

THE WAGWORKER

ALLIED PRINTING
TRADES UNION COUNCIL
LINCOLN, NEB.

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

VOL. 2

LINCOLN, NEBRASKA, NOVEMBER 13, 1905

NO. 31

AND THIS FACTORY WAS OPENED WITH PRAYER

On Monday, November 2, 1905, the new factory building of the Lincoln Overall and Shirt Co. was formally opened with prayer by Rev. D. L. Thomas, pastor of Grace M. E. church, Mayor Brown, President John E. Miller of the Commercial club, Governor John H. Mickey, President Snell of the company and others made short addresses. Then Governor Mickey threw the electric switch, the sewing machines began humming, and work in the new factory building began. The occasion was made quite a gala affair.

On January 25, 1905, the old factory of the Lincoln Overall and Shirt Co., then located in the Halter block, was destroyed by fire. In the papers next day appeared an article inspired by Manager L. O. Jones, of the company, telling what a vast benefit the factory was to Lincoln, and conveying the notice that unless the citizens of Lincoln came to the front and furnished the company with a new building the factory would be located elsewhere. As an inducement for subscriptions it was stated that the factory employed an average of seventy-five people, and that the average pay roll amounted to \$500 a week. A little sum in long division will reveal the fact that the average wage is a fraction over \$6.60 a week. The rule is piece work and the hours are from 7 a. m. until 6 p. m. or ten hours a day. The factory turns out overalls and work shirts.

The Wageworker has, on several occasions, referred to this factory and passed criticisms upon it. It desires now to make a few more, and to form a basis for its criticisms will quote liberally from the addresses made by Mayor Brown, President Miller of the Commercial club and Governor John H. Mickey. Mayor Brown said:

"It is the presence of such houses as this one that distinguish the city from the country town."

There can be no dispute upon that point. There are other things, however, that dis-

tinguish the city from the country town. Among them we might mention red light districts, open gambling halls, bucket shops, policy shops, pool rooms, beer gardens, Sunday theatres, sweat shops, grafting political rings, and general misery and despair. All these things mark the modern metropolis, but they are absent from the typical American village or country town. Mayor Brown also said:

"I don't care how small the wages of a laborer may be, you may rest assured that they will be spent in the city. But a retired farmer sends out to the farm for his butter and eggs; he has no use for the butcher, because he has his meat growing on the farm. What makes a town is not the farmers who come to it to make their homes, but the people whose livelihood lies in the city. That is why I believe that such a factory can be made to pay well, and become an important factor in the industrial life of Lincoln. You have the market for the goods that are manufactured in this house immediately at hand; in this line I do not see why Lincoln should not become as important a point as Chicago, or St. Louis, or Kansas City."

Mayor Brown did not mean the opening sentence of the quotation just as it sounds. Of course he does care whether a laborer's wage is small. He pays fair wages himself, and he would like to see all wage earners well paid. His intent was to say that the city needed wage earners. And that is true—but the kind of wage earners Lincoln needs are not those who are paid starvation wages, who work long hours and who have nothing to look forward to but long lives of illy requited toil. The Wageworker charges that the Lincoln Overall and Shirt Co. pays ridiculously low wages, that it is a detriment instead of a blessing to the city, and that factories of its class instead of benefiting the city will in the long run be a detriment. A city filled with poorly paid working men and women can not, in the nature of things, progress morally, socially or financially. We need but to call attention to the mining towns of Pennsylvania and the Virginias and to the mill town of Massachusetts and Connecticut, to emphasize this fact. Mayor Brown further said:

"I believe that such a factory can be made to pay well, and become an important factor in the industrial life of Lincoln."

The Wageworker unhesitatingly admits that such a factory can be made to pay well. There are already two or three of them in Lincoln that are paying well—paying the stockholders well. But what about the pay of the women and girls who run the machines? The remuneration of Manager Jones of the Lincoln Overall and Shirt Co. The Wageworker fur-

ther ventures to assert that Mr. Miller would not, under any circumstances, ask anybody to work fifty-nine hours a week in Miller & Paine's store for even twice \$2.42 a week.

Mr. Miller was quite correct in saying that "If we are to hold our relative position among the cities of the west, we must rouse ourselves immediately." The Wageworker reiterates and emphasizes that declaration. It is ready to do its best—as little as that "best" may be—to help the Commercial club in its campaign for a greater Lincoln. But it will not lend its aid to a campaign that has for its object the securing of factories that employ women and girls at an "average wage" of \$6.60 a week for fifty-nine hours' work, and which draw checks for \$2.42 to pay for one woman's work for an entire week. Such factories may make a city in point of population, but it will also make a city in point of misery, squalor, destitution, woe, want and misery. Better remain a city of universities and churches for a thousand years to come, than to become a city of sweat shops.

The Wageworker calls attention to the facsimile of a wage check issued last week by the Lincoln Overall and Shirt Co. The original of this facsimile is in the possession of The Wageworker's editor. That check represents a week's work of this new industrial institution that means so much for the industrial future of Lincoln. Think of it, O, ye fathers and mothers whose children may sooner or later be forced into one of the "beneficent industrial institutions" to work a whole week for the munificent wage of \$2.42!

"O, she was a slow worker," you say. "Some of the employes make as high as \$10 or \$11 a week."

Granted. But if the swift operators can make \$10 a week, and the average is \$6.60 a week, in God's name how can the average worker exist on the wage they must receive?

"O, but she was a young and inexperienced girl," you say.

That's where you guess wrong. The one to whom this check was issued is a woman. She is a married woman, too, and sought employment because she needed it.

President Snell of the company says some of the employes make as high as \$11 a week. Manager Jones says the average is \$6.60. Figure it out for yourself. Add \$11 and \$2.42 and the average is \$6.71.

President Paul Morton of the Equitable gets \$80,000 a year, and a clerk in the same office gets \$720 a year. The average salary is therefore \$45,860—but the clerk doesn't gain anything by it.

A professor in a law school once told his class a story about a squirrel. It was a good story. He told how the squirrel came out to hunt up its winter supply of food. He described the woods, the harvest of nuts, the apparel of the hunter who was scouring the woods, and threw in a lot of flowers of speech and then wound up the story. Immediately members of the class began plying him with questions. "How old was the hunter?" "What kind of a gun did he have?" "What kind of nuts grew in the woods?" "What time of year was it?" And thus the questions came. Finally one student asked: "What became of the squirrel?"

The Wageworker wants you to keep your eye on the squirrel, and not be misled by talk of "average wages" and "fast workmanship."

Here is a factory that is dedicated by prayer to the Heavenly Father who marks the sparrow's fall—and one working woman employed therein receives a check for \$2.42 for a week's work.

"Keep your eye on the squirrel!"

Here is a business institution managed by a man who is foremost in promoting great religious works—and his business institution remunerates a woman for a week's work by giving her a check for \$2.42.

"Keep your eye on the squirrel!"

Here is a business institution that asked the citizens of Lincoln to come to its rescue when it had a fire because it was such a big thing for Lincoln, and it draws a check for \$2.42 to pay for a week's work over its madly rushing machines.

"Keep your eye on the squirrel!"

Here is a manufacturing concern which is pointed to as a sample of what Lincoln needs to make it a great city—and a check for \$2.42 is handed out as pay for a week's work in that factory.

"Keep your eye on the squirrel!"

"It is the presence of such houses as this one that distinguish the city from the country town," said Mayor Brown, who probably knew absolutely nothing about the wage scale in the factory. And a factory that gives a check for \$2.42 is pointed out as a blessing to the city.

"Keep your eye on the squirrel!"

It is all right to talk about Lincoln's need of factories. It is all right to tell about the necessity of providing employment for people before we can hope to make Lincoln a large and prosperous city.

"But keep your eye on the squirrel!"

The "squirrel" in Lincoln's case is the wage question. Do we want here in Lincoln the sweat shop system? Do we want factories that pay starvation wages? Do we want factories that prey upon the necessities of those who are forced to toil? Do we want factories that not only crush down wages here in Lincoln but force competition to do the same in other cities—in this manner throwing the whole burden upon the shoulders of women

and girls who are compelled to toil ten hours a day over sewing machines?

"Keep your eye on the squirrel!"

The Wageworker is as much interested in making Lincoln a manufacturing center as any other newspaper or business institution can be. It strives to represent in the best manner possible the interests of those who work for wages. Its prosperity depends wholly upon the prosperity of the laboring classes. But sweat shops never have and never will make any city prosperous. Illy paid workmen and women can never make a city a good place in which to live. If Lincoln's future rests upon filling the city with factories that pay women \$2.42 for a week's work, then would it be better to turn the streets into cow pastures and leave our public institutions to the bats and rats.

"Keep your eye on the squirrel!"

The way to make Lincoln a big and prosperous city is to keep in mind the great fact that men and women must be paid a fair wage for their labor; must be paid a wage that will enable them to live properly, educate their children and build happy homes. Factories that are filled with women who receive an "average wage" of \$6.60 a week, and issue checks for \$2.42 to pay a woman for a week's work, will be fatal to Lincoln and undo in a short time what it has taken thirty-five years to build up.

The Wageworker invites the attention of thoughtful men and women to the facsimile check which appears herewith. That check is the "squirrel" in the present controversy.

"Keep your eye on the squirrel!"

WINNING THE FIGHT.

The printers are winning in their fight for the eight-hour day. The Typotheta in order to win its ends has resorted to the injunction, and in order to secure injunctions has resorted to what ought to be called perjury. The infamous injunction issued by Judge Holdam of Chicago was issued on the sworn statement of employing printers that the strikers had resorted to violence. They knew this to be a lie, and in their correspondence with "rat" printers admitted that there was no violence. The daily newspapers of Chicago are almost a unit in denouncing Judge Holdam's injunction, and a mass meeting to protest was held last Sunday. It was attended by ministers, business men, mechanics, lawyers, doctors and educators.

The National Association of Manufacturers is now trying to coerce the daily newspapers into helping in the fight against the printers. The covert threat is made that unless the newspapers proceed to give the printers the worst of it the big advertisers will resort to the boycott. This precious outfit of "free and independent" citizens are loud in their denunciations of the boycott when applied by workmen, but they do not fail to resort to it when their own business is threatened.

The Woman's Home Companion is published by the Crowell Co., Springfield, O. The Crowell Co. secured an injunction against its printers who were trying to secure the eight-hour day. The boycott is illegal, but we mention the Crowell Co. in this connection lest it be overlooked.

The Typotheta, while still claiming that it has all the non-union men it needs, is still advertising for more. Consistency and truth do not seem to be on the Typotheta's visiting list.

Of course the eight-hour assessment carried—by an overwhelming majority. Did anybody believe that it would not?

The Typotheta scheme to import a lot of machine operators from England was suddenly nipped in the bud. As soon as the British union men discovered the strike situation they gave the Typotheta agents the merry laugh.

The "linotype schools" in Chicago evidently did not pan out as well as the union busters expected. At any rate the schools have been discontinued.

Three men "ratted" in Omaha. One of them has received more in benefits from the union than he had ever paid in the shape of dues.

Only the most cheering news comes from the firing line. The unions are standing fast, and up to date not one has proved recreant. But Typotheta firms are constantly reneging on their pledge to the Typotheta's national body. It is only a question of weeks and victory will come to stay.

"FAITH WITHOUT WORKS."

The prominent business man who takes an active part in the deliberations of the Lincoln Commercial club had just finished an eloquent oration before the club on the subject of "The Greater Lincoln, or Patronize Home Industries."

Wiping the perspiration from his heated brow, and bowing to the enthusiastic applause of his fellow men, he stepped over to the cigar case and said:

"Cimme one of those 'Robert Burns' cigars."

The chances are that this enthusiastic proponent of home industries never smoked a Lincoln made cigar in his life. The chances are that every sack of flour that has gone into his kitchen bore a Minneapolis label. And the chances are that he patronizes the Chicago mail order houses whenever he wants anything in the line of furniture or carpets.

The Wageworker believes in patronizing home industry. It not only believes it, but practices it. And it desires at this time to call the attention of the "home industry" boom-

ers of the Commercial club to just one home industry—cigars.

There are some ten or twelve cigar factories in Lincoln, employing about fifty men. These men make about 12,000 cigars a day. Not more than one-third of them are smoked in Lincoln. It is safe to say that two-thirds of Lincoln's male population who are above 20 years of age are smokers. To be conservative let us estimate that there are 10,000 users of tobacco in Lincoln, and that the average is three cigars a day. We will leave it to any smoker if the average is too high. That would mean 30,000 cigars a day for Lincoln, or an increase of at least 25,000 cigars a day manufactured here if every smoker called for Lincoln made cigars. That would mean an addition of not less than 100 cigarmakers to the factories of the city—and cigarmakers average considerably more than \$6.60 a week. It would mean an additional \$1,400 or \$1,500 a week to the city wage roll, and just that much more to the volume of business in the city.

Isn't this worth thinking about? We submit the question to the members of the Commercial club.

While the Commercial club is prosecuting its "home industry" campaign let it practice what it preaches. It keeps cigars on sale in the club rooms. How many brands in that cigar case are made in Lincoln. What proportion of cigars consumed by the club's members are manufactured in Lincoln? How many Commercial club members make it a point to call for Lincoln made cigars when they want to smoke?

The Commercial club would go a long way and make great effort to secure a factory that would employ a hundred or a hundred and fifty men with a pay roll averaging \$1,400 or \$1,500 a week. Why overlook factories that are already here? Why not get behind them and push them along? Two dozen cigar factories employing an average of ten men each and paying an average wage of \$15 a week are of vastly more benefit to the city than a sweat shop overall factory employing 200 women and girls and paying an average wage of \$6.60 a week.

Get right, gentlemen of the Commercial club. Practice what you preach. Don't approach the workmen of Lincoln and puff the smoke of foreign made "scab" cigars in their faces while preaching to them the doctrine of "patronize home industries."

MERELY A SAMPLE.

More Than Przyer Necessary to Make Such a Factory Popular.

A year ago Miss Blank (The Wageworker has the name and all the facts) applied for and secured work at the Lincoln Overall and Shirt factory. She is an expert needlewoman and also an expert with a sewing machine. Her skill as a dressmaker is well known, and she has no difficulty in securing work. But she wanted a steady position where she would not have to visit from house to house. She imagined that she could make good wages at the factory.

Miss Blank worked diligently for twenty-six days, ten hours a day, and at the end of that time found that she had made the magnificent wage of \$13.41.

And then she quit.

KEEP YOUR EYES OPEN.

Do Not Lose Sight of the Main Point in the Immigration Problem.

Do not grow too excited over the threatened invasion of the Chinese. That old anti-Chinese cry has been worked as a scarecrow about long enough. While we have been throwing fits about the Chinese the great corporations have seized the opportunity when we were looking towards the Pacific coast to sneak in a million or two of the most degraded workmen possible to find. We haven't been watching the Atlantic coast quite sharply enough. The great corporations want some more Huns and Finns and Slavs and Lithuanians, but they are afraid we are watching them too closely. So they have again raised the Chinese scarecrow. As soon as we get hysterical enough they'll open the gates of Castle Garden and bring 'em in. Don't throw too many fits over the Chinaman.

AFTER HIS SCALP.

Lincoln Unions Have No Use for an Ingrate and Say So.

The unions of Lincoln are taking up the grievance of the Carpenters and Joiners against Engineer Crabtree, and are adopting resolutions denouncing him for his base ingratitude. Crabtree is the man who employed "scab" carpenters to build his house after union carpenters had come to his rescue and built a cottage for him while he was laid up with a broken leg.

The Wageworker has told the story in detail, and now the local unions are giving the matter their attention. Last Sunday the Typographical Union requested that Crabtree's services to the city be dispensed with, asserting that a man guilty of such base ingratitude was unworthy of confidence. The resolutions of the different unions will be presented to the city authorities.

Lincoln Overall & Shirt Co.

PAY ROLL ACCOUNT.

Lincoln, Neb. NOV 4 1905

Handed to
Sister of
Mrs J. J. Jones

\$2.42

Dollars

To FIRST NATIONAL BANK,
LINCOLN, NEB.

PAY ROLL ACCOUNT.
LINCOLN OVERALL & SHIRT CO.

By *Ralph H. Jones* TREASURER.

tinguish the city from the country town. Among them we might mention red light districts, open gambling halls, bucket shops, policy shops, pool rooms, beer gardens, Sunday theatres, sweat shops, grafting political rings, and general misery and despair. All these things mark the modern metropolis, but they are absent from the typical American village or country town. Mayor Brown also said:

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to make something out of nothing, I consider one of the dangers of our present commercial life. I believe with Mr. Miller that what Lincoln most needs is companies like this one, and factories like the one we are in now. Lincoln can not depend on the farmers who come here to send their children to school. We wouldn't care to do without them, it is true, but there are other things needed as well."

Governor Mickey means well, and it is his earnest intention to do and say the right thing. But he makes a mistake that is altogether too common when he says that "labor can not exist without capital, and capital can not exist without labor." Labor can exist without capital, and did so exist for hundreds of years. Give the people access to the soil and they can snap their fingers in the face of capital. And the coal barons who control the output of coal can close down their mines indefinitely and while jeering at labor can live in luxury and idleness. The man who endeavors to make something out of nothing is, of course to be reproached. But what about the sniveling hypocrites, the canting pharisees, who seek to make great gain out of the blood and tears and sweat of illy-requited toil? What shall it avail a man to stand before great assemblies and lift his prayerful voice in sonorous tones to Him who heedeth the sparrow's fall, and then turns around and preys upon the necessities of the poor by forcing them to work at starvation wage in order to make sure his own fat salary?

President John E. Miller of the Commercial club, who is deeply interested in Lincoln's future prosperity, and who has built up a splendid business on fair principles, said in substance:

"I believe that if the campaign just started by the Commercial club is supported as it should be, Lincoln will see a period of such improvement and prosperity as has never been experienced here before. It is of great importance to the city that such enterprises as this one should be pushed and given the support of the people of Lincoln. If we are to hold our relative position among the cities of the west, we must rouse ourselves immediately. Now is the crucial time."

Mr. Miller's employes do not average as many hours work a day as the employes of Lincoln Overall and Shirt Co. The work of his employes is not nearly so hard. And The Wageworker ventures to say that the average wage of the employes in the big store of Miller & Paine is more than double the average claimed by Manager Jones of the Lincoln Overall and Shirt Co. The Wageworker fur-