

the agricultural laborers, from which injury they are only now recovering. There can be no higher mission for trade unions than that of raising the condition of the working men of this country to such an extent and for such a length of time that the point reached becomes the accepted minimum, and that any change at all must be in an upward direction.

The laborers, however, must not expect to derive all the advantages of high wages at once. They must remember that if enhanced wages cause the price of the commodity produced to be enhanced, the price is raised to them as well as to others. If the demand of the cotton operatives raise the price of shirts, the cotton operatives must pay more for their shirts just the same as other people. There is, however, this to be considered, that men produce faster than they consume. Each man produces more than is necessary for his own support. When a man has made a plough he can make another before that one is worn out. The more there are made the more there will be wanted until all are supplied, which for practical purposes may at present be considered a very remote future. The supply creates the demand. Stockings were not inquired for (because they were not wanted) until they were invented; and if to-morrow we had double the quantity we have to-day, it might be possible to sell them at half the present price without reducing wages at all. It is quite possible that wages may be enhanced, prices diminished, and profits increased, at one and the same time, as those familiar with the use of newly invented machinery are well aware. This explains a paradoxical appearance at the present day, that all over the world there is a tendency of wages to rise, and at the same time a universal tendency of all materials to cheapen. Unionism helps both these tendencies, and is thus a double blessing. It is probable, though not certain, that profits will be called upon to make the principal sacrifice in the future. At any rate this is to be hoped. Hitherto the consumer has been—to use a vulgar but expressive word—fleeced; and it is time that the incidence of injustice be either shifted or annihilated.

Although, however, a rise in the price of labor all round, taxes, so to speak, the laborers themselves, yet it does not tax them to the full extent of the advance. There is a race of beings called "non-producers"—a class "sometimes innocent, generally useless, often noxious." Now a rise in wages all round means that some of the luxuries of the non-producing class are being metamorphosed into extra comforts or luxuries for the producing class. This is a pure gain to the producer, in addition to other gains which result from the improve-

ment of his position. The only way by which laborers could be deprived of the benefits of increased wages, would be by the non-laboring class setting to work and producing something. They would then share in the advantages of the increased prosperity, instead of, as now, sacrificing a portion of their means, and this portion is divided amongst the producers. So long, however, as they toil not, neither do they spin, and garner what they have not gathered, they cannot complain that they contribute towards the cost of those who work.

It must not be thought, however, that well-paid labor is unremunerative to the capitalist. The contrary is the fact. Indeed, that style of labor for which no wages—in the ordinary sense—are paid, is the least remunerative of any. Slaves will not work. The low state of civilization and the ignorance of even the simplest laws in which it is found necessary to keep human beings, in order that they may submit to slavery, do more to prevent them from working hard than the lash does to make them work at all. It was pointed out some time ago that "two Middlesex mowers will mow in a day as much grass as six Russian serfs; and in spite of the dearth of provisions in England, and their cheapness in Russia, the mowing of a quantity of hay which would cost an English farmer a copeck will cost a Russian proprietor three or four copecks." It was, in short, considered as proven that in Russia, where everything was cheap, the labor of a serf was doubly as expensive as that of a laborer in England. Men will not work their very best unless they have an incentive to do so. This great truth has at last made itself known to some of our great capitalists. Sir Thomas Brassey and other large employers have found out that underpaid labor is by no means economical. Here are a few proofs—When the North Devon Railway was being made, men were working at 2s. a day at first, then 2s. 6d., and then 3s. 6d. Nevertheless it was found that the work was executed more cheaply at the highest rate than at the lowest rate. So also in carrying out the large sewage works in Oxford Street, London, bricklayers were gradually raised from 6s. to 10s. a day, and at the higher rate of wages bricks were laid at a cheaper rate; while at the building of Basingstoke station one London workman at 5s. 6d. a day did more work than three country ones at 3s. 6d. each. Many other instances might be added, all showing that intelligent workmen well paid are cheaper than bad workmen ill paid. As Mr. Frederic Harrison puts it: "The workman whose intelligence requires no more than the minimum of supervision is a cheap bargain even at the maximum wages." "It is said by one