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WORKMEN'S ADVOCATE.

Series 2. No. 1 — New Haven, Connecticut, Sunday, October 4, 1885. — Price 3 Cents

A GALLANT TRADES UNION

CONTENDING FOR FAIR PAY FOR HONEST LABOR.

An Unjust Reduction of Wages Attempted by the New Haven Wire Co. The Men Object. A Scab Honored. The Swedes Horsehair.

On the 10th day of November last, the wiredrawers employed at the New Haven Wire Works were notified of a reduction of 20 per cent. in their wages, the company claiming that they could not run the mill unless the cost of production was less—much promising, however, to restore the old rate of wages in the Spring if there was a rise in the market. The men having been but partially employed for some time, accepted the reduction, believing in the honesty of the company. Everything went on smoothly until April 4, when the men appointed a committee to wait on the firm to consult in regard to the restoration of the old wages, the market meanwhile having advanced $5 per ton. Instead of securing the promised increase, the firm coolly informed the committee that "their expectations had not been realized and proposed a new system of working which further reduced the price; but after a stoppage of two days the men secured an advance of 5 per cent.

HELPING DEFRAY THE COMPANY'S EXPENSES.

About this time the men were put under a new expense; feeling it incumbent on them to assist the company in paying the wages of an old and faithful workman of 37 years' standing, who, running the worker's risk, lost the best part of his right hand in the companys service.

After the man was disabled, the company "charitably" employed him as watchman, giving him the munificent salary of five dollars a week. This the workmen augmented by contributing between seven and eight dollars per week, and thus the company secured the services of a faithful watchman without having to pay him decent wages.

A SCAB.

It having come to the knowledge of the Union that one of their members long suspected of crookedness was giving away the proceedings to E. S. Wheeler & Co., the dishonorable member was expelled notwithstanding his futile attempts to throw off suspicion. The following interesting epistle was received by an officer of the association which bears a great similarity to the language and characteristics of the aforesaid scab:

NEW HAVEN, JUNE 14.

Mr. ——, I would like to put you on your gard before you hold any more meeting in the lan building as there was a man hidin in there on Saturday week and he took down all that was said I don't now who he is put he lite suite of chose on and a brown hat on So look out next Saturdy night for him let one get there about 6 1-2 o'clock and then you will be able to have the rome to yourself I seed him comin out after you had all come out and I tooke him bye the color and I made him tell mee wat he'ed been doin and he told me and he give a dolar not to say any thin to any body about it and he'ed make it al rife with another time I would wrote sooner honly i did not now who to rite to til taste thursdy night so look out fore hime now if you dont stope him it will be your fult and i shal get as many dolars as i can if you dont stop hime this is frome one as likes to see fare play and i aint a goin to give myself away if i can make any money out of it so i say again look out fore hime i told hime i wouldnt say a word so if you can beat a dolar for a poor felowe jute it under were the cheer man site under the table leeg and i can finde it some of the nights wen the rome is open so good night and take me warning

this is frome who has been a fole to iself

This fellow sought the more congenial climate of Canada, following the example of more wealthly scamps. He located in Toronto, a strike of brick layers, and laborers being then in progress in that city. Whether he followed his avocation of scabbing in which he made his debut in Warrington, Eng., in the late wiredrawers' strike there, cannot be said with certainty. Suffice it to say he had a slight knowledge of that trade, acquired in lining blast furnaces. This interesting object was reimported by the company about September 6 to assist them in crushing the men on strike. He resides on Chapel street and his name is Samuel Wright.

ANOTHER REDUCTION.

On July 16 the usual notice was posted of a reduction ranging from 10 to 33 1-3 per cent. on different sizes of wire, the regulation argument of not being able to compete, etc., being again advanced. The men by this time were disgusted and the Amalgamated Association of Iron and Steel Workers, of which they are a part, legalized the strike, which was immediately entered upon. Up to August 28 nothing occurred to mar the serenity of affairs, when the company issued a circular, published in the *Register*, setting forth that they would give the men until August 31, at noon, to accept their terms, otherwise they would never again employ a union man. This ukase was answered by the association, through the columns of the *Register*, as follows:

The statement printed in Friday's (Aug. 28) *Register* headed "To the Wiredrawers" and signed by the New Haven Wire company, contained some errors which might mislead many who are not acquainted with the facts. The wiredrawers are forced to the opinion that the Wire company deliberately contemplated the reduction of wages of its employes; first, because they confess it in their statement, and secondly, because they imported twenty five wiredrawers from Pittsburg about a month previous to the posting of the reduction. These men were lured to this city by advertisements in the Pittsburg *Commercial Gazette* to this effect:

WANTED—25 Wiredrawers. Good workmen guaranteed $3 per day and steady work. Apply at the New Haven Wire Works Monday morning.

Most of the men came with their families, trusting too implicitly in the honor of the advertisers. This importation of labor of itself seemed suspicious, and subsequent facts proved the suspicions of the men only too well founded. The object was plainly to gather a surplus of labor in this vicinity in order to weaken the Union.

Last November the men accepted a reduction of about 20 per cent., and the same "arguments" were used by the company then as are used now. And this cutting of wages might go on *ad infinitum* if a check were not placed upon the ruinous policy by those interested—ruinous for both employer and employe. The company through its representatives used the argument that they could undersell other manufacturers and thus enter the market by lessening the cost of production; but the men recognize the fact that such ruthless competition would only result in competition would only result in disaster in the end. If the manufacturers reduce their profits by such means, that is their own business; but when they take from the hard-working men that which is necessary for decent maintenance, it becomes the especial business of the workmen to prevent such a catastrophe by honorable and legal means.

The forgoing will show to intelligent men whether we understand the underlying causes of the "cutting" or not. We have advised and do advise the manufacturers to form an association; and if it is answered that they cannot trust each other (and that statement has been made), how much less must the employes trust their employers?

The company says in its circular that "no doubt many of the men would be glad to work at the prices offered if the Union would permit." The company should understand that the Union is composed of intelligent men, and they are perfectly aware of the fact that if it were not for their Union, they would be compelled to accept any terms, no matter how unjust, that the company might deign to offer. Our union is our defense, just as the union of states is the defense of our Union.

When the company says that our Union is not "run in a reasonable way" because we "would not give the reduction a trial," we can only say that many of our members have been in the business so many years longer than their employers, and know more of the practical workings of their trade by hard experience. If by working at the reduction we enable the company to undersell other mills, how long would it be before their competitors would endeavor to undersell them, and thus incite another reduction. As a matter of fact we have worked for less than the men in some western mills. And when the company gives it as their belief that they have paid the highest wages for skilled workmen, we can only answer that they deceive themselves.

While we are fully aware of the fact that idleness is not profitable, we are also conscious of the principle involved. We are contesting for justice and an honest livelihood. THE WIREDRAWERS.

INTERPORTATION OF SWEDES.

Sunday, September 6, the firm sent two emissaries to Worcester, Mass., to secure help to start the mill. They did not escape the eye of organized labor, however, and were unsuccessful in their efforts. The next day another was dispatched and met with better success, securing fifteen Swedes—men who receive the contempt of their countrymen—who were conveyed in stages to the Hotel Svea on State street and taken to the mill, where they became acquainted with the scab, Sam Wright. On their return from the mill at night they created a small sensation among the citizens and strikers, who treated them with the contempt they deserved. The next morning's issue of the rat *Morning News* contained a sensational account of an assault which never occurred. Three of the strikers were arrested and put under bonds of $300 each.

The company's secretary, Mr. Galpin, a literateur and a lawyer, as Mr. Wheeler found occasion to mention to a committee of the strikers, seemed to be on very intimate terms with Prosecuting Attorney Cable; notwithstanding which, however, it was proved that one of the victims of police vigilance was not a striker nor was he present at the alleged assault. The other two, although they were strikers, could not be connected with the affair, much to the evident chagrin of the redoubtable Galpin.

TWO VERY SLY MEN.

There is a department of our local police composed of so-called detectives. Judging by the proceedings of two of these cunning gentlemen, they must have been captivated readers of dime novels of the "Old Sleuth" series. A number of Fair Haven gentlemen were gathered together under the hospitable roof of the Riverside Hotel, when they were astonished at seeing an elderly individual with an alcoholic complexion enter the house, lugging two bunches of horsehair, which were suspended from his ears by wires, with the evident intent to represent side whiskers. Without waiting for a formal introduction, he shambled up to one of the guests, and in honeyed words asked how the Swedes were getting along. When he moved his jaws to speak, the two bunches of horsehair seemed to be much agitated at what he said. He was told that the Swedes were getting along well enough, after which he ventured to remark that he would have to look for a job at the wire mill as he was pretty well broken up. This was too much for the assembled guests, who broke out into laughter, while the unsuccessful imitator of "Old Sleuth," taking the two bunches of horsehair with him, made his exit, and joined his companion in disguise, who had waited outside to hold their horse. Soon the team carried the two very sly men, with two bunches of horsehair each out of sight, and the guest at the hotel spent the rest of the evening in looking for the buttons that had been torn from their vests in the audience of their laughter.

HONORABLE WORKMEN.

The resident Scandinavians are much mortified at the conduct of their degraded countrymen. The Society Arkime, composed of a large number of Scandinavians, appointed a committee to consult with the Wiredrawers. Friends who to certified to the discovery that the scabs were renegades of an honorable vocation, and unworthy the flag of any one. The Swedish consul, he to will not harbor them, and so, like the outcasts they are, they must be provided for by their masters. The President of the Swedish society informed one of the strikers committee that Mr. Galpin had offered them ten hundred dollars, which was indignantly refused. What the object was is not known, unless it was an outburst of that spirit of charity which characterizes the firm.

MUSIC AND DANCE.

Among the incidents of the strike we must not forget the concert and soiree at the Quinnipiac Rink given by the organization of which the wiredrawers are members. It was a most enjoyable affair, and was a credit to the men, which at the same time netted a handsome sum for those who suffered most by standing out for principle.

A WEAK SCHEME.

The company viewing with jealousy any sympathy for the strikers and suspecting that their old watchman—he who was disabled in their service—entertained some regard for his former fellow workers, he was summarily discharged. It may be remarked here that Mr. Edwards Wheeler, the boss, is a member of one of our fashionable churches and a teacher in the Sunday school connected with it. A noble example, truly, for the innocents in his charge. He is also a prominent member of the Young Men's Christian Association.

STILL DETERMINED.

The strikers, conscious of the justice of their cause, are determined to hold out. In this they have the sympathy of the organized workers of this city, and should be supported and encouraged by all classes of citizens in their effort to gain an honest livelihood with fair wages for their hard labor.

The New York Bakers' Union has called the attention of the Board of Health to an infringement of the health laws in that city by 200 employing bakers, whose 500 men have to sleep in cellars.

The annual session of the General Assembly of the Knights of Labor will be held at Hamilton, Ontario, October 6.

The noble Order of Knights of Labor has more than doubled its membership during the past year.

The Knights of Labor cooperative cigar factory of Boston is meeting with great success.

The funeral of E. S. Davis, for a long time treasurer of the Bricklayers' Union of this city, occurred Friday afternoon. The Bricklayers' Union turned out in a body to pay their last tribute to their departed comrade, to whose energy the success of the Union was in a great measure due.

ORGANIZED LABOR'S WORK

WAGEWORKERS IN COUNCIL IN VARIOUS CITIES.

Trades Council of New Haven. New York Central Labor Union. Brooklyn. Pittsburgh. Boston. Philadelphia Telegraphers.

A special meeting of the Trades' Council was held last Tuesday evening, at which of was voted to give a ball, some time during this month, for the benefit of the strikers, who are destitute. A committee of five was ordered to prepare a program to be submitted to the next session of the council, to be held on Wednesday evening. The Publishing Committee reported progress in the new enterprise, and announced that the WORKMAN'S ADVOCATE would be printed by the end of the week. The delegate from the Machinists' Union reported that their organization was in good condition, notwithstanding the rumor circulated to the contrary.

NEW YORK C. L. U.

Council No. 1 of the Telegraphers' Protective Union sent credentials to the New York Central Labor Union last Sunday, which were received with applause. Branch No. 4, of the United Order of American Carpenters also presented credentials. Bricklayers' Union No. 2 was again admitted to membership, though the name of one of the delegates, James Hughes, was not acted upon, he being president of a political organization, and therefore considered a politician, and debarred admission. Professor Richard T. Ely, of Johns Hopkins University asked to have a copy of the circular explaining the grounds upon which the boycott against Peter Doelger's beer rested, sent him; the secretary sent him one.

Cigarmakers' Progressive Union No. 4 reported that they had now a strike on at Ney & Co.'s shop and that eight policemen were detailed to interfere with the Union's pickets. They wanted a committee to wait on Superintendent Murray and lay the case before him. The committee was appointed. The Washington Association of Shoemakers said that the boycott of Brennan & White's shoes was being pushed. The Furriers' Union reported that they were engaged in organizing the women employed in their trade with good prospects. The West Side Furniture and Carpet employes reported the name of the thirteen dealers who are opposed to early closing, and stringent measures will be taken against them.

BROOKLYN C. L. U.

A shoemaker presided at the last session of the Brooklyn Central Labor Union, which was held last Sunday. The boycott against Boss Baker Horseman was reported in progress, while Horseman was trying to make some of his customers believe that he employed Union men. The Secretary of the "State Trades Assembly" asked for the addresses of all Labor organizations in the Central Union, which caused much debate, and a motion was made that the request be granted "after next election," as there seemed to be a suspicion that the "State Trades Assembly" was of a political stripe. However, the request was finally granted.

PITTSBURG TRADES ASSEMBLY.

At the last meeting of this new and successful organization, new delegates were introduced from Typographical Union No. 7, the Druggists' Ware Union, Bishop Lodge, A. A. of I and S. W., and Horseshoers' Lodge No. 9. The executive committee recommended that an address to the wageworkers be prepared, and that agitation be created for the formation of a National Trades Association. A resolution was adopted granting members of any union in good standing a seat on the floor of the Assembly, without voice or vote.

BOSTON C. T. AND L. U.

From now till May next, the Central Trades and and Labor Union of Boston will hold a course of public meetings to agitate the eight-hour question.

PHILADELPHIA.

PHILADELPHIA, Sept. 30. The arrangements are all perfected for the labor demonstration to be held on Saturday evening next in opposition to the police force of the city. The people are indignant at the brutality exhibited by the police lately, and an immense turnout is expected. All the open trades unions connected with the Central Labor Union, together with the three District Assemblies of the Knights of Labor located in this city, will participate.

STRIKES.

Between 800 and 900 employes of the Pullman Palace Sleeping Car Works at Pullman, Ill., held a meeting Wednesday night to consider the action of the company in ordering a reduction of wages amounting to about 10 per cent., to go into effect Thursday morning. The reason assigned by the company for making such reduction is that recent large contracts were made on so small a margin of profit as to demand retrenchments. As a result of the reduction, 300 employes struck Thursday morning, and the others are expected to follow.

Philadelphia is having more than its share of strikes just now. Three are in cotton mills, one in a woolen mill, one in a carpet factory, one in the American Sewing Machine Company's factory, and one of hatters. The majority are for an advance of wages or to recover reductions made a year ago.

The meeting of the window glass manufacturers in New York did not adopt the ultimatum, as it was thought it would. The question was left with the committee, and it was thought that the fires in the glass factories would be lighted yesterday, and all hands be at work at the prices paid last year.

One of the largest of strikes has just come to an end in Boston, where the female stitchers in a large establishment have returned to work after a strike of fifteen months, caused by the retention of an obnoxious forewoman. The latter "resigned" at last.

About 190 employes at Bergstrom Brothers & Co.'s stove foundry at Neenah, Wis., struck for an advance of 5 per cent. in their wages Wednesday. They claim that they are getting 30 per cent. less than the Milwaukee moulders.

The difficulty in Levy Brothers' cigar factory, New York, has been settled. The strikers returned to work yesterday at the instance of a joint committee of Internat onal Union No. 144 and Progressive Union No. 1.

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