

# NEVER CEASE WORK.

## Sweatshops Found Running All Day Sunday

### IN FOUL-SMELLING ROOMS

#### Men, Woman, and Children Crowded Together.

#### The Legislative Committee Finds Much That Annoies and Disgusts its Members.

The special committee of the Illinois Legislative investigating the sweat-shop system expressed some of its worst feelings concerning their investigations yesterday. At 2 o'clock yesterday afternoon Senator Norman called the committee together at the Sturgis House.

They bounded a hidden street and went to the Hall House where they were met as heretofore by Mrs. Florence Kelley and T. J. Morgan, who have acted as guides. The object of yesterday's visit was to find out the removal of Sunday work being done. The committee had no difficulty in finding the crowded sweatshops open, and an examination showed that nearly all of them were running in full operation.

The first place visited was the rear of No. 130 Forquer street. Entrance was gained through a dark passage, forty feet long, which extended under the house on the front of the lot. The passage was not six feet high, and the floor was covered with silt. Doorkeeper Brown and Senator Norman had their hats knocked off while entering the place by coming in contact with the ceiling. Emerging into the daylight again, the committee found a little frame cottage.

**Working in Close Quarters.**

Three men and the proprietor, Hyman Polstein, were at work on boys' knee trousers. The room in which they worked was about 12 x 14 feet, and the air was very bad. The work was for Max Green & Co., No. 218 Franklin street, and Mayer Engel & Co., of Monroe street. Polstein said he received from \$1 to \$1.25 a dozen for the trousers complete. The neighbors said they were annoyed by the noise commenced by the presser, who worked as late as 4 p. m. in a small shed in the yard.

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The committee then climbed thirty feet to the second floor of the front house, where they found two girls at work. Sam Fisher, the elder of the two, said she made about \$1 a week sewing the buttons on trousers. She receives 2 cents a dozen for the same, after paying six buttons on each. The other girl was 12 years old, and only worked Saturdays and Sundays. She was paid 18 cents a day. The flat, which consisted of three rooms, was occupied by Polstein, and was in a filthy condition. The goods were crowded on and under the only bed. Polstein, his wife, and two young children were living in the rooms.

**In the Heat of Foot Air.**

In a single little room in the rear of No. 128 Banker street two girls and twelve men were found at work on knee trousers. Two persons were at work in the bathroom below, and the place was in a bad sanitary condition. The walls in the room were black with soot, and the air was stifling, as the gas and steam of the presses' steam came through the side floor. The girls were receiving 1 cent a dozen at this place. The goods were for Strauss, Blankenship & Upton, No. 218 Jackson street.

The next place visited was No. 210'Brien street. Here a crowd of young men and boys followed the committee, running and yelling. Great excitement prevailed among the residents of the district, who thought they were going to be arrested. Curiously demanding by signs the committee entered a dark, ill-smelling room where they found three men at work. The proprietor, Raphael Mordecai, was lying in at the time, but he hurried downstairs and explained that his goods were for H. Hall & Co., No. 112 Madison street, and Strauss, Blankenship & Upton.

**Health Down in Two Years.**

Joseph Herber, an operative in the place, was arrested. He said he was 27 years old and worked 12 hours in every house a day in order to make \$7 a week. He had been at the work two years and a half, and in receiving the machine had broken down his health. He said that some people with very strong constitutions could stand the work for eight years, but it was very seldom that a person could stand it over 1000 days. The committee then visited another shop operated by Moschler. Completely packing their way down the alley behind Judd street they reached No. 18, where the other of machines was found above the shops of street vendors and men who had crawled into the dirty alley after their work. On entering the room Sam Herber, a son of Joseph, was found running a machine. Being asked his age he could not say it, but it was 17 years old, although he was apparently about 5. He said he was paid \$1 a week, and nothing could shake this statement. In all seven houses are employed 180 boys, but only five were at work yesterday. They were at work on waistbands for boys' trousers. The foreman said that the proprietor sold most of his goods to small concerns all over the city.

**Goods Gather to the Street.**

At No. 91 Wilson street a sign hung "A. C. Bloomman, button-hole maker." Several of the members of committee entered the shop, which consisted of one small room, too small to admit all the members. Two men and two girls were at work. The proprietor said he did work for all the tailor shops in the neighborhood. All this time a crowd of men, women, and children stood in the street watching what was going on. On this street a large number of women and children were seen carrying large bundles of clothing to their homes in the street.

The next place visited was a typical tenement-house shop. In the rear of No. 81 Wilson street stands a respectable-looking brick building. For the first four floors half the building was used for living-rooms and the other half for shops. But the 8th floor was occupied by two large shops. All the shops were running full blast. The hallway is narrow and dark, and the only stairway is a wooden affair, very badly arranged for use in case of fire. In one-half of the two floors L. Johnson employs ten girls and 10 men making men's coats for Kahn, Wimpold & Co.

A large number of the girls were much too young to do the work required of them. One, Minnie Harris, 11 years old, was operating a sewing machine by foot-power and had to sit in one position ten hours a day six days a week and drive the machine. There was only one stove in the room, and that was forty feet long where the youngest girls were at work. The other shop was in very much the same condition. It is operated by Levy and Tucker. Twenty girls and ten men are employed on men's coats. The goods were of a good quality and were for Koh, Nathan & Fisher, Van Buren and Franklin streets, and Harris & Liebenthal. The room was crowded and the air was very bad. The sanitary condition of the shop was horrible, and the appearance of the employees gave evidence of what kind of play they were having. All the four lower floors between 11th and 12th girls had about thirty-five men are employed in the different branches of the business and several families have living rooms. They all use the same stairway and use the hallway as a receptacle for shoes, garbage, and other rubbish. Several water pipes were leaking a little and the condition of the place was far from being healthy.

**Shadows of Flesh and Blood.**

There was no provision made in case of fire, and considering the crowded condition of the place, the committee thought it very dangerous. After making their way through the crowd that thronged the sidewalk in front of the building, the committee went to No. 71 Wilson street, where A. Scheraga conducts an establishment in which he makes boys' trousers, selling them to retail stores all over the city. The ceiling was six feet below the sidewalk, and the light was so poor that several lamps were burning, casting a feeble light over the place. Four men who looked more like shadows than men were staring about the place. Their rough, straggly beards, their discordant speech, and the stilt of the umbrellas, together with the bang of the presser's

iron, were things which hastened the departure of the committee. There is a great difference between the work done by most of the workers and that done by Scheraga. The majority of workers contract for work for the morning and wholesale houses, where it is possible that the goods are furnished. The goods made by Scheraga are brought right to the retailer in small lots and are sold directly to the public. A small room in the rear of the shop was completely piled with finished work, which was neatly piled on boxes.

The committee then visited the last place for the day. In the rear of No. 21 Kansas street is a small frame building 20x40 feet and about 7 feet high, occupied by M. Borenstein as a coal factory. The room was dark, the only light coming from a small skylight. Thirty men and girls were at work in the small room and the air was foul. To add to its impurity, nearly all the men were smoking cigarettes. The girls were paid from \$2.50 to \$3, and the men \$3 to \$3.50 a week. They all work ten hours a day. The sanitary arrangements were in a frightful condition, and the general aspect of the place was far from pleasant.

After leaving the place the committee adjourned to meet at 10 o'clock this morning when further investigations will be made.

## WABASH RAILROAD SUFFERS

Extensive Reduction of Freight Cars Said to Have Been Discussed.

Kansas City, Mo., Feb. 12.—Special Telegram.—For the last two years the Wabash Railway Company has lost from freight cars valuable merchandise of every description. The total value, it is said, will total up not less than \$200,000 as far as now traced. Three months ago, according to information obtained to-day, the matter was pinned on the hands of one of the most noted detectives in this country and they were systematically to work on the case. One of the first things noticed by the detective was the manner in which the suspected person carried up their freight. Instead of packing with care, as is the usual way of pilfering a car, they had not insured a cent. After a careful scrutiny of the cars, here and there could be seen marks upon the timbers, showing that bolts had been removed. By removing the lower runway the door to the car would drop slightly and this would allow the door to free itself from the upper runway, and then the clasp of the door, through which the rail was wired, would act as a hinge, by which the door could be swung out wide enough to allow a man to enter. Next inside, the most valuable freight which would be loaded in small parcels, it is charged, was removed and loaded in the warehouse, who would "plum" it and send a line as it would be done. All the cars said to have been pilfered were assigned to persons many miles distant from the place where they were supposed to have been received, and in consequence it would be several days before the loss would be discovered. The principal points at which the alleged stealings were carried on are Kansas City, Toledo, St. Louis, Moberly and other important points on the system. Many arrests are promised in the near future.

## PARTY PRESSION PLANNED

Disfranchised Member Represents to Be Whipped Into Line.

INDIANAPOLIS, Ind., Feb. 12.—Special Telegram.—Many Democrats suggest away from school to-day and, according to reports, and unwilling to discuss their views for leading the trouble that has split the big Democratic majority in the House in Indiana. After many proposals and counter-proposals had been considered and discussed all parties decided to attend the advisory joint session which is to be held tomorrow evening in the hall of the House of Representatives. The Indian that is opposed to the enactment of the Governor's suffrage bill will go into the arena with the understanding that no vote can be collected or to vote the McLean bill should be passed and to justify the action of those House Democrats who led the action of the citizens. It is argued that the opponents of the McLean bill could be forced by any means that the Democrats may take. The purpose is to reach an agreement that will be satisfactory to all interests concerned. The agreement to attend the advisory session is taken as an indication that the opponents of the Governor's plan are endeavoring in their opposition and that they will within the next few days be whipped into line.

## WILL MAKE SOCIAL REFORMS

Judge Grover Will Try Much Simpler Than His Predecessors.

WASHINGTON, D. C., Feb. 12.—Special Telegram.—The friends of Judge Grover, speaking of the chance as to his financial stability in relation to the social state of his Democratic predecessors in the State Department, say that a reform in the report will be inaugurated by Judge Grover; that he will, undoubtedly, introduce simpler social system, and seek to the cost the extravagance and wastefulness which have been characteristic for so many years of the new rich, outside and inside of political life, who have so demoralized society here. Nothing is more needed in Washington than a return to simpler and less expensive social ways. Judge Grover will be welcomed if he still stands the practice adopted by his Democratic predecessor, who, Milwaukee gathered silver dollars from the marriage contracts in the province in the strict and cool battles of childbearing in excellent writing of exceptions.

It is said that Judge Grover will favor an energetic foreign policy, and that he is likely to be an earnest advocate of the annexation of Hawaii.

**The Girl**

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