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Among the Live Ones Here and Hereabouts

Among other demands of the street railway men of Lincoln is that of the abolition of the "swing run" system. That this demand is founded upon justice will be admitted by every man who has investigated. The "swing run" has already been abolished in the cities fortunate enough to possess up-to-date and progressive street railway systems. For the enlightenment of those who do not know what the "swing run" is we will give an illustration:

John Smith, a motorman living at Fourteenth and Poplar, must start at 4 o'clock in the morning in order to get to the car barn at Ninth and K by 5 o'clock and report twenty or thirty minutes before taking out his car. He works from 5:30 a. m. until 9 a. m., and then takes his car to the barn and turns it in. Then he is off duty until 3 o'clock in the afternoon, when he must report at the barn and be ready to take his car out at 3:30. From 3:30 until midnight he is on the car platform. He is only paid for the actual time on the car platform, and thus he is compelled to put in what is practically twenty hours to get twelve hours' pay at an average of less than 20 cents an hour. He is not paid for the time between 9:30 a. m. and 3:30 p. m., although he is practically on duty all of that time. He is deprived of a chance to ride to his work in the morning or to his home at midnight. His rest is broken in a way that is injurious to his health. Now that school has begun there are motormen and conductors who will not see their children awake for months. The kiddies are in bed and asleep when papa starts to work in the morning. They are in school when papa comes home in the middle of the day. And they are in bed and asleep when papa comes home after midnight. The "swing run" system is inhumane, and it should be abolished.

A committee representing the street railway men of Omaha came to Lincoln Monday evening to ask the governor to act under the statutes and investigate, through the labor commissioner's office, the controversy between the Omaha & Council Bluffs Street Railway Co. and the striking employees. The sections of the statute relating to matters of this kind are as follows:

"Sec. 6928. Duties of Commissioner.
—The duties of said commissioner shall be to collect, collate and publish statistics and facts relative to manufacturing, industrial classes, and material resources of the state, and especially to examine into the relations between labor and capital, the means of escape from fire and protection of life and health in factories and workshops, mines, and other places of industries, the employment of illegal child labor, the exaction of unlawful hours of labor from any employee, the educational, sanitary, moral, and financial condition of laborers and artisans, the cost of food, fuel, clothing and building material, the causes of strikes and lockouts, as well as kindred subjects and matters pertaining to the welfare of industrial interests and classes."

"Sec. 6933. Seal of Office—Hearing by Commissioner.
—There shall be provided a seal of office for the use of said bureau, and the commissioner or his deputy, for the purpose of making any investigation contemplated by this act, shall have power to administer oaths, take testimony, and subpoena witnesses, which witnesses shall re-

ceive the same fees as are allowed to any person testifying in district courts of this state, to be paid out of the contingent fund of this bureau. Provided, however, That no person subpoenaed by the said commissioner or his deputy shall be compelled to go outside of the city or town in which he resides to testify in behalf of such investigation."

Governor Shallenberger was not in the city, consequently the committee did not see him. A conference was held with W. J. Furse, secretary to the governor, and the whole situation was gone over. In the meanwhile Deputy Labor Commissioner Maupin has spent considerable time in Omaha familiarizing himself with the situation so as to be ready in case Governor Shallenberger, as labor commissioner, deems it proper to begin the investigation contemplated by the statutes.

If the workmen of Lincoln are interested in knowing something about the financial workings of the Lincoln Traction Co. they would do well to attend the meetings of the Central Labor Union. There may be some interesting information on these points brought out at the meeting next Tuesday evening, and if not at that time, then at the first meeting in October. There is enough of facts in this connection to startle the easy-going people of this municipality.

"The law condemns the wretch inhuman
Who steals a goose from off the common;
But turns the greater rascal loose
Who steals the common from the goose."

Division No. 522, Amalgamated Association of Street and Electric Railway Employees, will meet at Bruse's hall at midnight tonight. A full attendance is requested. C. O. Pratt, chairman of the international board, and Ben Commons, a member of the same board, will be present to give the men a little talk along the lines of organization. The meeting will be full of interest and information, and no member of the division should miss it.

There are rumors of a neat little "scrap" being on among the officials of the Lincoln Traction Co. It is rumored that Mr. Sharp is trying to round up enough of the stock to elect himself president of the company. Further rumor says that Mr. McDonald is tired of the presidency but unwilling to be succeeded by Mr. Sharp—so unwilling that failing to find another man who could beat Mr. Sharp to it he will contest for the place. It is further said that Mark Woods entertains presidential ambitions and is seeking to secure enough control to beat Mr. Sharp. All of this internal trouble is, of course, being kept as quiet as possible for the reason that the company is not quite willing to have its affairs aired before the public at this time.

The Central Labor Union will meet at Bruse's hall next Tuesday evening. Do not forget the date nor the place. It will pay you to be there.

The street railway men's union held a special meeting at Bruse's hall last Saturday night for the purpose of admitting eight new members who were

so anxious they did not want to wait until a regular meeting. At the same session the local decided unanimously to affiliate with the State Federation of Labor.

Among other prominent members of the union busting organization known as the Omaha Business Men's Association is a banker named Charles McGrew. Is this the same McGrew who was a national bank examiner along about 1891 or '92, and who was so watchful and efficient that he let Charley Mosher loot the Capital National bank of half a million right under his nose? We pause for a reply.

The printers of Hastings have a good live union now. That makes five Typographical Unions in Nebraska. Organized Fisher was in Columbus this week, and the prospects are good for the organization of a union at that point.

A lot of complaint has been made about boisterous conduct on the part of young men and boys on the streets evenings during fair week. They slapped women on the backs with "slap sticks" and tickled them under the chins with feathers, and a lot of awful things like that. But that has been going on for several years, and the women know it. Isn't it rather inviting that sort of thing for women to walk the streets without escorts during the evenings of fair week? And if you were escorting a young lady and some boisterous young blood snatched her on the back or tickled her under the chin, and you didn't haul off and buff him one, what have you to complain of, anyhow?

Who was the first to reach the pole, Cook or Peary? We'll take the time to discuss that question just as soon as we learn definitely whether Don M. Love really received more legal votes for mayor than Robert Malone.

INGALLS' EXPERIENCE.

Man of Huge Affairs Admits Good Results of Union Recognition.

Said Melville E. Ingalls, chairman of the board of directors of the Big Four railroad: "For thirty-five years of my life I have been what you might call a large employer of labor as a railroad manager. I have seen these modern conditions grow up under my eye. My first experience was in controlling a railroad of 175 miles and 300 or 400 employees. I knew every man on the road; I could call him by name and shake hands with him, and we

could make all the trade agreements we needed between hours. There was no trouble. If anybody had a grievance he could call and see the "old man," and the door was always open. When I left the active management of the road we found some 7,000 miles of railroad and some 30,000 employees, and the men who worked on the railroad would have stood just as much chance to see any one with his grievance as he would have stood to get into the kingdom of heaven. His only chance was to join an organized body and deal through committees. We were always in favor of that—in fact, it seems to me that your trade agreement is just as much a protection to capital as to labor.

VOID, OF COURSE.

Illinois Ten-Hour Law Declared Unconstitutional as Expected.

Judge Tuthill in the Circuit Court at Chicago last Saturday issued a writ restraining the state attorney and the state factory inspector from bringing any suits against W. C. Ritchie & Co., paper box manufacturers, for alleged violations of the so-called ten-hour law, which prohibits women from working in factories, laundries and other similar places more than ten hours in one day.

The decision of Judge Tuthill, it is understood, will be fought in the upper courts for a final settlement of the question. The suit, it is said, affects all other concerns similarly situated.

William Duff Hayne, general counsel for the Illinois Manufacturers' Association, argued the case in behalf of the complainant, declaring that if the provisions of the law are enforced the constitutional right to enter into contracts will be denied to them.

Next week The Wageworker will try to have something to say about this stupid decision. It will also reprint an article from the Chicago Public which will go to the meat of this "freedom of contract" delusion. Louis F. Post has the knack, as no other man in America has it, of showing the absurdity of such fossilized contentions.

IN LITTLE OLD "CHI."

Charles B. Righter went to Chicago last week to transact a bunch of business first, and then to spend a few days mingling with old pals of other days. "Doc" worked in Chicago for a long time and managed to circumnavigate the "Loop" without getting lost and didn't pay anything to see the Masonic Temple turn around.

A FAIR QUESTION THAT DESERVES IMMEDIATE ANSWER.

Commenting on the situation at McKees, Rocks, Pa., and the low rate of wages paid by the Pressed Steel Car Company, the Secretary of the American Federation of Labor has written a letter to Secretary Nagel, of the Department of Commerce and Labor, in which he asks a question that is both pertinent and of general public interest. He declares that during the recent tariff hearings representatives of iron and steel companies set up the plea that if the existing rates were continued the benefit would accrue to the employees and that if the duties were removed or reduced the employees would suffer, and he wants to know if workingmen who depend upon those companies for support are profiting from the policy which Congress has pursued. That is a matter regarding which the employees of all the protected interests would doubtless welcome information.

It is well understood, of course, that the friends of high protection have proceeded on the theory that labor shared equally with capital the profits which high protection made possible. Now, whether at the extraordinary session of Congress the tariff was revised upward or downward the fact remains that under the conditions which were established by a Republican majority in both branches—with the kind assistance of "free trade" Democrats—prices of most commodities have already been materially advanced. Moreover, large orders for their products have been placed, not only with the steel and iron companies, but also with other large corporations. Yet in some instances the cost of production has recently been lowered by reducing the cost of labor, while in others, notably in the cotton industry, which is prosperous, operatives are complaining that they are underpaid, and in one important center, at least, they are demanding an increase of 10 per cent, an advance which manufacturers contend is unreasonable. But if a high tariff does not admit high wages and there is no additional increase with which to maintain a higher standard of living, it is clear that there is a screw loose somewhere in the logic of the high protectionists.

There is still another phase of this subject that rarely receives the consideration which it deserves. What about a vast army which sells its services for salaries in distinction from wages? It can not be ignored, surely. For the most part it is unorganized and in no position to enforce its claims to recognition under the fruitful dispensation of our paternal lawmakers. When the home market is cheerfully turned over to the vendors of domestic wares and the spoils are distributed it would be edifying, indeed, to learn where the army comes in. It has seen the standard of living and the cost of living steadily ascending, but it is safe to say that it has witnessed no corresponding increase in its remuneration.—Providence (R. I.) Tribune.

Little Gossip About Things In Lincoln

The members of Division No. 28, Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers, are to be commended for having so liberally donated to the Y. M. C. A. building fund. And we hope that other unions will see fit to do the same thing. Not all of them are financially able to make an equally liberal donation, but all can donate something. But it should not be forgotten that the engineers are not the only mechanics who have contributed to an organization to a Y. M. C. A. building fund in Lincoln. When the campaign was on for raising money for the erection of the present Y. M. C. A. building the Union Carpenters of Lincoln made a liberal donation. The engineers have merely followed a good example set for them—an example that other unions would do well to follow.

Another meeting of well-intentioned people was held at the city hall last Monday afternoon. Among other things considered was that of "doing something for the workingman." As usual the old "now that the saloons have been closed" argument was advanced to support the claim that "something should be done for the workingman" in the way of providing him with a place to spend his leisure hours. It seems impossible for a lot of these well meaning people to realize that they are insulting the intelligence of honest, sober, industrious mechanics by forever prating about "doing something for the workingman." The workingman is not asking anybody to do anything for him; he would be well content if it were made possible for him to do something for himself. He is not asking anybody to provide him with amusement. If given the opportunity to work for a living wage he will readily undertake to amuse himself, and his amusements will average up pretty well in point of morality with the amusements of the well meaning people who are so anxious to "do something for the workingman."

With all due respect to the good men and women who are trying so hard to "do something for the workingman," we have no hesitancy in saying that this coffee house suggestion will not do. There's nothing to it. It will attract the average workingman just about as much as a "tea house" would attract the bridge whist-golfing women of Lincoln. The average workingman of Lincoln wants to do things for himself. He is not at all averse to being helped, but he rather resents the imputation that he does not know what is good for him and should, therefore, be willing to let other people tell him what he should do.

The Star is rather inclined to object to Councilman Pratt engaging in the business of bonding his fellow city officials. The salary of a city councilman is \$25 a month. Surely the Star does not insist that the genial and urbane Thomas shall subsist on a paltry \$25 a month!

The writer happened to be in Omaha the day President Taft was there. If the president's popularity in Nebraska is to be measured by the warmth of the reception in Omaha, then it is sadly in need of a stimulant. There were less than 500 people at the union depot to cheer him—and even they did not cheer to any great extent. Several thousand school children were lined up in front of the

schoolhouses to see the president go whizzing by in a \$5,000 automobile, and they cheered, of course. But it wasn't anywhere near like the cheering that would have been brought out from the same throats if Buffalo Bill had gone prancing by. The president's visit to Omaha was a chilling frost.

The way to remove the poles from O street is to treat with as much consideration the Traction Co. and the telephone companies as those companies have shown the city. This thing of forever considering the well being of corporations that don't give a rap about the welfare of the city is becoming a little bit stale. Give the public service corporations notice to remove their wooden and unsightly poles from O street within a reasonable but specified time, and then go to sharpening up the axes so as to have them all ready by the time the limit expires.

Perhaps Health Officer Rohde might be able to help out some in the matter of street railway service. Of course he could not compel the company to run more cars, nor could he compel it to extend its lines. But it is barely possible that he might compel the company to run cars fit for human use, and that would help a lot. Some of the cars now in service would be condemned by the Humane Society if used for the transportation of live stock. Perhaps Councilman Leonhardt would consent to investigate and see if some of those filthy, germ-breeding and bacilli-distributing cars should not be condemned on the ground that they are a menace to public health.

Every now and then a Lincoln paper throws a few fits of regret because some university professor drawing \$2,500 a year goes to some other state because of a better salary, and bemoans that the state is to niggardly to pay higher salaries. Every day workingmen are compelled to leave Lincoln because they can not pay the exorbitant rents demanded out of their meagre wages, but we haven't noticed that paper throwing any regretful fits over the fact.

Measured by the wage standard in Lincoln the cost of living is entirely too high. Or, the other way about—measured by the cost of living in Lincoln the standard of wages is entirely too low. This is not mere guesswork. The facts are at hand to substantiate the assertion. Next week The Wageworker will publish the results of a thorough and impartial investigation.

The rumor that the Omaha, Lincoln & Beatrice Interurban is about to proceed with construction work sounds good, and here's hoping. But when it is completed let us fervently pray that it will provide an equipment something like 1,900 per cent better than that provided Lincoln people by the Lincoln Traction Co.

WITHDRAWS FROM FEDERATION.

DETROIT, Sept. 24.—The Detroit Federation of Labor recently practically withdrew from the American Federation of Labor by voting unanimously not to comply with the recent order of the executive council to unseat the Electrical Workers' Union. The matter will be appealed to the American Federation convention at Toronto in November.

HOLDING THE PROTECTED INTERESTS TO THEIR BARGAIN.

There is pith in the suggestion of Secretary Morrison, of the Federation of Labor, that the interests that have asked and received high tariff protection on the ground that they wanted to maintain an "American" scale of wages, have made themselves answerable to the government for the maintenance of such a scale.

He requests the secretary of commerce and labor to investigate the condition of the wage-workers at McKees Rocks, to find out whether the protected Pressed Steel Car Company has lived up to its bargain with the public.

The public has taxed itself for the health of the steel business—at the request of the steel manufacturers.

And the public has a right to know whether the business has been made healthy by the sacrifice.

If not by this particular train of logic, then surely by some other train, the people of the United States are bound to arrive at a certain destination, to-wit:

The establishment of their right in law and equity to require a fair and orderly administration of protected industries.—New York American.

NOT THE AMERICAN WAY OF DOING THINGS.

Secretary Morrison, of the American Federation of Labor, has asked Secretary Nagel, of the Department of Commerce to investigate conditions at the Pressed Steel Car Works in Pennsylvania, to discover whether the company is paying its men the wages a highly protected industry should. He says in his letter that the steel companies made a plea before Congress for the retention of protection on the ground that, if it was continued, they would be enabled to pay high wages, but that if it was taken off they would be obliged to reduce wages. Congress retained protection, and there is, he claims, an implied contract between Congress and the steel industries which gives the government the right to inquire whether the promised reward of protection is being realized by the workingmen.

In the case of the Pressed Steel Car strike, however, it appears there was no definite wage. To the men was apportioned a lump amount for making a car, out of which the cost of material was deducted. The men received the difference as a wage. This is scarcely up to the American idea of doing things.—Minneapolis (Minn.) Journal.