

This is one of the points that every union always struggles hard for, once they have first settled preliminary questions with the employers in a previous strike. So it was in Toronto several years ago when the strike of the motor men and conductors of the Toronto Street Railway demoralized the street railway service for a length of time. After some violence a *modus operandi* was agreed on, and things went smoothly for a while. At the expiration of a year, however, the union makes a new demand—to be recognized, and another strike is only averted by the exercise of the greatest diplomacy on the part of the railway company.

It is the demand thus stated, therefore, which is most likely to force a coal strike in April, and, although a strike at that time would not work nearly as much damage as one in the early part of winter, yet if the men are satisfied with their present wages, hours of labor, and general treatment at the hands of the operators, and their walking delegates or chief muftis insist on such an immaterial demand as we have above referred to, and precipitate a prolonged strike as a result, the sympathies of the consumer and the general public will be entirely weaned away from the union, and quite justly so. The curse of the labor union to-day, for it has its proper field and functions to perform, is the paid agent who is not earning his bread by the sweat of his brow, but who extracts a share of the workingman's hard-earned wages to enable himself to live sumptuously and get the workingman into trouble. This personage, indeed, is the greatest menace to the peaceable settlement of conflicts between capital and labor.

WINTER WHEAT IN THE FAR WEST.

The country west of the great wheat fields of Assiniboia, or what, to speak more correctly, is now to become famed throughout the world as the Province of Saskatchewan, has been looked on, or large sections of it, as a great ranching territory, good for ranching and nothing else. This view, of course, was due to the semi-aridity of the climate, which, without artificial irrigation, rendered the growing of crops a precarious undertaking, a condition which was not under-estimated by the ranchers, whose interest it has always been to be disturbed by the purely agricultural element as little as possible. As may be imagined, therefore, the dryness of the climate and the difficulties of crop-raising lost nothing in the telling through the mouths of the first occupiers of this great territory. But to-day there is a different story told. In the district of Southern Alberta the story of the triumph of the farmer over the rancher as told in the everyday anecdotes of the residents of that, perhaps, most hospitable section of the West reads like a fairy tale. Our special correspondent, who is spending some weeks in the new Provinces, formerly territories, dwells upon this in his latest letter, dated September 9th. In other parts of the West, as, for example, in Montana and Nevada, in the United States, he says the same struggle has been accompanied by sometimes bloody feuds; but in Canada, while the general result is none the less interesting, the tension has been allowed to relax more gradually, and the result may clearly be seen in the triumph of the agriculturist. "In some cases near Calgary can even now be seen the two elements fighting for supremacy on one and the

same man's property. That is to say, a man who started ranching under the old conditions has gradually, with the taking up of surrounding lands, had to contract his herds, and, to come out even, has taken to farming. And when one says farming in this district, it generally means the growing of fall or winter wheat. Generally the rancher sees that the latter is much the more profitable part of his business; at any rate at a time when the range is becoming more and more limited, and the consequence is his fields grow larger and larger at the same time that his herds become smaller and smaller. To-day, while Calgary still may be said to be the centre of a great ranching country, it is a centre, the radii of which extend a very much greater distance out than of yore. And the same must be said of many another town in sunny Southern Alberta." In the Far West, particularly in the region around Calgary and in Southern Alberta, winter wheat is King, and that, in the opinion of many observers, is what is going to make the country.

The growing of winter wheat in Alberta has developed from small beginnings, but it is very apt to have a great influence on the growth of this section of the mighty West. For many years it has been known that to grow winter wheat was possible in spite of the comparative dryness of the climate. The knowledge, however, was not acted on in any earnest way. A few farmers grew it here and there—grew it chiefly for chicken feed and home purposes, for there was no developed market. Four years ago, or thereabouts, as our correspondent describes, a man thought he would put in a big piece of it. "How much?" "Oh, quite a crop," was the reply. "Was it a success?" and he echoed: "I should say! What do you think of forty bushels per acre, and in one part of the field fifty-two bushels per acre? Yes, sir; that's success enough for me. Winter wheat is the thing for Alberta." Since then the sowing of winter wheat has advanced by leaps and bounds. Last year in one section that I have in mind the yield was extraordinarily good, but it was *not good enough* to supply seed sufficient for the multiplied fields contemplated for this year, and so on, for the acreage next season will be enormous.

The "philosophy" of winter wheat is not difficult to understand. It is sown in late summer or early fall, obtains a good growth before cold weather, and then, even though severe weather be encountered, the roots have obtained such a firm hold on the soil that when spring opens the plant and the grain can be rushed forward to maturity even in spite of drouth. This is why people say: "Winter wheat is King." It solves the problem of permanent prosperity for a wide country. Admittedly, ranching is good, but it is not considered to represent such a solid basis for future development as grain-growing and mixed farming. This is why the most difficult thing to find in the whole countryside of Southern Alberta is a person who has not infinite confidence in his own particular ant-hill; and why, if earnestness and hard work and whole faith stand for anything, it is bound to go ahead with leaps and bounds.

Mr. Wilson explains in this connection that Southern Alberta is not the only part of the Province capable of growing winter wheat. It has been proven successful in the Edmonton district, though perhaps on a smaller scale. However, relatively speaking, its successful culture does not mean so much to the latter country, for the climate being more humid,

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