

stated that within a small area in that city there were 170 families, aggregating probably a thousand souls, who were starving for food and without any of the comforts of a home. These were the families of striking tailors and coatmakers, who could not possibly exist upon the miserable pittance which the sweaters were offering for their services.

The *Empire* approvingly quotes an article from the *Chicago Herald*, a rabid free trade journal in which it alludes to a certain plank of the platform of the Republican party of Pennsylvania which endorsed the McKinley tariff as being in conformity with the national pledge to protect the interests of American labor, and which had already brought about and would continue to bring about more settled prosperity to all classes. The *Herald* denounced the McKinley tariff as being against the interests of labor, declaring that there were "no words in the English language adequate to the fitting characterization of the conduct of the infernal scoundrels who," in the face of the facts regarding the suffering in New York, Chicago and other cities, "continue to deceive by their mocking laudations of McKinleyism."

If Mr. McKinley or the Republican party are responsible for the wholesale immigration into the United States of the Russian Jews and other offscourings of the old world whose presence has brought about the deplorable condition existing in some American cities, the tirade and blackguardism of the *Chicago Herald* and the quasi endorsement of it by the *Toronto Empire* might be condoned: but in view of the fact that the Republican party, as represented in the American Congress have done and are doing all they can to check the evil, the vulgarity and abuse heaped upon it can but remind us of some of Sir Richard Cartwright's elegant speeches in the Dominion House of Commons. The bitterness of the language is its own antidote.

The condition prevailing in some American cities as regards these foreign paupers is simply awful. Mrs. Annie Besant, writing to the *London Star* of some of her impressions of the United States, says:

I spent some interesting hours tramping about New York slums, contrasting in my mind the terrible poverty with the little less terrible wealth found within the limits of the same city. The misery I saw was chiefly foreign—the streets and houses were filled with Germans, Polish and Russian Jews, Italians, Irish—hapless seekers for the riches that lie at the end of the rainbow where it touches the earth. The public schools of the district told the same story, scarcely an American child being found among the dark-eyed, dark haired little ones, who have to be taught the language of their adopted country ere their ordinary education can commence. It is a complex problem which has to be worked out on American soil, this shooting down of foreign waifs and strays into a country which so quickly admits them to full rights of citizenship—the fragments broken by British and Continental oppression used for the building of a country that should be noble and free. The steps of the "Nemesis which dogs the heels of crime" may be heard all over the civilized world, the citizens of to-day reaping the harvest they sowed so long ago. When and of what nature shall be the garnering?

The fourth annual report of the New York State Board of Mediation and Arbitration, speaking of the sweating system as practised in the city of New York, made special mention of the manufacture of certain articles of clothing in that city, principally cloaks, shirts, pants, etc., by a class of foreigners of several nationalities, few of whom speak the English lan-

guage, and nearly all of whom labor like slaves from twelve to eighteen hours a day, receive a miserable pittance and live in great squalor. The number of both sexes and all ages engaged in this work is estimated at from 60,000 to 70,000. The chief cause of the degradation of this class of labor is to be found in what is known in the trade as the "sweating system," which is carried on by contractors or middlemen. These contractors are generally of the same race and nationality as their victims. They live and have the garments made in the shabbiest and most wretched of the tenement houses of the city, which are destitute of proper light, ventilation and accommodations. Into these tenement apartments they crowd the horde who serve them in making the articles for which they contract at fair prices with the manufacturers. It is difficult to find, and hardly possible to imagine, greater wrong or more degradation than is suffered by these working people at the hands of the "sweaters." Under existing statutes and circumstances there is no measure of relief at hand.

If this is the condition in the United States under protection, it is quite as bad in England under free trade. A staff correspondent of the *London Times* goes so far as to assert that in London the Russian Jews are actually held in slavery and bought and sold as slaves; that in the East-end of London a market is held every Sunday, at which Russian Jews are disposed of to purchasers. "Of course," says the writer, "a man is not sold in a fashion clearly agreed upon; but these men, driven out of Russia and wandering from place to place without a home or resources, reach London knowing neither the town nor the language, nor any living person. There they become the prey of a man who is an actual slave dealer. He keeps and feeds them till the day of the sale, when they sign, in return for a certain sum given for them, a very long engagement as workmen or servants, according to their capacity, in consideration of a certain salary, feeding and lodging. Now, the sum given for them varies from £2 to £3. Their salary varies from 2s. to 3s. a week. Their feeding is horrible and so is their lodging. They suffer hunger, cold, heat, vermin, and work from early morning until late in the evening. They have agreed to pay back a certain sum if they break their engagement. They are deprived of relations, paper, acquaintances, of protection. They remain slaves, working for nothing, depriving thereby, for the profit of their master, other men of work, and especially English workmen.

While the policy of protection is in no way responsible for the labor situation in the United States, there is a brighter side to the picture than that here depicted, and which is clearly attributable to protection. In our last issue we enumerated the wages paid by an iron rolling mill company in Pittsburgh, Penn., in which the helpers of a mill crew, the lowest of the lot, received \$2.50 per day, while the roller, the highest, received \$24.88. The fact that these wages were paid was made public through the trouble between the workmen in the mill and the proprietors, who declined to sign the scale presented by the Amalgamated Association of Iron Workers, which demanded higher wages. It is true that there are but few industries where workmen receive such high wages, but it is also true that there are a great many industries which afford comparatively high wages—much higher than in countries where protection does not prevail. Both Great Britain and