

LABOR NEWS.

Engineers' Call.

The following call has been issued. It is worthy of the earnest consideration of every friend of humanity. To Organized Labor and Their Friends. Greeting:

The Amalgamated Society of Engineers, Machinists, Smiths and Pattern Makers, and allied trades of Great Britain and Ireland, are now, and have been, fighting concentrated capital since the first week in July for the establishment of an eight-hour day—a reform that is human, a necessity, the hope and ambition of all true friends of labor. This fight started locally in the London district, and when three-fourths of the firms had conceded the eight-hour day the federated employers stepped into the field, and at this date 632 firms have locked out 87,000 skilled and unskilled workers. This was done to defeat the movement in London, crush trade unionism, grind down the workers to the level of uncivilized natives of old, or weld fetters of slavery on them worse than that of the chattel slave of the sixties. The Amalgamated Engineers have blazed the road of trade unionism, has met every obligation, and in forty-six years has paid out \$23,101,938 for benefits, as follows: Unemployed benefit, \$10,854,994; special relief, \$489,925, and in forty-one years has donated to other unions in distress the world over \$820,000, or an average of \$20,000 per year. Our members in the United States have received in benefits, as above mentioned, in five years, \$283,000, or an average of \$56,600 per year, and this with a membership of 3,000. Benefits are paid as follows: Unemployed, \$3 per week; sick, \$3 per week; accident benefit, \$600; railroad fare, up to \$9; insurance on tools, up to \$60; old age pension, from \$2.10 to \$3 per week, according to number of years membership; special relief, legal defence and other benefits, according as case may require. When we were forced into this fight we had \$1,700,000 in our treasuries. We give the foregoing figures to show you that we have always tried to help ourselves, and never turned a deaf ear to others in need, and we have every confidence that when the American worker knows the true state of affairs they will respond to our appeal all along the line, as some few have already done on this continent. The Continental workers have responded nobly—German printers, 10,000 marks; German stone masons, 10,000 marks; German metal workers, 20,000 marks, and other smaller unions have contributed. Danish engineers and smiths, \$1,000; Austrian metal workers, \$125 weekly; Swedish metal workers, \$1,500; Australia, \$10,000; New Zealand, \$1,000; Montreal, Canada, \$1,500. Russia, Roumania, Japan and China are amongst the contributors. The United States so far has sent \$2,500, but we believe when these facts are known they will respond worthy of the name of unionism. This is an international battle. The employers' federation, through its president, Colonel Dyer, states that they will smash trade unionism. We don't believe the world's workers will stand by and see our fighting brethren crushed. Eight hours there means eight hours here. It is our personal battle. We appeal to every lover of justice and freedom to rally to our support. Take no notice of press dispatches of a settlement; they are done for effect to ruin our cause. A dollar now is worth ten in a month. Up to date the engineers and allied trades have spent \$2,600,000. It has cost the employers twenty times that, but they have large bank accounts of other men's labor, and can stand it better than our brothers. Don't file this away. Don't refer it. But let us know where you stand, whether you can assist us financially or not.

We remain, yours truly, the American and Canadian Council.

HENRY WOODBOROUGH,
President,
1059 Bedford Avenue, Brooklyn, N. Y.
W. H. SAGE,
Secretary-Treasurer,
137 East 13th Street, New York.

Eastern Out in Wages.

Fall River, Mass., December 9.—At a general meeting of the Cotton Manufacturers' association, it was voted to reduce all wages in the mills of the city, the amount and the time of reduction being left to a committee, which for some time has had charge of the matter.

It is understood that the cut will not be less than 10 per cent. and that it will go into effect on January 1. It will affect 28,000 operatives, who are paid an aggregate weekly wage of \$180,000. The price of print cloths for a long time has been only fair. Under these conditions the mills have been selling at a loss and the stock of goods has been increasing.

Street Car Vestibules in Kansas City, Kas.

J. B. Gibbs, the colored attorney of this city, says the Kansas City, Kansas, Labor Record, is making a one-handed fight against the Metropolitan Street Railway Company of this city for not equipping their cars with vestibules. Last week Gibbs went before County Attorney Miller to swear out warrants but Miller refused to issue them. Gibbs says that he will try and secure the assistance of Attorney General Boyle to carry out the fight. The company had all but a few of its cars equipped with vestibules before the trouble and since Gibbs started has fixed all of them.

Illinois Coal Strike.

Streator, Ill., December 10.—The miners' strike in this vicinity came to an end this afternoon, when A. L. Sweet, general manager, Chicago, Wilmington and Vermillion Coal Company agreed to pay the price demanded by the men, which is 64 cents a ton for gross weight mining. The Star Coal Company officials last night met State Secretary Ryan and a committee of miners and agreed to pay the price demanded. The miners refused Mr. Sweet's proposition to go back at 62 cents a ton and he finally yielded to their demands. This practically settled the strike in all northern Illinois and will put 2,000 men at work at once. The men have been standing out for gross weight and are elated over their victory.

Printers' Nine-Hour Fight is On.

New York, December 9.—At the annual convention of the International Typographical union a year ago it was decided to make a fight for a work day of nine hours in all book and job printing shops as soon as possible. This fight will be started in this city on January 2, 1898, and will involve 5,000 men, as the employing printers have resolved to oppose the demand. It was announced last night that other cities, including Brooklyn, would also take up the fight for nine hours and that before the new year was a month old it was probable that 50,000 men would be on strike for a shorter work day.

On December 2 Typographical union No. 6 sent a notice to 102 employers, making the official demand for a work day of nine hours instead of ten, beginning on January. On Tuesday night an executive meeting of the Typothetae was held at which resolutions were passed denying the demand of the printers and looking to raise a fund of \$50,000 as a defense fund to fight "big six." President Donnelly of union No. 6 says that within thirty days his union will have \$100,000 with which to enforce its demand.

Barbers' License Law.

The barbers are preparing to begin the campaign for a license law in the near future. It will be taken up in such a way as to bring it before the people of the State during the coming campaign. The movement has been started by the Topeka barbers, and it is expected that others all over Kansas will cooperate in keeping up the agitation until there is such a law upon the statute books.

It is intended to get all barbers, bosses and journey men, union or non-union, to work together in a vigorous campaign. The law will undoubtedly do a great deal of good; it will abolish the vicious "barber's college" and bring about better apprenticeship system.

The convention of the American Federation of labor is now considering a resolution relative to the license law, as introduced by Secretary-Treasurer W. E. Klapetzky of the International union. It is in full as follows:

Whereas, The Journeymen Barbers' International Union has adopted a "License Law," and will attempt to have the same passed by the various State

Legislatures at their coming sessions, and,

Whereas, The purport of this proposed law is for the better protection of the craft from the disciples of the Barber college, and also regulates the apprenticeship to be served by those desiring to learn the trade and which to-day is the cause for much of the discomfort suffered by the barber, and,

Whereas, This law has been passed and is now operative in the State of Minnesota and is proving itself to be of untold value; therefore, be it

Resolved, That the American Federation of Labor gives its hearty endorsement to this proposed legislation in behalf of the barber craft and that they pledge themselves to do all in their power to assist in the passage thereof.

Local Labor Notes.

The engineers and firemen met Sunday.

Jim Heslet has returned from Washington, D. C., and is now with Adams Bros.

George Rauss received word of the death of his father in St. Louis last week. He went there at once with Mrs. Rauss.

W. H. Hall, of Emporia Lodge No. 23 B. of R. T., is at the Santa Fe hospital. He lost a finger at Emporia last week while making a coupling.

Labor Commissioner Johnson did not go to Nashville to attend the A. F. of L. convention, as the duties of his office are keeping him too busy.

The Trades Assembly has appointed an organization committee to take up the matter organizing a local Federal Labor union. The committee will push it, and some of the members of the Assembly say that it should have over 100 members.

Barbers.

President Miller went to Kansas City on business with the local there Monday.

New unions have been organized at York, Pa., Elwood, Ind., Alexandria, Ind., and Oshkosh, Wis.

Pete Miller says that "you may quote me as saying that Roy Hammon is the best looking and John Pleasant is the most accomplished conversationalist of the accredited tonsorial artists of Topeka."

B. J. Wagner, fifth vice president of the J. B. I. U. of N. A. has become an employer and resigned, and Oscar B. Payne, of Ft. Wayne, Ind., has been appointed in his stead. Mr. Payne is a prominent and hard-working union man who has always had the best interests of the organization at heart. He will make an efficient officer.

There are five resolutions from the J. B. I. U. of N. A. before the A. F. of L. for consideration. They are summed up: (1) The "license law" resolution, which is printed in full elsewhere; (2) "that in order to carry out the precepts and principles of organized labor in general, and this Federation in particular, no member of a local whose national or international union is affiliated with the American Federation of Labor shall patronize any barber shop charging 3 or 5 cents for a shave or 5, 16 or 15 cents for a hair cut; and further, that as no union shop card of the barbers is displayed in a shop of this kind the members of affiliated unions are instructed to patronize only such shops as do display the union shop card;" (3) "that all central bodies having a local of barbers affiliated therewith and not affiliated with the Barbers' International Union within thirty days, and for failure to do so the central body shall expel them;" (4) "that the incoming President of this Federation shall, as soon as possible, issue a circular letter to the organizers of this Federation and instruct them to give all possible assistance to the general organizer (of the Barbers' International) in their various localities and to make a special effort to organize the members of the barber craft;" (5) "that the incoming President shall give instructions to the organizers to ascertain if there is an independent union of barbers in their district, and should they find such to be the case they shall ascertain the names and addresses of the officers thereof and send the information gained to the office of the President of this Federation, who in turn shall send it to the Secretary of the Barbers' International Union."

What Unions Can Do.

What unions can do in the face of discouragement is shown by the following from the Cigar Makers' Journal: "About a year ago one of our local unions reported that the members were

nearly all out of employment and that those who were working were on a limit, and that the town was overrun with non-union cigars and that they were thinking of returning the charter. We advised them to hold on to the charter and to appoint a live, energetic label committee. We have just received a letter from the same union saying that all members are working and on full time, and that they are now negotiating with the last and only non-union shop in town, with good prospects of its coming into the union at an early date."

Testing an Eight-Hour Law.

A case of great importance has just been elaborately argued before the United States Supreme court, says the Eight-Hour Herald. The question involved is the power of a State Legislature to pass a law fixing the duration of the workday for adults and making it a punishable offense for an employer to hire a man to labor more than the prescribed number of hours. The case has been appealed from the Supreme court of Utah, which sustained the constitutionality of the Utah eight-hour law for miners engaged in work in underground mines.

The facts are as follows: An operator named Holden was convicted for employing a miner for ten hours a day, contrary to the eight-hour law, and sentenced to pay a fine and to serve fifty-seven days in jail. Holden, admitting the facts alleged, had pleaded not guilty—first, because the miner had voluntarily entered into the contract for the services in question; second, because the statute was repugnant to the constitution of the United States in that it deprived employer and employe of the right to contract in a lawful way for a lawful purpose; third, because the statute was class legislation; and fourth, because it deprived the defendant of his property and liberty, without due process of law.

It is plain that these exceptions are those which would naturally be raised in any State of the Union against a law restricting the hours of adult labor. But the familiarity of the objections does not detract from their strength and validity. The Supreme court of Utah, however, upheld the law and denied a petition for a writ of habeas corpus. It looked upon the eight-hour law as a proper exercise of the police power of the State in protecting life, health and morals. As this is the first American case in which a State Supreme court has sustained a law interfering with the right of adults to make contracts for labor great interest attaches to the proceedings in the Federal court. The decision will turn on fundamental principles of constitutional construction and will constitute a landmark in our economic and judicial history.

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LABOR UNIONS.

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on your printing. It is a guaranty of skilled and fair-paid workmanship. The following newspaper, job and book offices in Topeka employ Union Labor and are worthy of your patronage:

- The Advocate and News.
- The Kansas Farmer.
- The Mail and Breeze.
- The Topeka Capital.
- The Topeka State Journal.
- Crane Printing Co.
- Kansas State Printing Co.
- Hall Lithographing Co.
- The Mail Printing House.
- Adams Brothers.
- The Topeka Printing Co.
- The Gillies Printing Co.

The Union Barber Shops of Topeka are:

- Oscar Shaeffer..... 819 Kansas Ave.
- Callahan & Brown..... 813 Kansas Ave.
- National Hotel Barber Shop..... 635 Kansas Ave.
- Nelson & Harmon..... 901 Kansas Ave.
- Thomas Davis..... 535 Kansas Ave.
- Miller & Hammon..... 425 Kansas Ave.
- F. A. Gutach & Son..... 381 Kansas Ave.
- Oscar Rader..... 215 Kansas Ave.
- Whitmore Bros..... 732 Kansas Ave.
- Royal Barber Shop..... 710 Kansas Ave.
- Jeff Caldwell..... 108 E. Seventh St.
- Capital Barber Shop..... 508 Kansas Ave.
- Fifth Avenue Hotel Barber Shop..... 119 East Fifth St.
- M. C. Wright..... 1303 E. Sixth Ave.
- Joe Klee..... 408 E. Fourth Ave.
- Star Barber Shop..... 330 N. Kansas Ave.

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