

# BEVERIDGE FLAYS CHILD LABOR EVILS

In Carnegie Hall Address Former  
Indiana Senator Urges Im-  
mediate Reforms.

PUTS IT UP TO CONGRESS

Says Crazy-Quilt Legislation of Forty-  
seven Different States Cannot End  
Present Ruinous Conditions.

Former Senator Albert J. Beveridge of Indiana, speaking under the auspices of the Civic Forum and the Child Welfare League, before some 2,000 persons in Carnegie Hall last night, urged a National child labor law as the only method of ending the child labor evil in the various States, which singly, he said, are powerless against the combined influences of the tremendous interests that thrive and get dividends from child labor and seek to perpetuate it.

He declared that these interests have succeeded in lulling the popular impatience and diverting the Nation-wide agitation against child labor some five years ago into a mere harmless and unreadable though accurate and comprehensive report in twelve large volumes, handed in by the Congressional Child Labor Investigating Committee appointed at that time; that nothing further has been done in the matter by Congress; that both political parties have completely ignored the subject, and that President Taft and his Cabinet, in "a Niagara of addresses" on every conceivable subject throughout the country, have said never a word on child labor, and seem never to have heard of the subject. Meanwhile, he said, the Socialists, demanding the National abolition of child labor, have made steady gains.

"The political parties and Congress are the only channels through which we can work this reform," he said. "When an evil is National, only the Nation can end it, and child labor is a National evil. Those opposed to the abolition of child labor have craftily suggested that it be left to the various States. The States are powerless to deal with it. The States were powerless even against the gypsy moth, and helpless before the yellow fever germ, which knew no State lines.

"The crazy-quilt legislation of forty-seven different States cannot end this evil. If one State abolishes it carloads of its children are shipped into another, where child labor is permitted; the business man of the former State, moreover, is by that very fact put under an unfair disadvantage as compared with the business man in the States where the ruinous cheap child labor is still countenanced. To-day not six of the forty-seven States have good child labor laws; in most of them the child labor law is a mockery and an insult to the cause."

Mr. Beveridge urged the enactment of a National law banning from inter-State commerce all child-made goods, or else taxing such goods prohibitively. That such a law was not enacted before, he said, was due to the tremendous influence of the powers of evil arrayed against the child labor movements—industries in which children are employed, the railroads that carry their products, and the millions these command, which, he said, aggregate to no less than \$1,000,000,000.

After his speech Mr. Beveridge consented to answer any questions sent up to him. Robert Erskine Ely read two from Mrs. O. H. P. Belmont, asking whether he did not think women best fitted to say what labor should be open to children, and if so, why women should not be voters. Mr. Beveridge replied affirmatively to both questions.

Fast on the heels of the first came another question from Mrs. Ida Husted Harper, who wanted to know his attitude on woman suffrage, and whether he thought it could best be obtained through Congress or the various State Legislatures. Mr. Beveridge retreated gracefully before the gathering suffragette onslaught, answering that he was "for the movement all right," but didn't want to be diverted from the subject of the evening, lest both reforms be weakened by such division of his energies.

A third questioner wanted to know whom, in view of his campaign for child labor, he favored for the Presidency; but again the quondam boy orator from Indiana proved himself an artful dodger by declaring the question of the Presidency unrelated to a child labor discussion. He was finally asked whether he would pledge himself to have a child labor plank inserted in the next Republican National platform and carried out thereafter. He said that he would—if he should be sent to the convention.