

DAILY PEOPLE

VOL. 10, NO. 282.

NEW YORK, FRIDAY, APRIL 8, 1910.

ONE CENT.

EDITORIAL

PAPER BOXES RATHER THAN HEALTHY WOMANHOOD.

By DANIEL DE LEON

THE *Bookmaker*, a monthly devoted to the paper box industry, is bubbling over with joy. It reports the Nashville, Tenn., American Paper Box Company as having had “the best season’s business in its history,” and it goes into details to explain the reason of the record-breaking season—“during the rush time the Nashville Company had ninety operatives working seventy-eight hours a week”—in other words, the employes toiled thirteen hours a day.

With such an ideal goal before the “trade,” the *Bookmaker* of the same issue hastens to comfort the “trade” in Illinois with this paragraph:

“The fight against the ten-hour law in Illinois, which was begun by W.O. Ritchie Company, has been referred to the State Capitol, Springfield, Ill. The brief which covers this case contains 610 printed pages, embracing 250,000 words. It is considered to be the most remarkable ever filed before the high court of Illinois. The law is declared unconstitutional on the ground that the right to purchase and sell labor is a part of both the liberty and property secured by the Constitution.”

Considering that most of the employes in the paper box factories are women; considering that even a ten-hour day is injurious to girls and a thirteen-hour day plays havoc with the sex; considering that the wages of these unfortunates are utterly insufficient to recuperate the waste of tissue, and that, consequently, their submission to such condition{s} is equivalent to a signal of distress set up from their camp;—considering this, on the one hand, and, catching, on the other hand, the special note of patriotic devotion to the Constitution that goes up from the throat of the *Bookmaker* against the law that seeks to protect the women of Illinois against decrepitude;—considering all this, what theory does the *Bookmaker’s* interpretation

of the Constitution set up, if not that the Constitution is there to shield paper boxes at the expense of healthy womanhood?

Transcribed and edited by Robert Bills for the official website of the Socialist Labor Party of America.
Uploaded April 2011

slpns@slp.org