

SWEATING IN NEW YORK.

AN AWFUL CONDITION OF AFFAIRS EXPOSED.

New York, February 23.—During the past week a representative of the Clothing Operatives' National Union of America, on behalf of the members of that organization who work at the various clothing trades in Boston, has been industriously investigating the condition of the "sweat shops" in this city for the purpose of proving that they are such as to transmit the germs of all sorts of infectious diseases in the garments that are manufactured in them. The facts he has gathered, together with the results of another investigation which Gov. Russell, of Massachusetts, ordered, will be submitted to the Legislature of that State, with a petition from the clothing operatives that the shipments of such garments into their State be prohibited. The investigation was made with the greatest secrecy, it being feared that if it were publicly announced the contractors who own "sweat shops" that could not bear investigation would be on their guard, and the object of the investigation be frustrated.

Three years ago the greater and more important part of the clothing trade of Boston began to be supplied by contractors in New York, who could get their work done more cheaply than it could be done in any other part of the world. This of course was a great blow to the clothing operatives of Boston. They declared that they could not compete with New York workmen, and sent a petition to Gov. Russell, who in the early part of January ordered Rufus Wade, Chief of the State Sanitary Police, to send two special officers to New York to investigate the sweating system as it is practised here with reference to the effect it might have on the sanitary condition of Boston. These two officers came to New York on January 19 and returned on January 26, but the result of their investigation has not yet been made public.

John Crowley, the secretary of the union, who was foremost in the crusade against New York clothing, thinking that if the matter ever came before the Legislature he would be called upon to testify, decided to make an investigation on his own account. He came to New York on January 20 and made elaborate preparations. He had a talk with Factory Inspector Connolly, to whom he unfolded his plans. Mr. Connolly gave him a letter to Deputy Factory Inspector Geo. A. McKay, who is stationed in this city, ordering him to accompany Mr. Crowley through all the clothing shops he might care to inspect. Mr. Crowley next engaged Dr. George Sticbeling, of 71 St. Mark's place, to examine carefully into the sanitary condition of the places they were to visit, and to make an affidavit embodying the results.

The first tour of inspection was made last Tuesday. Mr. Crowley had a long list of the sweating shops which do work for Boston houses. The condition of these places has been described in the newspapers too often to need any repetition here. They were all dirty, hot and foul smelling dens, in which the workmen were packed closely together.

The deputy factory inspector found a great many violations of the factory law. He discharged nearly a dozen children who were under age. Another inspection tour was made on Thursday, and a third and last one on Saturday, all with the same results, of foul rooms packed with people living in a horrible condition.

THE EIGHT HOUR BILL IN CONGRESS.

The disposition manifested toward the Eight Hour Back Pay Bill in the United States Senate when the subject came up for discussion last week was not entirely encouraging to those having balances due them from the Government for over-time. Several members of the Senate seemed to regard the actual merits of the bill itself as of secondary importance to the question of economy in appropriations, as if the question were simply one of needless outlay rather than one of debt lawfully incurred and morally owing. Various arguments were advanced against the measure, such as that many of the workmen had contracted to work more than eight hours; that many of them were now dead; others had worked without any claim to the wages due them for the labor done over-time; the claims were now outlawed, etc. All such arguments might, with much greater consistency, be advanced in support of the bill. If any workmen made such contracts those contracts were made contrary to law and for the plain purpose of evasion and should be annulled as unlawful. If some of those to whom injustice has been done have died before reparation is made, that certainly should not stand as a bar against the others. If the law which declared eight hours to be a lawful day's work was violated to the extent of enforcing longer hours, the fact that poor men seek the

privilege to toil did not complain of the injustice ought not to be held against them by a powerful and wealthy Government as a justification of the wrong done them.

The bill does not provide simply for the payment of certain claims made for labor performed and unpaid for, but that such claims may be presented before the Board of Claims and each separately investigated and its merits passed upon, and if found to be a just and lawful claim under the laws existing at the time the work was done, that its payment should be recommended. Economy which seeks to go behind such questionable excuses in order to evade investigation of the question whether the laborer be worthy of his hire stands too close in the shadow of dishonesty to lay any claim to statesmanship. It is not too late yet for the friendly majority to secure the passage of the measure before adjournment, and it is to be hoped that the action of the House will be approved and the measure forwarded for the Executive signature to make it a law.—Irish World.

THE LIP RING OF THE MANGANJA.

It is a very curious study to note the variety of feminine ornamentation in the different nations, and how what may be considered as a beautifier by one race becomes a positive monstrosity and deformity in the eyes of another. One of the most curious decorations in the world is adopted by the women of the Manganja tribe, inhabiting a country in Africa near one of the northern tributaries of the Zambesi. It is called the "pelele." This is a ring, but it is fixed neither in the ear nor the nose like other races, but in the upper lip. It is a ring made of ivory, metal, or bamboo, according to the wealth of the wearer; is nearly an inch in thickness, and varies in diameter at the will of the wearer, many being nearly three inches in diameter from outer edge to edge. When the girls are very young they have the lip pierced with two holes close to the nose, and a small wooden peg inserted to keep the wound from closing. When the wound heals, two small holes are left in the lip, into which larger pegs are successfully introduced until, in about two years, the full-sized "pelele" can be worn. Its effect, when worn, is indescribable. When at rest it hangs down over the mouth; when food is taken it projects horizontally, like a small shelf, and when the dusky maiden smiles upon her admirer, it elevates itself, turning upside down until the lower edge rests against the bridge of the nose, the tip of the nose appearing through the centre, and the eyes looking round each side. As the teeth are generally filed to sharp points, until they resemble those of a crocodile, the effect may be better imagined than described. Chikanda Kadze, wife of the great chief, had a "pelele" that hung below her chin.

The origin of this horrible ornament (?) is unknown, and the reasons given for it are amusing, the natives saying, "What kind of a creature would a woman be without a pelele? She would have a mouth like a man and no beard to cover it." In different districts it varies slightly in shape, being cylindrical, instead of round; or like a flat dish, instead of a ring.—W. F. Pond in Ladies' Home Journal.

Thoughts of a Reformer.

(From the Glassworker.)

The man of wealth and cozy surroundings may easily dilate on the duties of the poor, of strikers in particular, just as the man farthest from the scene of battle can boast loudest of his bravery. But "put yourself in his place" is an old and true saying. But a hungry stomach has no conscience and a sense of injustice done, often causes blindness. It's all very well to tell a striker to be peaceful, and it's all very hard for the striker to remain peaceful while he sees other men taking the bread and butter from himself and family. When he sees a return to work made necessary by the action of slaves weaker in manhood than himself, and when he knows the return means an increased burden for the slaves to bear, no wonder he becomes a rioter. Then the judge and jury, who do not know what grinding poverty or unfair competition means, can easily dilate upon morality and convict him, hang him, not in justice but as a warning, a scare-crow to all other workmen, that almighty capital will tolerate no monkey business from common workmen.

Mr. Carnegie intends to write another book. I haven't heard the proposed title, but probably it will be "Triumph and Reduction." You know "Triumph and Democracy" has become too tame, and besides it doesn't pay its votaries like triumphant reduction. It's a peculiar and significant occurrence when the mills of Mr. Carnegie are generally the first to receive notice of reduction; not only first but often the only ones. Mr. Carnegie has been giving advice how young men can achieve fortune and success. They would have a very hard time to achieve it in the employ of Andrew Carnegie. Our Scotch fellow-

citizen patronizingly claims to have the only panacea for the ills of poverty and for the solution of the labor problem by the general adoption of his gospel of wealth. Rich men's fortune, in keeping with his idea, should be distributed for the general good by the erection of libraries, endowment of hospitals, etc. The only way to do this successfully is to cut down your employees' wages, that is, take what they justly earn away from them and scatter the proceeds among the general public who never had anything to do with earning it. This is a new way of giving the devil his due. To my mind the proper way to do is to leave the money in the hands of those who really earned it, then workmen will need no endowed hospitals or free libraries. These thoughts are suggested to a reformer by the recent reductions at Homestead and the little difficulties at Braddock.

The Power of the Soup Ticket.

Relief committees are once more to the fore, and the distribution of tickets for bread and cheese and soup is again being used as a means of heading back the revolutionary tendencies of the people. Parsons, politicians and plutocrats subscribe their few pounds to the funds of these committees with a view of making the workman a better church goer, a more ready partisan and a more willing slave; for, in short, creating political and religious "soupers." There is a law against bribery, and a parliamentary candidate may not stand half a pint of beer to an elector without risking his seat in the event of his being elected. But he can give a five pound note to a soup kitchen and have the fact widely advertised, whereby he influences not alone the thousand or so recipients of soup tickets, but all who hear or read of his munificence, and all the workmen electors of the division throw up their hats and shout, "He's a jolly good fellow." Good old "soupers!"—London Justice.

To Whom Does it Belong?

In a previous issue we referred to the vast accumulations of wealth, actually belonging to no one, but controlled by the directors of life insurance companies. We named, among others, the New York Mutual, whose assets are very nearly 150 million dollars. The Metropolitan has just issued its annual report, which shows assets amounting to 120 million dollars. Its income last year from premiums paid by policy holders was nearly \$30,000, while its disbursements for death casualties and endowments were only \$18,000,000. In other words the policy holders, as a body, paid more than double as much as they received. Of the remainder seven million dollars went to agents and directors, and the net surplus, together with the income of previously accumulated assets, went to swell those accumulations. Once more we say, it were high time those vast sums were turned into the public treasury and life insurance became a public service.—Workman's Advocate.

Idle Workmen in Boston.

"It cannot be helped," a Boston master builder is quoted by the Record as saying. "There are five men for every four jobs, and one of them must remain idle. That one man holds the balance of power, so to speak. Look at the strikes we have had. He steps forward at the critical moment when the four men choose to stop work, and when they conclude to resume, he also resumes his proper function of loafing." The number of idle laborers in Boston is estimated as follows: Longshoremen, 2,000; coal heavers, 500; gas house men, 300; iron workers, 1,000; day laborers, 4,500; mechanics, 10,000; salesmen and clerks, 2,000; street car employees, etc., 2,500; hotel employees, 400; women, all branches, 8,000; miscellaneous, 7,000; total, 33,200.

Between the Devil and the Deep Sea.

The meaning of the phrase "Between the devil and the deep sea" is apparent to be between dangers of equal magnitude. But the real origin of the phrase is not easily found. Inter-Ocean says that the first use of the expression it can find in literature is in a work printed in London in 1637, entitled "Expedition with Mackay's Regiment," by Col. Monroe. The regiment was with the army of Gustavus Adolphus, and was engaged in battle with the Austrians. The Swedish gunners did not elevate their guns properly, so their shot fell into the ranks of their allies. The Scottish regiment, therefore, with the enemy on one side, and on the other side the blundering gunners of the Swedes, was, says the historian, "between the devil and the deep sea." But the phrase was probably an old one at that time, and may even go back to the time of the Hebrew exodus, when the Israelites had the Red Sea in front and Pharaoh and his army behind them.

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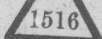
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