

THE WAGWORKER



VOL. 4

LINCOLN, NEBRASKA, AUGUST 9, 1907

NO. 19

How Fairbanks Loves The Laboring Man

Vice President Fairbanks, second in command in this great republic of ours, was in Lincoln last Saturday. While here he was warmly greeted and he was awfully glad to shake the hand of every man and woman who called on him. Mr. Fairbanks thinks he is a candidate for president to succeed Theodore Roosevelt. It is one of the blessed privileges of our American citizenship that every man who has not been incarcerated in the penitentiary, and is not subject to confinement in a hospital for the insane or the feeble-minded, may aspire to any old office upon which he may set his mind.

Mr. Fairbanks has not been incarcerated in a penitentiary, and he is a man of more than average brain power. Hence it is all right for him to aspire. Mr. Fairbanks is rich man. He is worth two, perhaps three millions of dollars, made in devious ways. He is, therefore, amply able to finance his post-election campaign for the nomination, and he is doing it to a finish.

Mr. Fairbanks is a tall, thin gentleman, with a bulging brow that extends from his eyebrows well upward, backwards and downward to the nape of his neck. A few hairs, jealously guarded and zealously cultivated sprout from over each ear, and are carefully trained up and across with intent to soften the baldness but in reality accentuating it. He has a firm handclasp, but owing to his extreme height he cannot look the average man square in the eye. He has to make it a slanting-downward look.

During the presidential campaign of 1904 there fell into hands of the Wagworker a little book called the "Official Biography of Charles Warren Fairbanks." It is a beautifully written book, and the author thereof could give the late lamented Baron Munchausen or the long mourned Bob Mulhatton cards and spades.

But there is one interesting chapter in the life of Charles Warren Fairbanks that his official biographer fails to chronicle, and it is the purpose of this humble little labor newspaper to give it to the workingman of the country, especially to the railroad men, that they may know better the gentleman who seeks to succeed Mr. Roosevelt in the White House. The Wagworker preferred to wait before giving this little chapter until after Mr. Fairbanks had visited in Lincoln and met the people face to face. It is an interesting story, and it may serve to give workingmen and women a clearer insight into the life of this presidential aspirant. Neither is it a long story, but it is a story of chicanery, double dealing, deceit, trickery and absolute robbery of hardworking men and women. By the side of it the graft of "Boss" Tweed looks like Sunday school work, and Abe Ruef's dirty work appears clean by comparison. Tweed and Ruef grafted from men who were willing to pay for political favors—Charles Warren Fairbanks made the poorly paid employes of a wrecked railroad hand him the money.

Thirty years ago the editor of The Wagworker, then a lusty boy, lived in the town of Farmer City, Illinois, and the majority of his playmates were the sons of men employed on the Indianapolis, Bloomington & Western Railroad. This enabled him to learn just what a hard time the fathers of those boys were having in order to eke out a living. The I. B. & W. Ry.—we used to call it the "I Beg & Wear Rags"—was thrown into the hands of a receiver along about 1874 or '75, and Charles Warren Fairbanks, but recently graduated from law school, was made attorney for the receivers by his uncle, or his father-in-law—we have forgotten which—who was the chief mogul of the road. The pay car failed to show up for four or five months, and then, when it did come it paid off in "certificates of indebtedness" instead of cash. These certificates were really orders on the road's treasurer for money due—when the treasurer had the money to pay it. For a few months the merchants along the road

accepted these certificates at face value, but as time went on and no cash hove in sight they began discounting them. Finally these certificates were being traded at 30 and 35 cents on the dollar. Section hands earning \$1.15 a day were paid in certificates of indebtedness good for 30 cents on the dollar at the grocery, but which the section men had to accept at par.

In sheer desperation some of the employes took the matter into court, and this lower court decided that the receivers would have to stop sending the cash to New York to pay interest on the road's bonds, and pay it to the wage earners. The receivers were so notified, but Charles Warren Fairbanks, presidential aspirant and "friend of the workingman," advised the receivers to pay no attention to the court order, as he would attend to that part of it. And he did. He appealed to the next highest court, and in the meantime the cash went to the bondholders and the certificates of indebtedness went to the employes—always at par to the earner but at 30 cents on the dollar at the grocery.

Fairbanks wept this up for nearly two years. Of course he knew that he would be defeated in the end, but he had money enough at his command to wear out the little merchants and little bankers who held the certificates. Mr. Fairbanks knew his business all right, all right, and don't you forget it.

Along towards the last was where he got in his work. Some very smooth spoken young gentlemen went out over the Indianapolis, Bloomington & Western system and began buying up the certificates. They bought them cheap, too. A lot of small merchants had gone broke trying to carry them, and they were glad to realize anything from the seemingly worthless paper. In good time practically every certificate was bought up.

Then came the finale. And that's where Charles Warren Fairbanks made a bunch of money to finance a presidential campaign.

THESE CERTIFICATES OF INDEBTEDNESS WERE TURNED TO THE RECEIVERS AND THE RECEIVERS CASHED THEM AT 100 CENTS ON THE DOLLAR.

The employes who had toiled through storm and stress did not get the 70 cents. Not much, Mary Ann. Charles Warren Fairbanks and the coterie of conscienceless financiers gobbled up the unearned increment. And they gobbled up millions of dollars by the trick, too.

As the railroad entered Farmer City on the east it came through a rather deep cut about a half-mile long. The winter of the receivership was a bad one, and one night a terrific snowstorm drifted that cut full and packed it down. It had to be shoveled out by hand. The local agent, whose name is now forgotten, wired the receivers for instructions. They ordered him to hire men for the work. The agent tried to do so, but nobody outside of the two section crews would work unless promised cash. The agent so reported and he was instructed to tell everybody that they would be paid cash for shoveling the snow. Under this promise a couple of hundred men responded, and the snow was removed in a couple of days. The agent asked that the money be sent by wire. It never came. Instead he was told to send in the time book. He did so, and in return RECEIVED CERTIFICATES OF INDEBTEDNESS WHICH THE BILKED WORKINGMEN HAD TO TAKE OR GET NOTHING, AND THESE CERTIFICATES WERE WITH DIFFICULTY TRADED AT 30 CENTS ON THE DOLLAR FOR GROCERIES AND COAL.

Bear in mind, that this "certificate of indebtedness" business was devised in the cunning brain of Charles Warren Fairbanks, and by him pushed through to a highly successful conclusion—highly successful for Mr. Fairbanks and his friends, but mighty tough on the workmen. This is one chapter in the life of

Mr. Fairbanks that his official Boswell did not even allude to in the biography. And Mr. Fairbanks did not refer to it while in Lincoln.

Now isn't this little chapter enough to make workmen—and especially railroad men—snuggle up to the Fairbanks' presidential boom like sick kittens to hot bricks? Hadn't the sons of those old I. B. & W. employes ought to get right out and help inflate the Fairbanks' boom until it lifts its owner into the presidential chair?

Charles Warren Fairbanks is a millionaire several times over. But there are blood and tears and heartaches associated with a big lot of those dollars—and the blood of little children whose barefeet were torn by the frozen clods; the tears of mothers who could not stay the sufferings of their little ones, the heartaches of fathers whose unrequited toil left their wives and little ones in want and misery.

Is Mr. Fairbanks ever worried with memories of those days? We opine not. Doesn't his official biographer tell us that Mr. Fairbanks dearly loves the workingman?

This is the Charles Warren Fairbanks who visited in Lincoln last Saturday and talked in oily tones at the Epworth Assembly in the evening—the same Charles Warren Fairbanks who lunched at the Country club and spouted about patriotism and all that sort of rot.

The Wagworker can just see the workmen of this country falling over themselves in their eagerness to make Charles Warren Fairbanks president of the United States!

PREPARE FOR LABOR DAY

The mass meeting held Monday night for the purpose of arranging for Labor Day handed the Lincoln Traction company a nice, large lemon when it decided to hold the Labor Day picnic at Antelope Park instead of at Capital Beach. There was no disposition to antagonize the management of Capital Beach, but on the contrary great friendship was expressed for that enterprise. But the union men would not stand for a celebration that would force all who participated in it to hand over 20 cents each to a unloading street railway company that has only given unionism a slap whenever it could, but has handed the city the worst end of every deal in which it figured. The Citizens' Street railway now having lines to almost every section of the city, it was decided to make Labor Day arrangements that would permit the unionists to patronize that company, and in this way show the appreciation of union men and women for the company's evident desire to be friendly.

It is a well known fact that the Citizens' Street Railway company is willing to sign up with a union of street railway men as soon as one is organized, and the officials are nonplussed at the negligence of the men who would be most benefited by the organization.

It was decided at the meeting to confine the Labor Day celebration to a regular old-fashioned picnic at the new city park. A committee consisting of Kelsey of the Leatherworkers, Chapman of the Barbers and Swanson of the Bricklayers, were appointed to arrange for some attractions during the picnic. There will be a number of athletic contests, such as tug-o-war, jumping, running, hurdling, potato and sack races, wrestling, etc., and also some good union music, vocal and instrumental.

Everybody will be expected to bring lunch baskets well filled, and be prepared to spend the afternoon and evening at the park. The park commission has very properly adopted a rule prohibiting the erection of refreshment stands inside the park limits, but every facility is offered for picnics. There is plenty of fine shade, plenty of soft, velvety bluegrass sod, and an abundance of cold drinking water handy to the center of the park. The best way to reach the park is to take the Citizens' cars anywhere in the city and transfer to the South Eighteenth street line. At the end of the line follow the footpath over across Twenty-seventh street, past the park pardeners' cottage, taking in the "zoo" on the way, and across the Rock Island tracks to the tract immediately in front of the municipal lighting plant. Those who want to play baseball will find a

WANTED THE CURE.
Willing to Take Same Medicine His Friend Took.

A well known artist was walking with a friend one day when his companion suddenly discovered he had a tooth in bad condition. As the pair were passing a drug store the man with the throbbing molar asked the other

"What would you advise for the toothache?"
"Why," innocently replied the artist, "the last time I had a toothache I went home and my wife kissed it away."

The friend paused a moment and then asked "Is your wife home now?"—Fort Wayne Times-Herald.

PROHIBITS PINKERTON THUGS.

Among the many labor laws passed by the legislature of 1907 and signed by Governor Hughes, was one—and a very important one at that—which forbids the appointment as deputy sheriff of any person not entitled to vote as a citizen in the county where appointed. This is designed to prevent the appointment of "strike breakers" as special officers.

BID FROM BOSTON.

Boston Typographical Union wants the 1908 convention of the International Typographical Union. Norman E. McPhail is Chairman of the Boosting Committee, and he says there are many reasons why Boston should have the honor of entertaining the delegates and visitors to the 1908 convention.

Section Men Make Terrible Arraignment

The Wagworker was honored on Saturday last by a visit from H. A. Vurpia, vice president of the National Union of Railway Trackmen, who was in Lincoln on some very important business connected with his union. Mr. Vurpia is a thorough unionist, and he has had a prominent part in the work of forming a union among a class of workmen who have heretofore been looked upon as poor material for the trades union organizer. The National Union of Railway Trackmen is less than four years old, but it already has a membership of nearly 40,000, and it is growing in numbers and strength every day.

As the name indicates, the union is made up of men who are generally known as "section men," the poorest paid employes of any and all railway corporations, and in reality the men upon whom depends the safety of the millions of passengers who ride upon railway trains.

The Trackmen's Union was founded four years ago at Fort Scott, Kansas, by J. I. Shepherd, secretary and counsel for the association. At the time it was launched Mr. Shepherd was a practicing attorney at Fort Scott. One day a committee of trackmen came to his office, and asked for some legal advice. They were not satisfied with the scale of wages and wanted an increase.

"Why don't you go to your association?" inquired Mr. Shepherd.

"But we have no association," answered the spokesman for the crowd. Then Mr. Shepherd began to study over the matter. He thought that the trackmen of the United States should form a union or have an association of some kind at least. He decided to start a paper, and offered it for \$2 a year to the trackmen. Upon payment of \$2, the subscriber became a member of the association.

As soon as the union was organized its officials began the work of calling the attention of the traveling public to the meagre wages paid the section men, the responsibility placed upon the underpaid toilers, and the nigardliness of the companies in providing men and material enough to keep the tracks in proper shape. Finding that a general campaign was not effective enough, the union's officials started to make a specific campaign, and began with the Missouri Pacific. After showing up the dangerous conditions of the Missouri Pacific lines in Kansas, and forcing the Kansas commission to take action looking towards a speedy repair of the lines, the officials turned their attention to Nebraska.

On July 22, last, Vice President Vurpia, accompanied by track experts and representatives of the union, started in at Falls City and began walking the tracks northward. They had their kodaks along, and they photographed the rotten and broken ties, the broken rails and fish plates, and other dangerous things. They assert, and offer to prove their assertions, that the Missouri Pacific officials became aware of their actions and ordered section men to get busy and throw dirt over ties broken in the center. Mr. Vurpia declares that the following is a copy of a "hurry up" order sent out to section foremen by the officials just as soon as the officials became aware of what the union representatives were doing:

"Please get out all broken end ties you possibly can in next two days if you have to truck ties; get out ties that have ends broken off and where they are broken in center of track throw some dirt over center of ties so they cannot be seen."

On Monday Mr. Vurpia and his associates filed with the Nebraska State Railway commission a complaint against the Missouri Pacific, and petitioning the commission to order the company to immediately begin the work of repairing its tracks in Nebraska. Accompanying the petition are thirty-two photographs showing the dangerous condition of the track, these photographs having been taken between Falls City and Lincoln. The exhibits are telling bits of evidence of official neglect and disregard for the safety of the traveling public.

The Trackmen's Union insists that the company employ but two or three men to the section, where as they should be from eight to twelve; that there should be track walkers day and night, properly equipped with

flags, lanterns and torpedoes, whereas there are none at all.

The trackmen's representatives are anxious to have the commission accompany them on a personal inspection of the lines and see for themselves the dangerous conditions pointed out. The commission has not yet had time to consider the complaint and commission.

PRESSMEN MEET SOCIALLY.

Entertain Their Printer Friends and Offer Some Clever Attractions.

Lincoln Printing Pressmen's and Assistants' Union held a social meeting last Sunday afternoon, and not only did they enjoy themselves hugely, but they invited in some trades union friends to enjoy it with them. There were plenty of union made cigars on tap, lots of good music and a social good time all round. Messrs. Herburger and Salsbury entertained with some excellent guitar and mandolin music, and they were kept pretty busy responding to requests for favorite melodies.

The Typographical Union met Sunday afternoon, and immediately on adjournment responded to an invitation from the pressmen and assistants to come over and have a good time. One of the cleverest attractions offered in a long time was a little scientific boxing match, in which "Billy" King went against Walters and Mayes for two rounds each. Both of King's opponents have been under his instructions for some time, and both of them reflected credit upon their instructor. Walters was the first man up, and for two rounds he kept King going some. He had a little the advantage in reach, but King had the advantage of weight and, of course, superior science. Mayes was introduced as a "lightweight," and he certainly is in the matter of avoirdupois. In the first round he sprained his wrist badly, but he was game to the core, and he made a mighty good showing against his teacher. He landed a few wallops that were of the "peach" variety, and if the gloves hadn't been something like pillows the wallops would have counted heavy. It was a clean and clever exhibition, and was thoroughly enjoyed.

President Brooks presided over the meeting, and Herman Werger officiated as master of ceremonies and referee. The pressmen and assistants declare that they were so well pleased with the results of their social meeting that they are going to make them a regular thing, and in this they are wise. Such gatherings make for better unionism.

The pressmen and assistants of Lincoln feel good over the outcome of the convention recently held in New York, and are confident that the new officials are going to make good all along the line. They are also rejoicing over the fact that they have been permitted to share in a large measure in the benefits secured by the fight the printers have put up for the eight-hour day. They heartily cheered President Bain of the Typographical Union when he referred to the days when he was a pressman himself and assured them that he with them heart and soul in their efforts to secure the eight-hour day and better working conditions.

OFF ON VACATION.

Thursday evening W. M. Maupin, editor of The Wagworker, accompanied by Mrs. Maupin and the baby, Richard Metcalfe Maupin, started for Hot Springs, Ark., where they will attend the annual convention of the International Typographical Union and the International Auxillary. They will be absent about ten days. During Mr. Maupin's absence, Colonel Harry W. Smith, foreman of the Western Newspaper Union and a member of the Typographical Union, will be in editorial charge. All persons having grievances against The Wagworker are cordially invited to vent them on Colonel Smith, as he will draw an enormous salary for being the "fall guy" during the editor's absence.

Union labor is renewing interest in a proposition to establish a labor temple in Boston.

The International Photo Engravers' union has signed a five year arbitration agreement with National Publishers' association.