

THE WAGWORKER



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

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PUBLIC OWNERSHIP IS COMING

Municipal Ownership Will Eventually Come to Pass, and Now Is the Time to Secure Municipalization of the Street Railway—Lincoln Will Never Get Proper Service Until This Is Done—An Opportunity That Would Be Folly to Lose.

Sooner or later the street railway must pass under municipal control, and the sooner it is the quicker the people will secure relief from the present onerous conditions. Municipal ownership is no longer considered communistic, socialistic or anarchistic. On the contrary, the most thoughtful economists are becoming a unit in declaring that it is the rightful solution of a vexed problem. If ever a city has been driven to the point of desperation by the insolence and arrogance of a public service corporation that city is Lincoln. The Lincoln Traction company has ignored the public's rights, evaded its duty as a taxpayer, given inadequate service and insolently refused redress. Every request for better service has been met with a threat. Its service is abominable, its taxes are unpaid and the people who are entitled to some consideration have been ignored with contemptuous indifference.

Lincoln has stood that sort of thing too long already. Good lawyers express the opinion that the city now has an opportunity to secure control of the street railway and operate it for the benefit of all the people instead of for a few people at the expense of all the people. If this be true, it would be criminal folly to miss the opportunity.

The street car service of Lincoln is miserably inadequate. There are just about half cars enough, and two-thirds of those in the service are filthy, decrepit and archaic relics of a long dead age. They are full of microbes, and are as comfortable as a bed of shingle nails. The hours of service are simply atrocious. Two-thirds of the cars are in the barns before midnight, and the rest are there within fifteen minutes after. The convenience of the people is utterly ignored. The city ought to seize the opportunity offered to acquire the whole outfit and then run the street cars for the benefit of all the people.

Municipal ownership of the street railway should be the municipal battle cry right now, and it should be kept up until the city owns the street railway. Already the city owns the water plant. After the street railway is acquired and under successful management the other public utilities may be taken up.

But municipal ownership is bound to come. The sooner it comes the better it will be for all the people.

CIGARMAKERS THE OLDEST.

They Outrank the Printers by a Little More Than a Year.

Last week The Wageworker, in speaking of Lincoln Typographical Union, said that the printers' organization is the oldest in the city. H. Huette and A. P. Herminghaus, members of the Lincoln Cigarmakers' Union, take exceptions to this remark and claim that their union is the oldest. More than that, they offer the proof. Lincoln Cigarmakers' Union No. 143 was organized in 1880, three years before the printers organized. The cigarmakers, because of some dissatisfaction on the part of individual members, gave up their charter, but reorganized and on September 28, 1882, received the charter which they now hold. This gives the cigarmakers about four months the best of it.

Messrs. Huette and Herminghaus close their historical sketch by saying that they and all other union cigarmakers wish the union printers abundant success, but believe that the honor of precedence should be given to those to whom it belongs. In this they are eminently correct, and The Wageworker is glad to make the correction.

MISSED HER OPPORTUNITY.

The Woman Might Have Earned a Very Comfortable Living With Ease.

Last week the local daily papers told a sad story of a woman who was left destitute, with six or seven small children and an aged and decrepit parent on her hands. Considerable sympathy was aroused, and kindhearted citizens at once went to her rescue.

We were inclined to be sympathetic at first. Indeed, we did feel sorry for her, and had the local aid society not taken the matter in hand and attended to the unfortunate woman's wants we might have done something. But why should any woman in Lincoln—that is, any woman in ordinary health—be destitute? The "daylight factory," wherein overall and work shirts are made, is constantly advertising for help. It is a very sanitary factory, well lighted, superintended by a gentleman who is foremost in religious gatherings, and the factory itself was opened with prayer. It is a factory, too, where only "free and independent" workers are employed. No union is allowed to dictate as to hours, wages or working conditions. The kindhearted superintendent will attend to all of that. If he is in doubt about anything he does not stoop to consult with the employees—he prays over it. Usually the answer impels him to give the factory a little the best of it.

Why can't a woman who can play a needle or run a sewing machine can obtain work at a kindhearted Christian? Why can't she obtain adequate wages? Why will she give the

women an opportunity to earn all they get. And he does not ask his employees to do a day's work in eight hours. He is so liberal he allows them nine or ten hours in which to do it, and the pay is so liberal that one woman recently made \$2.42 by working only fifty-nine hours in one week. Surely in these days a woman ought to clothe herself and six or seven children, pay rent, grocery and coal bills and put money in the bank for a rainy day on such a munificent wage as that.

Lincoln ought to be proud of such an institution as this "daylight factory." There are other and similar factories here that ask local support, but the "daylight factory" is the only one that was opened with prayer, and the only one presided over by a gentleman who generously pauses between prayers to pay a woman \$2.42 for fifty-nine hours work.

A WORD WITH THE "KNOCKERS."

And It Is With Reference to Employing Union Musicians.

Before the Typographical Union's ball the Lincoln Herald contained a paragraph to the effect that the printers had employed a "scab" orchestra, and a few "knockers" took up the assertion and used it to the disadvantage of the ball. Three cowardly and mangy "knockers" who did not have the courage to give their names, sent the editor of The Wageworker marked copies of the Herald.

We give the editor of the Herald the benefit of the doubt, believing that he was imposed upon. There is no musical union in Lincoln. Every effort to organize such a union has failed. It is admitted that there is an orchestra leader who claims to be a member of the Omaha musical union, but the editor has never seen his card. If he is a union musician he certainly has failed to evidence the fact by seeing to it that the members of his orchestra joined the union, and he has further failed to evidence the proper union spirit by not being the prime mover in the organization of a local Musical Union. Two union printers belong to Reid's orchestra, and as they have been promptly paying the heavy assessment levied by the international, and as there was no union orchestra in the city, the printers thought it no more than right to give their fellow printers a chance to earn a little honest money. That is all there is to it. The editor of The Wageworker cordially invites the three anonymous "knockers" to call at the office and make their little knock in person.

FILLED THE WRONG HOLE.

Then the "Scab" Teamsters Had to Shovel It All Back Again.

A load of coal, three negroes and a Daniels & Co. wagon filled with coal. The load of coal was destined for the Donnelly Printing Company's coal receptacle. The negroes were strangers in a strange land. They did not know Donnelly's coal hole from Low's coal hole, the nextdoor neighbor. Donnelly's is a non-union plant; Low's is a union plant. The negroes didn't know. They took the cover from Low's coal hole and filled it with Donnelly's coal. They unloaded it all, only to find that they had filled the wrong coal hole. An effort was made to induce the Low company to retain and use the coal, and while the firm probably would have agreed to the proposition, the fireman and engineer dissented. They refused to use any coal brought in by strike breakers. Here was a dilemma. The coal reposed in Low's coal hole and no fireman or engineer to use it. Mr. Low demanded the space. After much unsatisfactory discussion between the interested parties the negro strike breakers were permitted to shovel the coal through an eight-inch hole back upon the wagon. Our informant says it took those three negroes the best part of two days to replace the coal on their wagon.—Chicago Labor Bulletin.

JUSTICE AS ADMINISTERED.

The Crime Consists in Being Poor and Friendless These Days.

Some real nice people have criticised The Wageworker for expressing contempt for certain judges and courts. They have accused this little paper of breeding disrespect for the courts and encouraging a spirit of anarchy. The first charge in the accusation is quite correct—and we are glad of it. The last count in the accusation is false. And if these nice people want a sample of the things that are making us feel a contempt for courts, here it is.

Last week a private soldier in the regular army, a man named Bailey, was accused of having stolen a bugle from Uncle Sam's storehouse at Omaha. Bailey was arrested, taken before Federal Judge Munger and fined \$1,000. Now we don't object to that particularly. But—

A couple of months ago a couple of rich cattle barons, Richards and Comstock, were brought before this same Judge Munger, charged with stealing a tract of government land thirty-five miles wide and seventy-five miles long—a tract larger than at least two states in the union. They entered a plea of guilty and were fined—

THREE HUNDRED DOLLARS EACH!

But the poor devil who stole a three-dollar bugle was fined a thousand dollars.

And yet some people wonder why the poor and the oppressed have lost respect for the courts and believe there is one kind of justice for them and another kind of justice for the rich.

LINCOLN'S BIG PARK PROJECTS

Foundation Already Laid for a Park System That Will Be a Splendid Advertisement for the City's Enterprise and Public Spirit—Generous Citizens Lend Their Aid to the Great Project—Mayor Brown's Part Therein.

That Lincoln does not now have a magnificent city park is no credit to the city or the men who founded it. That Lincoln is to have, in a comparatively short time, a magnificent park system, is a credit to the city. If Mayor Frank W. Brown had done nothing else during his administration, his part in initiating and carrying out a great park project would vindicate the judgment of the wage earners of the city who rallied to his support and elected him to the highest office within the gift of Lincoln's citizens. Every time this little newspaper reviews the park plans it rejoices that it had some little part in the election of the gentleman who, as mayor, has taken such an active and successful part in laying the foundations of the great park Lincoln is soon to have. And it believes that the wage earners of the city feel the same way about it.

It was Mayor Brown who took the first step, and with characteristic business enterprise secured the first land in the shape of the Sager tract. In this move he had the support of a majority of the council, and to this majority the wage earners, who are most interested, also owe a debt of gratitude. Then William J. Bryan stepped forward and said, "There is a nice 10-acre tract that would help out. You get the city title to it and I'll furnish the money." It took Mayor Brown about thirty seconds to close that deal when he got started.

Then D. E. Thompson looked about and saw another fine tract that would add to the park. "Get it for the city and I'll foot the bill," said Mr. Thompson to Mayor Brown. Another thirty seconds sufficed for that. Then other citizens donated lesser but equally desirable tracts, and now the city has the ground for a park that will in time excel anything in the city park line in the entire west.

The workmen of Lincoln are particularly interested in this great park project. They who have made Lincoln what it is today deserve to have a resort to which they and their families may go in search of the recreation they have earned. They should be, and are, the ones most vitally interested in making the park system something unusually fine. Lincoln has been woefully slow in this park matter, but now that an awakening has come the interest should not be allowed to flag. It will take several years to make the new park what it should be, but in the meantime the F street park is all right, and its popularity should increase every day after it is opened this spring. Let the park commission provide it with benches, swings, refreshment booth and band stand, and let it be made a huge pleasure resort for all the people.

GETTING READY FOR WORK.

Label League Preparing to Start a Membership Campaign at Once.

The Woman's Union Label League met last Monday evening, and in the absence of Mrs. Kent, the president, General Kelsey occupied the chair. Owing to the inclemency of the weather the attendance was small, but the interest made up for the lack of numbers.

The most interesting feature of the meeting was the preliminary steps for a "membership campaign." Two captains were chosen to select teams for a competitive campaign, and the first selections of aides made. The opposing sides will be given in the next issue if the two captains complete their work in time. Immediately after the teams have been selected they will hustle out and look for new League members. The contest will be carried on for several weeks, and then will come the final rally. The team securing the largest number of new members will be given a supper at the expense of the losing side.

After the meeting Secretary Schiermeyer invited the delegates present to attend a performance at the Lyric, and most of those present accepted the invitation.

PULPIT RAPS JUDGE HOLDOM.

Methodist Ministers Denounce Injunction as a Menace to Free Speech.

The Methodist ministers of Chicago have told where they stand as regards the infamous injunction issued against the Chicago printers by Judge Holdom, and they have told it with no uncertain sound. They met in regular weekly session on February 19, and the Chicago Record-Herald of the following day contained this report of the meeting:

Judge Jesse Holdom's attitude toward labor is un-American, contravening the right of free speech, according to the Methodist ministers of Chicago, who, at their weekly meeting yesterday adopted resolutions criticising the jurist for his attitude in issuing an injunction against Typographical Union No. 16 and its officers and members.

The resolutions were written by Rev. J. H. MacDonald of the Oakland Methodist church, and were referred to a committee of which Rev. John Thompson of Grace Methodist church was chairman. They expressed the hope that the injunction would be speedily dissolved, because it "restrained fair argument and persuasive speech," which action the ministers declared was a menace to individual liberty.

At the last previous meeting of the Methodist

ministers a week ago, E. R. Wright, president of Typographical Union No. 16, had declared the ministers were not fair to the striking printers, because they had not taken a decided stand. He said the printers had been peaceful and law-abiding from the beginning of the trouble with the Chicago Typothetae, and that the restriction of free speech by the courts was a question in which the ministers should go on record. He also said the dispute with the Western Methodist Book Concern should be investigated by the ministers.

Resolutions covering both subjects were submitted to the meeting and were referred to the committee on sociology, which considered them for a week. When Rev. Mr. Thompson reported yesterday's resolutions out of committee there was not a dissenting voice. They were adopted unanimously, without discussion.

The resolution dealing with the book concern is still in the hands of the committee, as the manager is out of the city and the committee has heard only one side of the dispute.

PRINTER MEN WILL ELECT.

Lincoln Typographical Union Will Select Officers Next Sunday.

Lincoln Typographical Union No. 209 will meet in regular session next Sunday afternoon, at which time it will select officers for the ensuing six months. Officers were elected three months ago, but as it was done in violation of the revised constitution the officers-elect were declared ineligible and a new election ordered. The campaign for president is overshadowing everything else, and friends of the opposing candidates are making a huge hustle. F. C. Greenley, the present presiding officer, Frank M. Coffey and H. W. Smith are the candidates.

There are no particular contests for the other offices of the union. The election for international officers will not take place until May, and then there will be some warm doings.

All members having tickets for the ball unaccounted for are requested to make settlement next Sunday afternoon. The editor will undertake to attend to this matter. It may be stated here that the ball was not a financial success, for reasons that need not be publicly mentioned. But despite the herculean efforts of a few the ball will entail no particular loss upon the union. Socially it was the most successful ball ever given. H. W. Smith and Gus Radebach are entitled to the blue ribbons for having sold the largest number of tickets. There were twenty-seven printers present, which is a fraction more than double the attendance of printers at the union's annual function.

The following notes from the "Day Side" of the Journal-News show were contributed by a gentleman and a scholar—and we wish there were more like him in the other chapels of the city:

Miss Ethel Thorngate, former proof reader on the News, departed for Omaha Tuesday evening, where she has accepted a position in the Western Newspaper Union proof room. When Miss Thorngate stopped to bid farewell to her former associates in the news room she was presented by the members of the chapel with a fountain pen and a box of stationery, and many were the wishes of success in her new field of labor.

Machinist Ira G. Stephens spent Sunday in Omaha. He states that conditions in that place are looking good, and that No. 190 is presenting as solid a front now as the day the trouble started.

Abraham Compton is now wrestling with a Merg. on the News. Abe expects to be able to turn 'er round by the Fourth of July.

A majority of the dayside force resides in northeast Lincoln—Printerville—and the mounds of industry in that section are many. Gardening and poultry raising will be carried on very extensively this summer, and each evening the husbandmen may be seen prancing impatiently around the back lot, longing for the balmy days of spring that they may get busy with the hoe. Such joyous anticipation!

The Journal's big contract for printing the supreme court report is making work quite lively on the book side.

"Bill" Norton is doing stunts in the News adroom these days.

It was a new "devil" in the News composing room who, while working among the turtles, asked the foreman where he wanted "this frog put."

That George Locker believes in starting at the bottom and growing up with the business is attested by a new hand made poultry "house" in his back yard in Printerville. The structure is built on the point system, and of nonpareil dimensions, and not many nonpareils at that.

CAPITAL AUXILIARY NOTES.

Some Items from the First Aid to the Typographical Union.

Mrs. A. L. Compton is visiting with relatives in York.

A gunnysack would look better on a union man's wife than a "rat" pattern.

No. 11 has about a half-dozen candidates for the "goat ride" this week.

Mrs. C. B. Righter and son Charles are visiting in Kearney this week.

How about that union made soap? It "Knox" the dirt and the "scab" soap factory.

The presence of every member at the meetings is an influence for good. Get the habit. You'll enjoy it after a while.

It was noticed that Mr. Fred Berge, business manager of the Independent, was the only employer at the union ball.

Mary Shepherd, of the Crete Vidette-Herald, and Miss Nellie Robertson of Crete, were guests of Lincoln friends last week and attended the anniversary ball.

SOME LABOR HALL EXPERIENCE

A Minister Gives an Interesting Little Account of Some Things Seen and Heard in Halls Where Union Men Gathered to Transact Business for Their Organizations—Rev. Charles Steizle's Observations Among the Men Who Toil with Hand and Brain.

"What's the use of talking about the moral aspects of the labor question?" indignantly demanded a socialist at a meeting which I recently addressed. "Don't you know that all sin is due to poverty?" he continued. "Is that so," I replied, "then I suppose you would say that all the capitalists are saints."

There were about a dozen of them—cigar-makers—waiting in the anteroom for a special order of business.

They were talking about various phases of the social question, when the sergeant-at-arms remarked, with emphasis: "You fellows ought to study the Bible if you want to learn some of the greatest truths ever given mankind. Take such sayings as Paul's as 'Charity begins at home,' and 'Know thyself.' Are 'nt they great?" The crowd took it in very solemnly as the learned brother gave them a little sermon on the mystery of the latter text. But if there had been a man in the bunch who had had even a Sunday school scholar's training in the scriptures, he might have made the speaker feel like thirty cents, for neither of his texts can be found anywhere in the Bible.

I was not responsible for the discussion, but after I had finished my address, the boys began telling me and the rest of the crowd why they had given up going to church. I was naturally very much interested in the reasons presented, although there really wasn't a new thing said. Finally, the business agent of the brewery workers remarked, with something of a blush: "Well, I suppose you have all told the truth about yourselves, but I want to say that I don't go to church any more because I just plain 'back-slid.'" And his candid expression discounted several of the fancy little speeches of his brothers.

He was long-whiskered, loud-mouthed, and he supported a bad breath. He happened to be present because it was an open meeting. When he found his feet, he gave us some pretty good advice—from his view point.

He did say some fine things about the beautiful spirit of Jesus Christ, and he very earnestly reminded us that he had accepted the teachings of Jesus as the guiding principles of his life. But in the very next sentence, he declared, with fury: "If I had my way, I'd send every capitalist to hell!" At the conclusion of this fiery speech a very modest workman arose and quietly remarked: "My brother, you had better go home and learn your lesson over again. You haven't quite caught the spirit of Jesus, if I know anything about it, and there were a lot of speakers."

A delegate was reporting for his local. "We initiated five candidates at our last meeting," he said, "and it required five different interpreters to obligate them."

I wondered what kind of a proposition it must be to get anything like harmony in that labor union, even under ordinary circumstances. I thought, too, of the report of the United States labor commissioner, in which he declared that the labor union is doing more to Americanize the foreigner than any other institution in the country.

DEATH OF H. P. STINE.

Secretary of the Cigarmakers' Union Called to His Long Home.

H. P. Stine, secretary of the local Cigarmakers' Union, and one of the oldest and best known unionists in the city, died at his home, 1427 D street, last Sunday, of dropsy. Mr. Stine's death was not wholly unexpected as he had been ailing for some time, yet his death was a shock to all of his friends, and he had a great many to them. For some time he had been secretary of his local union and performed good service. He leaves a wife and six children, to whom the sympathy of every unionist in Lincoln is tendered. The funeral services were held Wednesday and the interment was in the Jewish cemetery. Mr. Stine was a member of several secret fraternal organizations and these, together with his union, were well represented at the funeral. Organized labor has lost a good and influential member by the death of Mr. Stine.

ENTERTAINED FRIENDS.

Visiting Newspaper Men and Their Wives Given a Little "Joust."

Last Wednesday evening, immediately after the McCutcheon lecture, Mr. and Mrs. W. M. Maupin entertained a few friends at a "Dutch lunch." The guests were visiting members of the Nebraska Press association. Those in attendance were Mr. and Mrs. J. B. Donovan of Madison, Mr. and Mrs. Harry Tostevin of Omaha, Mr. and Mrs. Frank Reed of Shelton and Mr. and Mrs. Hall of Lincoln.

The whole history of newspaper making was told and retold, and some side issues discussed while sitting around a table. A couple of hours were pleasantly spent.