

THE WAGEWORKER

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Going to Build A Labor Temple

The Central Labor Union met in regular session Tuesday night and occupied considerable time in transacting a small amount of business. The chief thing done was to appoint a committee to devise ways and means for the erection of a Labor Temple in this city, and the committee is made up of Isaac DeLong, M. T. Castor and Robert Strain. This committee is going to see what can be done in the way of raising money to erect a building for the use and benefit of the labor unions of the city.

A label committee consisting of Gus Swanson, Walter Swanson and J. W. Evans was elected. This committee's duty is to spy out label goods and report, and to use its best efforts to have dealers replace non-union goods with goods of a similar nature that do bear the union label.

The organization committee was instructed to go after two or three of the smaller unions and endeavor to persuade them that they ought to be represented in the central body.

An amendment to the constitution providing for a better way of providing revenue was offered and under the rules went over for two weeks.

The delegates from the Teamsters' union made explanation of the trouble with Mr. Gregory and also told of their plans. The explanation was very satisfactory to the assembled delegates and the Teamsters had no difficulty in seeing that they have the support of the unionists of the city. The Teamsters also reported the following employers of teamsters who were "fair," employing only union teamsters in their work.

- THE ADAM SCHAUPP COAL CO.
- THE F. W. BROWN LUMBER CO.
- WHITEBREST COAL CO.
- HUTCHINS & HYATT.
- LANDY CLARK, AGENT.
- UNION FUEL CO.
- MARSH-BURKE CO.
- BADGER LUMBER CO.
- SEARLES & CHAPIN.

The following firms are classed under the "open shop" list, employing both union and non-union teamsters: Dierks Lumber Co., John Oberlies & Son, Rock Island Coal Co.

The attention of all union men and women, and sympathizers with unionism, is called to the above list of "fair" employers. When union labor begins standing unanimously by its avowed friends, it will be better for unionism.

Hereafter the Central Labor Union will bar out smoking during the time it is in session. The adoption of this rule was not brought about without some warm discussion, but it finally carried after it had once been defeated and then reconsidered. The new rule was made out of deference to two or three delegates who are seriously affected by tobacco smoke.

The reports of the various unions under "state of trade" were unusually interesting. Most of the trades reported "fine," and the rest of them reported from "fair" to "good."

UP NEXT WEEK.

The label ordinance did not come up at the council meeting last Monday night, for the reason that the council met and immediately adjourned in order to participate in the citizens' mass meeting at the Lincoln hotel. The mass meeting was for the purpose of considering the Lincoln charter bills now before the legislature.

By failing to hold a meeting the council missed seeing a fine crowd of union men interested in the adoption of the ordinance requiring the union label on all city printing.

Union men of all trades have taken a deep interest in this bill, and the councilmen are beginning to understand that the unionists of the city are in earnest. No open opposition to the proposed measure has developed, but it is known that some influences are working under cover to defeat it. The first attempt will be to smother the measure in a committee, but the friends of the proposed ordinance have made careful provision for all that sort of thing. It is believed that the ordinance will be reported next Monday night, and all union men interested—and all union men should be—earnestly requested to be on hand.

ALLIED TRADES BALL.

A Social Success That Also Helped Out The Treasury a Little.

The Allied Printing Trades ball—the first in the history of the council—held on February 24, was one of the most successful social functions ever given by craftsmen in Lincoln. Financially it was not the success hoped for, but there will be a neat sum to put into the treasury of the council. About sixty couples enjoyed the evening, and the use of the word "enjoyment" is warranted by the facts. The ball room was decorated with the banners of the Allied Printing Trades Council and potted plants, and Quick's orchestra provided the music. The grand march was led by Mr. and Mrs. Will Bustard and was participated in by forty-three couples. The program consisted of fourteen numbers, with several extras thrown in for good measure, and each regular number was named after some trade, personage or "shop talk." Departing from the usual custom the printers tried to see how severely plain the dance programs could be made, and the result was a program that was as neat as any ever seen. The refreshments were served under direction of a committee from Capital Auxiliary No. 11.

Several members of the legislature were present with their ladies and at the close of the ball expressed the opinion that they had never enjoyed a more pleasant evening. The members were present as the invited guests of the allied trades. All in all the first annual ball of the

Allied Printing Trades was an event to be long remembered by those who were fortunate enough—or enterprising enough—to be present.

TAILORS OUT OF POLITICS.

The Journeymen Tailors of America have sidestepped the effort to commit their organization to the political views of the socialist democratic party. An effort to secure an endorsement of the party failed at the Bloomington convention. An effort will be made to amalgamate the tailors and the garment cutters; and the tailors appointed a committee to meet with a similar committee from the garment workers. Buffalo was selected as the next place of meeting.

STREET RAILWAY STRIKE.

A strike of the employees of the Houghton County Street Railway company, Calumet, Mich., was inaugurated on February 25. Seventy-five employees, including motormen, conductors and switchmen, refused to go to work until the company removed new men recently employed. A week ago the employees organized a union, and claim that since then the company has been importing non-union men.

NOTICE TO MILL MEN.

There will be a special meeting of the mill men (U. B. C. & J.) at Carpenters' hall, 130 South Eleventh street, Monday evening, March 6. All mill men in the city, union and non-union, are invited.

THE LABEL LEAGUE.

The Woman's Union Label League is going to get busy. Lincoln union labor should be prepared at any time now to hear an alarm at the outer portals announcing a visit from a committee of earnest union women who are out looking up ways and means to advance the cause of unionism. This was decided on at the meeting of the League Monday night, and the committee will be appointed before the next meeting. It will be the duty of this committee to visit the different labor organizations and urge upon their having their wives become members of members the wisdom and necessity of the League and advance the cause of unionism. M. E. McKnight, business agent of the Teamsters' Union, said that if he could be assured that every union man's wife was a member of the League he would not be fearful of results—that the unions could have anything within reason that they asked for. He recited some experiences he has had during the last few weeks and demonstrated that the women were able to do more practical work for unionism than most of the union men themselves.

Two new members were taken into the League and several short addresses were made. The organization is in good shape financially, but is still suffering from a lack of interest on the part of those who should be most interested. The League will meet again on March 13, at which time preparations will be made for a social session calculated to arouse interest in the work of the organization.

The bill giving women the right to vote for presidential electors was killed by the house by a vote of 60 to 29.

When a warm day comes along the thermometer always rises to the occasion.

CAPITAL AUXILIARY.

Mrs. Marshall, who has been ill for some time, is reported much better. Mrs. Brown is on the sick list. She was to have entertained the Auxiliary this week, but owing to her illness the meeting was held at the home of Mrs. Bustard.

Next Monday night Capital Auxiliary will resume its monthly socials for the printers and their wives. The first social of the season will be in the form of a colonial party, and as many as can are requested to appear in costume.

LABORING MEN'S CLUB.

The Laboring Men's Political club seems to have gone out of business since the recent republican primaries. The club endorsed a long list of republican candidates, but lost out on every one against whom any contest was waged. Since then the club has been inactive. It has been reported that the club might meet and endorse a candidate in opposition to Mr. Hutson, but the report is denied by members of the club. Street Commissioner Anderson, who was an active member, says: "I believe the club has held its last meeting."

The Pittsburg, Pa., builders' exchange league gained another point a few days ago in its fight against organized labor when the electrical workers, who have been on a strike since January 1, signed the scale. This makes six trades that have signed.

The master builders have decided to ignore the union as a body and intend that every man before being employed shall sign the agreement which contains the uniform working rules of the league as modified to suit the trades that have signed up. This means open shop in the full acceptance of the word.

T'll With the Workingman!

The Lee Broom and Duster company got in its work on the bill to brand all convict made goods. And the Lee Broom and Duster company did not have to give a banquet, either.

The bill has been indefinitely postponed. It only had the backing of poor workingmen. T'll with the workingman! What right has he to butt in and ask for something when the legislature is busy trying to give the railroads and other corporations all they want?

When will laboring men learn to keep their peace? Who are they that they should ask for anything calculated to keep them? Let them keep their mouths shut and not have the impertinence to ask for anything until the corporations get all they want. When that time comes the workingmen will realize the folly of asking for anything.

T'll with the workingman!

They Killed the Label Bill

Senate File No. 202, the Allied Printing Trades bill, introduced by Senator Epperson at the request of the allied printing trades, is dead. On recommendation of the senate committee on public printing the bill was indefinitely postponed on February 28. The men who compose the committee on public printing in the senate deserve to be well remembered by union labor and its friends throughout the state. The gentlemen in question had a perfect right to recommend the bill for indefinite postponement, but common courtesy demanded that the committee give the friends of the bill an opportunity to explain its merits. The committee is made up as follows:

- M. H. WHALEY, Eighteenth district, Clarks, Chairman.
- ELLIS T. GOOD, Second district, Peru.
- AARON WALL, Sixteenth district, Loup City.
- MARTIN W. DIMERY, Nineteenth district, Beaver Crossing.
- CHARLES P. BREESE, Fourteenth district, Rushville.

These gentlemen are all republicans. All senate committees are unanimously republican because there are no democrats or populists in that branch of the legislature. Not one of the members of this committee is a printer, or in any wise connected with the public printing business. The committee gave the bill little or no consideration, and gave its supporters no opportunity to argue in its favor. Several gentlemen interested in the defeat of such a measure were, however, very busy around the state house, and being expert lobbyists undoubtedly exercised an influence against the bill. Tom Benton, whose skill as a lobbyist and whose reputation as an employer of non-union printers are well known, was very much interested in the defeat of the bill. The men who advocated it had no railroad or Pullman passes to give out.

This bill would have worked no injustice, but on the contrary would have benefitted labor and protected the state against cheap and inferior work such as it has been getting for the past two years. It was fair in its provisions and in the best interests of the public at large.

The Wagerworker regrets that the mode of procedure in the legislature prevented a record vote for and against the postponement of the bill. The "committee of the whole" gag is very convenient for the eminent gentlemen who want to evade responsibility. Under it they escape going on record with their votes, and thus can help special interests defeat much legislation in the interests of the people without incurring any responsibility.

The Wagerworker urges union labor to at least remember the names of the eminent lawmakers who make up the senate committee on public printing and who recommended the allied printing trades bill for indefinite postponement. At least one of that committee has a great yearning to secure some higher political office than that of a state senator.

How Lee's Contract Skins Nebraska

If the Lee Broom and Duster company has given any legislative banquets this session the fact has been kept very quiet. But judging by the activity of union men who are making an effort to secure a law compelling the branding of all convict made goods, the Lee Broom and Duster company is about due to spread a feast.

Last Monday representatives of the Omaha and Lincoln Central Labor Unions made appearance before the house judiciary committee and argued in favor of the convict brand bill, showing why they wanted the bill enacted into law and answering some searching questions put by members of the committee. The committee treated the representatives of the central bodies with every courtesy.

Just now the Lee Broom and Duster company is using a considerable amount of printer's ink in the shape of "communications" to the daily press. The broom outfit is opposing the establishment of a twine plant at the state prison, and is also opposing any and all things that may tend to weaken its graft at that institution. In last Monday's State Journal Representative Ernst had a communication that makes a startling showing of the Lee Broom and Duster company's methods of conducting its business with the state. The communication is long, but it is well worth careful reading and study. The communication follows:

To the Editor of the State Journal: I have been furnished a copy of the penitentiary labor contract which I presume is the one under which the Lee company is now acting. It is dated April 1, 1902, and expires April 1, 1905. The bond for the contract is, however, dated April 16, 1903, as I learn by consulting the one on file in the office of the secretary of state.

The contract is worse for the state than I thought. In fact, it is all one-sided. It was first drawn up to reduce the pay to forty-five cents a day, and later, when Gov. Savage refused to sign it, the price was raised to fifty cents. Then they fixed a system of 'tasks' to make a day's work, so that in reality the men are at the option of the company worked at 'piece work.' Some of them can do the 'tasks' and get a little extra. More of them are unable to do the 'tasks' and get less pay. According to State Treasurer Mortensen, whose word will be taken by everyone without question, the men are paid on an average much less than fifty cents per day, and in that case the bond is not lived up to.

The contract is made up in numbered sections, and in brief here is what it says. Everyone can judge how much free labor the broom company gets:

1. Lee is to have not less than 100 men.
 2. If Lee needs more he is to have up to 250 men, at his option, in preference to any other employment, except such as are used in prison duties.
 3. Whether or not Lee shall be working convicts in excess of this contract or not, no convict once assigned shall be taken and assigned to other work without Lee's consent.
 4. Sick prisoners to be returned to Lee when fit for duty.
 5. Lee to have exclusive control of convicts assigned by this contract, subject to the rules, etc. (Whether the whole 250 are working or not. This is to prevent any other company getting men.)
 6. This section fixes the hours of labor at 8, 9 and 10 hours per day, with a clause about 'tasks,' which fixes it so that at the option of the contractor a man unable to perform a certain task has not worked a whole day.
 7. Lee to select additional convicts to take the place of men who may die or be pardoned.
 8. Men to work every day except Sunday and legal holidays.
 9. Lee to have exclusive right to maintain a broom factory 'with said labor.' (Tie up 250 men whether used or not.)
 10. State to furnish free building and rooms; (heated), power, live steam to dry brooms, and heat for office and bleach rooms.
 11. Lee to furnish foreman, and state to guarantee the work of the convicts, and in case of slighting or poor work, Lee not to pay for the labor.
 12. Lee to pick out good men to take place of those unable to learn broom trade satisfactorily.
 13. In case of sickness, or in case convicts are 'unable to complete their daily tasks,' then Lee is to pay 'only that portion of the task or day's work performed by said convict or day's work performed by said convict on that day.' (This is where they dodge the fifty cents a day contract.)
 14. State to furnish guards and keepers, for the supervision of the convicts employed under this contract free.
 15. State to furnish free a runner for each shop, to do errands, carry wash water, clean up shops daily, and other jobs that the guards may direct, and should said state runner have any surplus time he shall perform similar duties for Lee.' (So the state throws in free building, free steam, free heat, free guards and free janitor work.)
 16. Lee to pay fifty cents per day for the convicts actually employed in making brooms.
 17. Lee to pay the state \$2.50 per car for loading, unloading and switching all cars of broom corn, brooms and broom handles, which price includes the 'bringing in of broom corn from warehouses as needed.' (Here is some more free work. The state pays for the switching, and then unloads free, and then handles the stuff again, as needed—all free. How many free men does this take?)
 18. Payments on the contract to be made on the tenth of each month.
 19. Here the 'tasks' that constitute a day's work are set forth, so that by any clever manipulation the contract for fifty cents a day may be avoided at the will of the contractor.
 20. New tasks to be fixed in proportion to those already named in case of changes or new machinery.
 21. In case of fire the contractor is to have reasonable time to put in new machinery.
 22. In case United States or Nebraska pass laws to brand prison-made goods, then Lee is 'not to be holden to pay within mentioned price,' and may at his option cancel the contract.
 23. Contract to terminate April 1, 1905.
- The contract is signed by Ezra P. Savage, George W. Marsh, William Steufer, George D. Follmer, F. N. Prout, Warden Davis, and Clinton R. Lee. As before stated, it is dated a year before the \$2,000 bond, which is on file at the office of the secretary of state.
- Anyone can see that under such a contract the state is at the mercy of the contractor. He only needs to use 100 men, but nobody else can use the others. He is furnished 'free' about as much as he pays for. And he can at the 'task' work fix the price of the labor to suit himself. I think this investigation will be valuable to the state, and ought to be carried further. I do not wonder that money is being paid out by the contractor to keep the legislature from putting something else in the institution to employ the convicts.
- "WILLIAM ERNST."