

was to go before the Unions on Monday or Tuesday and before the United Board of the Building Trades on Tuesday. By Thursday the sense of the Unions upon it was to be made known. The new arrangement, it is understood, while not doing away with the walking delegate—of which functionaries honest labor union men have grown somewhat tired—limits his powers and leaves him no room to exercise his desire to “bleed” corporations in the way that Parks is alleged to have corruptly bargained with the Hecla Iron Works Co.

A lock-out was declared by the Building Trades Employers' Association of New York on the 5th of May. More than two months have thus been lost in an active building season, and it is estimated that 100,000 men have been that long idle. On Friday night last, after a long conference between the commissioners representing 19 unions affiliated with the United Board of Building Trades, the fourteen points in the plan of arbitration offered by the Employers' Association were accepted by the delegates of the unions. One of these is that all main points at issue are to be arbitrated. The president of the United Board, Mr. Eidlitz, said at last accounts that the indications are that the men would be back to work in a few days.

The plan thus far agreed to provides for an arbitration board, but its members sent by the unions must be actual workmen and not walking delegates. It is a very reasonable clause, and one hardly to be expected, that, namely, which permits employers, where union men cannot be obtained, to employ non-union men.

PROSPECTS FOR WOOL.

Cablegrams this week from London say that while no change has taken place in the price of merino wools, the coarser and medium crossbreds showed an advance at the new series of sales, which began on Tuesday, of $7\frac{1}{2}$ to 10 per cent. compared with the close of those sales last held. This state of things will, no doubt, strengthen the position and stiffen the backs of holders of these classes of wool who have for some time past held out for higher prices. Buyers, however, have been afraid that such conditions were but temporary and that the firm values would not last. This seems to have been the case in all parts of the world. In England, Bradford manufacturers have allowed their stocks to become extremely low, yet the wool owners hold out. In the United States, manufacturers of woolen goods are fearful that the prices of their finished products cannot hope to advance in proportion to those of the raw material and so they refrain from buying wool. The lack of orders in their business compared with the booming in most other trades, gives color to the view that prices are already too high for the consumers' taste or pocket, and this is confirming buyers in their view of the superiority of the plan of allowing the “dealer to carry the wool” himself, at any rate for some time to come.

However, even in the United States, there are many people who take an optimistic view of the situation. They point to the fact that merinos are now only 2 per cent. higher than they were this time last year and that in Europe the advance has been more than 12 per cent. But even the above upward movement has been too much apparently for the Americans, for they have lately been turning their attention more and more to the cheaper medium or crossbred wools which may now be said to be the most popular in evidence. Against this, it should not be forgotten that they are at the present

time already very much higher in price than they were only a few months ago, also that they are daily becoming more abundant in the various markets.

The above summaries of the state of affairs in Britain and the United States may be said to apply to Canadian conditions as well. Here, as elsewhere, the new clip is coming forward in comparatively small quantities, chiefly because, while holders feel very firm in their views, buyers are not, as yet at any rate, prepared to give the prices asked. In the meantime a good deal is hoped for as a result of the probable passing by the Dominion Parliament of a bill prepared by Mr. Walter Scott, M.P. for Western Assiniboia, whose object is to prevent the sale of impure or shoddy goods as all woolen, which already has done so much harm in the trade, and has been extremely detrimental to the sheep interests of the Northwest.

THE GREAT SIBERIAN RAILWAY.

From St. Petersburg, on the Baltic Sea, in European Russia, to Vladivostock, on the Pacific ocean, is a distance of 9,781 Russian versts, equal to about 6,521 English miles, for a verst is two-thirds of a mile. This distance has been spanned by a railway, the larger portion of it built by order of the late Czar Alexander of Russia. The railway, after passing through European Russia and crossing the River Volga at Samara, and the Ural Mountains at Orenburg, becomes the great Siberian line and runs from Cheliabinsk through Omsk, Tomsk and the great Lake Baikal to Stretensk, on the borders almost of Manchuria. It is this latter portion, possessing these most characteristically Russian geographical names, which constitutes the main line of the Great Siberian Railway. At Stretensk it forks, one branch going south into Port Arthur and Peking, the other eastward to Vladivostock. The name Vladivostock means, we are told, “Dominion of the East.” It may be instructive, because of Canadian interests on the Pacific Ocean and beyond, for our readers to be informed as to the enormous tract of country which we recognize remotely as Siberia, but which is greatly more valuable than the average person would believe.

Siberia possesses a varied climate, and is so enormous in extent that even the traveller accustomed to the great stretches of North America finds it difficult of comprehension. Still the cultivated zone of Eastern Siberia covers but 10,000 square miles. In this are included the Yenisei and Irkutsk governments, exclusive of that of the Kirensk district. The southern valley of the Yenisei river is a favored spot, and in ancient times was well peopled, as the remains of buildings and stones covered with inscriptions bear witness. To the north of this section is the forest zone, covering 65,000 square miles, and there forestry and agriculture are practised in a modern manner.

Western Siberia has an agricultural zone of 8,600 square miles. Bretun states that the real treasure of this northern land is in the rich black earth, and that the whole future prosperity depends upon this rich black earth. The vastness of the region is not easily described, but it may serve to indicate its dimensions if we say that among the railway bridges across the great rivers which drain the territory northward into the Arctic Ocean, is one 2,400 feet long across the Ob: one, 3,000 feet long across the Yenisei, and one 2,100 feet long across the Irtysh.

The Siberian main line of railway from Cheliabinsk to Stretensk has a total strength of 4,865 versts, say 3,243 miles, and is divided into the following sections: The West-Siberian, 1,329 versts; the Mid-Siberian, 1,715