

Miners' Wages in Germany.

Some years ago the miners of the Ruhr coal district, one of the most extensive in the German empire, suffered a reduction in pay and within the past year have succeeded in getting even better rates than those prevailing in 1900, the period of high wages. Conditions are still unsettled, however, according to a recent statement from United States Consul Dunlap of Cologne.

Owing to the high prices for coal the official reports regarding wages of miners in the Ruhr district for the third quarter of 1907 were awaited with considerable expectancy, there being close connection between the wages paid miners and the prices at which the product is sold. To the public demands for a reduction in the price of coal the mine owners reply that it is impossible, owing to the high wages paid miners, which are still increasing. Besides that, the new laws regulating the payment of sick benefits and pensions to disabled miners and their families will, even if rejected by the miners, considerably increase the expense to the mine owners by many million marks. At the recent meeting of the national miners' congress in Berlin the leaders of the miners' unions in the Ruhr district complained of much want and misery among their members.

The German miners last year earned approximately \$1.50 a day and other workers in the mines about \$1. These rates were an increase over those of 1905 of about 26 per cent for miners, 20 per cent for other workers underground and 14 per cent for laborers.

German mine workers are required to pay large sums for the purpose of invalid and accident insurance. To these funds the mine owner is required by law to contribute as much or more. Taking these facts into consideration and also the fact that the new law regulating these funds will add nearly \$2,500,000 to the expenses of the mine owners in this district, an increase in the cost of fuel to the consumer is most probable.

The number of adult employees in the Ruhr district increased during the second and third quarters of 1907 from 288,833 to 292,309.

American Rights in Russia.

Recently the state department at Washington declared officially that the United States dissents from Russia's well known views as to the criminality of those of her subjects who have or may become American citizens and the right of the czar to punish them when caught on Russian soil without his express permission. This is a decision following upon another of the same purport which has aroused protest in this country. Nearly a year ago the state department issued a circular to the effect that it would not "issue passports to former Russian subjects or to Jews who intend going into Russian territory unless it has assurance that the Russian government will consent to their admission." This circular further explained that a passport under such circumstances was a document tending to mislead the holder since it does not really protect from hardship and even imprisonment.

In the recent note dissenting from the Russian view the secretary of state added the warning that "an American citizen formerly a subject of Russia who returns to that country places himself within the jurisdiction of the Russian law and cannot expect immunity from its operations." It is made clear that the applicants for the passports take all the risk as to whether their return will be assented to by Russia. There seems to be a clash here between the international and the domestic law, and it will not be settled until there is a naturalization treaty between the United States and Russia.

The more the Japanese become acquainted with the resources of their part of the island of Sakhalin the better they are satisfied with the bargain that gave them possession of it. The fisheries are proving very profitable, and coal mines of value are being developed. The Japanese population now numbers 30,000, and during the fishing season it is much larger. The vigor displayed by the new occupants of Sakhalin indicates what will happen in Korea when Japanese energy has full play.

Among the fresh evidences of Spain's revived commercial activity is a report which states that Spanish trade with South America is rapidly increasing. In some lines of manufactures Spain has captured already the lion's share of the trade, and in other lines her enterprise and energy are making inroads upon the trade enjoyed by other European countries and by the United States.

The 108 young men who graduated from West Point last week may find "standing and waiting" to their liking, but it might be advisable for them to take a horseback ride occasionally to keep in good standing with the commander in chief.

Work, said a clergyman the other day, is the common lot of man. The only trouble is that there is not a lot of work for common man at present.

Women's Strength.

It seems that the doctrine set up by the United States supreme court in its latest decision limiting the working hours of women may become the public policy and practice of the whole land. The court reached bed rock when it declared that woman's "physical structure and a proper discharge of her maternal functions—having in view not merely her own health, but the well being of the race—justify legislation to protect her from the greed as well as from the passions of man." The particular law which the court upheld had for its primary and its exclusive purpose the protection and welfare of the individual and society.

In twenty states of the Union laws have been enacted to restrict the factory hours of women to ten in one day. In upholding these statutes the supreme court treats them as proper police regulations, and it must be a rare instance when such a law is conceived with a view to limit freedom of contract. The court of appeals upset the New York law making ten hours the limit for women on the ground that it discriminated with respect to the liberties of persons or of contract. This adverse ruling has yet to be reviewed by the supreme court, which has repeatedly held in effect that private interest is subservient to public interest and that all rights are subject to such regulation as may be "essential to the safety, health, peace, good order and morals of the community." The application of this principle in the recent decision makes woman the ward of the state and places her under the fostering and special protection of the law in the interest of the human race and posterity.

A Good Stroke of Business.

The display of our sixteen warships could not have been needed to impress the thinking men of South America that the United States will be able when the time comes to uphold the Monroe doctrine. All the world knows that the position this country occupies among the powers today is not an accident and that what appears to be, simply because of its magnitude, perhaps, ostentatious greatness is not a sham. But the social visits between the personnel of the navy and the people of South American cities opens up another aspect of our relations with the Latin Americans. We have heretofore been almost industrial strangers to the people south of Mexico. Some of the European nations, notably Germany, have pressed their commercial interests while we slept. In Chile and Argentina the Germans in force are engaged in general trade and in banking, while in Brazil these people exert an important influence in governmental and trade affairs.

Now that the citizens of the big ports have seen our representatives on the social side it will be strange if they do not wish for a further acquaintance. Trade follows the handshake and the cordial greeting, for people live by buying and selling, and they always want something new. If this government is to protect the political interests of the South American states, this people should share equally at least in the trade of those states. The situation can be improved, and the time to act is while the people down there still cherish pleasant memories of the visits of our sailors.

A Long Way to "the Woods."

An Australian corporation has just received a concession from the Russian government to take out 30,000,000 feet of timber a year from a forest in Siberia, 900 miles from Vladivostok, to be delivered in Melbourne, Australia, approximately 8,000 miles away. It is likely that no lumbering operation of recent years more strongly illustrates the pinch in the timber supply in all parts of the world.

The news of the concession, told in an American lumber journal, is accompanied with a suggestion of the difficulty that all countries may have to encounter in getting the wood which they need in the future. Every year timber cruisers are going farther and farther afield and cutting trees which, in former times of abundance, they passed because of the inaccessibility of the forest. Forest experts in this country say that the hope of the United States for a steady supply of timbers lies in the application of forestry to all timber lands, private and public, and the careful study of the economical and better utilization of product. And at best a severe shortage in twenty to twenty-five years must be expected.

Not so many abusive valentines were sent through the mails this year as formerly. The peculiar form of brain fog that has prompted their use hitherto finds expression now in letting loose an avalanche of picture portraits.

Skeletons now harbored in prohibition territory will have to move over a little closer to make room for a jug or two in the closet.

It is just a hundred years since hard coal came into use. Other ways of spending money may be older, but not more effective.

Every man has a right always to live where he pleases, but not always to live as he pleases.

Unquiet China.

According to observers on the ground in China, there is a mischievous spirit of rebellion at work, and the so called "awakening" of the natives gives the malcontents an opportunity for poisoning men's minds toward what is good in foreign assistance and in the ruling dynasty. The Celestial Empire, printed in English at Shanghai, says that with all the spirit of progress manifested there is also a spirit of narrowness and revolt which threatens to imperil the soundness and permanence of the renaissance. Of the present opposition of the natives to foreigners this journal says:

Their new found strength is running with much force in the opposition to all foreign aid in the development of railways, mines or other natural resources in China. It is not necessary to assure our readers that a great deal of this vigor is misdirected. It must necessarily be so. To men so utterly ignorant of the practical working of railways and other engineering works as all but one in a million of Chinese are it could not be otherwise than ridiculous for them to presume to have any opinion at all. Yet the opinion is there, strong and determinedly expressed. The papers are full of the necessity of preventing foreign capital from entering the country at all, and if the officials attempt, as the more enlightened do, to show that help is desirable they are abused and cartooned as allies of the "foreign devil," if not as traitors to their country.

A writer in the Chinese Recorder, another Shanghai paper, says that not only is there at work "a quiet and persistent anti-foreign propaganda," but a public sentiment which is strongly "anti-dynastic." In other words, Chinese patriotism today stands for revolt against things as they are, and the empire is actually threatened with decentralization and anarchy. To quote from the Recorder article:

Of riots and of attacks against or even abuse of foreigners there is a cessation. The Jingoism has learned a better way. They are using milder and much more effective methods. For instance, many of the popular songs that are being sung so widely in the schools are saturated with fire eating anti-foreign sentiment. Many of the text books used in the schools introduce the same sort of thing. The native newspapers report many adverse things concerning that "undesirable citizen," the foreigner, and in so doing they take little care to distinguish whether the given foreigner is a missionary or an adventurer or whether Roman Catholic or Protestant. The length to which the native papers go in their abuse of the foreign office and of the government would be almost incredible were it not daily displayed before our eyes.

More Where the Last Came From.

It is generally conceded that our prosperity came from the ground, where nature's bounteous hand placed the seeds if not the ripened product. It is gratifying to be told that there is more in the same treasure house to be dug out in the same way. Not only is there more of the same sort, but so much more that our prosperity record can be beaten and perhaps doubled.

From the perspective of barren years it might be said that our enjoyment of plenty was riotous. Perhaps it was. The lesson of it is worth heeding, but caution should not go to the extent of distrusting nature. Experts say that what we have been taking from the ground is but half what we might take with proper attention to the science of producing. They declare that our seeds and fertilizers are not right, our methods of tillage imperfect, our live stock very imperfect and our losses by fire and flood and the ravages of insect life double or treble what they need be. In other words, for every million of dollars gained there might be two millions gained if we would but make the most of our resources and our labor. Making money enough to be happy on for a day is perhaps not the highest good. But making money enough to establish a reserve which would tide over lean years so that all years might look alike would constitute a complete task, the complement of nature's thoroughness.

In Germany a dealer in planchets has been arrested for representing that by means of this device hypnotism could be practiced and the future revealed. His income is reported to have been \$1,700 a day. Thirty years ago the planchet had a vogue in the United States. It is now about due for a return performance here along with blue glass cures, the crinoline and other discarded fancies of a former generation.

The two companies of the Twenty-fourth infantry, colored, returning from the Philippines, will be stationed at Madison Barracks and Fort Ontario in spite of the fact that protests have been made from both places. "But it's Mr. Thomas Atkins when the guns begin to shoot."

And there was Marshal Bazaine, who surrendered Metz. He, too, was condemned to death and had his sentence commuted to imprisonment for twenty years. He escaped, only to die in poverty in his place of refuge, unwept, unhonored and unsung.

"They also serve who only stand and wait," said Mr. Taft to the West Point cadets. Which is apt advice to a standing army that waits for trouble.

If at some future day the treasury finds \$29,000,000 and accrued interest straying into the conscience fund it will know whom to suspect.

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