

THE WAGELABORER

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THE TROUBLE AT GREGORY'S

On Thursday noon of last week the teamsters in the employ of Mr. Gregory, the coal dealer, went on strike, their grievance being that one of their associates, Hicks, had been unjustly discharged. Behind the matter are a few facts not given in the daily newspapers that made mention of the incident.

On the Saturday previous, when Mr. Gregory paid off his men, he held out \$3.90 from Hicks' wages, claiming that Hicks had injured some property belonging to a customer. It was charged that Hicks had driven his wagon against the guy wire of a tall chimney, breaking it and felling the chimney. Hicks denied the charge, but the money was held out, just the same.

The following Wednesday night being the regular meeting of the Teamsters' Union, Hicks brought the matter before the union and asked for an investigation. Thursday morning Hicks was discharged by Mr. Gregory, the latter having evidently heard of the fact that Hicks had called the union's attention to the case. At noon the remainder of Mr. Gregory's drivers went on strike, demanding that Hicks be either re-instated or given the money held out. A committee from the union interviewed Mr. Gregory, and the latter said he would go with the committee and investigate the matter. When the time came, however, to make the visit, Mr. Gregory declined to go, but gave M. E. McKnight, one of the committee, the \$3.90, and said:

"The committee can go out and investigate, and if they find that Hicks did not do the damage, give him the money. If he did, give it back to me."

Mr. McKnight and the committee, together with four other and wholly disinterested parties, did investigate. They found that there had never been any guy wire on the chimney, which was a galvanized iron affair. The stack had rusted and a high wind blew the top over, shaking the stack loose from the base. Another gust of wind, the day Hicks delivered the coal had blown the stack down. This was the exact state of affairs, and the money was given to Hicks.

The striking teamsters then went to Mr. Gregory and offered to return to work Monday morning.

"I do not want them," said Mr. Gregory. "I am making a contract with Carter's transfer to do my hauling. You can apply to him."

At no time did the strikers demand that Hicks be re-employed without reservation. They merely insisted that the matter be investigated, and if Hicks found innocent of doing the damage his money be given to him. The Teamsters' Union has not at any time demanded that any member be retained in the employ of any man. The union's contention was that Hicks had not been given an opportunity to show his side of the case, and further contended that until he had, fraternity demanded that his fellow unionists stand by him. But the report that the men struck solely because Mr. Gregory discharged Hicks is absolutely untrue.

To the union it appeared that Mr. Gregory had discharged Hicks because Hicks had the temerity to ask for an investigation with a view to fixing his responsibility.

This is the way matters stood last Monday. Carter's transfer is not a fair firm. It does not employ union teamsters. During the early part of the week the union's committee was working on the Carter transfer with a view to ascertaining what its attitude would be under the new conditions.

THE UNION LABEL.

The Wageworker has said it time and again, and repeats it here and now—if it is worth having it is made somewhere by union labor, and it is your duty, as it should be your pleasure, to see that it bears the union label when you buy it. The label is unionism's best and chiefest weapon, and if it is intelligently and universally wielded by union men and women it will solve the labor problem as no other agency now known to man will. Poets may dream and theorists may theorize until Hades boils down to a poultice, but the fact still remains that human selfishness can never be fully eradicated and greed will always exist in some form or other. Therefore it behooves unionists to get closer together, work more harmoniously and demand the union label under all circumstances and everywhere. The article that bears the union label is always made by men or women, or both, who are fairly well paid and work under fairly good sanitary conditions. The label is a guarantee against sweat shop and child labor. It is a guarantee that it is made by men or women, or both, whose hearts beat in sympathy with yours and whose aims are as high as you own. It means a more and longer step toward that glad time when labor will get what belongs to it and when greed will be throttled into submission. The union label means fraternity, hope for the downtrodden, better days for our children than we ever enjoyed.

The man who belongs to a union merely because it may help him to draw higher wages is more rogue than unionist and a greater danger to his union than the non-union man. The man who belongs to a union because he loves justice and is interested in the welfare of his fellows while safeguarding his own, is a better workman, a better citizen and a better husband and father. Such a man always looks for the label. You can bank on the unionism of the man who always insists on seeing the label.

Are you that kind of a union man? If you are not your unionism needs a stimulant.

GONE TO SLEEP.

House Roll No. 124, the notorious garnishee bill, has sunk away to sleep, and is slumbering quietly in the "indefinitely postponed" bed so kindly provided for it by the committee to which it was referred.

This was the bill fathered by the Retail Grocers' association, and sought to reduce the exemptions of a wage earner to \$7 a week. The main object of the bill was to make the state a collection agency for the retail grocery men.

The interests backing the bill sought to make it appear that every man opposed to it was a "dead beat," and declared that no man who paid his honest debts need fear the operation of the proposed law. Organized labor opposed the bill, not because organized labor upholds "dead beats," but because organized labor long since learned that such a law caught honest but temporarily unfortunate workmen much oftener than it caught those who might try to evade their honest debts. It meant endless trouble and litigation every time a merchant took a notion in his head to make sudden collections. It meant fat fees for constables and justices of the peace, and provided no protection for the man who might by force of circumstances be unable to pay a small bill the day he agreed. An unscrupulous merchant could use the law to the detriment of laborers. In fact, the bill had nothing to recommend it.

The legislative committee to which the bill was referred took the same view of it that organized labor took, and the result was that when the bill was taken up for discussion it took only a few moments to put it to sleep. Doubtless an effort will be made to introduce the bill again, but all such efforts will be watched. Two years ago a similar bill passed both branches of the legislature but was vetoed by Governor Mickey.

The men who own the coal trust, the beef trust, the shipping trust, the implement trust and other trusts, also own the great daily newspapers of the country. The trust managers are "open shop" advocates, because they realize that the labor unions stand between them and the power to reduce wages as they see fit. For this reason the majority of the daily press gives the advocacy of the "open shop" great prominence, while the labor unions receive small comfort. The labor press is fighting organized labor's battles and should have the support of organized labor everywhere.

Who shoulders the muskets and fight the wars of a country, the laboring men or the capitalists? Who remains at home when the country is attacked and profits by the necessities of the government, the laboring men or the capitalists? Who is the greater patriot, the man who shoulders his musket and marches away to war, or the man who remains at home and sells paper shoes to the government and discounts the government's bonds? Think it over.

Every street car in Lincoln should start from a central point. It should be possible for patrons of the street railway to stand at a given point and catch a car to any part of the city. A loop from the Burlington depot running to R street, thence east to Tenth and south on Tenth to O would make just the right loop, and every car in the city should run around it.

The Lincoln Shirt and Overall company will not be moved from Lincoln. Outside towns did not manifest any hysterical interest in securing this institution, and so far as known, Lincoln has not rent its nether garments in an effort to persuade the company to remain.

It looks as if several councilmanic candidates were trying to sidetrack the label ordinance until after election. They are making a mistake, for organized labor has its fighting clothes on and is not going to give support to dodgers or open enemies.

Vote your own interests and not the interests of the cheap politicians. Vote for your own welfare, and not the welfare of a party organization that never profited you a penny. Be your own man.

The tenement house owners of New York are fighting the bill to regulate tenement houses. The owners don't care a rap for human life as long as they get plenty of revenue from their firetraps.

Men and women have a right to know if the wares offered them are made by convict labor. Free labor needs as much protection as creamery butter.

If it hasn't got the label, it is not what you want. You may think you want it, but that is because you do not keep your unionism on straight.

The union label is labor's only guarantee of justice. Are you asking for the union label every time you buy goods?

If your union is not properly and regularly represented in the Central Labor Union, wake up and get into the game.

The Wageworker has several new advertisers this week. Note who they are and give them a share of your patronage.

Before you vote for a councilmanic candidate, ask him to define his attitude towards organized labor.

The Burlington depot is not what Lincoln should have at the hands of that great railway.

Get into the union game for fair, or else get out of the way and give better men a chance.



Good Words
When you meet a man that's blue
There's one thing that you should do—
Slap him on the back and say:
"Better luck another day!"
Cheer him up and make him smile—
Don't keep "knocking" all the while.
Good words come amazing cheap.
Use them—for they help a heap.

When you see a man in woe
Slap his back and say: "Hello!"
If he's down upon his luck,
Cheer him up and give him pluck.
Laugh and grab him by the hand
And then boost to beat the band.
Good words won't cost you a dime.
And they'll help him every time.

When you see a man knocked out,
Stop and ask what it's about.
Help him to his feet, and then
Urge the man to try again.
Fill his heart with "plucky dope"—
Equal parts of cheer and hope.
Good words help a man along
When he's up against it strong.

If you can't find one good word
Then don't let your voice be heard.
Better live in silence than
"Knock" against your fellow man.
Speak good words or none at all.
Help your fellows if they fall.
Good words help along the way—
Therefore say a few today.

Of Course
"I wish you would get off my feet,"
growled the railroad magnate to the
laborer who was swinging to a strap.
"Beg pardon, sir," said the laborer,
"but when you deny me the right to
stand where I please you interfere with
my individual liberty."
However, being busy with plans for
raising the rates and avoiding the anti-
rebate law, the magnate did not catch
the sarcasm.

By Comparison
The Spartan youth hitched over a
bit to give the fox a chance to gnaw
a fresh hole in his vitals.
"This is purty tough," murmured the
youth.
But after a few more twinges he
smiled a wan smile and exclaimed:
"But what if I had been born an
American 3,000 years later and had a
Standard Oil company gnawing away
at my insides?"
This, we believe, is the first recorded
instance of a man making light of his
woes by comparing them with what
might have been.

Always
The manager of the great plant held

his hand aloft and said in his most
impressive way:

"Gentlemen, I regret more than I can
tell this effort on your part to organize
and become a part of that anarchistic
crowd known as union laborers. We
have tried to treat you well. We love
you all, individually and collectively,
and we will do all that we can to
advance your interests."

"But our wages are low and our
hours long compared with workmen
in the same line in other mills," said
the spokesmen of the employees.

"Well, drop this foolish and social-
istic idea of organization and we will
meet you as individuals and see what
may be done for our mutual advan-
tage."

Thereupon the workmen ceased agi-
tating the idea of organizing, and the
organizers were sent away. One by
one the employees who had taken the
lead in the matter were discharged,
and then came the crash. Wages were
reduced 35 per cent.

"But you said you would meet us as
individuals and talk it over," com-
plained the unhappy employees.

"Quite true," said the employer's
representative. "You go right ahead
and talk all you please. But the wage
scale is reduced 35 per cent, just the
same. Do you think we are running
this mill as an eleemosynary institu-
tion?"

"But you bamboozled us into drop-
ping the idea of organization and said
that you would act for our mutual ad-
vantage," complained the employees.

"Well, we have discovered that when
workingmen organize they soon learn
that language is given us to conceal
our thoughts," said the manager.

Feeling very hungry the employees
were compelled to return to work at
the reduced wage pending their ar-
rival at a complete understanding of
what the manager meant.

Failed
"Want to borrow a quarter, eh?
When I saw you a year ago you told
me you were on Easy street."
"I was then, but I engaged in busi-
ness and went broke."
"What business?"
"I started a magazine called 'How to
Make Money.'"

Too Soon
The mother of the infant Achilles,
seeking to make her son invulnerable
to the weapons of his enemies, seized
him by the heel and dipped him into
the river Styx. Knowing that it would
be fatal to her if she touched the water
with her hands, she allowed the infant
heel to remain unmoistened. Having
learned the secret of his invulnerability,
Achilles' enemies shot him in the
heel. As the warrior lay dying he
gasped:

"Alas, that I lived so soon. Had I
waited a couple of thousand years or
so I might have become a 'captain of
industry' or a 'master of finance,' and
thus become well heeled."

Realizing that he had lived long
enough and too soon, Achilles closed
his eyes.

Everything
"I take a great interest in your wel-
fare," said the employer who opposed
the labor unions, "and I—"
"Yes, I know you do," said the poorly
paid workman. "And while taking the
interest you also hang onto the
principal."

True
"We'll have an open winter"
Last fall the prophet said,
And now he claims permission
To go up to the head.
It is an open winter,
Which you'll admit is true,
Wide open, too, at both ends,
And the wind goes howling through.

Brain Leaks
A starving man isn't worrying about
his soul.
Optimism is not "taking things as
they come."

If it's worth having it is worth
striving for.
"Killing time" is the wilful murder
of opportunities.

The church that does its duty never
needs a revival.
The value of a gift is measured by
the heart of the giver.

The fellow who is too good for his
job is no good to an employer.

The man who does his level best has
very little time to worry about results.
Did you ever hear of a man being
dragged down because he stooped over
to lift up?

The man who is always behind time
usually has very little he can rightfully
call his own.

A man who does his whole duty
never lacks appreciation, even though
nobody ever hears of him.

The man who doesn't like children
will be out of place in heaven, for
adults will be in the minority up there.

Kind words are so cheap that it is
a wonder anybody will take the trouble
to think up unkind ones.

The young man who "accepts a posi-
tion" usually winds up playing second
fiddle to the young man who hustles
for a job.

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