

THE WESTERN FEDERATION OF MINERS.

When gold mining began in California a little over half a century ago, wages were paid in gold and an ounce of gold, \$20, was often paid for a day's labor. In Colorado, first with gold mining and after in silver, the early wages were probably not that high, but often \$10 a day was the regular wage. Probably at no time in history have the wages of labor ever been so high. The forming of an organization of men who had been very well paid would inspire them with different feelings and sentiments than with most of the organized trades because in nearly every line of business that one can recall the trade union brought in a bettering of conditions. They could always look back to a time when the wages, hours and working conditions had been smaller, longer and harder. But not so with the metalliferous miners, with them^{after}/~~the~~ early days at good wages, increase of population and the bringing in of eastern conditions had brought wages down. But the wages were still good as things go in the various communities when this organization came into being. In the Western states the frontier conditions still obtained, the cowboy, gambler, and the Indian were still the vogue. The saloon was the principal meeting place in the village or settlement and the six shooter and the bowie knife very much in evidence. The type of man found in such a community is happy, carefree, ready to drink, fight or shoot,

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