

It has come to this in America, that a newspaper correspondent can be arrested for reporting the news from the Wage-Worker's point of view, given 65 days in the chain gang, and so restricted that no word can reach his newspaper or his friends. For, with all our efforts by letter and telegraph, we were unable to learn what had happened to Foster when his reports suddenly ceased on Wednesday evening, Dec. 15. This last dispatch appears elsewhere in this issue. If he had been guilty of anything libelous in his reports, he or we ought to have been arrested for libel. But no! On a fake charge of "disorderly conduct" he is railroaded to the rock pile! This is America, workingmen, land of the Free! Foster is no "professional," but just a "common laborer."

We print one of his reports, which we had no room for last week. We also print his last letter, written Tuesday, Dec. 14, outlining the history of Spokane's Chief Sullivan, and Justice of the Peace Mann. Will they kill him when they read this? If they do ———!

## SHOCKING EXPERIENCES

(Reported by Wm. Z. Foster, Special Correspondent of "The Workingman's Paper" in Spokane, now in jail under sentence of 65 days on chain gang, for daring to make these true reports.—Ed.)

**SPokane, Monday, Dec. 6, 1909.**—Last night was experience night at the I. W. W. propaganda meeting, and it was one that many of us will never forget. The bolts at Franklin school and Fort Wright were withdrawn for a short time the day previous, and about forty human wrecks turned adrift to find aid wherever they could. They, of course, were given a rousing welcome at the headquarters, and after being fed a little milk toast (which is all they can eat without becoming deathly sick), they are called the "milk toast gang"—they were asked to tell some of their jail experiences at the meeting last night. Some of them were so weak that they couldn't take

the stand, but a few of the stronger ones could and did, relating stories of police brutality that seem incredible in this twentieth century.

One boy 18 years old served 23 days in the terrible Spokane sweat-box dungeon for simply trying to encourage his fellow-prisoners to stick it out. This dungeon is 8 x 8 feet and is heated by steam; sometimes there were as many as thirty-one confined in it for 10 or 12 hours at a stretch, and so crowded were they that three or four big policemen had to throw their weight against the door in order to shut it and render the cell air-tight.

Harry Nelson, the boy who spent all this time in such a horrible place, is a happy-go-lucky young fellow who expresses his willingness to go in again and "rot" if it is necessary. He lost fifty pounds during the sweating process but his boyanant spirit still reigns supreme. The direct cause of his being put in this place was talking a guard at the Franklin school that if home had been like this he would never have left it.

There are other men at present in this dungeon who are so weakened that, in the language of some who have recently come out, "they will never be able to stick it out." Wilson was promised freedom if he would work half a day on the rock pile.

For six days a bunch of twenty-six were kept in a cell about the same size as the dungeon and so crowded were they that if a man wished to stretch his legs he had to climb up on the bars and hang by his hands. Although it was impossible to sleep under such conditions for the first few days, nature finally asserted itself and the men would pile themselves up cord-wood fashion and try to "sleep."

Others told of hardships at the Franklin school and Fort Wright, and also of the hunger strikes when every one refused to eat the vretched rations and kept to their determination for a week, or in some cases for ten or twelve days. At Franklin school the most refined punishments and hardships were inflicted upon the men in the vain hope of driving them on to the rock pile. Buck Miller — C. Edwards, two police sergeants, are the worthies who are entitled to a great deal of the credit (?) for these atrocities. Let their names be preserved to fame with Sullivan, Burns, Shannon, Miles, etc. To break the men's

sleep they were ordered out at 4 a. m. to wash.

In passing out the bread to the men it is customary to line them up and make them pass along a certain route so that no one gets a second ration. One of the fellows, a harmless, good-natured Swede, after getting his portion sat down to eat in the corridor just outside of the room where he was confined. He had been doing this unmolested for several days and was startled when a big brute came up and struck him in the face with his fist and then fell to clubbing him. He was informed also through the medium of many oaths that the guard had orders to kill and that he would be pleased to carry him out dead.

The guards occasionally sort out some who they think show signs of weakening and taking them aside, console with them and ask them if they would relish a good bombast, and state they are in a position to grant this favor if it was asked for. In case of acceptance the prisoner is taken to the city jail and served with a meal and after he has eaten it he is invited to go to work on the rock pile, he is told that he can't refuse now, as he has accepted the food and must work. When he does plainly indicate that he don't intend to go on the rock pile he is punched, kicked, made to run the gauntlet between rows of policemen, and finally winds up in the dungeon, perhaps ruined for life, as many of the boys have been in this light.

A favorite pastime of the guards at the school is to call some prisoner out from the bunch on some pretext or other, and then take him to some adjoining room and club him, while his companions are regaled with his cries.

One young fellow is hobbling about with his kneecap broken as a result of a kick delivered by a policeman after he had been taken to the police station. One is in the hospital with a broken jaw received by being struck by a club. Several have been ruptured and otherwise injured.

Recently the prisoners were taken to the city jail to bathe, and as they had no warning that they were about to go, many had taken off their underclothes in order to boil them and kill the vermin with which they were infested. In spite of this fact they were taken out into the cold weather, and as a result several got severe colds and rheumatism while one suffered an attack of pneumonia and another hemorrhage of the lungs. And two last were taken to the alleged hospital and experienced such hardships there that they were glad to get back to Franklin school. This hospital is located in the basement of the city hall, and is a diagram. The only medicines given to the patients are quinine, salts, hartshorn and one or two other staples. A Salvation Army lady is supposed to be matron, but ex-patients declare that while they were in there were several helplessly sick women inmates who had to look entrally to men attendants for every help. The I. W. W. patients slept on iron beds from the mattresses had been removed. The tortures during the last 48 hours at Franklin school are in

such a weak condition, at present that seven were carried out on stretchers yesterday, bound whether or one knows. A couple of days since the guards discovered that one man had his bank book with him (he had smuggled it in) and full of authority he tried to take it from him. The fellow, however, succeeded in tearing it to pieces rather than let the guard have it, as he feared he would try to draw the money, and for this insubordination he was choked almost into insensibility and until his mouth streamed with blood.

Many such tales as these were related by the boys, but in spite of them, when the chairman called for volunteer speakers, they one and all signified their intention of "going in" again as soon as they recovered a little strength. They have the utmost contempt for the few who accepted a speedy release by way of the rock pile, and declare they will rot before they help build the new Monroe street bridge unless they get paid for it.

Many of these men have served in the army and navy, but that don't save them from being anarchists in the sight of the authorities. The conditions depicted above are not stories typical of bygone police brutality, but are those of the present time. Right now there are men in Franklin school so weak from lack of food that they are unable to walk, and yet Spokane goes on seemingly unconcerned over the matter. The speakers arrested today are either in the sweat-box or cold cell, according to the whim of the police. How long will this crying shame last.

## THREE SPOKANE MUSHROOMS

Spokane is a city of mushroom growth and until a few years ago was simply a small railroad center. The great trignition, whaling, lumbering, wheat farming and other industries which have lately sprung into existence have called into being a fair sized city. Like many other such rapid growth towns, Spokane has retained many nondescript old-time men who were fitted to the village era, but unable to handle the same position in a third-class city. Tradition and custom lead the people to select their officials in much the same manner as they did when the town was small. They settle on some popular incompetent and stick him into a job for which he utterly is unfitted. Spokane has a choice assortment of officials who have gained their positions through either this method or by virtue of growing into good positions as the city grew.

Acting Chief of Police Sullivan is one who achieved fame and a fit job

## She Will Come

Chicago, Ill., Dec. 17, 1909.

Mrs. Floyd Hyde:

Fellow Worker—I for one will come to Spokane and do my best to help in this fight. I am a member of good standing in the mixed local 85, branch 2, of Chicago, and I will come at once if need be. Please answer and let me know. You can ask Mrs. C. Q. Flynn and Mr. V. St. John about me, and I am sure I will help. I have a few friends in jail there at this time.

MISS A. BLAIR.

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