

and do not remember being advised on this particular subject by any one acquainted with the country, but the talk and the evidence of one's eyes were all of pot and skin hunters, of tramping, coal and gold and silver miners, of camp and bands of Chinese railroad laborers. And then the loneliness and the distances between stations and houses. But by and by the car slowly dropped lower and lower into the coast country of British Columbia, following the mighty and always angry Fraser River, and then came more of western life, not much after the Bret Harte pattern, it is true, yet passed amid trees of giant growth, made quaintly picturesque by swarms of Chinamen in blouses and in hats shaped like bowls turned upside down, made glorious by the constant offering of salmon fresh from the water at every meal in the dining cars, and rendering yet more notable by constantly increasing familiarity with those coast Indians, wrongly called the Siwash, who are little more like the Indians of the plains than the zebras are like horses or Japanese are like negroes. In truth, these Siwash are extraordinarily like the Chinese in facial features, but from centuries of boat-rowing they have grown short-legged and broad at the shoulders. They are fish-eaters, and are in consequence mild and pacific, with a natural inclination to work for their living, and no strong inclination to the clothes, the houses, or even the religion of the whites. There was no suggestion of what we eastern folks know as western or border life anywhere on the Pacific coast, as I saw it, either in Canada or our own country. More stolid, staid, or finished cities than Victoria and Portland, Ore., or a more delightfully cultivated and progressive little community than Tacoma I will defy the eastern man to find in his own land. I made the return trip by the Northern Pacific Railroad, and it was so much less savage in aspect than the outward journey that I only saw twenty Indians, and they were all on one place sunning themselves on a freight house platform in Montana. The cowboys were their substitutes, and a milder, more intelligent-looking lot of young men than all of them that I saw were, it would be difficult to find. Here, too, the stations were close together, and the settlements often larger and more thriving than in Canada, which is a much newer country. By any other of the Pacific roads, except possibly the Southern, there is even less of rawness and rudeness than I saw.

No; there is a western life, and it is very peculiar to an eastern man, but it is not garnished with pistols or celebrated with knives. Its peculiarities lie in the almost pure democracy of the society out there, in the footing of equality maintained by every one with every one else; in the high regard for women, even when they are women who scandalize their sex; in the vigor and keenness and enterprise that mark the conduct of all enterprises, and in the vanity with which every man speaks of the community of which he forms a part. In these features, and not in bloodshed and disorder, lie the differences between the eastern and western life of to-day.

### The Coal Strike.

*The Railway Service Gazette* says: There has in the management of the Reading in the past, been much to alienate the friendship of its employees, or possibly more correctly speaking, there was little to show that the management desired the friendship of the men whose labor it purchased. The principle upon which the Reading management seemed to act in the past, that the employer paid so much money for the faithful service of the employee, and that, when the accounts were squared, all obligations ceased on both sides, may be correct and in accordance with the cold logic of law; but the railway corporation or the individual employer will learn to his sorrow, sooner or later, that he must have either the good will or the ill will of his employees, and that if he is indifferent to their good will he will surely get their ill will. The railway corporation is most unfortunate that is served by the employees only for the money paid them and who cherish for the company no feelings of kindness; for if there is not good will, it is certain that ill will finds a place in its absence. If this feeling is permitted to grow for years it will at last burst forth with greater fury; and we believe there is not a single instance on record where a railroad management has been able to successfully operate its road with the hostility of a considerable portion of its employees arrayed against it.

As to the justice or injustice of the present strike on the Reading, no man living can form even a remote conclusion from the published reports. The present trouble may be wholly a protest against the real or imaginary grievances of to-day, but much more likely it is very greatly influenced by remote causes that had their origin under former methods of management.

*The Philadelphia Press* gives the following summary of the conditions existing in the anthracite regions, which, it will be seen, does not present a very flattering picture for the speedy termination of the strike: There is a demand for all the anthracite coal that can be produced, and there will be as long as the Schuylkill and Lehigh miners stay out. The Wyoming region is working full time and producing a great amount of coal. This, with the supply from Lehigh, makes the shipments heavier than last year and so far equal to any in January. The distribution of the coal mined is better than it was a week ago, and except in the Schuylkill Valley there is no great inconvenience, but prices are high. In New York wholesalers have to pay from \$4.50 to \$4.75 per ton, and at this the retail price is \$7.50, except old customers, who are generally supplied at \$7. There is no sign of the end of the strike. It was thought that some of the individual operators in the Schuylkill region would get to work this week, but the miners are determined to refuse to mine coal which is sent to market via the Reading's lines. This shows that the strongest kind of a bond exists between the striking miners and railroaders, though officially there is no connection between them. It can fairly be assumed that the issue is now joined and the contest is between capital and labor, with the capitalist

contending for complete supervision of his business, and the laborer contending for the continued recognition of his organization. How long the battle will last no man can tell. In the Schuylkill region the miner has just received his last pay and has not yet begun to feel any inconvenience from the strike. In the Lehigh region the men have entered the fifth month of the strike, and though they are poor, they are still able to hold out.

### Pacific Railroad's Report.

The report of the majority of the United States Commission appointed to investigate the affairs of the Pacific Railroads, while condemning the course followed by the corporations in the past, takes the ground that it is not expedient for the government to wrest the property from their hands at the risk of destroying the chance of recovering the money due, and, as a means of punishing past wrongdoing, the report proposes to present bills to congress providing for the refunding of the entire amount due to the United States, computed so as to show what would be fairly due in July, 1888, if payment could be then exacted. Thus the commissioners would put into three per cent bonds, running for fifty years and paying half yearly interest, and they would provide for the payment of  $\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. of the full amount of the bonds for the first ten years, and one per cent. thereafter into a sinking fund to be placed in the hands of trustees. They calculate that this arrangement would suffice to extinguish the principal at the end of fifty years. The present lien on the subsidized lines would be retained, and a new contract mortgage be executed, covering the property of the companies. In case of the non acceptance of the refunding plan, the proposed bills provide for the annual payment to government of 40 per cent of the net receipts of the Union Pacific and the whole of the net receipts of the Central Pacific, with other percentages for the other lines on the plan of the Thurman Act. The report of the minority proposes to put the roads into the hands of a receiver, wind up their affairs, wipe out the great mass of their obligations, and let them take a new start on solid ground. Of the commission of three, Mr. Pattison recommends the appointment of a receiver for all the Pacific railroads. Messrs. Anderson and Littler say, concerning the Union Pacific, that the road has passed out of the control and the ownership of those to whom the subsidies were granted, and those who were responsible for the enormous indebtedness of the corporation to the government. The property, they say, is now in the hands of men who seem to be running it in the interest of the stockholders, the bondholders, and the government, and, as long as they pursue the course they have adopted, should receive the encouragement of the government. Within a few years, the development of the western country is so rapid, the roads under the Union Pacific management cannot but become very valuable properties, and the indebtedness to the government will undoubtedly be paid in full without embarrassment to the corporation.