

STRIKE WAGED IN GEORGIA FACTORY

Nine Hundred Workers Affected
by Contest for Increase in
Wages — Families Evicted
from Homes by Corporation.

Officials of the United Textile Workers are much interested in the progress of a strike in Atlanta, Ga., of which an organizer writes as follows to Secretary Hibbert:

"The struggle of dollars against humanity in the Fulton Bag & Cotton mills settlement is being waged as fiercely today as three weeks ago. Both sides are equally determined to win. Oscar Elsas says that he will close his mill forever before he will recognize the union. The union members declare they will die in their tracks before they again enter this mill under the old conditions."

"Quite a number of years ago, the exact number I do not know, Jacob Elsas conceived the idea Atlanta would be a splendid locality in which to erect a cotton mill. The citizens in their eagerness to encourage enterprise, importuned this company to build here, and as an inducement guaranteed them the exemption of taxes for all time. According to newspaper reports, Jacob Elsas retired three years ago with a cool \$10,000,000 to his credit."

Son Assumes Control.

"Oscar Elsas, the eldest son, following the custom of rulers, fell heir to the throne, and czar-like, assumed the dictatorship over that part of the city principally occupied by the Fulton Bag & Cotton mills. It is as difficult to get an audience with this young ruler as it is with the czar of Russia. The closeness of kin perhaps is responsible for this. The czar of the Fulton Bag & Cotton mills settlement is a well-fed and carefully groomed personage, parting his hair in the middle, standing erect and assuming an air of dignity that would put a turkey gobbler to shame. He lives in one of the most fashionable residence streets in our city, surrounded by every luxury, traveling to and from his throne in an automobile driven by a chauffeur of emery hue."

"The employes of this descendant of Abraham are mostly Georgians and many residents of long standing in the city. The \$10,000,000 accumulated by Jacob Elsas represents the blood and sinew of these people. The young czar evidently thinks they are good for a few millions more before they are assigned to the scrap heap. The mystery is, how have they stood it so long? Working under deplorable conditions (some have to climb five flights of stairs to reach their work; not allowed the use of the elevator,) inhaling dust and lint all day long in a closed, stuffy building without ventilation; living in houses in the most part unfit for human beings; sanitary conditions unspeakable; scarcely any house furnishings; soap wrappers grace the wall in the absence of pictures."

Stunting Little Ones.

"There is evidence on all sides of the natural desire for home life that finds its fullest expression as soon as the family income permits. The children of the mill district have the same ambition for play as other children, but the poverty of the mill people makes it imperative that their little ones supplement the family income as early as possible, hence, they are denied the pleasure of the playground and God's sunshine at much too early an age. Are the citizens of Atlanta so blind that they cannot see, by stunting the lives of the little ones, dwarfing the mind and body, that of a natural consequence the next generation will deteriorate?"

"Nine hundred are on the strike list; 130 of these are children under 16 years of age; two-thirds are women. The commissary is feeding between 1200 and 1400 strikers and their dependents. One hundred and twenty-five families, averaging nine to the family, are involved in this struggle. Eighty-five families have been evicted from their homes, in the face of the company owing them for honest labor."

"One lady lay ill with a three-day-old baby at her side; the doctor advised strongly against her removal, fearing death would result. But reports have it that the orders from the Fulton Bag & Cotton mills were to move her regardless of the consequences."

"Man's inhumanity to man makes countless thousands mourn."

"An operative from another city received a flattering offer to come and work for this soulless corporation. She came, bringing a three-year-old tot with her. May it be said to her honor and credit that when she learned the conditions she joined the union and took her stand for truth and humanity. A few days later her husband (rather, it should be said, the brute she had for a husband) came, and, upon learning that his wife had failed to go into the mill to work, he became so infuriated that he wrenched the little one from her arms and disappeared before she fully realized what had happened. In about four days he returned with the sick baby in his arms, willing and eager to deliver it to his wife. All possible was done for the precious little one, but angels from heaven had gathered the little one home. All indications were that the baby had starved to death. Organized labor representatives took charge of the remains and with gentle hands and loving hearts placed with tender care the earthly remains in the last resting place."

"A more gallant fight has never been conducted than is being made by these people, and, lest we forget, they are making our fight. They are putting their all into this effort to ameliorate the condition of the textile workers in every walk of life. They are not asking for charity; they do not want charity, but they are demanding justice, and to this end they must have munitions of war. First, they need money. The Atlanta Federation of Trades, through its executive board, is handling all funds. From this committee a sub-committee, consisting of William Strauss, Carl Karston and Louie P. Marquardt, has been appointed to supervise the spending of the finances. Carl Karston is exchequer. C. A. Miles and Mrs. E. B. Smith are directing the work, and a splendid work they are doing."

Value of Publicity.

Next to funds, is publicity. Let every union man and woman keep constantly

before the public the fact that the textile workers are on strike and what they are striking for. The daily press cannot find in this struggle of dollars against women and innocent children anything of interest to the public to print. So the fact of spreading before the world the great injustice perpetrated upon a helpless and unfortunate people depends upon the activity of organized labor and its friends. Publicity will win the battle.

"The textile workers are not making an unreasonable demand of the Fulton Bag & Cotton mills. Their cause is a just and honest one, and to the end of gaining recognition they are living hopefully, buoyantly, and filled with the belief that in the not far distant future victory will be their reward."

ers and at R. A. McWhirter Co.