

THE SATURDAY RECORD

THE MEDIUM OF ORGANIZED LABOR.



Issued weekly from the office of The Saturday Record, 509 So. Fourth St. Wilmington, N. C.

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We are always glad to receive letters or articles from our subscribers along any line of interest to our readers.

Subscription price \$1.00 a year, in advance.

Entered at the postoffice at Wilmington, N. C., as second-class mail matter.

SATURDAY, JUNE 9, 1917.

State Federation of Labor.

Mr. M. E. Meadows, secretary-treasurer of the North Carolina State Federation of Labor, has sent out an appeal to central trades unions and locals urging them to assist in bringing about the affiliation of unaffiliated unions over the State. This is a step toward a more thorough organization before the convention of the State Federation of Labor, which takes place in Salisbury in August. Every union man in the State should awaken to the necessity for a stronger State body and interest himself at the next regular meeting of his union in the election of a true-blue and conscientious delegate to represent the membership, in proportion to numbers allotted, at the convention.

The State Federation in the past has been sorely neglected by many strong local bodies of organized workers, as well as having had several setbacks on account of negligent and unfaithful officials; so we hope that every union man in North Carolina will give his assistance to the movement to get together in Salisbury in August and strengthen the spirit of brotherhood and justice among the united workers of the State. Let us go forth with the determination to make effective the ideals of the great labor movement. Urge upon every union man the necessity of greater interest in the State Federation. Let every delegate go to the convention with the determination that good shall be accomplished for organized labor. Be up and doing, brother! Agitate! Educate!! Organize!!!

War Emphasizes Need of Child Labor Laws.

"The experience of war time has demonstrated the necessity—technical, economic and even physiological—of the labor laws enacted before the war. In our legislation, secured in time of peace, we shall find the conditions for a better and more intense production during the war."

These words of Albert Thomas, French munitions minister, illustrate the attitude of France and England after two years of emergency exemptions for war industries, according to the children's bureau of the United States Department of Labor, which has just completed a brief review of all available reports on child labor in the warring countries.

In France and England, earlier standards of hours are being restored, not only to protect the health of the workers, but for the sheer sake of industrial efficiency, present and future. In Italy the central committee on industrial mobilization has taken steps in the same direction. In Russia, a year before the revolution, a movement was under way to raise the age limit for children industry.

Canada, Australia and New Zealand,

in spite of the great armies of men they have sent to the front, have maintained their labor standards, with little or no variation. Victoria has slightly increased the amount of overtime which may be permitted to women and children in special cases. On the other hand, Manitoba has reduced its legal overtime. No change in restrictions on women and child labor is reported from New Zealand.

In England the war exemptions to the factory laws have not included a lowering of the age limits for factory work, and the exemptions to the school attendance laws permitted for agriculture and "light employment" are now bitterly regretted by the general education authority which has sanctioned them.

"Suspend Profits" Suggests President Gompers.

Writing as chairman of the committee on labor, advisory commission, council of national defense, President Samuel Gompers makes this suggestion to T. G. Cranwell, president of the Continental Can Company, Syracuse, N. Y.:

"Suppose you and your fellow manufacturers were willing to suspend entirely, in this hour of the country's emergency, the pursuit of profits; would there be any possibility of a shortage of tin cans?"

The manufacturer urged a modification of laws governing the hours for women workers, which was disagreed to by President Gompers, although the trade unionist says he fails to understand how he can be of "some assistance" in this case.

In answer to the claim that there is a scarcity of labor, President Gompers says:

"It is to be regretted that there is no public method by which such assertions may be proved or disapproved.

"There may be a scarcity of some kinds of labor in your district at lower wages than are acceptable to unemployed persons who might fill a demand at what they regard as living wages at steady work.

"In all these cases the absence of public employment agencies which might indicate the movement of supply and demand of workers, leaves the interested observers without other help than their own or other men's guess work."

President Gompers quoted statements made by officers of the Amalgamated Association of Iron, Steel and Tin Workers in a conference with Secretary of Commerce Redfield and himself that the deficit in the output of cans could not be laid to the door of labor, as it could be shown that in certain places members of this union are not working full time.

A Very Commendable Act.

The management of the Delgado Cotton Mill Company, Messrs. R. R. Bellamy, president; T. R. Ames, secretary, and W. A. Woods, superintendent, have granted to those of their employes who reside in company houses their use without rent charges, and to those employes who reside outside the mill section they have given an increase in pay equivalent to their rents.

This sacrifice is made by the company to relieve the workers of a portion of the burden imposed on them by the high cost of living and is a most commendable act, which will undoubtedly strengthen the feeling of mutual responsibility that has always existed between the management and the employes of this company.

Women have such a good time talking because they have so little to say that they do not care how they say it.

War Times Call For Well-Conditioned Labor.

Reports to the American Federation of Labor headquarters indicate that the nation's best thought is accepting the trade union position that labor laws and other social legislation must not be waived or weakened because of the war.

Exploiters of labor have failed to twist the declaration of the Council of National Defense to suit their purpose. This declaration is based on possible eventualities that would imperil our national life. The council insists that it, rather than an employer or group of employers who would take advantage of war's first alarms, is the best judge of future conditions.

President Wilson's clear-cut declaration on May 15, in addressing a delegation of trade unionists, has been a powerful factor in checking this tendency, as it is a notification to labor exploiters that they can expect no aid from the nation's chief executive in their attempt to tear away the foundations of social progress. The President said:

"I have been very much alarmed at one or two things that have happened: At the apparent inclination of the legislatures of one or two of our States to set aside even temporarily the laws which have safeguarded the standards of labor and life. I think nothing could be more deplorable than that.

"Therefore, I shall exercise my influence as far as it goes to see that that does not happen and that the sacrifices we make shall be made voluntarily and not under the compulsion which is mistakenly interpreted to mean a lowering of the standards which we have sought through so many generations to bring to their present level."

In his telegram of April 30 to Illinois trade unionists, Secretary of War Baker said:

"The recommendation of the Council of National Defense was that power to suspend existing statutes be granted only in emergency cases involving the national defense, and then only upon request of the Council and for a stated period. The declared policy of the Council is to maintain all existing laws and regulations. No position has been taken by the Council in opposition to or discouragement of the passage of further regulations looking to improvement in industrial conditions."

Secretary of Commerce Redfield took the same position in his address before the convention of the National Associa-

tion of Manufacturers, New York, May 15th:

"In practice, therefore, there should be no disturbance of labor standards, no suggestion of altered hours. Let these things rest till the nation itself calls. Keep the standards of living untouched and the standard of friendly leadership exalted. If the nation's need shall call, you will be told what is required. Till that call shall come, let there be no undue pressure upon labor and let no advantage be taken whether for profit or for pride or supposed principle in the hour of the nation's trial."

These declarations by President Wilson and his cabinet officials are in line with the present attitude of the British government after its disastrous experience following an assent to the plea of employers identical to that in our own country. British authorities have acknowledged their mistake and the maintenance of labor standards is now their greatest consideration.

This war will not be a 100-yard dash, with the contestants calling on every ounce of energy for the few seconds necessary to cover the distance. The present emergency will be a long struggle, a marathon. Under these circumstances it is worse than unwisdom to deplete our first line of defense, the producers, by stripping them of protection against employers whose ideals are less of patriotism than of profit and dividends.

The editor of the Wilmington Dispatch says, in speaking of the Socialist-Pacifist meeting in New York recently: "Many a buzzard is liable to parade in the uniform of a Dove of Peace these days." No danger, Brother Cowan, for that Vulture of Speculation has absolute control of the parade grounds.

"So you are the applicant for position as chauffeur?"

"I am, sir."

"Are you a careful driver?"

"I am, sir."

"Do you smoke?"

"No, sir."

"Drink?"

"Do you swear?"

"Well, it depends on what kind of a car you've got, sir."

There is now said to be a peanut trust. It ought to be roasted.

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on your printing will appeal directly to every branch of organized workers and their friends, as it plainly shows that you fully

APPRECIATE THEIR TRADE