

THE QUESTION OF THE HOUR.

[From the New York Telegraph.]

HOW SHALL LABOR BE RENDERED MOST PRODUCTIVE?

Undoubtedly the greatest question of the future with us, after we have succeeded in planting the constitution once more on solid ground, will be that of labor. How to prevent wages from falling below the living point or the zero of the labor thermometer? How to make employment easily findable at all times and seasons? are forms of the workingman's political questions, to which an effective answer requires to be given.

TO DIMINISH POVERTY.

To diminish the pressure of poverty upon a sober population, to provide sufficiently paid work for every arm and for the greatest number of arms an encouraging marriage law could possibly produce, easily accessible highways between labor and capital, inexpensive labor removing machinery, "cheap trains across the ocean," the constant development and multiplication of labor markets, and the active circulation of money in reproductive channels, are indispensable.

THE TRUE SOURCE OF WEALTH IN A NATION.

The possession of a gold mine may be of no value to the owner, because of his inability to find capital and skilled labor to make it productive. Unwise laws may render parents unable to support and instruct their offspring. But every well-managed civilized nation possesses the means of making every child born within its borders a profitable instrument in developing national wealth and strength. To neglect to use such means is sometimes justified on the plausible but untenable ground that the assumption by the nation of the duties of a god or unfortunate parent would induce parents in general to become neglectful and wicked. But wise educational laws would in the end have no such effect, but the opposite.

No nation can be in a thoroughly thriving condition unless it is constantly adding to its population, and, like the bees, periodically casting off young and vigorous lives of humanity.

In a healthy state of society, the birth-rate should greatly exceed the death-rate, and this excess represents the amount of surplus labor or living wealth the nation has available for reproductive employment, for export and for manufacturing purposes.

An increase of population is only an evil when a nation lacks brains.

Knowledge ought to produce wise laws, and, while an acre of waste land or waste sea exists, why should we multiply productive labor fields as rapidly as population? One of our gravest errors, arising from the want of an efficient parent or owner for neglected children, consists in not rearing the human article most in demand. Good wives are wanted, but with 500,000 surplus females, we have apparently none to spare; good domestic servants are wanted everywhere, we have few to offer; stout hearts and strong muscles are in demand, for the article is scarce.

THE QUESTION OF WAGES.

When we come to consider the question of remuneration for labor, we find insufficient wages is a constitutional malady, a local manifestation of a general disease requiring general treatment as well as local application and individual attention. A trade strike is a purely local remedy, and therefore performs but a secondary part, whether for good or for evil, in connection with the complaint.

It is chiefly by the operation of wise general laws that wages can be kept abreast or ahead of the living point.

What, for example, would workingmen gain by an advance of wages if their employers, who make the laws, imposed such a duty on imports as would double the price of food, clothing and house rent? Instead of fighting in detached bands against the individual holders of capital, trades unions would better secure the permanent elevation of the working classes and the ultimate comfort of their individual members by combining together as a nation of wage-earning men for the purpose of securing political power.

Remarkable Surgical Operation.

REGRAPTING RAT SKIN ON A MAN'S HIP. [From the Louisville Ledger, May 20.]

We hear of a somewhat novel surgical operation recently performed by Dr. E. R. Hawn, of Leavenworth, Indiana. A young man named Murchison, living in Meade county, Ky., met with a terrible accident while working in a saw-mill, by means of which a piece of skin as large as the bottom of a tin cup was torn from his hip. Dr. Hawn was called to the case. Knowing the extreme difficulty experienced by surgeons in getting injuries of the kind to heal properly, the doctor was at a loss how to proceed.

It is well known that where a large surface of skin has been removed the cure is tedious and difficult to accomplish. Nothing but skin will produce new skin, and the exposed surface will not heal further than an inch from the margin, after which the edges must be trimmed again and a new growth started, the operation being repeated as often as necessary, until the entire surface is covered and the cure effected. Not wishing to subject his patient to this tedious and painful process, Dr. H. resolved to try the experiment of engrafting. His first idea was to take small bits of live skin from various other parts of the body, and graft them on the exposed surface, but the patient objected on account of the pain attending the skinning process and the multitude of small places which would be left.

The doctor then suggested that a portion of the skin of some inferior animal might be used, and the patient readily consented. A rat about two-thirds grown was caught, killed and quickly skinned, after which the doctor cut a piece of the required size, trimmed it to suit the exposed surface, clapped it on and fastened it with strips of adhesive plaster, after which the whole surface was covered with a coating of codion. The experiment succeeded beyond his most sanguine expectations. The graft took by first intention and in ten days the cure was complete.

The surface of the wound is covered with a fine growth of hair, and the rat skin seems to answer every purpose. The only inconvenience to which Mr. Murchison is subjected is on account of the cat. On several occasions, when sitting down reading, he has been put to little alarm and some inconvenience by having the house cat spring suddenly on him and fasten her teeth in that portion of his pantaloons which immediately covers the transplanted rat skin. The terriers, also, sniff suspiciously at his heels when he walks the streets.

Charles Jackson was executed at Fonda, N. Y., on Friday last, for the murder of Thomas E. Burdick.

The Pittston Disaster.

STATEMENT OF A RESCUED MINER.

One of the few miners who was entirely conscious when lifted from the shaft, was William R. Davies. He talked feebly with those who bore him away, and bemoaned his "not to hurt his head." Soon after, he made the following statement, which is given in his own words: I am one of the men who have so narrowly escaped death in the West Pittston mine. I now feel extremely weak and exhausted, and very dizzy in my head, as well as sick at my stomach. At the moment when I first heard that the breaker was on fire I was hard at work in my chamber in the mine. As soon as the alarm was given, and we understood the exact nature of the danger, we all came together as quickly as we could find one another, in the gang-way at the foot of the shaft; and finding it hopeless to attempt to go up, and knowing that there was no other way of escape, we decided at once to build a barricade, and shut ourselves in behind it.

We had one thing of the greatest importance in our favor. There was no furnace in the mine, and the air was furnished in the pit by a large fan, which drove it down. We were perfectly well aware of the fact that our lives depended almost entirely on the breeze which was being building, and we therefore, made it as strong as we could. We made it by trimming off very large lumps of coal, and then putting them together closely in a stow wall. When it was completed we knew that it was a perfectly secure barrier against the fire. We then gave the closest attention by listening to what was going on outside. For two or three hours, at least, after the barricade was finished we could distinctly hear the noise that was made at the top of the shaft.

After that time the assurance seemed to come upon us all that we should never be taken out of the mine alive. The reason of this change of feeling was that so many of the men had died, and we knew it must be the effect of impenetrable air. After this we quite resigned ourselves to the death which seemed certain, and went to work to make our preparations to meet it. We held a prayer-meeting, with singing and praying; and at last we gave each other parting caresses and kisses, each of us bidding every man an affectionate farewell, with the hope of meeting one another in heaven.

We, of course, thought much of what could be done to attract the attention of the men outside, who we knew were doing all in their power to deliver us, so that we might be found as soon as possible, and not lost in search of traces of us. For this purpose one man was sent to the gangway, at the foot of the east shaft, who wrote with a piece of coal on the outside of the door of the east gangway that we had barricaded ourselves behind it. You will excuse me, I know, from trying to remember anything more, or from talking further just now. I am too weak, but as soon as I recover my strength, will be glad to recall and describe in full detail everything that occurred in the mine.

The physicians attending Mr. Davies believe that he cannot survive the effect of the noxious gas which he inhaled. All the victims receive the most devoted attention from neighbors and friends, and aid is freely proffered from all quarters. The afflicted women, especially those who for two days suffered from extreme alternations of hope and despair, are pitifully exhausted from broken-hearted lamentations, or from ministering upon the injured men lingering between life and death. Those of the men who have been able to speak of their experience while shut up in the mine have all related that death approached them in the form of drowsiness, and almost painless stupor. The clothes of some were torn and the flesh bruised as if from violent struggling; but this appears to have taken place while they were unconscious.

BANKRUPT NOTICES.

IN THE DISTRICT COURT OF THE UNITED STATES for the Eastern District of Virginia. In the matter of William B. Burt, bankrupt. To whom it may concern:—The undersigned, Jacob Cohn, of Henrico county, Va., hereby gives notice of his appointment as assignee of the estate of said bankrupt, to appear before the said court, on the 13th day of April, 1871, at 10 o'clock A. M., in accordance with the provisions of the 28th section of the bankruptcy act of March 2d, 1867. Dated at Albion, Va., May 24, 1871. J. C. COHN, Assignee.

IN THE DISTRICT COURT OF THE UNITED STATES for the Eastern District of Virginia. In the matter of Arthur L. Rogers, bankrupt. To whom it may concern:—The undersigned, J. S. Fowler, of Alexandria county, Virginia, hereby gives notice of his appointment as assignee of the estate of Arthur L. Rogers, of Loudoun county, Va., in said district, who was on the 26th day of April, 1871, adjudged a bankrupt on his own petition by the District Court of said district. Dated at Albion, Va., May 24, 1871. J. S. FOWLER, Assignee.

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