

My Own Shop

Reznor Gas Stoves and their "trade-mark."
By One Who Wears It.

The plant of the Reznor Mfg. Co. is located in a little out-of-the-way place called Mercer, Pa. But there is nothing slow about the way they play the game of getting lots of work out of a small number of people for little money. They have a modern, well-equipped plant and turn out an enormous product for the number of workers employed. Only about 150, all told, work here; many of them are girls. Yet they produce yearly nearly 300,000 of the famous Reznor Gas Stoves; the kind you see in the magazine advertisements heating up a cheerful room.

You might think the Reznor Company is proud of this record of exploitation, and no doubt they are; but that does not mean that they are satisfied. Like all labor skimmers they want still more work out of the exploited slaves without paying increased wages and they are using an up-to-date "soft soap" method to get the workers into the right frame of mind.

Some Company Propaganda.

With our last pay checks they handed us each a neatly printed booklet entitled "Your Share Of The Money". It is a clear attempt to convince the workers who produce the 300,000 stoves per year that a hand-to-mouth existence is all they are entitled to, and that they really are lucky to get that.

The booklet depicts a dialogue between workmen, one of whom is a "Red". He is quoted as saying that money in the country ought to be "divided up". A Company stool—referred to in the pamphlet as "having a level head"—comes back with the statement that if the money was all divided up there would be only about \$100 apiece. This is supposed to settle the argument and to convince the workers that they should be satisfied to slave their lives away for the benefit of a few parasites who own the land, factories, railroads and natural resources of the country, to say nothing of money which is only a symbol of value and is the smallest part of their wealth.

They wind up twelve pages of this sort of stuff with the argument that increased wages will not solve the problem of the high cost of living. The solution, they say, lies in increased produc-

tion. This, remember, to 150 workers who produce nearly 300,000 stoves per year and get in return barely enough to enable them to keep alive. Such is their estimate of the intelligence of the great majority of their slaves.

Open Shop Conditions.

The entire plant of the Reznor Company is run on the "open shop" basis with the exception of our department—Polishers and Buffers. Here we have maintained union wages and the eight hour day. As for the rest—well, it is the open shop, and you know what that means, piece-work, speeding up, long and uncertain hours and small wages. The workers are at the mercy of the bosses; they have no representation and no redress for any grievance no matter how pressing it may be.

The press department is called the "Butcher Shop." This is because of the many fingers of the workers that are chopped off on account of the speeding up to meet the bosses' piece rate. It is easy to tell an old-timer in this department; nearly every one of them has the Reznor Trade Mark upon him—a mangled hand.

But, after all, it is a good sign when, in such a small back-woods place, the bosses, are forced to talk economics and to adopt welfare measures to counteract the effect of radical propaganda. They used to play prohibition and Sunday School stuff, but now they are compelled to go into the industrial argument, and that's their finish.

The union is not strong enough to protect me, so please do not use my name. Some of these days I hope to be able to report that the Reznor plant is organized from top to bottom, all the workers, in one union. I also hope to see the day when the workers will take over the plant—not to "divide up", but to run it co-operatively for the benefit of the workers only.

The fourth section of the Lever act has been declared unconstitutional by Judge W. H. S. Thompson in the States District Court at Pittsburgh, Pa.

Three rail workers who took part in the recent vacation of the railmen, and had been indicted under the Lever act, were ordered released.