

THE WAGWORKER

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CURT CURRENT COMMENT

There died in Lincoln a few days ago a motorman in the employ of the Lincoln Traction Co. He had been in the street railway service for twenty-four years, beginning in the days of the old horse cars. He was a faithful and efficient employe. When his death was made known at headquarters Manager Humpe paid the dead motorman a high tribute. "He was a faithful and dependable employe," said Manager Humpe, "and had rendered good service for twenty-three years." All that Manager Humpe said of this faithful employe was true, and well deserved. But Manager Humpe could have said a lot more. He could have said that after twenty-three years of faithful and arduous service the motorman was making the magnificent wage of 24 cents an hour. He might have said that had the dead motorman saved one-third his wages all these years he might have died with \$3,500 in the bank—after living a quarter of a century like a recluse, depriving himself and family of needed food and clothing and enjoyment nothing of the luxuries of life. This amount invested at 6 per cent would earn the widow less than \$200 a year. "He was a faithful and dependable employe." And after twenty-three years of that kind of service he was working twelve hours a day to make less than \$2.50!

It is an encouraging sign when the voters of a legislative district select such men as H. C. Taylor of Central City to represent them in the legislature. Mr. Taylor is one of the progressive republican newspaper men of Nebraska. His record is as clean as a hound's tooth, and he is level-headed, sincere and willing. Nebraska would have nothing to fear from unwise legislation from a legislature made up of such splendid young men as H. C. Taylor.

Land Commissioner Cowles, who has just been re-elected to succeed himself, is inclined to favor the establishment of a state printery. But the kind he favors will not meet with the approbation of men who have given the labor movement their best efforts. Mr. Cowles would have the boys at the Kearney Industrial school and the prisoners at the State Penitentiary man the printing plant and do the work. He thinks this could be done by employing some experts to oversee the business. Perhaps—if he could get the experts, and enough of them. But it would be cheaper and a great deal better to man the plant with experts. And we can see the political finish of any legislator or governor who would agree to the enactment of a law providing for the establishment of another state shop employing convicts in competition with free labor. Mr. Cowles ought to take a running jump and try to land in the present.

Every now and then Col. Al. Sorensen, never-will-be-senator, springs a joke that keeps us laughing for hours and hours. He has just sprung one. Col. Sorensen says that the county optionists are going to try and buy enough legislative votes to insure the enactment of a county option law. The Colonel is altogether too humorous.

The Fremont Herald suggests Latta for governor in 1912; Shallenberger for United States Senator and Dan V. Stevens for congressman from the Third district. We are in favor of just two-thirds of the proposition. We prefer to watch Mr. Latta's record for a couple of years more before endorsing him for any other office than the one he now holds.

The Minden Courier is for Shallenberger for United States senator to succeed Senator Brown. The Courier says the Shallenberger boom will have something more than "near insurgency" behind it. Editor Richmond has a political head upon him, so long that he has to go out of doors to turn it around.

Two months since the Los Angeles Times building was wrecked by an explosion. The police were going to arrest the guilty parties within twenty-four hours. Not an arrest has been made. The telegraph operators employed by the Western Union and stationed in the Times building who testified that they had smelled gas in the building for several days, were discharged. The "rat" linotype man who testified that the presence of gas enough anywhere in the building to cause an explosion would have put the linotypes out of business—that "rat" is still on the Times' pay roll. Every ex-

pert in explosives testifies that the wreck could not have been caused by any high explosive—that it was a gas explosion. Yet the papers that so loudly spread the report that union men wrecked the Times building are as silent as the grave about the revelations that have followed the investigation.

Here is a new item that will "listen good" to union men and women everywhere: Spokane unionists are striving to raise money to erect a Labor Temple. At a meeting of the Central Labor Union of Spokane a week or so ago Mr. and Mrs. L. W. Hutton handed in a check for \$500, the same to be used in the erection or purchase of a Temple. Mr. and Mrs. Hutton thanked organized labor for its part in giving the women of Washington the ballot, and presented the check as a token of appreciation.

Just what a little personal work will do in an election is evidenced by the fact that Addison Wait is elected secretary of state by a majority of 97. Had Charley Pool's friends hustled just a bit more or Wait's friends a bit less, Pool would have been elected. A difference of only 97 votes in a total of 240,000 is getting down pretty close.

The officials of the window glass trust are in an awful fix. They formed a trust in restraint of trade and by hoisting prices made an extra profit of \$1,000,000. For this they were arrested, tried and convicted. Nine officials were fined \$1,000 each, and the corporation itself fined \$1,000—\$10,000 in all. Wasn't it awful, Mabel! Only allowed to keep \$290,000 of the \$1,000,000 made in defiance of law! Will some one please set a "tag day" for the benefit of the poor officials of the window glass trust. They have been so hard hit by the fine that they have reduced the wages of their employes from 35 to 50 per cent to make good. The price of window glass, however, remains the same.

All of which reminds us that the villainous socialist who had the temerity to offer to pay men to do what other men had already done with the sanction of the federal judiciary, was fined as much as a window glass magnate, and also sentenced to six months in jail. But if you assert that there is one law for the rich and another law for the poor you are an anarchist, a traitor to your country and deserving of punishment by boiling in oil—or something lingering, you know.

Young man, you'll miss the treat of a lifetime if you fail to hear Edmund Vance Cook at the Oliver Sunday afternoon. He is a platform artist with few equals and fewer superiors. He is a poet, a philosopher and a humorist. His religion is the religion of doing good, and his heart is big enough to encompass all humanity. We want you to hear Cook, and if you do and then say you were disappointed, we'll beg your pardon every time we meet you.

For a couple of hours last Sunday we enjoyed the society of Strickland W. Gillilan. Say, what an inspiration it is to listen to "Strick!" Did you hear him at the Oliver last Sunday? If you did, we know you laughed "fit t' kill," even though the laugh came forth before you could get the tears wiped out of your eyes—tears brought forth by the sweet sentiments of his little verses. Tell you what, boys, it's not often in a lifetime that we have a chance to meet up with fellows like "Strick." God only makes one like him every decade.

The Traction Co. is managed by men who almost begged the city council to enact a six-for-a-quarter ordinance. It is managed by men who insisted that if relieved of its occupation tax it could continue the six-for-a-quarter fare. It is also managed by the same men right now, and they insist that the six-for-a-quarter fare is confiscatory, although they secured the reduction in the occupation tax that they asked for. We commend to the people County Attorney Tyrrell's presentation of the case against the Traction Co. The company is entitled to a fair hearing and a square deal. That it is in trouble everybody knows—but it will have to convince the people that the trouble is not of its own making.

The Wageworker will not insist that the charter proposed for Lincoln shall be exactly to its liking. But it will insist that whatever charter is proposed be submitted to a vote of the people, that it shall provide for a commission form of government, and that it shall provide for a salaried commission. Here and now The Wageworker pledges its best efforts to beat the stuffing out of the proposition to have a council of fourteen elected at large.

The Omaha Bee is opposed to the enactment of a law providing for the initiative and referendum. Of course! But in heaven's name what would the people get if every legislature was made up of members like the bunch Douglas county usually sends down? It is counties like Douglas in the several states that are responsible for the demand for the initiative and referendum.

Now comes the rumor that a move will be made to prevent Victor