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THE WAGEWORKER

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

VOL. 2

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NO. 1

Child Labor The Industrial Curse

Mrs. Ed D. Donnell, general secretary-treasurer of the Woman's International Auxiliary of the International Typographical Union, in a letter to the Cincinnati Chronicle says in part:

The Woman's Auxiliary to Typographical Union No 3 was visited at its last meeting by Mr. Joseph Heberle, secretary of the Educational committee of the Central Labor Council. Mr. Heberle is very much in earnest as to the rights of the children of Cincinnati to be furnished with free school books, and that the curse of child labor in our factories should be stamped out.

I am free to confess that until very recently I had never given the question of child labor any thought because I suppose, I didn't know anything about it.

Having been born and reared in a smaller city, where most children are expected to attend the local schools until they graduate, the thought of children at the age of 10 to 14 years being required to work that the rest of the family might live, was derived from a story in a Sunday school paper, where the boy always turned out to be a great man and finally became a banker.

We are informed by those who have made the question a study that the Cincinnati factories employ a very large number of children under the legal age. If this is true, and we have no reason to doubt it, it were time that the Central Labor Council take the matter up in earnest and insist that the state law against this practice be enforced, and that other and more stringent laws be enacted if necessary.

Surely every mother, if she has one spark of feeling for her children, desires that they grow to manhood and womanhood to be an honor to themselves and to her who gave them birth.

It is not to be denied that the influence which surrounds young girls in factories is not of the best. It is true that there are hundreds of girls in our factories who are just as pure and ladylike as girls in other walks of life; but they will admit that the moral atmosphere is not the thing for a child just budding into girlhood.

We have all respect and admiration for the young lady of proper age who is willing to go out to work in a factory or some one's kitchen, where the necessity requires. She has the same right to make and pay her way as her brothers, but we know that she should be kept under the watchful eye of her mother until she knows at least the difference between right and wrong, and has received the training and acquired the knowledge to maintain her respectability and guard her character above reproach. Aside from the fact that these children in our factories working for a mere pittance, take the place of men who are walking the streets today looking for work, is the thought of what their future will be.

Mothers, if you are at all interested in this question, other than from a monetary standpoint, take your stand on one of the downtown corners some morning at 6 o'clock and look into the faces of the young girls from 10 to 14 years of age who hurry by on their way to work. Pale, tired-looking, worn—these are the girls whom we expect to be the mothers of a future generation of toilers. One can only imagine what the outcome will be.

As a means of awakening public interest in this question, it has been suggested that the ministers of our city churches be asked to aid in this work by demanding from their pulpits that child labor be suppressed. We shouldn't think that any self-respecting minister

Volume Two, Number One

With this issue The Wageworker enters upon the second year of its existence. This is not the first labor paper ever started in Lincoln, but it is the first one that ever lived long enough to issue fifty-three consecutive weekly numbers, and in that respect, at least, The Wageworker has broken all records. Whether or not it has broken any other records in the labor newspaper line remains for its patrons and supporters to say.

The Wageworker was started to meet what seemed to be a growing demand for a newspaper that would be a medium through which union men and women could become better acquainted. It started out without a single subscriber paid in advance, and only 150 who had promised to pay a quarter for a three months' subscription. The second year begins with 1,073 bona fide subscribers, nine-tenths of whom have paid in advance. The regular weekly issue now exceeds 1,150 papers.

During the year The Wageworker has made an earnest effort to be of service to the unionists of the city. It has not, and never will, pose as a "leader of labor," but will always strive to be an educational force. With politics as politics it will have nothing to do—in politics as it affects the interests of union men and women it will undertake to play a prominent part. What The Wageworker has been and what it has done it will continue to be and to do, only to a greater and a better extent if possible.

To the earnest and loyal union men and women of Lincoln who have given The Wageworker their hearty support and co-operation the editor returns his heartfelt thanks. Without them The Wageworker could not have lived through the year. With them it has come through with flying colors. Through and by a continuance of their support it hopes to accomplish greater good for the cause of unionism in the future.

Vardamann's Foolish Talk

Governor Vardamann, of Mississippi, seems to have some very queer ideas of what constitutes "Industrial progress," and equally queer ideas of what constitutes "inducements to prospective home-seekers." Recently William E. Curtis of the Chicago Record-Herald interviewed Governor Vardamann and asked him, "What is your administration doing to improve the condition of the people of your state?"

"Mississippi is making noticeable industrial progress," replied Governor Vardamann. "I think the state is in better condition than ever before and is improving every month. Our greatest need, in my judgment, is the immigration of the better class of white people, not laborers, but farmers and mechanics, who are competent to be landlords and not merely tenants. We want home owners and home builders; men who will save their money and invest it wisely; and give permanent prosperity to Mississippi and stability to the laboring element of the state."

This was all right, had Governor Vardamann stopped there. But he went right on and opened his mouth so wide that it admitted his foot so far that his instep collided with his epiglottis. After enumerating Mississippi's undoubted advantages of soil and climate, healthfulness and opportunity, the governor tried to show up some other things that he called "advantageous." Listen to what he said:

"The people of Mississippi are absolutely free from the tyranny of class; we have no plutocrats, no monopolies to grind us down and NO LABOR UNIONS TO INTERFERE WITH THE FREEDOM OF WORKINGMEN. We have no strikes, no strife over wages or hours, no riots."

Having no labor unions it naturally follows that there is "no strife over wages and hours" and a further result is that the hours are longer and the wages lower than in a majority of the states. Men and women who lack the energy to organize to protect themselves against oppression are usually content with whatever their taskmasters see fit to give them.

A little investigation of the census figures may serve to show up Mississippi in a little different light to "home owners" and "home builders" who may have their eyes turned towards Mississippi as a probable and likely place of residence.

In Mississippi where there are no labor unions to "interfere with the freedom of workingmen," the average wage for workingmen is 70 cents a day for an average day of 10½ hours, or an average of 6½ cents per hour.

In Nebraska, where the number of wage earners is practically the same as in Mississippi, and where the labor unions are comparatively strong and active, the average wage is \$1.72 a day for an average day of 8½ hours, or an average of 20.2 cents per hour.

In other words, the "free and independent workingman" of Mississippi earns as much in ten and one-half hours as the "servile slave of the labor unions" in Nebraska earns in three and one-half hours.

In Mississippi the number of child laborers is 1 in 21 of the adult working population, and the work day for them averages 11 hours and the wage 3 cents per hour.

Pleasantly Entertained

Mr. and Mrs. M. T. Caster entertained a number of friends last Monday evening in honor of Mr. and Mrs. George DeBolt. The evening was devoted to games and sociability and at a seasonable hour the hostess served a two-course luncheon. Mr. and Mrs. DeBolt are preparing to move to California in a short time, and the affair was planned as an expression of friendship. Those present enjoyed a most delightful evening and in parting wished for the guests of honor a

ON THE CANAL

Government Jobsters Seek to Evade the National Statutes

Chief Engineer Wallace of the Isthmian Canal Commission had an interview with Secretary Taft last Monday in which conditions on the canal were discussed. Afterward Mr. Wallace met such members of the commission as are in the city. As to the right of the commission to employ labor for more than eight hours per day, there is a belief that the eight-hour law does not apply to the canal zone. Chief Engineer Wallace says that it would very seriously impede work to have the eight-hour law in effect during the construction of the canal. It would be impossible to make uniform hours for all labor, because some labor must be twelve hours, while ten hours is the regular rule for most of the workingmen.

Chief Engineer Wallace could "expedite" the work of the canal by working the laborers twenty-four hours a day instead of twelve or thirteen. If the canal work and the canal zone are under the control of this government then the laws of this government, and not the whims of some engineer, should prevail. The government law makes eight hours a day's work for the government—although comparatively few among the clerks and chiefs work that long. But the common laborers and the mechanics in the government employ have to put in full time.

There is no more reason why the canal laborers should be made to violate the law than there is that the flag should float over a territory where United States authority does not prevail.

Tom Foley of Omaha, was in Lincoln one day last week, shaking hands with old friends and making new ones at the rate of sixty a minute.

"Hustling Harry"

Harry E. Moores, general agent of the Wabash Passenger department, with headquarters in Omaha, was in Lincoln Thursday, looking up the festive tourist and telling everybody he met that the Wabash was the real route to all eastern points and resorts. This is Mr. Moores' first appearance for some time, as he has been laid up with a pair of fractured ribs, but the "slats" are all right now and he is more than making up for lost time.

CAPITAL AUXILIARY'S APRIL SOCIAL.

At Bohanon's hall on Wednesday evening, April 19, Capital Auxiliary No. 11 to Lincoln Typographical Union No. 209 will give its April social, and all union printers and their wives are cordially invited to attend. The last was poorly attended, and the excuse offered by printers who were not present was: "I knew nothing about it until it was over." This notice is prominent enough to make that excuse ineffectual. There will be an unusually good program, good music, a social good time and good light refreshments. Everything will be good. It will cost a union printer just 15 cents to get in and have a share in these good things. Being good hearted and great on bargains, the Auxiliary members offer this good bargain—a union printer and his wife will be admitted for 25 cents.

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would refuse this request. We have thought at times that our clergy are not as much interested in saving the souls of the working man and his family as they are in catering to the whims and fancies of that so-called upper class who contribute so largely to their salaries. If they were they would get out and solve for themselves the oft-repeated question: "Why do the laboring class not attend church?"

With few exceptions the ministers of Cincinnati take little or no interest in the working man. Two of the largest religious publishing houses in Cincinnati—the Methodist Book Concern and the Christian Standard Publishing Company—are notoriously unfair to organized labor. We believe we have yet to see a single bit of printed matter sent out by a minister which carried the Allied Printing Trades Label. Why is this? That is the question that the trades unionist is asking today, and the question that the minister will stutter over every time it is put to him.

Let our ministers indicate a willingness to meet the working man half way, let him occasionally add to his offer of salvation in the hereafter a plea for the better conditions of man here on earth, and we believe there will be fewer empty seats in the churches and more standing room in the opera houses.

safe journey and good fortune in their future home.

Notice

The International Union of Flour and Cereal Mill Employees asks The Wageworker to make the following announcement: "All flour made by the Washburn-Crosby Milling Co. is still on the 'We do not patronize' list. When a settlement is reached you will be officially notified."

The Lincoln Gas & Electric Light Co. have a few words to say to you this week. Gas for fuel is cheaper

CENTRAL LABOR UNION

Declines to Recommend Men for Appointment to Office

Last Tuesday night the Central Labor Union went on record as opposing the official endorsement of any particular man for political appointment. The matter was brought up because several union men were after the appointment as street commissioner and sidewalk inspector under the new city administration. Teamsters' Union No. 440 recommended the re-appointment of John Anderson as street commissioner and Bert Corner as sidewalk inspector. The recommendations were placed on file. Afterwards the action mentioned above was taken. It seemed to be the general opinion that the best way to do was to submit a list of several names, with the information that the appointment of any one of them would be satisfactory to the union men of the city. A meeting of the Central Labor Union was called for Thursday night, for the purpose of recommending a number of men to Mayor Brown.

The Labor Temple committee reported progress and promised to have something definite to report at the next meeting.

Every union represented reported the state of trade from "good" to "never better," and the general ave-

rage was "good, plus." This was greeted with applause from all sides. The attendance was unusually good, owing perhaps to the fact that everybody thought there might be some "doings" relative to political endorsements. The excitement was suppressed, however, and things moved along smoothly.

BUSH RE-APPOINTED

Popular Deputy Labor Commissioner Will Hold His Job

Deputy Labor Commissioner, Burrill Bush, has been re-appointed for another term by Governor Mickey, and the re-appointment meets with the hearty approval of every unionist in the state. Mr. Bush has made an excellent official, and during the last session of the legislature kept the unionists posted on what was being done in matters affecting their interests. He has also enlarged the scope of the bureau's work.

Don DeSpain, his assistant, has also been re-appointed, which was a recognition of good work faithfully performed. The roster of clerks in the office will remain unchanged.

The Armstrong Clothing Co. advertisement deserves your especial attention. It is easy to find.

THE UNLICENSED SALOON MUST GO.

In every move the new excise board may make looking towards the abolishment of the "drug store saloon" it will meet with the hearty support of all right-minded people. The drug store saloon must go. It must go because it is an unlicensed saloon, a menace to the boys and girls, an infringement on the rights of men who have paid for the privilege of dealing in liquor, and illegal in its very nature. No drug store should be allowed to sell alcoholic liquor save as a medicine, and then only on the prescription of a reputable physician.

There are drug store soda fountains in this city that sell more alcoholic beverages than the average saloon, and sell them openly and notoriously to boys and girls, whose parents are in ignorance of the fast pace their children are going. A large percentage of the fancy mixtures sold at these drug store soda fountains—not all of them—but some of them—are practically bar mixed drinks that are worse than the festive cocktail, the insidious julep of the hilarious fizz. The excise board shows gratifying signs of shutting down on this sort of thing. More power to the board! There are drug stores in this city doing more damage to society than any saloon ever run in the corporate limits of the city. The saloons have no wine rooms. Some of the drug stores have worse—they cater to children of tender years. It would be a good thing if several hundred fathers and mothers of Lincoln keep a sharp watch on their boys and girls. Their children are no better or no worse than other children—and "Young America" today is a mighty smooth youth. The smooth-faced lad of 12 to 17 years of age knows he can not get alcoholic liquors at a saloon, but he knows drug stores where he can take his "steady" and bowl up without let or hindrance as long as he can hold up papa for the money. That's the kind of drug stores The Wageworker is after, and the kind of drug stores and excise board is after. And between the two of us we'll get 'em.

The unlicensed saloon in the guise of a drug store must get out of the saloon business!

In Nebraska the number of child laborers is 1 in 33 of the adult working population, and the work day for them averages a fraction less than 9 hours and the average wage is 7 cents per hour.

Mississippi has no child labor law worthy of the name, and as a result children from 5 years old and upwards are worked in the mills.

In Nebraska children under 14 are barred from employment in mills and factories.

But Mississippi has no labor unions to "interfere with the liberty of workingmen," while Nebraska does.

In Mississippi 1,049 children under 16 work for wages, and work an average of 11 hours a day.

In Nebraska children under 14 are barred from employment in an average of less than 9 hours a day.

Mississippi's child workers range in age from 5 to 16 years of age, while Nebraska's child workers range from 14 to 16 years.

Mississippi's 23,643 adult workingmen earn \$7,035,534 a year, while Nebraska's 21,059 adult workingmen earn \$10,749,706 a year, and work one-third less time than their Mississippi brethren.

But Mississippi has no labor unions to "interfere with the liberty of workingmen," while Nebraska has several hundred local labor unions.

The figures given above refer only to manufacturing industries, and are given because the labor unions are more intimately connected with manufacturing than with any other branch of national industry.

A craftsman who is content to work eleven hours a day at his trade for the average wage of 70 cents a day could hardly be expected to have independence enough to strike for his rights and certainly not energy enough to stir up "strife over wages and hours."

But The Wageworker is of the opinion that Governor Vardamann has not pictured Mississippi in a light that is calculated to attract working men. His picture may appeal to Puritan Massachusetts whose millionaires have accumulated their wealth through the blood and tears and sweat of child labor and are looking for fresh pastures where youth runs free. What retail business man in Lincoln would trade his location in a city where unionism is comparatively strong and wages average \$2.00 a day or more, for a location in Mississippi where there are no labor unions to "interfere with the liberty of workingmen" and the average wage is 70 cents a day?

Doubtless Governor Vardamann means well, but he is an ass, nevertheless.

General Mention

Sadie Puckett is a new advertiser in The Wageworker.

Capital Auxiliary social at Bohanon's hall Wednesday evening, April 19. Printers and their wives cordially invited.

G. W. Burnes of Omaha, representing the wholesale liquor firm of George Biele & Sons, Cincinnati, was making the rounds in Lincoln one day last week, and dropped in on The Wageworker for old times' sake.

A Good Business

Last Saturday was the best day in the history of the Lincoln Clothing Co. This company has been a steady and liberal advertiser in the columns of The Wageworker ever since it began business, and it would seem that its efforts to deserve the patronage of Wageworker readers are meeting with success.

If a man gets run over by a street car a woman is never sure that isn't his way of trying to flirt with her.