

POETRY.

WHAT WE WANT.

We are the hewers and delvers who toll for another's gain,
The common clods and the rabble, stunted of brow and brain.
What do we want, the gleaners, of the harvest we have reaped?
What do we want, the neuters, of the honey we have hoarded?
We want the drones to be driven away from our golden hoard;
We want to share in the harvest; we want to sit at the board;
We want what sword or suffrage has never yet won for man.
The fruits of his toil God promised when the curse of toil began.
Ye have tried the sword and sceptre, the cross and the sacred word,
In all the years, and the kingdom is not yet here of the Lord.
We are tired of useless waiting; we are tired of fruitless prayers.
Soldier and churchman and lawyer—the failure, is it not theirs?
What gain is it to the people that a God laid down his life,
If, twenty centuries after, His world be a world of strife?
If the serried ranks be facing each other with ruthless eyes,
And steel in their hands, what profits a Saviour's sacrifice?
Ye have tried and failed to rule us; in vain to direct have tried—
Not wholly the fault of the ruler; not utterly blind the guide.
Mayhap there needs not a ruler—mayhap we can find the way.
At least ye have ruled to ruin; at least ye have led astray.
What matter if king or counsel or president holds the rein,
If crime and poverty ever be links in the bondman's chain?
What careth the burden bearer that Liberty packed his load,
If hunger presses behind him with a sharp and ready goad?
There's a serf whose chains are of paper, there's a king with a parchment crown;
There are robber knights and brigands in factory, field and town.
But the vassal pays his tribute to a lord of wage and rent;
And the Baron's toll is Shylock's with a flesh and blood per cent.
The seamstress bends to her labor all night in a narrow room;
The child, defrauded of childhood, tiptoes all day at the loom.
The soul must starve, for the body can barely on husks be fed;
And the loaded dice of the gambler settle the price of bread.
Ye have shorn and bound the Samson and robbed him of learning's light;
But his sluggish brain is moving; his sinews have all their might.
Look well to your gates of Gaza, your privilege, pride and caste!
The Giant is blind, but thinking, and his locks are growing fast.

—New York Independent.

HOW IT WOULD FEEL TO BE A MAN.

1. Why are you a non-unionist?
2. Is it because you are too shiftless or too stingy to join a union?
3. Are you willing to accept the shorter hours and better pay secured by trade unionists, without having done anything to help in the work, and if so, don't you think your conduct extremely bad?
4. Are you ashamed to look in a mirror, or an honest man in the face?
5. Don't you know that but for trades unionism you would have always had to work longer hours than you now do, and for less pay than you now receive?
6. Don't you think such sponging as you are doing is contemptible?
7. Don't you think it is right for us to call you a rat or a scab?
8. Don't you think the condition of us wage-workers would have been better if you and all other duty shirkers had never been born?
9. Are you not ashamed to go on the public streets in broad daylight?
10. Have you ever wondered how it would feel to be a man?
11. Don't you think it would be a good idea to jump right up and join a union?
12. Don't you think you will respect yourself more if you do your duty as a man, a wage-worker and citizen?
13. Will you put it off from day to day and from year to year, as you have done, or will you join now?
14. Do you blame any man for refusing to work with black-sheep, scabs and rats?
15. Don't you think that the time will soon come when no non-unionists will be employed?
16. Do you think those who have borne the brunt of the battle will be anxious, or even willing, to enroll you, in their ranks after your help is no longer needed?
17. Don't you sometimes wish you deserved to be recognized as a loyal comrade by all fair-minded men?
18. If you need information about labor societies, or even encouragement, why not seek for it where it will be willingly given you?
19. Have these questions roused you, and will you stay aroused, or will you slump right down again?
20. Do you think you can sneak into heaven as you have sneaked into your trade—by crawling under the canvas?
21. Don't you think the "other place" is especially adapted for crawlers, scabs, black sheep and sneaks?
22. Don't you think you had better swear off sneaking?
23. Are you unwilling to join a union because all its members are not angels?
24. Do you imagine they would accept you if they were?
25. Will you this day swear that henceforth you will try and be a man?

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WHAT COMPETITION DOES.

In a recent address delivered in Hartford, Geo. E. McNeil said: "How are we to introduce a better state of society? Henry George says that the single tax will abolish poverty. Others say Government ownership of mines and machinery, and protection, will solve the problem. Some believe in political action. But no one remedy is adequate. Conditions are better here than in any other country. It is said the civilization we enjoy is because of the competitive system, but I say it is in spite of that system. What is the competitive system? A manufacturer sends out an agent to sell his goods—boots and shoes we will say. He finds another manufacturer has put his goods lower. That means that his goods must be made ten cents a case lower. Another capitalist commences in the same line of business, and to secure a market puts his goods still lower. So the wages of the workmen have to go down to balance the competition. Every manufacturer of shoes must put himself down to the level of the lowest; 96 per cent. of the manufacturers may be good, honorable men, but the 5 per cent. fix the prices for the 95."
"Two organizations are at work for the solution of the problem. Trades unions and organized capital, the latter for the extension of trusts and the corruption of Legislatures and jurors. Go back to the time when children worked sixteen hours a day, and when factory diseases were tabulated and trades unions could only meet in secret. Now they are in the van. You see what they have accomplished without wealth and with only average ability. Why are wages higher here than in England? The protectionist says because of the tariff. That is absurd. Wages are higher in free trade England than protected Germany. It is because our habits of thought have lifted us to a higher level and we demand more of the comforts of this life. Now, what makes the mind broaden? It is leisure that builds us up. Those who work seven days in a week get seven days' support. It has been said that they who work the longest will be the richest. Were that true, the horse car drivers and the hewers and diggers would be millionaires, and the bankers and professional men be the majority of the pauper class. The reverse is the case. Those who work the hardest get the least; those who do the least get the most, and those who don't work at all get the surplus. And this will continue till men shall not build up great capital out of the hard-earned wages of cheap labor. But the time is coming when those who work shall share the profits, and those who don't work shall go without."

LOST.

The same old story has been repeated, and the uselessness and folly of strikes as a means of bettering the condition of the working people has again been demonstrated by the complete collapse and utter failure of all the strikes inaugurated by the different labor organizations for less hours and higher wages. In Chicago, the centre of the labor disturbances, the carpenters, after being out of work for five weeks, have returned to work after the bosses have refused to grant any of their demands except those for eight hours, recognition of the union, regulation of the apprenticeship system, employment of none but union men, the discharge of all scabs, thirty-five cents per hour until August 1, thirty-seven and a half cents per hour thereafter. The failure to get forty cents per hour should be a lesson to these poor misguided men not to follow the leadership of those horrid, loud-mouthed agitators. In Indianapolis the same miserable fiasco was the result, the carpenters, painters and plasterers being the only ones to secure the eight-hour work-day at the same wages they had been getting for ten hours, after having been out of work three whole days. The employing builders of New York city were so solicitous for the welfare of their hands and so unwilling that they should be thrown in the way of temptation by the idleness consequent upon a strike that they insisted the men should work but eight hours per day. San Francisco, Philadelphia, Boston, Baltimore, Milwaukee, and dozens of other places had employers so deeply imbued with the milk of human kindness and a desire to elevate the condition of the working people that they forced the shorter work-day upon those who were dependent upon them for their daily rations. There is one striking peculiarity in regard to the matter, though, and that is that only in such cities as were thoroughly organized were the bosses so liberal. The entire lack of disturbance which characterized the movement was owing, no doubt, to the wise and conservative action of the bosses for which they are to be commended. The country at large is to be congratulated on the result and it is hoped that the men who have escaped so lightly will appreciate their kind treatment and refrain from making any more such foolish moves in the future.

LUCKY MULES.

The street car drivers in Louisville work about fourteen hours a day. The mules only work four or five hours. By all means give the mules a chance, and let the poor driver stay away from his family for fourteen hours. The street car lines here sold the other day for \$4,000,000. The poor workmen, and not the mules, made most of this for the corporations. "Talk about the eight hour law," said a driver of the street railway company, yesterday, "the employees of the company have nothing like that, but the mules beat it by a long shot. Now, those mules," he further remarked, pointing to some sleek, long-eared fellows, munching in their stalls, "only work four and a half hours a day. They work hard enough then, and it worries them. Think of it, a pair of mules are out for an hour and a half, and make one trip of eleven miles. They make three trips a day or thirty-three miles. It is fast travelling to make eleven miles in ninety minutes and have to keep it up. Often they have loads to pull, sometimes seventy or eighty people. Oh, the mules work hard enough for four and a half hours. They don't have to organize to get it, either."
Pretty soon the mules in Louisville will get a rest. The street car companies own 2,300 of them and will have no use for them when the put in electric cars. It is hoped when mules go, the street car syndicate will give the poor drivers less hours and more pay. The life of a street car driver is not much happier than that of the mule.—New Era.