

pacifying incipient strifes and averting threatened strikes. Several requests that Mr. Arthur made of the convention, whereby he might be the better enabled to conserve the interests of the order, were refused. Among these he wanted an assistant of his own choice to take charge of the necessary office work, and it was only by the casting vote of Mr. Arthur himself, as chairman of the convention, that one of the most objectionable of the chiefs of the radical element was not forced upon him to fill the position. Before the meeting of this convention, when any trouble arose between the railroads and their engineers, the grievance committee of the road concerned were ordered to look into it, and efforts were made to arrange with the management. If the committee failed to do so Mr. Arthur was sent for, and he was the sole judge as to whether the case was such that the brotherhood should interfere. This gave him important conservative power. At the last convention this rule was altered, and Mr. Arthur was made a voter along with the grievance committee from the road interested, having no larger power than any member of that committee. He had to consult with the grievance committee as to whether the subject at issue was a sufficient cause for a strike, and if the majority of them said it was he had no veto power, and could not say it was not. This change was a great modification and curtailment of the authority of Chief Arthur; for he could no longer forbid or prevent a strike, and he was bound to abide by the decision of the majority of the grievance committee of the road where trouble existed, and at the same time he was bound to exercise his authority as Chief of the Brotherhood in sustaining any strike that the committee might decide to make. He was obliged to either do this or resign his position as Chief.

Of late engineers have complained that it was difficult for a discharged man to get reinstated on any road where the system of advancement as prevails on the Chicago, Burlington and Quincy is observed; and there is a growing feeling of dislike among them at the idea that when one of their number is dropped from employment the chance of reinstatement is very slim, and that the event indicates the promotion to the throttle of a fireman. They say that a newly-made engineer cannot possibly be as valuable as an old hand; and they think that the classification system, which embraces the advancement of fireman, would become inoperative to a greater or less extent, as far as such advancement is concerned, if all engineers were paid according to their grade regardless of the special service they performed. This feeling has increased rapidly since the last convention of the Brotherhood, and now that Chief Arthur is virtually nothing more than a figure-head, and unable to control this radical element, a strike has been precipitated.

The Knights of Labor, now that the engineers' strike is fairly on, laying aside their chronic antipathy and hatred of corporations, particularly of the railroads, are in glee over their opportunity of revenging themselves on the Brotherhood because of past offences, and are supplying the railroads on which the trouble exists with engineers in place of the strikers. But disorganization exists on these roads nevertheless, and traffic generally is impeded and obstructed. If the final outcome should be the crushing defeat of the Brotherhood, as at present managed, and its re-organization under such conservative influences as

characterized it when Mr. Arthur was its true head, it will be well for the engineers. But in the meantime the whole community suffers.

### INTER-AMERICAN TRADE.

THE people of the United States are rousing themselves to the importance of extending and amplifying their trade with the South American States, and the people of Canada will watch their efforts with great interest, for whatever is or may become possible for them in this direction may become to greater or less extent possible for us. Working in this direction the American Shipping League, at its recent convention in New Orleans, adopted resolutions advocating before Congress the passage of a bill giving a small bonus for a certain length of time to American vessels engaged in foreign trade, as France and Germany do. The argument was advanced before the League that with an annual appropriation of, say, \$3,000,000 expended in this manner, the effect would be to resurrect and rebuild the American merchant marine, and that the investment would prove a very profitable one to the whole country. The United States is now paying \$150,000,000 a year to foreign countries, mainly to England, to do its international carrying trade. There are comparatively very few American ships employed in the South American trade, and England, with its regularly established lines to that continent, virtually monopolizes the trade; even a large portion of American manufactures destined for South America being carried there in British ships from British ports. It is safe to say, therefore, that the lack of American ships costs the United States \$150,000,000 a year in freights paid to British vessels, and \$350,000,000 in trade with South American countries which they ought to have and would have if they had the vessels.

Viewed in this light, the *New Orleans Times-Democrat* says, "The matter is not one for the ship owners alone, but for manufacturers and farmers also. The Western farmer who cannot ship his flour to Brazil or the Argentine Republic, because there are no vessels in which to ship it; the Eastern manufacturer who sees Chili depending on England for those very manufactured articles in which this country excels, because the English have the ships and the trade, are equally affected by the decadence of American shipping, to which is largely due the loss of trade with certain countries and the overproduction at home."

The Shipping League seeks a remedy for the present evils and suggests the tonnage act as the best remedy. It has been tried by France and Germany, and we have the authority of those countries, as well as the Boards of Trade of England, that it has largely succeeded. The British Government, indeed, with its postal subsidies, tried practically the same system, until its shipping was on a solid basis, when a bonus of any kind became no longer necessary. No other satisfactory mode of dealing with the problem has been suggested. The American merchant marine, once all-powerful on the ocean, was almost totally ruined by the war. When peace came, it found vessels of a new style and build in use. Against England, already mistress of the seas, with the finest shipyards in the world, backed with illimitable capital, American competition is difficult and almost impracticable, unless some aid is