

THE EVENING JOURNAL

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COAL BARONS TAKE ADVANTAGE OF SMALL WAGE INCREASE TO BOOST PRICES

BY ROBERT L. OWEN

I fear the average citizen does not realize sharply enough the close connection between his vote and his pocketbook. Big business understands this perfectly, that is why it spends millions on campaign funds, maintains expensive lobbies in Washington, watches appointments to important offices, and is in politics 365 days in the year. The average citizen, disgusted with "politics" need not despair of release from his unjust burdens if he will forsake blind partisanship and take a little intelligent interest in his government.

Take the coal situation as an example. The nation gasped a few days ago when a \$2 increase in the price of coal was announced, the excuse given being the 27 per cent increase granted labor by the president's coal commission.

Now comes the Federal Trade Commission and gives the country the plain facts which prove that this wage increase averages only 45 cents per ton advance to the miners, and that 23 cents of this was granted by the Garfield award at the time of the strike last November.

Two dollars is demanded to cover a wage advance of 45 cents. Do the coal operators need this money to care for their families or enable them to make a fair profit and thus continue in business? For answer let us turn again to "Senate document 259"—the Treasury report giving corporations income and excess tax returns for 1917, from which I have before quoted in these articles. At page 372 of this famous report are listed 34 bituminous coal companies of the Appalachian region, which has a total capital stock of \$99,577,103 and which in 1917 made a total net profit of \$26,261,667 after all taxes had been paid.

Twenty-three of these companies cleared net profits on capital stock, after paying taxes, of all the way from 100 per cent to 9,963 per cent. Six Pennsylvania anthracite companies cleared up \$1,081,550 profits, beyond all taxes, on a capital stock of \$1,150,000.

Impossible of belief as it may seem that men would take such advantage of our people with the nation at war, the government figures are there. And remember, these profits were made in some cases on watered capital.

To a great extent this explains why the average American family man had to pay this last winter \$8.81 per ton for his soft coal as against \$5.43 in 1918, and for his stove coal \$12.59, as against \$7.73 for the same period. The Bureau of Labor Statistics furnishes us with these figures and they are conservative.

No fair man who knows the truth can lay the enormous sudden increase at the door of labor, organized or unorganized. My space is short; I cannot fill this article with unending statistics; but reports of the Federal Trade Commission prove that between 1916 and 1918 the increase granted operators and dealers on their coal prices was proportionately four times that granted to labor.

There is a question of humanity, health, and national well-being involved here.

All experts agree that no wage worker can maintain himself, wife and family of three children in ordinary health and comfort on an income of less than \$2,200 per year at the present time and that \$1000 is necessary to escape the mere poverty line.

From reliable data it is clear that the best paid coal-miners during the war period were making \$14.00 per year, the poorer paid down to \$900; and, further that even with the recent award the average yearly earnings may be expected to reach around \$1,200 or \$13.00 per year, with a maximum of \$1,600 or \$17.00 just at the poverty line.

Facts like the above which might be multiplied indefinitely all to the same conclusion, are necessary if we are to arrive at just judgements and take wise action which will be neither precipitous and destructive nor delay beyond the point when the public patience is exhausted.

If the people will not realize the great value of public servants who are turning the light into dark corners of commercial greed for profiteering, the special interests do.

The Coal Operators' Association itself has brought a suit in the Supreme Court of the District of Columbia to enjoin the Federal Trade Commission from securing monthly data

as to their cost reports. The case is before Judge Bailey. If the operators win, the usefulness of the Trade Commission is at an end, because it will be shorn of its power to go behind business camouflage and bet the real facts which the people must know.

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If it is good business for the coal operators and other combines to take an interest in politics and government without distinction of party politics, then it is equally good business for the people to interest themselves likewise.

How Stomach Can be Restored to a Vigorous Healthy Condition.

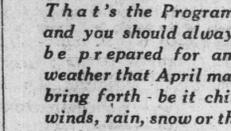
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But it is possible to so tone up the digestive organs that a pleasing diet may be selected from articles of food that cause no discomfort.

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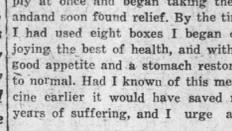
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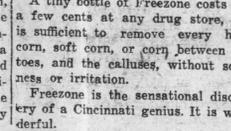
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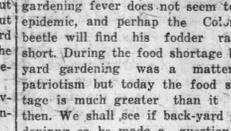
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A Comradely Man

THEY deal in human nature stripped of its veneer. They see it at the pinnacle of its joys, and in the depths of its sorrow or degradation.

RECENTLY one of the leading officers of the Men's Social Work of the organization, after twenty years of devoted work on the altar of sacrifice and service, was "promoted to glory." One testimony described him as "a comradely man."

THAT graphic phase illustrates the spirit in which their Officers endeavor to interpret Christ's teaching to those whom they serve.

The Salvation Army

308 Citadels and Institutions in this territory. Use them!

Dyed Her Blouse, Skirt and a Coat

"DIAMOND DYES" TURNED FAD-ED, SHABBY, OLD APPAREL INTO NEW.

Don't worry about perfect results. Use "Diamond Dyes," guaranteed to give a new, rich, fadeless color to any fabric, whether it be wool, silk, linen, cotton or mixed goods,—dresses, blouses, stockings, skirts, children's coats, feathers, draperies, coverings.

The Direction Book with each package tells so plainly how to dye and dye over any color that you can not make a mistake.

To match any material, have druggist show you "Diamond Dye" Color Card.

POTATOES AND GARDENING What reason there has been for the extraordinary rise in the price of potatoe is not clear. The blame is laid on United States buying to help cover a shortage across the border. But potatoes are held in car-lots at many points, passing from one speculative hand to another, merely on the strength of a bill of lading, and the price is shoved higher each time. Potatoes are \$6 a bag, and there is no protest from any authority in the name of the consuming public if the public complacency will endure a price six times as high as the pre-war price for a necessary that is the base of nearly all meals, then the extortion will not abate. But the high price will surely turn extra attentions to back-yard gardening this year. Toronto back-yards and vacant lots produced \$100,000 worth of vegetables in the war period. If potatoes were generally grown this season, in the vacant yard soil in and about the city, two months' supply might be produced locally. But the gardening fever does not seem to be epidemic, and perhaps the Colorado beetle will find his fodder rather short. During the food shortage back yard gardening was a matter of patriotism but today the food shortage is much greater than it was then. We shall see if back-yard gardening can be made a question of pocket. If potatoes at \$6 a bag are not sufficient motive, then the outlook is hopeless, and the country will have to go on until mounting food prices force partial depopulation of the congested cities and towns, and repopulation of the farms.

ALL STAR VAUDEVILLE AT THE GRAND The all star vaudeville show at the Grand Opera House for the week-end is another excellent bill and the management deserves credit for bringing such good attractions to the city. All the acts are good ending with the wonderful electrical performance of Fred Larenie & Co, which is a whole show in itself. Arthur and Jean Kelly supply plenty of fun in a sporting goods store, displaying much skill and good comedy. DeCourtney and Jamieson in their sketch, "Out in the Country in the Morning," are most entertaining. Maybell Phillips, the Sunshine Girl, has an entertaining act and Theo and Bandler are good in their sketch featuring the Aero Girl. The Naval Base Quartette, in harmony and comedy is good. Dominion-wide application of the principle of a minimum wage and a 48-hour working week for women and girls except in domestic and agricultural occupations was strongly favored by the Royal Commission on unification of labor laws. A contract has been awarded for the erection of a \$74,000 public school at Welland.

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