

# THE WAGWORKER



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NO. 50

## An Open Letter to Rev. Mr. Batten

Lincoln, Nebr., March 13.—To Rev. Samuel Zane Batten: I have your letter of recent date, addressed to me as editor of *The Wagworker*, and printed in my humble little labor paper on March 7. You "note with surprise and regret" that I have taken an adverse position with reference to the "no-license" campaign in Lincoln. Permit me to reply to this by stating that I note with surprise and regret that you have taken what I honestly believe to be an adverse position with reference to the speediest and best solution of a very vexatious question—temperance.

You further state that "in another editorial I seek to belittle the whole movement for temperance reform by legislative action by carrying the principle to an absurd length." I assure you that if I have carried this or any other temperance reform principle to an "absurd length" I have but followed the example of others who go to an absurd length in their denunciation of those who may differ from them in matters of policy. When you say that I "seek to belittle this whole movement for temperance reform," by legislative enactment or otherwise, you merely follow the usual logic of those who believe all guilty of criminal folly who do not agree with them. I have yet to learn that infallibility is an attribute of either preachers or prohibitionists.

There are those who insist that when they have voted to close the licensed saloon their responsibility ends, but my observation of social and economic conditions leads me to believe that is merely the beginning of their responsibility, and that they are very apt to be premium shirkers.

Doubtless you know among your parishioners many parents who shirk upon the Sunday school the work of religious instruction which parents owe their children. There are likewise those who would shirk their personal responsibility for genuine temperance work by securing the enactment of a prohibitory law and then forgetting straightway that law enactment and law enforcement are vastly different things.

I must confess that ministerial logic is very often beyond my comprehension. You cite the fact that the law does seek to prohibit the sale of adulterated flour and sour bread, and then offer that fact as an argument for the prohibition of the sale of liquor. But that is beside the question. Because adulterated flour is made and because sour bread is baked, has not yet led any reformers to stand forth and demand the prohibition of flour manufacture or break baking. Of course I am in favor of pure food laws—and I am also in favor of sane temperance agitation. Being forty-five years of age, a newspaper man of a quarter of a century's experience, the recipient of a fair education and the possessor of average commonsense, I am of the opinion that I have as much right to assume that my position on the temperance question is right as you or your ultra-prohibition friends have to assume that your position is right. I would, if I could, wipe out the liquor business tomorrow—or today. But I cannot do it, and I know I cannot do it. Neither can you; neither can both of us. But I can help those who work by educational methods to minimize the traffic along constantly increasing lines. There is not a man in Lincoln who would not complain before the court if he saw a man commit a burglary. There is not one in a hundred who would enter complaint if he knew of an instance of violation of the liquor law. Perhaps your experience in prosecuting the Riggs case, or your observation of the result of the Wompler trial, will lead you to admit that I am well within the truth when I make that statement. And why this difference? Simply because men are educated up to the burglary question, and they are not educated up to the same point on the illicit vending of liquor. Your Sunday baseball prosecution is another case in point. Bless your soul, Brother Batten, you cannot enforce a law which legalizes the liquor traffic. Now tell me, pray, how you will enforce a law that prohibits it entirely. I, and

my parents before me, was born in Missouri.

Further along in your interesting letter to me you say:

"Again, you say that every preacher who is beseeching the aid of man-made law is confessing that the Gospel of Jesus Christ has failed. Now that is one of the most surprising statements I have seen in print for a long time, and I can hardly believe that it reflects your maturest judgment. You seem to suppose that the Gospel of Christ is a kind of weak milk and water doctrine, a goody-goody sentiment, a vague and indefinite influence that remains up in the air and never gets down to real life."

Pardon me, Brother Batten, but you have your cowcatcher on behind. Instead of supposing that the gospel of Christ is "a kind of weak milk and water doctrine, a goody-goody sentiment, a vague and indefinite influence that remains up in the air," I believe it is a living, breathing, vital force in the regeneration and salvation of men. Because I so believe I do not deem it necessary to supplement it with a legislative enactment and a constable's club. Because I believe it sufficient for the regeneration and salvation of men I believe implicitly in the truth of Christ's utterance, "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me"—John 12:32. He nowhere says that if He is lifted up, and properly reinforced by statutory prohibition, sheriff's writs, hired spies, and constable's clubs, He will draw all men unto Him. "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth."—Romans 1:16. Because I am not ashamed of it, I am not ready to confess that it lacks power and must be supplemented with legislative writs and made dependent upon fallible officials.

If either of us is supposing that the gospel of Christ is a kind of weak milk and water doctrine, I submit that it is the face of the facts it is not I, but rather you, who confess by your public utterances that it needs bolstering up by legislatures, city councils and hired informers.

Further along in your interesting letter you say:

"Jesus of Nazareth, as you very well know, was no harmless dreamer and visionary recluse; the fact is He was a terror to evil-doers and was killed on that very account."

I know that quite as well as you, Brother Batten. Slavery was common in His day—show me if you can one word He uttered in denunciation of slavery. Yet His whole doctrine and His whole life was a living, vital protest against slavery. Before He came the law of force—the law of "Thou shalt not"—was in force. This law He superseded with the law of love. Not because He roundly denounced and bitterly condemned; not because He prohibited and prosecuted—not because of these things was He crucified. He was crucified because His precept and His example impelled the evil-doers of His day to slit themselves of His presence so it might no longer reproach them. A "weak milk and water doctrine? Without a court in the land to aid Him, with man-made law against Him, He wrought out the plan of redemption and salvation, and shall we now confess that it has lost its power? Not I, Brother Batten.

I have no desire to lengthen this controversy, although I assure you the columns of *The Wagworker* are open to you, subject to reasonable limitations as to space. I merely want to add that not all those who may oppose prohibition are "hirelings of the liquor interests," nor are all prohibitionists Christian or temperate. Not all opponents of prohibition are actuated by a desire to perpetuate the saloon, nor is the judgment of all prohibitionists as to remedy infallible. With renewed assurances of my distinguished consideration I am, yours very truly,

WILL M. MAUPIN,  
Editor *The Wagworker*.

chine shops on an eight-hour basis. For some time a part of the shops of this system have been working on short time, but now all are included. Thirty-five strike breakers working on the Erie Railroad at Huntington, Ind., have gone on strike. They were brought into the city to take the place of the machinists who had gone on strike against the piece system, and now in self-defense against this curse of the machinists, they have had to strike.

### TRAINMEN WILL DANCE.

Will Usher in St. Patrick's Day to the Sound of Music.

Capital Lodge No. 170, Brotherhood of Railway Trainmen, has completed all arrangements for what it believes will be a record-breaker in the line of Brotherhood balls. The ball will be held in Fraternity hall on Monday evening, March 16—with "St. Patrick's day in the morning."

If the dance programs are as fetching as the placards announcing the event they will be worth keeping as a souvenir. The placards are unique in their way and reflect credit upon the genius of the man or men who conceived.

The Brotherhood of Railway Trainmen always makes a success of its annual ball, and this one will be no exception. A cordial invitation is extended to all friends to attend and enjoy a pleasant evening.

### THE CARPENTERS.

Educational Sessions Proving Entertaining and Lively.

The Carpenters of Lincoln made a good move when they decided to arrange for a course of talks along educational and industrial lines. Last Tuesday evening the editor of *The Wagworker* appeared before the local by invitation and read a paper on "Man's Inhumanity to Man," which appears in this issue. After the reading was finished there was a warm but good natured discussion of the paper. Dr. P. L. Hall is slated to appear before the local union, and *The Wagworker* guarantees the membership that they will hear something worth while.

The Carpenters are arranging for a

social session to be held some time in April, and there are dark hints that it will be "something different."

The following is from the Oklahoma City Labor News: "Local Carpenters No. 276, at their regular meeting last Tuesday night, voted down the proposition to affiliate with the State Federation of Labor. The membership of 276 may think they have done the right thing not to affiliate with the State Federation of Labor, but we doubt their wisdom in this instance. It is the duty of every local union to affiliate with the State Federation, and we know of no union that needs affiliation more than the carpenters. Come, brothers, reconsider your action and vote to affiliate."

Col. Charles Woodward came down from Omaha and attended the meeting Tuesday night.

### ESPECIALLY FOR WOMEN.

Paper Patterns That Are the Product of Union Labor.

The last issue of the Typographical Journal contains the following, which will be of interest to the wives of all union men:

"In response to inquiries, The Journal desires to announce that the patterns printed by the McCall company of New York are the product of union labor, though they do not bear the label. This company has issued a circular denying the charge that it is a part of the pattern trust. An effort is being made to have the label placed on the McCall patterns."

SCHOOL FOR STRIKEBREAKERS.

West Virginia unionists are after the Moler barber school, truthfully declaring it's only a strikebreaking incubator. Efforts will be made to keep the institution out of the state. The Barbers' Union has spent \$50,000 fighting this institution.

### A WOMAN ORGANIZER.

The executive council of the American Federation of Labor has appointed Miss Annie Fitzgerald of Chicago a general organizer. She will devote her efforts to trades in which women are employed.

The socialist party of Indiana will hold its State convention at Indianapolis, March 15.

## Man's Inhumanity to His Fellow Men

(Paper read before the Christian Citizenship League of the East Side Christian church of Lincoln, March 3, 1908, by Will M. Maupin.)

"The sun that overhangs yon moors  
Out-spreading far and wide,  
Where hundreds labor to support  
A haughty lordling's pride;  
I've seen you weary winter sun  
Twice forty times return:  
And every time has added proof  
That man was made to mourn.

"See yonder poor, o'erlabored wight,  
So abject, mean and vile,  
Who begs a brother of the earth  
To give him leave to toil.  
And see his lordly fellow-worm  
The poor petition spurn,  
Unmindful though a weeping wife  
And helpless offspring mourn.

"If I'm designed yon lordlings' slave,  
By nature's law designed,  
Why was an independent wish  
E'er planted in my mind?  
If not, why am I subject to  
His cruelty or scorn?  
Or why has man the will and power  
To make his fellows mourn."

—Robert Burns.

The great mining magnate, seated in his palatial office, was telling the visitor about the operation of the industry.

"Every spring we take them out of the mines," he said, "send them into the country for a couple of months, have them examined by an expert and every little wound and bad symptom attended to. When we bring them back to work they are in prime condition."

"I am glad to hear that," said the visitor. "I have so often heard that the men employed in the mines were cruelly treated."

"O thunder!" exclaimed the magnate. "I was talking about the mines, not the miners!"

Under the impetus of greed for gold, our modern industrial system has developed with such rapid strides

that human life is no longer a factor in the equation. Abraham Lincoln said he could make a brigadier general with a stroke of the pen, but it took \$150 in gold to buy a mule. The cheapest thing on the American market today is human life. We contribute our money to send missionaries to India and to China where infants are sacrificed to Moloch and to the Ganges crocodiles, seemingly unmindful of the fact that in free America 1,750,000 children under 14 years of age are daily offered as sacrifices to greed, and 300,000 of them claimed annually. We read with a shudder of horror that an American missionary and his wife have been cruelly murdered in some far-off heathen land, and immediately send others to shed light into the darkened minds of the slayers. But we read with calm equanimity that on the day this missionary and his wife were murdered in benighted India or China, 36 citizens were murdered and 509 others seriously injured in free America by enlightened, Christian, church-going, missionary-supporting men who would rather put human life into danger than to spend a small percentage of their profits in safety appliances. Puritan Massachusetts furnishes the capital to operate southern cotton mills because, forsooth the laws of unionized Massachusetts forbid the employment of children, while the southern mills can and do employ thousands of children between the ages of five and twelve. Humane men in Nebraska ask the enactment of a child labor law, looking to prevention rather than cure, and from a Nebraska city with one church to every 300 of population comes a protest that the enactment of such a law will compel the abandonment of its canning factory.

The church thunders against the iniquities of the modern saloon, notwithstanding the fact that 300,000 American workingmen daily find the saloon the only place where they can have companionship, bright lights, good cheer, warmth and a few hours of forgetfulness. And the church is silent about the iniquities of the sweat shop wherein daily 300,000 women and children work an average of fourteen hours a day for an average of less than \$1.20 a week, surrounded by filth unspeakable, crimes unmentionable; never seeing a tree or a blade of grass; never hearing the name of God save as a curse; never having hunger thoroughly appeased, and never knowing what sufficient clothing means.

A little band of workingmen, driven mad by abuse, commits some overt act, and immediately the newspapers are filled with denunciation of the "anarchistic labor unions." Multi-millionaires, a majority of whom occupy prominent pews in the churches, plunge two nations into war in order to further fill their fat coffers, and immediately the newspapers appeal to our patriotism and we rush to arms "for country and for God."

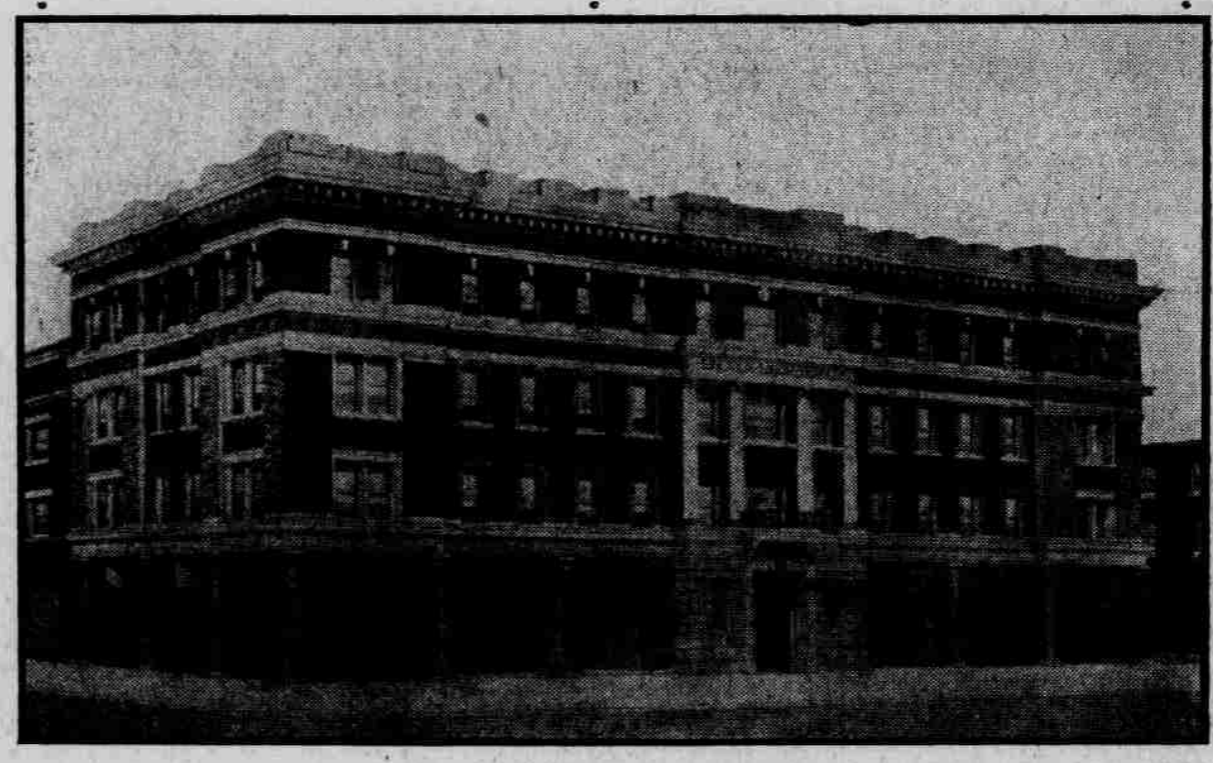
Chinese Boxers, maddened by prejudices, murder a handful of missionaries, and immediately the armies of six great nations are sent into the country of the Yellow Dragon and a horrible penalty exacted, while indemnity amounting to \$200,000,000 is levied.

American Captains of Industry, maddened by greed, massacre 36,000 American workingmen a year, maiming 170,000 others, and we read the figures with equanimity and postpone the enforcement of safety appliance laws already enacted and postpone the enactment of other laws looking to the same end—and why? Because human life is cheaper than safety appliances. The gold dollar, held close to the American eye, shuts out the sight of suffering widows and children, and a liberal check in the contribution box turns our thoughts Africa-ward instead of inward.

Let me give you a leaf from my own experience as a union man. Time and again I have seen union men appealing to a legislature for laws that would compel protection for them—safety appliance laws, sanitary laws, liability laws. I never in my life saw a committee from a church advocating these humane and beneficial.

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## THE LABOR TEMPLE



It is with a great deal of pride that *The Wagworker* this week presents to its loyal army of union readers a picture of the proposed Labor Temple. It is a picture of what will surely be if union men do their duty—and they will.

The exact location of the structure has not yet been decided, but the directors have three or four fine sites in view. The matter of site will be arranged to the satisfaction of the majority just as soon as the money for the site is forthcoming. And that is coming at a gratifying rate.

The board of directors met last Monday evening and districted the city for the purpose of the financial campaign. All the necessary information for prospective subscribers is embraced in a neat folder, and these are being distributed among business men and others whom it is sought to interest. Blank pledge cards have also been provided, and quietly and

without any flourish of trumpets the campaign is now under way. A little later the campaign will take on the nature of a circus parade, and then there will be plenty of noise and enthusiasm.

The board is in receipt of several handsome offers of "benefits" for the Temple fund, and these will be acted upon in due time. One of these contemplates a grand "Labor Temple Ball" and it is considered by the board to be about the most promising proposition in sight.

A number of professional men who are interested in church work have also interested themselves in the Temple project, realizing that such an institution would be a splendid factor in the moral uplift of the city. Said one of these men recently:

"My wife and I have considered your Temple proposition carefully, and we have decided that it merits our support. I can conceive of no move-

ment better calculated to advance the best interests of the workers, and therefore the best interests of the municipality. When you get ready to receive subscriptions, call on me, and I will do all that I can to help push this magnificent enterprise to success."

This is only a sample. A business man who employs a number of skilled craftsmen, said:

"Count me in on that Temple proposition. It looks good to me. It will pay cash dividends as well as moral and economic dividends. Every employer of labor in Lincoln ought to get behind this project and help the wage earners to make it a glorious success."

The board of directors will meet again Monday evening, and at that time will listen to reports of the week's work and arrange for a more enthusiastic hustle during the weeks to come.

### THE MACHINISTS.

The Baltimore - & smohop—SRitot  
The Baltimore & Ohio Railroad has issued an order which places all ma-