

LABOR AND WAGES.

Cleanings From the Industrial Field of the World.

England has 600,000 cotton workers. In Italy 200,000 people live in cellars. Berlin has a papier-mache fire engine. Natural gas is petering out at Pittsburgh. Germany's bakers average \$2.50 per week. Saltair (Utah) salt works cover 900 acres. Boston is to have an electric elevated road. Barnsley (Eng.) joiners won 8 pence per hour. Many laborers in Italy average 25 cents a day. St. Paul City laborers get \$1.40 for eight hours. A Scranton mill makes a steel rail every sixteen seconds. America has 1,000,000 telephones; the world 1,200,000. A penny-in-the-slot gives electric light in English railways. Denver conductors have been using bogus bell punches. Boston slate and metal roofers demand eight hours and \$3.25. The San Francisco Union will establish a co-operative shoe factory. Great Western (Eng.) Railway hands got increases and shorter hours. In Berlin 800 sales girls get medical care and work is secured for 10 cents a week. John Burns, of England, says last year there were 2,000 strikes, and only 20 or 30 lost. San Diego, Cal., has the largest hotel. The grounds cover twenty acres, the building five. The Maritime trades of Melbourne have adopted a resolution declaring that the strike should be continued. A meeting of Sailors' and Firemen's unions has decided to federate the employees in all the shipping industries. A meeting of unionists held at Sydney, N.S.W., on Monday, resolved that union men should not work with free men. Every steamfitter establishment in Chicago is idle, all of the union men and 95 per cent. of the non-union men being on strike. In 1888, said John Burns, six persons in Liverpool and New York, in twenty-four hours, by forming a cotton "corner," made £3,000,000. Furniture workers met at Indianapolis. This union won thirty-one demands without a strike. Strikes cost \$7,019; sick benefits, \$16,299. The Newcastle, Wales and other miners in New South Wales are resuming work. Many seamen are applying for work, and the strike is virtually ended. In 1888 the New York Malsters' Union men got \$16 a week for ten hours. The loss of a strike cut wages to \$10 and \$12 and increased the day to fourteen hours. They are reorganizing. An extensive strike has been begun by the dockmen at Plymouth against the employment of non-union men. The new federation of employees in all the shipping industries embraces 370,000 men. Three thousand strikers at Sydney, N.S.W., have declared in favor of continuing their struggle. The miners of Newcastle have delayed resuming work. There was rioting in Adelaide caused by unionists molesting non-union men. The trouble between the Western Union Telegraph operators, who were members of the Brotherhood of Telegraphers, and the Western Union company has been amicably settled. The members of the St. Louis lodge have taken steps to dissolve the lodge. The telegraph officials have reinstated both the discharged and the striking operators. At last Saturday's session of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers, in Pittsburgh, the following officers were elected: First grand engineer, D. Everett; second grand engineer, T. C. Ingraham; third grand engineer, Ash Kennedy, of Winnipeg. The latter office was created at the convention. There was no election for grand chief engineer, as Mr. Arthur was elected at the last convention for three years. All the operators, thirty-seven in number, in the Western Union Telegraph Company's office at St. Paul, Minn., struck at eight o'clock on Monday, and all the company's wires into the city are idle. The walkout is on account of the discharge by the company a few days ago of six operators supposed to belong to the Brotherhood. The discharged men called on Superintendent McMichael in Minneapolis on Monday to try and effect an agreement, but were not recognized and the strike is the result. The Western Union Telegraph Company at St. Louis, on Monday, discharged R. R. Grandy, T. I. Irwin, G. B. Groves and C. McNeal, four experienced operators, because they were members of the Brotherhood. Grandy has been in the employ of the company for twenty-five years and McNeal for seventeen years. The four men have been prominently identified with the Brotherhood affairs, and the others were notified last Thursday that unless they severed their connection with the organization they would be dismissed. The Retail Clerks' Union, No. 5046, American Federation of Labor, has issued a strong appeal calling upon retail clerks in every city in America to organize. It says: "The great wave of organization which has swept from ocean to ocean and from the lakes to the gulf has found a welcome in the hearts of the down-trodden slaves, commonly called clerks. Many unions have been organized and wonderful improvements accomplished through the assistance of organized labor. Hours have been shortened, wages have been increased and the general condition of members improved. So apparent has been the benefits

derived that an effort is being made to extend the benefits of united action to all cities in America, hoping by effecting an organization among the clerks from all parts of this country, a better condition will result and a more thorough realization afforded the clerks of their true condition. The fallacious idea that employers look upon organization with contempt and fear is false and unfounded. Self preservation is the first law of nature, therefore all the reasonable employers can naught but respect the man who aims to promote his condition and welfare. That union is necessary to accomplish the much needed improvement is evident from the grand progress made by other crafts through the Federation of Labor. But few clerks realize that when seven wage workers join hands and secure a charter thereby affiliating with the American Federation of Labor they command the recognition and support of over seven hundred and fifty thousand organized laboring men."

Seventy-five telegraph operators, employed by the Western Union Company, Chicago, responded to a call for a special meeting on Monday, and remained in session for several hours. The Western Union officials rented a room facing the hall in which the operators' meeting was held and by the aid of a pocket camera photographed every one who came within its focus. The operators who were taken will no doubt be placed on the discharged list.

The Associated Steamship Owners of Liverpool, who employ a number of non-union laborers, have been warned by the Dock Laborers' Union that unless the non-unionists are discharged a strike will be inaugurated. The executive of the Shipping Federation offers to supply the Associated Steamship Owners with a full force of non-union men if the Liverpool owners will join the Shipping Federation. It is believed the Liverpool employers will refuse to discharge the non-unionists, and that a strike is therefore imminent.

IS THE DAY OF STRIKES PAST?

"The day of strikes," say some of the so-called conservative, "is past." Rats! The day of strikes will never be past until all men, everywhere, are free, industrially, economically, socially, and every other way. As long as injustice sways the world, strikes will be resorted to to overcome it. Whenever workingmen become so lost to their own sense of protection as to endorse the puerile and really idiotic idea of no strikes, and act on that principle, that moment they will rivet the shackles of industrial slavery around their necks so tightly that only death will relieve their suffering. An individual who will not strike against injustice deserves not the name of man or woman. Then away with the fool talk of "the day of strikes is past." It is the only weapon mankind possesses to fight against the tyranny of organized robbers. When labor receives the full product of its own exertion, then and not till then will the day of strikes be past.

DIGNITY OF LABOR.

Passing up Merrimack street the other day, a not very uncommon spectacle was witnessed which gave us an excellent chance to meditate on the prevailing question of the dignity of labor. A man about sixty years old, a sober, industrious citizen, was engaged in cleaning out a manhole; his head and shoulders being the only part of him visible to the passer by. The mud and filth was indescribable, yet the man was performing a very important service to the public, for which he was receiving the exorbitant sum of \$1.75 per day. Now the question very appropriately comes in: Where is the dignity of labor in this case? Are there not thousands of people in our city who would shudder at the thought of leaving their comfortable offices, their libraries, their stores, or their workshops, to change places with this man in filth, and how many of the thousands just spoken of are troubling themselves about the labor question, or making any show of earnestness in trying to elevate the condition of labor, and to bring a truly dignified basis? The work of this man is of just as much importance, and should carry with it as much dignity, as the work of those in offices, libraries, stores and shops. It is disgusting to hear so much talk about dignity of labor, when so many good men, who, through force of circumstances, brought about by the present sinful competitive system, are compelled to perform important services for a miserable existence, which so many others would shrink from doing. Every man should be willing to pay another as much for doing a piece of work as he would want for doing it himself. There are many men in comfortable positions, receiving salaries varying from \$1,000 to \$5,000 per year, whose services are of no more importance than those of the digger in the sewer.—The Commonwealth.

WOULD NOT TAKE THE OATH.

Joseph Byron, of 242 Cleveland street, East New York, claims he is willing to join the Plasterers' Union, but as he refuses to take an oath the union will not admit him, and he finds it impossible to obtain employment. According to his statement he came to this country from England last May and obtained work as a plasterer. He found it necessary to belong to the Plasterers' Union and therefore made application. Recently he was notified to be present at their hall in South Brooklyn. He went there, and was partially initiated, but refused to take the oath and was put out of the hall. He now claims that it is impossible for him to obtain employment in New York, Brooklyn or Jersey City, and thinks it an outrage that a question of religious belief should debar him from becoming a member of a trades union.

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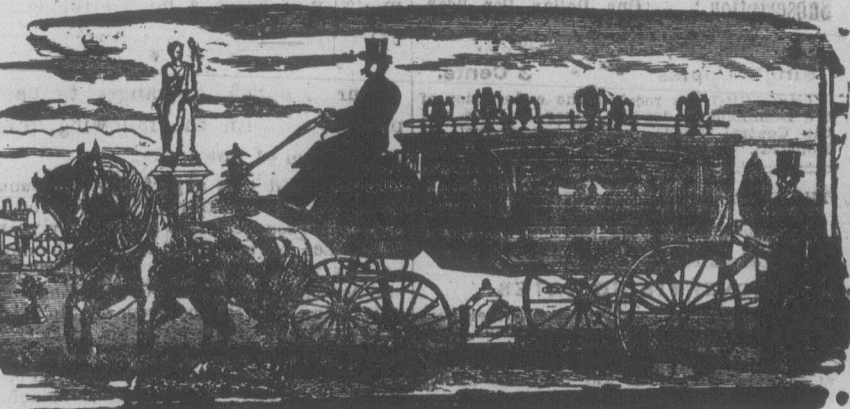
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