

our correspondent to know that the University of Chicago has established a course of instruction in short-story writing.

D. M.—What are the moths that get into clothing and are so troublesome to housekeepers?

They are the larvæ of a small moth or "miller" which, in its adult state, gets into unused clothing, etc., and deposits its eggs. The larvæ that hatch from these eggs feed on feathers, wool, fur, and other animal substances, and effect much damage. Keep clothing in boxes or drawers that are sealed tight with strips of glued paper, and use "moth balls," camphor gum, etc. Whip out with switches.

T. D. D.—I want to give a lesson on anthracite coal—the supply, the industry, characteristics, and incidentally tell about the present strike in the Pennsylvania coal fields. Can you give your readers the causes and present condition of that strike?

The subject is a long one to deal with in a few lines, but we will give a few leading details, chiefly gathered from an article in the New York *Outlook* of August 30, to which we refer our readers for fuller particulars.

The strike directly affects 147,000 anthracite mine workers, now out of employment, and incidentally every man, woman and child of Canada and the Northern States. The native American, with English, Irish, Welsh and German immigrants formed, up to 1875, the mining population of the three hard coal fields—Lehigh, Schuylkill and Wyoming—in Pennsylvania. In that year the railroad mine-owning companies began the introduction of cheap labor from southern and eastern Europe, chiefly the Slavs from Russia, the northern provinces of Turkey, Bohemia, Lithuania, Poland, etc. These people have few wants beyond a rude shelter usually erected by themselves, accommodating a party of over a dozen unmarried men, with coarse food sufficient to keep body and soul together. The whole cost of living for a man per month is not over \$4.00.

Before the advent of the Slavs, the English-speaking miner had become accustomed to good wages which gave him a good house and comfortable living. In the beautiful and fertile Wyoming valley his condition was even prosperous. A small plot of land attached to his house produced vegetables and fruit sufficient for the family, consisting on an average of five persons. The English-speaking miner living up to his income of not less than \$30.00 a month, soon began to feel the competition of his Slav

neighbor, who saved most of his wages, upon which he soon could bring a wife from the old country. The foreign woman, herself doing manual work and with few wants like her husband, was not much of an encumbrance to him. But the wants of a growing family, feeling the breath of civilization through the schools, and by contact with the English-speaking miner, have raised to some extent the standard of living of the Slav family; so that it is not so much competition from this source that the English-speaking miner now feels; but it is with the unmarried Slav with few wants and who cares but little for his "rights" or whether his wages are reduced a trifle or not. Of course the introduction of cheap labor reduced wages, if not directly, by various indirect methods, such as increasing the size of the mine-car and the number of pounds to the ton; increase of "topping," exorbitant charges for powder and other supplies, increased charges at the "company" stores, etc.

The United Mine Workers of America is the powerful organization which has been built up and is controlled by English-speaking miners, and the Slav laborers if not directly members are under its influence, and amenable to its laws. It was the English-speaking miner and the Slav laborer of the Wyoming district who were mainly instrumental in bringing on the present strike. In addition to rectifying the grievances complained of above in the "indirect methods," the mine workers ask for a method which they term "joint bargaining." The union represents that it has labor to sell, for which like other sellers, it asks the highest possible price. Like all consumers, the railroad mining companies strive to secure this labor for the lowest possible price. The union believes there is a "happy medium" which can be reached by arbitration. The companies evade this by declaring "there is nothing to arbitrate." Unless there is government interference, a resort to force seems to be the only alternative. In the meantime householders are growing alarmed, and industries are beginning to flag for want of coal.

RECENT BOOKS.

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