

pearance in England. Last spring the engineers of Sunderland demanded the reduction of time to nine hours, and stopped work until they got it. The joiners and carpenters of Newcastle and Gateshead followed suit, and in these places held out from May until September, a period of four months. In the latter month the agitation broke out in New York, and on Wednesday, the 13th of September, a procession of over 25,000 persons was held in that city, composed of mechanics and labouring men "on strike." From there the contagion has at last spread to Canada, and bids fair, in a short time, to be raging with considerable fury.

And what are the arguments put forward to justify this despotism of the working classes? Is their time of labour oppressive? Is their condition such as demands amendment? We fear this last question must be answered in the affirmative. In the large manufacturing towns and cities the operative or mechanic does not get his share of the comforts of life, considering his importance in the community, and the amount of labour he performs. This is more especially the case in the large manufacturing centres of England and the United States. There the working-man learns what it is to earn his bread by the sweat of his brow, almost before he can comprehend the meaning of the phrase.

He toils on from year to year, he develops his physical and muscular powers, he arrives at manhood, he marries and begets children, and, though he obtains work from one end of the year to the other—regular and un-intermitting work—he finds that he has almost more than he can accomplish to provide the necessaries of life for those dependent on him. If his family be large, his labour has often to be supplemented by that of his wife, to provide even these; and, if he yield at all to the great curse of the civilized world, and spend his pennies in taverns, his way of life is thorny indeed.

And when we consider that this condition of affairs is shared in by what we—both English and American—are fond of designating a free and enlightened people, we cannot wonder that they will do what they can towards amelioration. We cannot wonder that they will league themselves together and do all in their power to improve their position and to render it more in accordance with the plain rules of justice. They argue, and no doubt with reason, that the man who does a hard, honest day's work every lawful day in the year, is entitled to as much of the fruits of his labour as will keep him in decency and comfort. But will a reduction in the hours of labour effect this much desired improvement? We confess we cannot see how. Even admitting that he will be drawing the same amount of wages at the end of the week, will he have gained by the change? Not at all: but, on the contrary, if the movement be a general one in the branch of trade or manufactures to which he belongs, the price of that article will necessarily rise.

And though it may not affect him directly or materially, still, "what is sauce for the goose," according to the time-honoured proverb, "is sauce also for the gander"; and the other branches of trade and manufactures will necessarily do the same thing; and the price of everything affected thereby will naturally rise ten per cent. to balance the account. This is inevitable. Even assuming that the manufacturer and other employer of regular labour will be induced to concede one hour out of the day's work, and pay the same price for the balance, it cannot be supposed for a moment that he is going to hand over to his employees a tenth part of the value he is accustomed to receive from them.

The merest tyro in human affairs would laugh at such an idea. He would tell you that the manufacture, whatever it may be, must be raised in proportion; and the farmer, finding he has to pay more for manu-