

-----FULTON BAG & COTTON MILLS-----

Report of J.W.W. Inspector and-
" " A.E.W. No. 10

Wednesday, June 3rd, 1914.

Mr. Miles received a telephone call at 7:15 A.M. from Mr. Max Wilkes, and said he would be right down to his room. I tried to get the next room to Mr. Wilkes, but a Mr. J.F. Crouch, who is with Mr. Wilkes, has that room, so I got the next one to Mr. Crouch, #306. Mr. Crouch has #304 and Mr. Wilkes has #302. Mr. Wilkes and Mr. Miles left the hotel at 8:45 A.M. We then went to office and notified Mr. Myers of the arrival of those two men. We then went down to our rooms and they opened their meeting about 10:00 A.M. Mr. Wilkes told them that the Fulton Bag & Cotton Mills was making thousands and thousands of dollars off of you people, and the conditions at your mill does not pay you enough to buy you a nights lodging. "The luxuries of their life is given by your sweat and blood. Some people don't know what they are talking about when they say they are not making any profit. The steel companies make from \$900.00 to \$1000. a man down the line every year. The officers of this Company enjoy the necessities of life, and all of this comes from you. Now come back to the conditions, (someone interrupted the speaker) some of you don't know what it is to get the fresh air, and I don't believe some of you know what the green grass is, or have ever seen it grow. The conditions here now are as bad as slavery days; the slaves were better treated than you, and they did get something to eat; what are you hanging around here for, do you blame the owners of the Mills or do you blame yourselves. Mr. Miles has told you the conditions of other cities and your conditions here. Now my brothers work to here (too low to hear good) The Committee wants to see those men on pay day (fans are working, machine cut out) Men what are you working for, are you working for a farm, or are you working for yourselves, or are you going to send these men to the seashore, and in the fall to Paris or Berlin (someone butted in and said, I ain't got anything to say about you) (speaker talking too low again) For your work you don't get enough money to buy a fan to fan yourself in this hot weather. I am going to tell you comrades now, before I proceed that there is \$6.20, \$5.50 and \$2.70 for something. I just want to let you know what these things cost you fellows come in later and want to know where this money is, and I am telling you now what we are doing with it! He told a little story about a vine he paid 50 cents for, something that was made for 15 cents. "I bought it and I knew it was robbery at the time. In 1881 during the panic what were your conditions, they are all work and now we are out for a strike, and the Fulton Bag and Cotton Mills must better the conditions for you men and women. To-day, what is the land of the free, we are out in a fight to win (a little applause) The business men of the city, they want something and they want it for nothing. If you want it you have to pay for it. If you allow the conditions to exist the way they are now, you are absolutely a lot of fools. You want so you can go to see your father, sister and brother and cousins when you want to, and what are you working for; how long would the Electric Lighting and Power Company stand for it, to allow their men to go out on strike and let their machines and boilers stand idle; that is where the shoe pinches you. You will all get

the same price. What is \$8.60 a week figuring out what that will be for 52 weeks in a year, and you have to live those 52 weeks in the year, while your boss goes and tours Europe, and you are working here at home in these hot mills for \$8.50 per week. Just think of that a little."

The Labor Unions in this city are working for your interest, and they want to see you making more money, and they are going to investigate the profits of this Company, and I want to see you all here at this meeting. I want to see a bunch here enough to fill the hall to overflowing and so that you will have to sit up on the roof. We want the working conditions so that we can eat our breakfast in peace and to be able to send our children to school, so that they can be educated the way they ought to be. I think I have talked so that you people can understand me! Mrs. Smith then took the floor. "We want to make conditions in these Mills something that we have never had before. There are some people around here trying to secure information, and they stand by the fence out in front of my house, and I sent someone out to ask him his business, and if it was information he wanted, for him to leave." There she called off a list of people who were working for \$1.35 a day. "You people don't want to go out and stand around the corner and give out information, put your hat and coat on and come up to the hall. We came down here to instruct you people and we want you to take our advice on the matter, and see that no one does any talking on the street. It did not take the Manager long to tell you that if you were not satisfied to work for the money that you were getting, to look for another job, and now we are out on a strike, do you get me, keep away from the park and the street, and to-morrow is the time, and if there is any talking to be done on the street let the picket do it. Now if any of you have any old newspapers, take them to the Commissary for we can use them, and we will accept any other contribution such as money and anything you can give, and you can come and present it to Mr. Miles. The stenographer will be very glad to accept it to, if you have anything to offer bring it up like men and women and give it to the Union, and not to other charitable institutions. There is going to be a mass meeting at Grants Park at 5:00 P.M. on Friday or Saturday. Mr. Sparks will talk. after you leave this hall I want everyone of you to go directly home, and at 3:00 P.M. we will all meet in front of the hall, and have your pictures taken, and don't let anything detain you to keep away. Mr. Miles will take charge of the big floor, and I will take charge of the small floor. How many are there in this hall who were fired before the strike, I want you all to stand up." Sixteen stood up. "How many have come out on strike since those 16 were fired?" Miles is now talking to help Mrs. Smith and to get them to stand up. "It seems as though they will not stand up, don't get impatient, it will only take a few minutes more, then we will close the meeting." very noisy, Mr. Miles called them to order, but they seemed to be very noisy and some baby was crying. "How many of you that were fired belong to the Union, or otherwise, stand up. I have been working for you night and day for 10 days and I want to know how many of you will do something for me. I want to know if you will get out and get all the people you can to come to this hall at 3:00 P.M. to-day. I want to see if you will do something for yourselves, and don't come up all dolled up in high collars and silks and satins, for after 3:00 P.M., we will have lots of work to do; come up just as you are." Mr. Miles and Mrs. Smith talked alternately. "Go out and find all the old ropes and tin cans that you can and bring them to me this afternoon, and I expect you all to be here at 3:00 P.M. and if any are here who have not taken the obligation, come forward and take it." He then said something about 50 cents, I did not get it. There was such an uproar, the meeting adjourned at 12:00 o'clock.