

band, by the facilities it affords for bringing in recruits from distant points to take the places of the strikers, might, on its part, if unrestrained, soon enable capital to defy organized labour, and impose upon it its own terms.

Bearing these two facts in mind, it is clear that it is at the point of contact with the railroads that every great struggle between employers and employed must henceforth be decided, independently of the origin and merits of the struggle itself. It is true that in the case we have now particularly in mind, the merits of the dispute may be said to have had some direct bearing upon the railroad question from the fact that it originated between the manufacturers of the Pullman cars and their employees, and these cars were in use on almost every railroad in the Union. But a little reflection will show that the quarrel would almost surely have centred around the railroads, whatever its origin and character, not only because the employers must, in any case, have relied on the railroads for fresh supplies of men to take the strikers' places, but also because the managers of almost every important industry are dependent upon the railroads for the carriage of their products to market. A blockade of the railways would, therefore, have become, in any case, a tactical necessity for the strikers, as a means of cutting off the enemy's sources of supply.

From these considerations the far-reaching importance of the action taken by President Cleveland in the late strike becomes apparent. Apart from the railways, the employees of the Pullman Company might, perhaps, have carried on the struggle on something like even terms with their employers. Had the latter been obliged to close their works indefinitely, or until they could have supplied the places of hundreds of skilled workmen by the slow processes of correspondence and travel, which would otherwise have been the only means available, they would have been very likely to think twice before engaging in so serious a quarrel. Assuming, on the other hand, the railroads to be in full operation, and no interference to be permitted either with them or with the new operatives who would have flocked in by thousands, glad to accept even smaller wages and more onerous conditions, the position of the striking workmen would have been absolutely hopeless. There would have been nothing for them to do but to submit to any terms offered, or to leave their places to others who would do so. Their only chance was in the "sympathetic" strike.

Given the confederation of labour unions and the sympathetic strike, and what follows? Eliminating the elements of disorder, destruction of property, and violence, which are no necessary parts of such a strike, and which, to whatever extent they are designed, perpetrated, or encouraged by the labour organizations, justly deprive

them of popular sympathy and make prompt suppression a public duty, ultimate success or failure depends entirely upon the stand taken by the State and National authorities. Let the labour organizations be sufficiently compact, united, and firm in their resolve to stand by one another, and let them be left to fight out the question with the railway corporations, as private companies, and there could be only one result. They could compel the companies to submit to their terms, or, which is the same thing, compel the public to force the companies to do so, to save the country from collapse or paralysis. But the moment the strong arm of the nation was interposed to protect the railroad companies as the servants of the nation, employed to carry its mails and chartered to carry on its commerce, the question was virtually decided against the labour unions. Their only effective weapon was wrenched from their hands. The efficacy of the strike as a means of obtaining concessions from employers was destroyed. This is, we hold, demonstrably the large meaning of the action taken by President Cleveland, when he ordered the national troops to Chicago. He not only restored order, protected railroad property and made possible the movements of the trains, but he established a precedent which makes the sympathetic strike, and hence all effective concerted action by federation of labour unions, henceforth illegal and impossible in the United States. We do not say that he was not right in doing so. That depends, we hold, upon what he gives the workingmen in its place. His action was approved by the popular feeling, which, however, was hardly in a condition to look beyond its own immediate interests and convenience in the matter. But he also acted on the sound and common-sense principle that the whole business, and even the health and the food supplies, of the nation, should not and could not be left at the mercy of a combination of any kind. The nation must not go hungry and idle while the railroad corporations and their employees are fighting out their difficulties or testing each other's powers of endurance.

But were President Cleveland's action to stop here it would have the effect of leaving the employed at the mercy of the employer. The former is deprived of the natural right of combination, by which alone he can hope to equalize the contest, if contest there must be. The latter retains in full the tremendous weapon which capital puts into his hands. "But the labourer has nothing to complain of," exclaims the political economist of the old school, who seems to think that the world has grown no older and the science of political economy no more far-sighted, since the days of Adam Smith. "It is merely a question of supply and demand. Where there is a scarcity of labour wages will rise. Where there is a superabundance labour

will fall." The *Toronto Mail* even goes into statistics in support of this natural law, and essays to show that under its operation, without unions or strikes, the wages of domestic servants, farm hands, and other classes of labourers have risen very materially in England. Now it is scarcely necessary, at the present stage of mathematical science, to prove that two and three make five, or that things which are equal to the same thing are equal to each other. We do not suppose that anyone with a modicum of intelligence will think of denying that competition, or the proportion between supply and demand, is a very potent factor in determining the rate of wages in any given industry. But that it is, even as things now are, very far from being the sole determining factor is, we hold, susceptible of very easy proof. *That it ought to be the sole determining factor* is a proposition so monstrous in itself, and in the consequences to which it would lead, that we cannot conceive of any thoughtful man, with a sense of right and wrong in his bosom, who would not, on reflection, shrink from enunciating it. Were not our article becoming too long, we should not fear to undertake to show to the satisfaction of most minds that even the rise in the wages of those classes to which the *Mail* refers has been largely due to other causes besides the law of supply and demand. Though there may have been no concerted action in these particular callings, the general rise in wages brought about by the labour unions has told powerfully upon these in common with other trades. In fact, it is one of the standing grievances of the union tradesmen, that the non-unionists are selfishly eager to profit and are constantly profiting by the results of self-denying struggles and sacrifices in which they refuse to bear their part. Nothing can be more certain than that any movement, the effect of which is to raise the level of comfort and remuneration of a large proportion of the workingmen in any country, will have the effect of raising along therewith that of the workers in other trades, though they may take no part in the movement.

But should it be simply a question of supply and demand? Have fairplay between man and man, have justice and morality, not to say religion, nothing to do with it? Does natural law necessarily coincide with moral law? Is it all "gush" to talk about introducing the one into the domain of the other? Happily the world of business, selfish as it is, does not think so. Look around on the industrial world as it is to-day, in Europe and America, and say, in view of the vast excess of supply over demand in almost every labour market, what would be the condition of the toiling millions were all moral influences eliminated and the problem settled simply in accordance with the law of supply and demand. There is surely something far enough from abstract justice in the system