

AN IMPARTIAL VIEW.

Editor of THE CITIZEN.

SIR,—Mr. J. R. Booth is reported in to-day's CITIZEN to have said, "The terms they (the strikers) offered were the same as before, ten hours and 50 cents increase." This statement appears to be simply untrue, as THE CITIZEN report declares repeatedly that the workmen are quite willing to compromise the matter by relinquishing all claim to the "50 cents increase;" and require now only the reduction of time to "ten hours," in consideration of the corresponding reduction of wages this year. Mr. J. R. Booth proceeds to say "they (the strikers) seem to have no idea of any argument. They will not look at the state of the market and the price of lumber." A little reflection should convince Mr. Booth that this is no part whatever of the workman's business, for it is manifestly the millowner's special business to "look at the state of the market and the price of lumber," and then to decide whether it is advisable to run the mills night and day, or by day only, or half day, or three-quarter day, according as the prospect may be encouraging or otherwise; and to calculate also upon paying his men fair wages according to the number of hours' work required of them, whether it should be a full day's work, or only half a day, or three-quarter day, or nine-tenths of a day. All this is most unquestionably the millowner's special business, and in justice to himself, and his workmen also, he should neglect no part whatever of it. A millowner also having any sense of justice and equity, or appreciation of sound "argument" himself, could scarcely fail to perceive that it is most unfair and unreasonable to demand eleven hours' work for ten hours' wages; precisely as it would be to demand a day's work for half-a-day's wages, simply because of a temporary decline in the price of the mill products. It is evidently the millowner's special business to make the surplus profits of the prosperous seasons tide over whatever deficiency may be incurred by any temporary decline in the market. The absolute absurdity of the contrary view becomes apparent enough (if carried out practically); for it would evidently necessitate the workmen's attempting (whenever the markets were sufficiently unfavourable) to do a full day's hard work continuously for wages which might not suffice for even half a day's food. The above plain statement is calculated to convince reasonable men that if the strikers declare their willingness to compromise the matter and return to their work, providing the "ten hours" is conceded, waving all claim to the "50 cents increase," as stated in THE CITIZEN report; it will certainly be the millowners' fault (much more than the strikers) should the mill operations be delayed a single day thenceforth.

HENRY WENTWORTH MONK.
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