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UNION MADE

WHEREVER POSSIBLE IS OUR POLICY

C. H. GORDON & CO., THE WAGE EARNERS' STORE

A GOLF SKIRT

By
Theodora Bliss

(In the American Federationist)

A great bundle was seen to fall mysteriously from a window in the rear of a tenement on the congested Eastside, that, mecca of sweat shop fame.

In this neighborhood, the hotbed of disease, the most pathetic poverty-exists. The houses are the oldest in the city, their foundations are crumbling, the walls are fifth-stained, mould and dry-rot are over everything.

But in many of the rooms in these buildings many families will huddle together in an atmosphere which is rife with the deadly germs of disease.

These houses are always swarming with dirty, noisy children, in spite of the fact that many little coffins are continually being borne out of the doorways.

On the afternoon when the great, clumsy bundle made its descent from a rear window of one of the largest of these pest breeders, a squad of health officers were making a tour of inspection.

Sophie Moscovsky, a mother of ten children, whose husband had thrown the bundle from the window, sat idle in her room. The scanty, cracked table was stood unwashed upon the greasy table, the floor was covered with ashes and tracks of muddy feet. A dirty frying pan lay on the rusty stove, for this woman had not been warned in time of the visit of the health officers, otherwise she would have smeared up into some kind of order for their reception.

As it was, when they entered the room there was no sign of work, the sewing machine was still, a table which stood behind it was empty.

The mother sat by a rickety carriage which did service as a cradle and contained an unwholesome looking babe sucking at an empty bottle. Several other children in dingy, ragged garments, were huddled in a corner, their eyes fixed in horror upon the uniformed men.

"Well! Well! No work today?" inquired the captain as he entered.

The frightened woman only shook her head, but one shaggy headed tot called out, "Mister, mister, its all out," as he pointed towards the window.

The mother grabbed and shook the youngster and ordered him to be quiet.

Then the leader went to the window and peered out of it in every direction, sniffing and turning up his nose, but seeing no sign of anything he turned to the woman with a warning.

"Remember, Madam, you can not take any work in these close quarters. That is against the law. The odor from the rear is simply awful. How do you live in such a stench?"

Then he poked into closets, opened the stuffy closets, and peered under the dirty beds in search of unmade clothes. But as nothing of the sort was visible in the apartment, he contented himself with writing out a notification which read: "The atmosphere is pregnant with tuberculosis germs; no work on clothing must be taken here until the room is thoroughly cleansed and disinfected," adding a warning to the woman: "See that this is attended to, madam, or you will have trouble. You mind the laws, I say," he shouted to the Russian.

The oppressed family had only recently left the land of their Batuschka (Little father or dear father), in order to make a livelihood for their family in America. But the language was new to them and the customs, too, were strange. The official paper handed to the woman she took with timid hands, and looked it over curiously, then shook her head in despair and cried aloud:

"No Inglesh naw, man," she cried. She trembled with deadly fear as the men left the room, shaking their hands in warning at her.

Then she remembered her Jacob and the work.

She looked out of the front window and saw her unwelcome visitors turning a corner. Then she ran to acquaint her husband with the fact, so Jacob quietly returned with the bundle of unfinished skirts, and they sat down to work again. They worked far into the night to make up for the time lost by the interruption of the officers. For by the rules of the firm for which they worked, a certain part of their pay would be deducted if the work was not returned by a specified time.

They could not afford to lose a copper of the money, the whole of it being but sufficient to supply food for the Russian family.

The next day the great pile of golf skirts was finished and delivered to a Fifth Avenue firm.

One skirt in the lot was a pretty shade of grey and marked "to be kept especially clean."

On this garment, the wife, a consumptive victim, worked alone, and with each few stitches she coughed up little germs that were devouring her life and thus infected the rich skirt.

This skirt attracted the eye of the young and lovely bride of one of New York's millionaires, who accordingly became its possessor.

This skirt was displayed and admired on the golf links in due time. There in the first few weeks of that exhilarating sport, this young bride began to cough. "A slight cold" her companion remarked. But the cough increased, her cheeks flamed, and she began to lose her strength.

A trip to the mountains was advised by her physicians.

Months passed away, but the slight cold taken in the golf links developed into a serious illness, and the young woman never dreamed that her days on earth were shortened by wearing of a garment impregnated with poisonous germs, fostered by the foul air in one of her father's tenement houses, a house which had been neglected by its owner, so that it was condemned by the health inspectors, a house whose foulness was so great that it was unfit to work in, and the garments there made could but spread disease wherever they were taken.

LABOR AND CAPITAL

"Things are what they are," and no amount of cheap rhetoric can make them otherwise. The "interests of labor and capital are identical" only to the extent that each side wants to get for itself from the other as much profit as all the circumstances attending and affecting the deal between them will allow. In all other respects these interests differ

WE CLOTHE THE
MEN FROM
HEAD TO FOOT

as widely as do their respective functions in the economic and industrial divisions of society. Labor and capital may, and should work in harmony but before that end can be attained each must realise its exact relation to the other and be guided by its action accordingly.—Coast Seaman's Journal.

LIFE IN CHINATOWN

Some Impressions of the Chinaman in Vancouver by J. Keir Hardie

The following interesting description of life in Chinatown, Vancouver, is given by Mr. J. Keir Hardie, M.P. in the London Labor Leader:

"At Vancouver we visited Chinatown, under the guidance of a couple of detectives.

"The overcrowding that prevails cannot be imagined by those who have not seen it. Beds on shelves and benches, and even suspended from the ceiling, are the rule in every room. It is seldom there is a window, or other means of ventilation. People work, cook, eat, sleep, and smoke opium in these places, and withal remain healthy. No European could survive for a month under such conditions.

"But the event of the evening was a mock raid upon a gambling den. Chinamen are inveterate gamblers; and behind an innocent looking shop front there is often concealed a great hall, reserved for this purpose. To get to this room is a problem. Behind a little counter in the front shop there sits an impassive figure, apparently waiting for customers to come and buy cigarettes. In reality he is guarding the den. A glass door leads out of the shop into a passage, and in this passage are three concealed doors, made of 2 1/2 inch solid timber, and heavily bolted from within by great wooden bars. When a customer enters the innocent looking youth behind the counter lifts the bars and pulls the door open. Twice the detectives made a wild rush into the shop smashing through the glass door at the back, but only to find themselves in a cul de sac.

A Detective's Ruse.

"Meanwhile the man behind the counter sat stolid and immovable, not showing the slightest interest in the proceedings even by the moving of a muscle. One man, in fact, calmly read a paper through all the hubbub. On the third attempt a bit of a ruse was tried, which succeeded. Standing close to the wall and out of sight of the window, one of the detectives smashed the plate glass with a swinging blow of his stick. In an instant a crowd began to gather and the man behind the counter, taken momentarily off his guard, rose from his seat to see what had happened. This was the detective's opportunity. With a rush like that of a mad bull he was in the shop, through the glass door, and inside two of the concealed doors before John had realised what had happened. By means of a small peep hole we saw through door number three into a dimly lit room, where about a score of men were busy gambling. They heard our voices, heard us trying to burst open the door, but they went on calmly playing all the same. On our way out the man behind the counter was too much engrossed in his paper to see us. Truly these are a wonderful people, of whom I shall have more to say after I have seen them in their native land."

No doubt our celestial friends are a wonderful people, but when we realise that it is this self same wonderful people, who are capable of living and flourishing under conditions above described, with whom our white brethren are expected to compete for a livelihood, we cease to admire them for their stolid indifference and their other peculiarities of nationality, and only wonder what species of imbecility a government belongs to which allows beings to herd together in such a fashion and expects a white populace to exist on wages which are sufficient to sustain life under those brutal and degrading aspects.

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Central district... 46c
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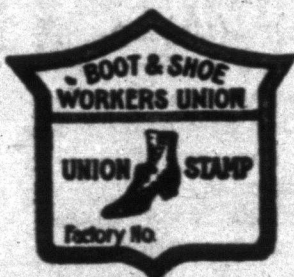
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