

WHERE LABOR IS NOT PRAYER.

here, but was evidently prepared to take his chances with the rest. He showed me some work he had taken out, which was evidently of a very fine grade, and in which he said he was putting the very best work, but that he did not know what price he was to get for it. He had only two girls working for him then, but intended to advertise for more. He evidently meant to go into the business more extensively if he could possibly get the work to do. There is no doubt he will be able to get plenty, as the big dealers are always on the look-out for men who will take the work for any price they can get.

I then went further west, and after some difficulty discovered a place of which I was in search, and what a place it was! The ceiling was very low and black with age, the light was poor, and the ventilation miserable. This employer was also a Jew. There were seven men and seven women in the room. Their appearance was certainly in keeping with the place, looking, as they did, more sad and dejected than any I had yet seen. The employer claimed to be a victim of circumstances and deplored the low wages of his employees, which he said were from one-fifty to three dollars per week.

"How can they possibly live on such wages?" was asked.

"Well I'll tell you how it is," he replied, "their brothers or fathers, I suppose, have to help to keep them."

All these women were of adult age.

He showed me coats and ulsters the prices for which were thirty-five cents and eighty cents respectively.

Coming back east, I visited two more places, in one of which was a young girl under age, who had no business to be there. She was

pulling out bastings, and doing other light work. When spoken to about it, the employer made very light of the matter, and said she was not regularly employed, but that she came in occasionally for her own amusement.

There were ten other girls employed in the same place, but they were all so busy and intent on their work that they evidently had no time to even think of or notice anything else.

In the other place, about the same number of hands were employed. The employer in this case, a very intelligent man, most willingly furnished me with all the information in his power. The wages, he admitted, were very low and the work very hard. But that could not be avoided so long as the trade was conducted as it is under the present system.

The indiscriminate giving out of work from the wholesale places, and the eager readiness to take advantage of every one's necessities in order to force the price down still another notch, was the prime cause of the whole trouble. He showed me several of the tickets given out along with the work, which describe the work and give the price. For the benefit of those familiar with the technical terms of the trade, I will give a couple of samples:

1. Double Breast Overcoats, edges swelled, one-quarter, seams raised, three-eighths, five pockets, cloth, quilting, silk stitching—price \$1.45.

2. Fly Front Overcoats, edges narrow bound, five pockets, velvet collars, quilting—price \$1.45.

"When I began seven years ago," said the contractor, "the prices for the same class of goods were about double what they are now, and the work must be done even better now than it was then."