

fully increased. have doubled the in sixteen years. progress of trade herefore, ample ment. Indeed, in their infancy, many of them to bring non-om of entering be hoped their th success, and every working of his trade.

were considered The Press en-lishers refused ng them. When ast recognized, uncompromising ed as enemies. To be a trade rous character," to be suppressed what is called the community. trade unions are o be justifiable, editors throw ons' champions, ficers themselves leading publica-representatives of Cabinet minis- the societies is ates for parlia-ceedings of the aped from one other. Unions as a power for t, they have suc-their secretaries itself, and there g, of many more ers of that as-

what unionists pital, but obtain s hoped that the question in this most distressing of this question e determination r, displayed in onal Federation Labor." That e to the power as, which is the consideration. isrepresentation e that the un-organization." y, "of the ex-ization, large nence of trade annual congress at r of unions are

represented each year." "They have the control of enormous funds, which they expend freely in furtherance of their objects, and the proportion of their earnings which the operatives devote to the service of their leaders is startling." We should think so, to the mind of a selfish master. The associations "are federated together, acting in common accord under able leaders." "They have a well-paid and ample staff of leaders, most of them experienced in the conduct of strikes, many of them skilful as organizers, all forming a class apart, a profession, with interests distinct from, though not necessarily antagonistic to, those of the workpeople they lead." "They have, through their command of money, the imposing aspect of their organization, and partly, also, from the mistaken humanitarian aspirations of a certain number of literary men of good standing [sic 'mistaken' men, i. e., such as the late J. S. Mill, Prof. Beeley, Frederic Harrison, Henry Crompton, W. T. Thornton, and others], a large array of literary talent, which is prompt in their service on all occasions of controversy. They have their own Press as a field for those exertions. Their writers have free access to some of the leading London journals. They organize frequent meetings at which paid speakers inculcate the working classes with their ideas, and urge them to dictate terms to candidates for Parliament . . . They have a standing Parliamentary Committee, and a programme, and active members of Parliament are energetic in their service. They have the attentive ear of the minister of the day, and their communications are received with instant and respectful attention. They have a large representation of their own body in London whenever Parliament is likely to be engaged in the discussion of the proposals they have caused to be brought before it. Thus, untrammelled by pecuniary considerations, and specially set apart for this peculiar work, without other clashing occupations, they resemble the staff of a well-organized, well-provisioned army, for which everything that foresight and preoccupation in a given purpose could provide is at command. . . . These results are the deserved reward of the superiority of the trade unionists over the employers in those high qualities of foresight, generalship, and present self-sacrifice, for the sake of future advantage [what an admission!], which form necessary elements in the success of every organized society." Truly, if there were any doubts as to the fitness of trade unions to attain their objects, the National Federation of Associated Employers of Labor has removed that doubt. Have the trade unions succeeded? Ask the federated employers. There can be no better proof, not only of the power, but of the justice of trade

unionism, than the document from which the above quotations are taken.

Although, then, trade unions have proved themselves thoroughly fit and able to carry out the main objects for which they were formed, yet it cannot be denied that, in regard to one portion of their programme, they have not shown the same tact and ability. There is the authority of the chief actuaries in the country for saying that the insurance funds—as they may be called—of some of the trade unions are based upon false data. The amounts expended under this head are for sickness, superannuation, accidents, funerals, etc., and the sum total thus expended is very large, in some instances much greater than is spent in conducting a strike or opposing a lock-out.*

As has been already pointed out, such benevolent notions had very little to do with the formation of a union. They were mere subterfuges tacked to the charter of a union because it was illegal for them to exist without them. When they were "registered," however, they had a sort of quasi-legal existence, and could, at any rate, meet legally. It is probable that the care and attention of the original members would be devoted more to the immediate advantage of increased wages than in calculating premiums for a sick and burial fund. Probably, also, the actuarial abilities of the first promoters of unions were not very great. On the other hand, it must be admitted that benevolent funds and kindred funds attached to trade unions both attract members and retain them. In this respect they are a source of strength, because each man is bound to obedience under the penalty of losing all the money he has subscribed for his support in sickness and old age.

That unions force masters to pay bad workmen the same wages as good workmen is not true, and the very idea would be scouted by all sensible unionists. The notion that such is the case is, however, very general. A uniform rate of pay exists in the army, navy, Government offices, and other institutions, in which aristocrats have been able to appropriate the "maximum" of pay, leaving a meagre residuum to their less fortunate brethren; but the trade unionists have not yet learned to practise such injustice. True, the unions sometimes agree upon a minimum rate of wages, but this is quite another thing. If a man be not worth that minimum no employer need employ him, while if he be a man of superior skill, or extraordinary working ability, there is no limit to the amount of wages an employer may feel inclined to give him. Of course, where wages are paid by the day, a uniform rate naturally springs into existence.

* The seven largest unions spent £220,095 in 1881 in the above-named benefits.