

Commission's Report On Coal Strike.

The report of the commission appointed by the President last October to investigate the anthracite coal strike was made public March 21. The report is dated March 18, and is signed by all the members of the commission—Judge George Gray, of Delaware; Labor Commissioner Carroll D. Wright and Brigadier-General John M. Wilson, both of this city; Mgr. John L. Spalding, of Illinois; Thomas H. Watkins, of Pennsylvania; E. E. Clark, of Cedar Rapids, Iowa, and Edward W. Parker, of this city. The report is to be illustrated, and it will be accompanied by the testimony taken by the commission, but thus far only the report proper has been printed. This alone covers eighty-seven pages of printed matter.

Following is the commission's own summary of the awards made:

First—That an increase of 10 per cent. over and above the rates paid in the month of April, 1902, be paid to all contract miners for cutting coal, yardage and other work for which standard rates or allowances existed at that time, from and after November 1, 1902, and during the life of this award. The amount of increase under the award due for work done between November 1, 1902, and April 1, 1903, to be paid on or before June 1, 1903.

Second—that engineers who are employed in hoisting water shall have an increase of 10 per cent. on their earnings between November 1, 1902, and April 1, 1903, to be paid on or before June 1, 1903; and from and after April 1, 1903, and during the life of the award, they shall have eight hour shifts, with the same pay which was effective in April, 1902, and where they are now working eight hour shifts the eight hour shifts shall be continued, and these engineers shall have an increase of 10 per cent. on the wages which were effective in the several positions in April, 1902.

Hoisting engineers and other engineers and pumpmen, other than those employed in hoisting water, who are employed in positions which are manned continuously shall have an increase of 10 per cent. on their earnings between November 1, 1902, and April 1, 1903, to be paid on or before June 1, 1903; and from and after April 1, 1903, and during the life of the award, they shall have an increase of 5 per cent. on the rates of wages which were effective in the several positions in April, 1902; and in addition they shall be relieved from duty on Sundays, without loss of pay, by a man provided by the employer to relieve them during the hours of the day shift.

That firemen shall have an increase of 10 per cent. on their earnings between November 1, 1902, and April 1, 1903, to be paid on or before June 1, 1903, and from and after April 1, 1903, and during the life of the award, they shall have eight hour shifts, with the same wages per day, week or month as were paid in each position on April 1, 1902.

All employees or company men other than those for whom the commission makes special awards shall be paid an increase of 10 per cent. on their earnings between November 1, 1902, and April 1, 1903, to be paid on or before June 1, 1903, and from and after April 1, 1903, and during the life of this award, they shall be paid on the basis of a nine hour day, receiving therefore the same wages as were paid in April, 1902, for a ten hour day. Overtime in excess of nine hours in any day to be paid at a proportional rate per hour.

Third—During the life of this award the present methods of payment for coal mined shall be adhered to unless changed by mutual agreement.

In all of the above awards it is provided that allowance like these made shall be paid to legal representatives of such employees as may have died since November 1, 1902.

Fourth—Any difficulty or disagreement arising under this award, either as to its interpretation or application, or in any way growing out of the relations of the employer and employee, which cannot be settled or adjusted by consultation

between the superintendent or manager of the mine or mines and the miner or miners directly interested, or is of a scope too large to be so settled or adjusted, shall be referred to a permanent joint committee to be called a Board of Conciliation, to consist of six persons, appointed as hereinafter provided. That is to say, if there shall be a division of the whole region into three districts, in each of which there shall exist an organization representing a majority of the mine workers of such district, one of said Board of Conciliation shall be appointed by each of said organizations and three other persons shall be appointed by the operators, the operators in each of said districts appointing one person.

The Board of Conciliation thus constituted shall take up and consider any question referred to it as aforesaid, hearing both parties to the controversy, and such evidence as may be laid before it by either party; and any award made by a majority of such Board of Conciliation shall be final and binding on all parties. If, however, the said board is unable to decide any question submitted or point related thereto, that question or point shall be referred to an umpire, to be appointed, at the request of said board, by one of the circuit judges of the Third Judicial Circuit of the United States, whose decision shall be final and binding in the premises.

The membership of said board shall at all times be kept complete, either the operators or miners' organizations having the right, at any time when a controversy is not pending, to change their representation thereon.

At all hearings before said board the parties may be represented by such person or persons as they may respectively select.

No suspension of work shall take place, by lockout or strike, pending the adjudication of any matter so taken up for adjustment.

Fifth—Whenever requested by a majority of the contract miners of any colliery, check weighmen or check docking bosses, or both, shall be employed. The wages of said check weighmen and check docking bosses shall be fixed, collected and paid by the miners in such manner as the said miners shall by a majority vote elect, and when requested by a majority of said miners, the operators shall pay the wages fixed for check weighmen and check docking bosses out of deductions made proportionately from the earnings of the said miners, on such basis as the majority of said miners shall determine.

Sixth—Mine cars shall be distributed among miners who are at work as uniformly and as equitably as possible, and there shall be no concerted effort on the part of the miners or mine workers of any colliery or collieries to limit the output of the mines or to detract from the quality of the work performed, unless such limitation of output be in conformity to an agreement between an operator or operators and an organization representing a majority of said miners in his or their employ.

Seventh—In all cases where miners are paid by the car, the increase awarded to the contract miners is based upon the cars in use, the topping required and the rates paid per car which were in force on April 1, 1902. Any increase in the size of car or in the topping required shall be accompanied by a proportionate increase in the rate paid per car.

Eighth—The following sliding scale of wages shall become effective on April 1, 1903, and shall affect all miners and mine workers included in the awards of the commission.

The wages fixed in the awards shall be the basis of and the minimum under the sliding scale. For each increase of 5 cents in the average price of white ash coal of sizes above pea coal sold at or near New York, between Perth Amboy and Edgewater, and reported to the bureau of anthracite coal statistics, above \$4.50 per ton f.o.b., the employees shall have an increase of 1 per cent. in this compensation, which shall continue until a change in the average of said coal works a reduction or an increase in said additional compensation hereunder; but the rate of compensation shall in no case be less than that fixed in the award—that is, when the price of said coal reaches \$4.55 per ton the compensation will be increased 1 per cent. to continue until the price falls below \$4.50 per ton, when the 1 per cent. increase will cease, or until the price reaches \$4.60 per ton, when an additional 1 per cent. will be added, and so on. These average prices shall be com-

puted monthly by an accountant or commission named by one of the circuit judges of the Third Judicial Circuit of the United States, and paid by the coal operators such compensation as the appointing judge may fix, which compensation shall be distributed among the operators in proportion to the tonnage of each mine. In order that the basis may be laid for the successful working of the sliding scale provided herein, it is also adjudged and awarded: That all coal operating committee file at once with the United States Commissioner of Labor a certified statement of the rates of compensation paid in each occupation known in their companies, as they existed April 1, 1902.

Ninth—No person shall be refused employment, or in any way discriminated against, on account of membership or non-membership in any labor organization; and there shall be no discrimination against or interference with any employee who is not a member of any labor organization by members of such organization.

Tenth—All contract miners shall be required to furnish within a reasonable time before each pay day a statement of the amount of money due from them to their laborers, and such sums shall be deducted from the amount due the contract miner, and paid directly to each laborer by the company. All employees when paid shall be furnished with an itemized statement of their account.

Eleventh—The awards herein made shall continue in force until March 31, 1906; and any employee or group of employees violating any of the provisions thereof shall be subject to reasonable discipline by the employer; and, further, that the violation of any provisions of these awards, either by employer or employee, shall not invalidate any of the provisions thereof.

RECOMMENDATIONS.—The commission also makes a number of recommendations, which may be summarized as follows:—The discontinuance of the system of employing "the Coal and Iron Police," because this force is believed to have an irritating effect, and a resort to the regularly constituted peace authorities in case of necessity.

A stricter enforcement of the laws in relation to the employment of children.

That the State and Federal Governments should provide machinery for the making of a compulsory investigation of difficulties, similar to the investigation which this commission has made. The commission expresses the opinion that with a few modifications the federal act of October, 1888, authorizing a commission to settle controversies between railroad corporations and other common carriers could be made the basis of a law for arbitration in the anthracite coal mining business. The commission, however, takes a decided position against compulsory arbitration. On this point it adds a long commentary, which closes in the following language:—

The chief benefit to be derived from the suggestion herein made lies in placing the real facts and the responsibility for such condition authoritatively before the people, that public opinion may crystallize and make its power felt. Could such a commission as that suggested have been brought into existence in June last, we believe that the coal famine might have been averted—certainly the suffering and deprivation might have been greatly mitigated.

These awards and recommendation constitute the closing part of the report. The earlier pages, and by long odds the larger portion of the report, are devoted to a review of the controversy which led to the President's action in appointing the committee, to the proceedings of the committee, and to the proceedings of the commission. They review in a general way the production of anthra-

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