

(4th) because coal miners only work eight hours; (5th) because the War Eagle mine management adopted the eight-hour system before compelled to do so; (6th) because, in Mr. Wilkes' opinion, "\$3.50 is not too much to pay good miners in this country;" (7th) because nowhere else in the British Empire "is there a precedent for ten hours' work by miners;" (8th) because the miners "believe that the mines can stand a reduction in the hours of labour without hurting them." Will it be believed that a strike has been organized on such lamentably feeble grounds as these? Of all the reasons Mr. Wilkes advances, is there a single one that could be seriously regarded as showing just cause why mine owners should suddenly be called upon to pay their employees higher wages for less work? Taking his own statement: With two ten-hour shifts the men formerly worked 19 hours, for which they received \$7 per day, under the eight-hour system they would work 16 hours for \$6 per day; the average pay per hour for the former is rather under 37 cents and for the latter rather over this amount. This is the only one of Mr. Wilkes' "arguments" at all worthy of consideration, the others are simply not to the point. For instance, coal miners, it is true, do not work under ground more than eight hours, but they work under contract; miners in the War Eagle mine work no more than eight hours, but only machine men are paid the \$3.50 per day wage. If Mr. Wilkes desires to prove that a miner should not continue to work longer than eight hours underground, that is another matter and we are quite prepared to endorse his views, but this should be the subject of arrangement between the employer and employees. We maintain, however, that no legislature has the right to dictate to an able bodied man of mature age how many hours he may or may not labour at his trade or calling, and by gratuitously introducing a law having this effect, the British Columbia Legislature have committed a very grave error and the whole responsibility for the present unfortunate state of affairs in the Slocan rests entirely with them.

Another argument—we use the word for want of a better—advanced by those who champion the cause of the miners in their demands for the old rate of wages while working shorter hours, is that the mines of the Slocan are so rich that the owners can well afford to pay high wages; and it is asked why should alien shareholders be allowed to sit quietly at home and take without effort all the profits from our rich silver-lead mines at the expense of the poor miner? For Heaven's sake, if the question is to be discussed at all, let it, at least, be done in a half rational manner. The world must grow many years older before it is educated up, or down, to the acceptance of socialistic doctrine. Because capital has developed a mine or any other enterprise until it is on a profit-earning basis, is labour to demand a bigger share, and if so, are the men employed in our Slocan mines, which are not yet in a position to earn dividends, and these are at present greatly in the majority—to be paid less than their more fortunate fellows engaged as miners in dividend paying mines? That is the conclusion to be deduced from the premises.

But for a gem in its way a resolution passed by the Silverton Miners' Union, on the subject of the eight-hour law, is really quite unique, and we cannot refrain from publishing at least the gist of it.

"Resolved, that while struggling for the co-operative commonwealth and the establishment of justice and equality among men we favor, for temporary relief, the reduction of hours of labor as our best defensive weapon.

"Resolved, that it is an improvement of our conditions that we are seeking; that we do not feel called upon to maintain that as much work can be done in a few as in many hours or that it is right for us to continue doing as heretofore in order that we may justly demand the same pay. We assert that we have done too much work for the money, that we are not getting ten hours' pay for ten hours' work; and we deny that we are asking 'ten hours' pay for eight hours' work.

"And whereas, it is wise for us to vigorously use every resource at our command in order to speedily effect the ends we are seeking.

Resolved, that those who oppose us are our enemies and that those who aid us are our friends, and that we treat them accordingly.

"Resolved, that we will not love our enemies, that we will not 'turn the other cheek;' that we believe that retaliation is right.

"And therefore, it is resolved that we denounce as unworthy of our patronage such papers as the *Spokesman-Review*, of Spokane; *The Miner*, of Nelson; the *MINING RECORD*, of Vancouver; and all others that, like them, delight in special sophistical and pharasitical pleading for those who despoil us and support them from a small portion of the spoils.

"And to the business man, the merchants and hotel men; to the professional men, the lawyers doctors and preachers, all of whom, at periods of intenser struggles between employer and employee, usually affiliate with the former and deplore the agitation that discourages investment—to you we have this to say:

"We know that the rich would become richer if we would consent to give them a larger rake-off. But not only is a juster and wider distribution of wealth in our interest, it is in the interest of the state and country, and we are therefore your best citizens. We seek to "encourage" men to hope for the largest possible share of what they produce and are entitled to. You ask us to "enconrage" capital to come in, by promising to give it rich rewards. You ask us to "encourage" men with a hundred thousand dollars to see that they can here increase it to a million. But we deny that it is desirable to have any man in possession of a million, and maintain that we rightfully refuse to aid you in encouraging capitalists to come here with such greedy hopes. The higher wages and fewer hours that we favour would fill this country with the most intelligent, effective and happiest workmen of the world, a citizenship to be proud of. The dollar a day labourers that would most encourage the capitalist would drive every self-respecting citizen out of the country, and leave only cabins here for houses, while palaces would be built in Spokane, Butte, Salt Lake and London. And we say to you business and professional men that we propose to "encourage" business and professional men who do not give aid and comfort to our enemies.

"Resolved, that we do not consider ourselves any better than the miners of the Coeur d'Alenes. Outrageous and arrogant wrongs have ever provoked and should provoke violence. The history of no country needs to be closely searched to find records of violent resistance to tyrants. Good citizens of America, disguised as Indians, threw overboard the sacred prop-