

## LEWELLING COMMENDED.

### Many Letters Received Indorsing His Attitude Towards Tramps.

From Many States Come Expressions of Approval for the Sentiments Expressed in the Governor's Letter to Police Commissioners.

TOPEKA, KAS., Dec. 9.—[Special.] Since the publication of his executive circular requesting the police commissioners of the various cities of Kansas to exercise reasonable leniency in dealing with tramping laborers who are traveling from place to place in quest of work, Governor Lewelling has received numerous letters and telegrams commending his action. From the large number of such letters in the governor's possession the following extracts are made:

Hon. John Bryan, of Cincinnati, shows how an unfortunate man may fall under suspicion of being a criminal merely through his poverty. He writes: "Allow me to thank you and express my great gratification for your circular. It has indeed become a crime to be poor in this country and petty police officers have set themselves up as autocrats, contrary to the commonest natural rights of man. This morning's paper reports that our chief of police yesterday issued an order that all lodgers and boarders at cheap houses are required to report at the police station and register for the purpose of reference in case of robberies, etc."

J. A. Huffman, manager of the Occidental Publishing Company, of Wichita, writes: "To be a philanthropist in a line of action that is against one's own financial interests is to my mind the acme of genuine benevolence."

Elliott S. Reynolds, a Fort Scott attorney, says: "Your communication to the police commissioners of Kansas is precisely the proper thing, and it has struck the right chord with the humane people of this city with whom I have conversed. It shows that you have the welfare of the poverty stricken people of this state and elsewhere in your mind, and that your head and heart are eminently in the right. I am with you body and soul."

George M. Dickson, president of the board of police commissioners of Wichita, concurs fully with the governor as to the workmen who are out of work by force of circumstances, but believes that the professional tramp and deadbeat should be severely dealt with.

Hon. J. M. Dunsmore writes from Thayer that in 1858 he walked from Philadelphia to Baltimore, without money and practically without home, food or friends, and through no fault of his own. "In my poverty I slept in haystacks and barns." Upon his arrival in Baltimore he secured employment as a sailor and later became a Union soldier. "The memory of that period of want and suffering," says Mr. Dunsmore, "should present social conditions continue, that it may be the fortune of my boy, prompts me to write you this letter. The law, as it stands, is a disgrace to civilization and the religion of Christ and is in keeping with those inhuman statutes that in my boyhood made chattels of men and women because God had painted their skins black."

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Brigadier General W. H. Sears, of Lawrence, "emphatically approves of the governor's letter denouncing the infamous tramp laws and the treatment tramps are receiving in Kansas." He adds that ex-Governor Robinson also approves of all the governor has said. "The very people and party that gave us this army of the unemployed, of 'tramps' if you will, are the first to denounce your courageous and manly words."

Police Judge Albert S. Frost, of Denver, who has had the benefit of a practical experience with the army of the unemployed that has seldom been equaled in the United States, says: "I congratulate you upon the letter and thank you in the name of humanity for this very courageous and commendable act. I know of no laws which have been so universally abused and used as an engine of oppression against the unfortunate poor as have the vagrancy laws."

Judge Frost entered upon the duties of his present office in April last and immediately held the city ordinances of Denver on this subject unconstitutional and void, and has steadily refused to enforce them.

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J. W. Canfield, of Parsons, "feels confident that all good men in Kansas whose religious creed does not ignore the teachings and spirit of the despised Nazarene, will honor the governor for his humane sentiments as expressed in his letter and for his bold and noble effort to protect the suffering poor from the cruel enforcement of a law which, without discrimination, makes poverty a crime and dooms the poor to infamous punishment because of their misfortunes."

W. W. Cochrane, president of the police board of Atchison, says: "Your address afforded me much pleasure, not only because it enunciated sound principles of philanthropy, but it evinced the disposition on your part to scan closely the conduct of all those appointed by you to preserve the peace and good order of the state."

Hon. Thomas Morris, police judge of the city of St. Louis, writes: "It is my opinion, judging from what is published of your letter, that it is the true definition of the inalienable rights of a citizen under our constitution. It is no crime to be poor, yet in almost all of our large cities and throughout our several states poverty is punishable with greater rigor than embezzlement."

Hon. Lewis A. Myers, judge of the First district, writes a long letter from Leavenworth, heartily indorsing the circular in regard to the treatment of the unemployed poor, and suggesting several needed reforms in legislation on the subject.

Among others who express their gratification in letters to the governor are: F. P. Sheridan, of Toledo, O.; P. E. Emery, of Ottawa, Kas.; Mrs. Louise Farley Suddick, of Joplin, Mo.; J. O. Cameron, of Pittsburg, Pa.; Edward Flannagan, of St. Louis, Mo.; G. T. Armagast, of Mankato, Kas.; Mrs. A. P. Garton, of Bond Hill, O.; J. G. Thayer, secretary of the Atchison police board; George Leary, of Lawrence, and others, representing states North, South and West.