

a demand has been made by labor for greater remuneration, employers were less able to continue current rates than at a previous time. Hence the apparent conflict between capital and labor. Labor always desirous of selling itself as dearly as possible, and capital anxious to make the most out of labor.

Rates of wages, recognized hours of labor, the employment of women and children in industrial pursuits, are all matters which affect both labor and capital. Some of these points have been frequently made the subject of legislation in different countries, together with the question of the sanitary condition of factories, etc. Altogether it is pleasing to know that a very great improvement has taken place in many respects, concerning the condition of labor, brought about by the force of public opinion and legislative enactment, still there is great room for improvement, in some countries of course more than others. In spite of competition, there has been a steady inclination to shorten the hours of labor; to regulate or restrict the working of young children in factories, and to improve the sanitary conditions surrounding labor generally. In this field there is legitimate scope for legislative enactment. In Australia, eight hours constitute a recognized day's work, and the custom is said to work well. In Europe the tendency is steadily in the direction of shorter hours of labor. The London *Economist* recently stated its belief that eight hours would ultimately be recognized as a day's work. It is better, however, that the tendency to shorten hours of labor be allowed to develop, rather than to force such result by official enactments. All this goes to show that labor occupies a favorable position to that it once did, and that the rights of labor are becoming more fully recognized. Besides this, employers are beginning to learn that well-nourished workmen will do as much in eight or nine hours, as poorly fed men can do in a longer period of time.

Competition between different countries in industrial pursuits makes the labor question an international one. This has been recognized in the proposals to hold an international labor conference in Switzerland, in the furtherance of which the Swiss President is taking an active part. A programme has been outlined for the consideration of the labor problem, at this conference, under five principal heads. These are. The prohibition of

Sunday labor; the fixing of a minimum of age for the admission of children into factories; the fixing of a minimum limit of a working day for young persons; the prohibition of the employment of women and young persons in specially unhealthy or dangerous callings, and the limitation of night work for women and young persons.

It is questionable if a set of rules can be adopted at this conference which will be made law throughout Europe. Still the discussion of the subject in its various phases cannot but prove very beneficial to the cause of labor at large. In Great Britain labor occupies a favorable position in comparison with the European countries. Sunday labor and the employment of women and children in factories, sanitary conditions, etc., have already received considerable legislative attention in Britain, but on the continent Sunday labor still largely prevails. It is to be hoped the conference may be the means of securing one day's rest in seven for labor, as well as directing attention to other abuses in such a manner as to secure their more speedy removal. The example of Great Britain should teach the employers of labor in Europe that they are not likely to lose by the abolition of Sunday labor, even with a continuation of the same rates of wages for six day's work, as is now paid for seven day's work in the week. As in the case of shorter hours, so it will prove in regard to Sunday labor. The men who have a much needed rest one day in seven, will as a rule have better capacity for work during the six days in which they labor, and in the end will be able to accomplish as much.

INTERNATIONAL RAILWAY TRAFFIC.

It seems that after all the threats of shutting out the Canadian railways from the United States, and the howling against the Canadian roads, by a portion of the press of the United States, the whole matter is to be allowed to drop. At any rate there seems to be little prospect of any early interference with the railway situation, as concerns Canadian roads. The fact of the matter is, that the United States Government could not shut out the Canadian roads without doing an enormous injury to vast interests in its own country. The matter was all right enough as a popular cry in sections of the country, for a time, but a little investigation of the question has shown that the injury which would be inflicted upon large sections of the United States, by any action against the Canadian roads, would be far greater than the harm which could be done to Canada. Of course, the Canadian roads would suffer severely, were they cut off from their connections

in the United States, but at the same time, vast commercial interests and great commercial centres in the United States would also be seriously affected thereby. All the way from Portland, Oregon, to Boston, on the Atlantic coast, there are many interests which would be injured by shutting out Canadian railway competition, and from these a strong protest was sent out against any interference with the existing order of things. There are certain railway and other interests in the United States which, from selfish motives, would like to see the Canadian roads shut out. They would like to be freed from the competition of the Canadian roads. But opposed to this is a great commercial interest, which is largely dependent upon the Canadian roads for railway competition and liberal freight rates. Besides, certain United States roads, such as the Michigan Central, Vermont Central, Northern Pacific, etc., have connections in Canada, from which they could be cut off by retaliation on the part of Canada, should such a course be taken against the Canadian roads having connections in the United States.

One of the questions in connection with the railway situation, was in the free transit of cars between the two countries. The collector at Detroit, who appears to be of a pugnacious disposition, seemed very anxious to interfere with the passage of Canadian cars into the country. He has appealed on two or three occasions to the head of his department, in the matter of having a tax placed on empty freight cars coming into the country. To this Secretary Windom has replied to the effect that the department does not deem it in the public interest to disturb a practice which has continued in force without interruption for over twenty years. This would seem to indicate that the railway situation along the border is not likely to be interfered with.

For fear, however, that some steps might be taken in the matter of taxing freight cars, the Boston Chamber of Commerce prepared strong resolutions against any such action, as greatly prejudicial to the commercial and railway interests of New England. In the west, St. Paul and Minneapolis would protest strongly against any interference with the railway competition which they enjoy, via their Sault Ste Marie route, connecting with the Canadian Pacific, and to which route they are indebted for their independence of the Chicago combination of railways.

In connection with the question of placing a tax upon Canadian cars used in the United States, it is claimed that more United States cars are used in Canada than Canadian cars in the former country. This would more than balance the matter in favor of the United States, and render the imposition of a duty upon Canadian cars simply a step in the direction of the restriction policy proposed to be adopted against Canadian roads, regarding bonding privileges.