THE LABOR HERALD.

OFFICIAL ORGAN OF DISTRICT ASSEMBLY, No. 84, KNIGHTS OF LABOR.

"THAT IS THE MOST PERFECT GOVERNMENT IN WHICH AN INJURY TO ONE IS THE CONCERN OF ALL."

VOL. I.—NO. 28. RICHMOND, VA., MARCH 13, 1886. PRICE 5 CENTS

A PLEA FOR WOMAN.

Hark! Freedom and progress resounding
Throughout this, our glorious land;
Serene floats the star spangled banner
Wafted by liberty's hand.

Man valiantly fights for his freedom,
And nobly he gaineth his right,
The power of tyrants is broken,
"Equality" gleams on yon height.

"Equal" is liberty's watchword,
Equal must every one be;
In this our cradle of freedom,
The land of the brave and the free.

Our brothers, those darker in color,
From ev'ry bondage were freed,
And man of all climes and all nations
Have wished us a hearty "God speed."

Yes, the negro was freed, Oh! how proudly
Floats liberty's flag to the breeze,
And the anthems of praise and rejoicing
Has reached us from over the seas.

By a noble and strenuous effort,
A struggle, 'twas rather severe;
The stigma of bondage was taken
Away from our country, so dear!

But hark! do I hear midst this tumult
Of rejoicing, o'er liberty gained
Not the cry of distress close beside me,
As if some one there be still enchained?

Yes, listen, Oh! listen my brother,
Again and again comes the wail
Of misery, wrong and oppression,
Oh! hark! to the sorrowful tale!

While fighting for freedom, for grandeur,
While being absorbed in the scheme
To throw off the yoke of your tyrants,
You lost sight of a weightier theme.

Your sister, the woman, wears shackles,
Her bondage is dreadfully drear
To her, you, the Lord of creation,
Are a master most cold and severe.

You refuse, though liberty of prating,
To acknowledge the rights of a wife;
Though drinking the nectar of freedom,
You embitter with serfdom, her life.

You refuse her the right to her person,
You lower yourself to the brute,
Yet think her forever below you
And bid her be loving, but mute.

You embrace her, Oh! what a derision!
Whenever your passion is roused,
Without the first thought of enjoyment
For her, you so eager espoused.

How oft do you kill, kill by inches,
A helpmate internally weak;
And place her on pillows of torture,
By your brutish, unnatural freak?

If your wife should be sickly and feeble,
She needs all your tenderest care;
Oh why! Oh why! will you burden
Her lot with such pain, such despair?

Why wishing and striving for offspring,
Why cruelly wronging a wife,
Are repulsion, disease and exhaustion
Productive of vigorous life?

Why will you send into existence,
A being deceased and depraved?
Remember the offspring may curse you
For the act you so eagerly craved

The cry of despair goes from millions
Of mothers, lamenting their lot;
No comfort, no joy are the children
In distress and abhorrence begot.

You champions remember while fighting
For freedom of body and mind,
To liberate women from thraldom,
Would you serve to advantage mankind.

Be consistent while vowing dire vengeance
Against depots of church and of State,
Remember a harsh, brutish husband
In justice deserves the same fate.

Labor Journal.

AT THE MILL.

BY MARY KYLE DALLAS.

At dinner time Ruth came out of the factory and sat upon a stone step in the stone yard with her lunch basket.

It had been her custom to sit in the midst of the other girls, the merriest of them all, at this time, but now she wanted to get by herself. She wanted to think as we generally do when thought is most a pain to us, and she was in that condition of mind when we could almost fancy ourselves to have a dual identity. One Ruth Rawdon seemed to hold an argument with another Ruth Rawdon in this wise: The first was the old Ruth she had known for nineteen years—her mother's obedient daughter, the good Sunday-school scholar, the steady, sensible little Ruth to whom duty was before everything else. That Ruth talked in this way:

"I am engaged to Charles Arthur. I am very fond of him. I ought to be; he is so good, so fond of me. We have been promised in marriage a long while. I have been so sorry for him since he met with that accident through which my mother and I nursed him. Now that he has the engineer's place in the factory, we need wait no longer. I ought to be very glad. I am glad. I shall not work in the mill after that. I shall keep his house for him. Everybody respects him, everybody likes him; I shall be proud of him. What is this strange, wicked feeling at my heart? What does it mean?"

The other Ruth—a new Ruth—seemed to say this:

"I engaged myself to Charles Arthur before I knew my own mind. I never really loved him; he is very much older than I; he has a jealous disposition. The pity I feel for his hurt does not keep me from knowing that it disfigures him. I have met the man I love; I cannot help loving him. I know I shall be miserable if I do not. I won't stick to my engagement; I will break it. I love Ben. Barton, and he loves me."

Which was the real Ruth? The poor girl did not know. She felt as though she must really be going quite out of her mind.

Meanwhile, at the window of his room, the engineer sat moodily, his face dark with trouble.

He ought to have been happy, it seemed. When, three years before, he had lost a good position through what was called "carelessness," he had never hoped to get another so good. He had lamed himself for life, and had been haunted for a long while by deep remorse.

Something had happened that had absorbed his whole attention, and he had forgotten his engine, and the result was a terrible one.

He had retrieved his character, however. He had a good position again. He was about to be married to the prettiest girl he knew, and there were many who thought him a very enviable fellow.

On the contrary he was very wretched, for he had just made sure that Ruth cared more Ben. Barton than she did for him, and he was furious with jealousy. He had made up his mind to talk to Ruth that noontime, but the assistant engineer had been taken ill and was at home, and the engine could not be deserted. All he could do was to get near the window and watch, hoping that she would pass. If she should come that way on purpose, knowing that he was tied in that room by his duty, and look up at him and smile, then he would know she cared for him still. Where was she? Talking to Ben. Barton, perhaps; aid, at this thought, he could have killed the young fellow.

Before his accident he could have dared to run down into the yard and look for her, catch a kiss, and be back again; but it would take too long now.

His mind went back to the day when he had forgotten his engine in the wrath he felt for a fancied insult.

"What a fool I was!" he muttered. "What a confounded fool! But I've paid for it. I used to be the strongest fellow I knew, if I was not the handsomest. How can I expect a girl to like me now?"

Then a memory came to him.

Once she had told him she loved him all the better for his hurt. She meant it, too, but she had not seen this Ben. Barton when she said it.

The big dark man, with his face all blackened with his toil in his rough clothes, and with the light of the furnace on his face, might have been taken by a romantic stranger, peeping into the engine-room, for something almost demoniac, at that moment, but his heart was softening very much. He remembered the soft touch of Ruth's fingers on his brow when he was ill—her cooing voice. "She can't be a false thing," he said, and he left his window and went to the other side of the room, and peeped through a crack in the boards. Thence he could see the courtyard and stone steps, and there sat Ruth alone, eating her dinner out of her little basket—alone, waiting for him, perhaps. All that was tender in the man thrilled within him now.

"Ruthy," he said, softly smiling unseen upon her. He whistled, but the sound did reach her. "Little Ruthy," he repeated, "I *am* a jealous beast. I've frightened you. Why shouldn't you have a dance now and then, child? Why shouldn't you know you are pretty? I could beat myself."

"Lots of steam on," said a workman, passing by the engine-room. "But I suppose the fellow knows what he's about."

I scarcely think the fellow did at this moment; for he had just seen Ben. Barton run down the steps and come behind Ruth very softly, and touch her on the cheek with a straw he held in his hand.

She started and turned, and laughed.

"Was she waiting for *him?*" asked the engineer, his face darkening again, "was she waiting for *him?*"

Ruth had laughed, but her face grew grave again—grave, but very sweet; the conflict between conscience and inclination was over. She had made a decision. She looked at Ben. as he sat down behind her and thought how handsome he was. But she remembered that same moment that the memory of which had come into Charles Arthur's heart and softened it just now. She had put her arms about his neck and told him she loved him better for his hurt, and she had meant it from her soul.

It came to her that this new emotion was, perhaps, a fleeting passion; that the long, oldtime home tenderness was all Arthur's, and she listened to what Ben. Barton said very quietly.

"I've been looking for you, Ruth," he said. "I have something I want to tell you. I can't rest until you know it. I like you so much I want you to like me. I—want you to be my wife, my dear. Will you?"

Ruth's heart gave one great leap. Then, to her joy, she felt that it was true to its love, after all. The words came to her:

"Oh! I do like you, Mr. Barton, very much, but only as a friend. I am engaged to be married, and, of course, I could not like any one else in any other way."

The blood rushed into the young man's face.

"I can't say you have acted much like an engaged girl," he said.

"Well, perhaps I've been wrong," said Ruth, mildly, feeling the reproach a just one, "but I thought every one *knew*. It is Charles Arthur. We are to be married very soon now. We've been engaged ever since I was sixteen. He is very fond of me."

"That's no reason you should marry him, if you like me best," said Ben.; "and, really, I can't see, since it is Charles Arthur, why you shouldn't; he is about the last person I should fancy a girl could like."

"You see," said Ruth, "people can't tell about that." And she had scarcely ever felt so lovingly to her betrothed husband before.

Little he knew it, as he watched her through the crevice in the boards, his face growing crimson with wrath; all forgotten but the sight he saw. He could not hear what Ruth said, and the attitude of the young man was very lover-like.

The engine was throbbing like a mad thing, like his own heart. A shrewd little boy, with all a little boy's observing power, paused at the door, feeling that something was wrong.

"There'll be a bust up," he said. Then he called: "Mister! Mister!" and at last went in and pulled him by the coat. But the engineer was an engineer no longer—only a jealous lover. Furious to be spied upon, he turned and gave the boy a kick.

Meanwhile Ben. had arisen.

"Well, I'm not one to stand in another fellow's way," he said. "Good-bye, Ruth. I shan't see you again very soon, I suppose, and I've liked you a good deal. Will you let me have one kiss; just one, you know, to say it is over?" I think there can be no harm in that," said Ruth.

Charles Arthur's eye was at the crevice again just in time to see that kiss.

"I'm right! He's got her!" he yelled.

And then—what was it—the noise, the beating pulse, that shook the building? He turned—a memory of that past scene of horror and destruction rushing over him.

"Again! again! again!" he shrieked, and flew to his engine. It was too late!

What had happened? Ruth did not know. Bewildered, shaken horrified, she stood amongst fallen beams and burning boards, and found herself unhurt.

Ben. held her tight. Neither were injured, but at their feet, cast there, as it seemed, through the broken wall, lay a dead man—torn, mutilated, terrible to see, with that look of horror frozen on his face; but she knew him.

The engineer was the only man killed by that explosion, though others escaped only as it seemed by a miracle. At the inquest the boy who had called him gave his evidence.

"I saw something was goin' to bust, and I called to him, but he was peekin' through a crack. I peeked too—he was watchin' another feller kiss his gal. I guess that made him so mad he didn't care what bust."

It was the week after Charles Arthur's funeral that Ben. Barton met Ruth Rawdon near her father's house, and went up to her and held out his hand.

Ruth did not take it. She turned away.

"I could not touch your hand," she said. "I hate you. Never, never speak to me again. Oh! my Charley—my Charley!"

BOYCOTT BAUGHMAN BROS.

Jump On Board Or Get Left.

The question of capital and labor and the proper relations between them is rapidly nearing a settlement in this country. More intelligent views are held by the people concerning this question than ever before. The mighty power of the press has acted as a tremendous educator upon this all-important matter. The people are pretty thoroughly informed about it; they know where they stand on it; and there is no doubt that, at the proper time, they will act forcibly and intelligently upon the labor question and all matters pertaining to it. There has been a mighty revolution in public sentiment concerning labor matters in the past few years. The masses are better informed of their rights, and their wrongs are more keenly felt than ever before. They also evince more courage and greater determination to assert and maintain their rights and to compel a redress of their wrongs. The car of progress is rolling on. People who desire to ride had better mount the vehicle at once; while the fossils, old fogies and bloated capitalists had better hustle out of the way of the car, or they will get run over and trampled in the mud. Jump aboard, boys; on we go.—*Ex.*

Properly Paid Labor is Not Riotous.

The New York *Star*, in commenting on the cause of last week's London riot, hits the nail squarely on the head when it says: "Industry is seldom riotous; never when properly paid" Give the laboring class plenty of work at fair compensation and there will never be any riots. "An idle brain is the devil's workshop," and when the laborer comes face to face with enforced idleness, and his dependent ones lacking the necessaries of life, it is but natural that he should revolt against the condition of things that make him so and could tear down and destroy the wealth of property accumulated by others, by which very process of accumulation he has been deprived of a fair sustenance. The immense fortunes, piled up in a few years by the favored few, and the pinched and abject poverty of the laboring class, go to show the unfair division of the legitimate profits of labor. Capitalistic corporations have, and avail themselves of, every facility to combine in putting up and sustaining the prices of goods manufactured and produced under their direction by the toiling masses, and necessarily consumed to a large extent by the same class, and yet deny the workingmen the right to any voice in saying what compensation he shall have for services in such production. There is but one way to remedy the evil. Workingmen, too, must unite—discarding past party affiliation, and joining in one great laboringmen's party, demand through the quiet and peaceable voice of the ballot, laws enacted that shall tend to lighten their burdens and give them an equitable share of the profits arising from honest toil.—*Labor Union.*

GROWTH OF THE ORDER.

Already Out-Numbering Half the Armies of Europe.

While I am not a member of the Order of the Knights of Labor, I am in full sympathy with the organization, and have for years anxiously looked forward to the time when the influence of labor which forms the ground work of all material growth in our government, could be exalted in such a degree as to enable the laboring classes of the United States to not only assert their rights, but maintain them. That period in our history seems to have arrived. The past history of our government, and especially that period of it embraced within the past twenty years, has been most prolific in causes which must, sooner or later, culminate in a grand conflict between labor and capital. I will not now attempt to point to them in the order in which they have made their appearance, but will simply say that during the period maintained, the legislation of our country has been such that the rich have become richer, and the poor have become poorer. In other words, we have witnessed a system of class legislation in favor of the few against the rights of the many. Under this system of legislation and official corruption, vast monopolies have grown up in our government, which at times seemed more powerful than the government itself. It is not strange that under such a condition of things, that the rich should become oppressive and disregard the rights of the poor and less favored classes. I have witnessed with much concern during the past few years the growing disposition on the part of capitalists to heap burdens upon the laborers, and often wished that I was in a position where I might point to some tangible way out of the iron hand of the robber, and right here I must admit that during this long period of bondage no people on earth have borne oppression more submissively than the laboring classes of the United States. It has only been here and there that the laboring man, like the bruised adder, would turn and strike at the foot of the enemy which trod upon him, but unfortunately for such, like the adder their heads were soon crushed.

During this period resistance was madness, because it was a contrast between organized capital and individual labor. The contrast which went on for years was an equal one. The laboring classes were divided in their own ranks, some seeking redress in one way and some in others, and thus repeated failures on the part of the laboringman was the result. But happily for the oppressed workingman, the Knights of Labor, which Order you are so ably representing, was organized upon principles so broad and so just, that all the laboringmen in the country can stand upon it. The growth of the Order has been rapid since its organization, until to-day its numbers are greater than half the armies of Europe, and its influence more potent than the combined wealth of all the monopolists in the nation.

Fortunately for your Order, its mission is a peaceful one, and its victories are gained without the shedding of blood. Doubtless at the inception of the organization the money kings, sitting behind their money bags, laughed at what they mistook as another foolish effort on the part of the laboring men to break their chains, but such is not the case to-day, for while they are yet fortified behind their money bags, they do so with fear and trembling, for they hear in the distance the deep mutterings of thunder, and even now, can see the dark border of the storm-cloud, which will soon burst in its fury and shatter the walls of the citadels of their position.

Let the Knights of Labor be just in their demands, and the great heart of the American poople will be with them in all their conflicts whether it be with the Mallory Steamship Line, aided by Galveston merchants who are in sympathy with her wharf monopoly or with the giant kings, whose iron bands extend from the Atlantic ocean to the golden shores of the Pacific.

Mr. Editor, so long as your Order adheres to the principles upon which it was founded, and you exclude from your ranks the office hunter, as well as the Socialist, you will have a union of hearts and a union of hands and marching on, shoulder to shoulder, you will become as invincible as the old guard of Napoleon. But when I say the Order should shun the office hunter, I do not mean to say that the Order should take no part in politics. It is not only the privilege, but a duty which every American citizen owes to his country and to his fellow-man, that he be diligent as well as conscientious in the discharge of his right to take part in the selections of public servants.

I am glad to see the merchants of Fort Worth as well as other interior cities co-operating with the Order in your efforts to enforce what seems to be a just demand against the Mallory Steamship Company at Galveston, and trust that you may ultimately bring them to deal justly with the Order.

Fearing that I have already made my letter too long, I will close.—*Labor Siftings.*

What is asked for by the workingmen of the present day and what we believe to be their rights, is that they shall find steady employment, that the time of such labor shall be limited to eight hours per day, and that for such employment they receive a just proportion of the profits accruing from such labor or an amount at least sufficient for the comfortable maintenance of themselves and families. This being the case the question arises, what are the safest and most certain means to attain that end? We believe them to be as follows; first, unanimity of action among the workingmen as to the object in view; second, care in the selection of representatives to present that object in a calm yet forcible manner upon the attention of the several legislative bodies, to the end that necessary laws be enacted; third, when such laws are enacted we may receive the hearty co-operation of the public in their enforcement. Of the first, unanimity of action, much has been accomplished by the formation of the many trade organizations and the establishment of newspapers devoted to these interests throughout the country. Both of these under proper care will increase in strength and usefulness till in the end they become a power capable of removing all obstacles from the path of progress. To this end they should both receive the hearty individual support of all interested in the labor reform movement. In regard to the second, namely the selection of legislative representatives, little of importance has been accomplished. True, we have elected men from both political parties, who, before election posed as would-be champions of the workingmen, but whose later acts convinced us that personal advancement was their principal aim, that while in some instances their honesty of purpose was proven even then the party lash was generally applied to bring them back to party fealty. There may have been some exceptions to this rule, possibly, Burnett and Haley, from Cuyahoga, McBride from Stark, and one or two from other districts, but they have been almost powerless to grapple with the situation in the face of so powerful an opposition. What we need and must have is legislators of our own, who will go solely for the purpose of enacting laws in behalf of labor, and leaving all other considerations behind, labor earnestly and entirely to that end. When you have found men willing to pledge themselves to this purpose, and whose career in the past has been such as to warrant you in placing faith in their word, unite in electing them, not as the member of any political party, but purely as a labor representative. As to the third question, the winning of popular sentiment to our views, but little more can be said at present, than this, that laws are oftimes inoperative and void from lack of moral support in enforcing them, and support is rarely bestowed and never long continued upon a lawless and riotous character. That strikes should be resorted to only as an extreme measure, and that all mobs and riots be summarily suppressed by the working classes themselves, that all inciters and abettors of such be denied admittance at our meeting and that our general behavior, in times of differences with our employers, be such as shall win us the esteem of all law-abiding citizens.

Arbitration Instead of Strikes.

The principle of arbitration is now generally recognized in all civilized countries, as the true method of settling disputes. That principle adopted and carried out between England and the United States prevented war between the two countries and saved millions of money and much bloodshed. The same principle applied with regard to the Canadian fisheries resulted in like good. And every true patriot looks forward to the day when war shall be driven from the earth and peaceable arbitration will be resorted to in order to settle all difficulties between peoples and nations. If this principle is good for the government of nations, it must be equally good for the government of individual disputes. We are glad to see this principle resorted to so universally in settling disputes between labor and capital. For many years in this country capital has not recognized the right of labor to appeal from the demands of capital. Corporations have claimed the right to employ labor at their own price, regardless of whether it was a just remuneration for the labor performed or not. But it is coming to be generally recognized that labor has rights as well as capital, and that the community, the State and the nation are interested in both classes, the laborer as well as the capitalist. Strikes in the past have cost this country many millions of dollars, both in loss of labor and in damage to capital, and every dollar lost in either way is so much taken from the wealth of the country. This interests not only those who are immediately concerned but the whole people, and men in every department of business and life are seeking to avoid this loss. Arbitration seems to be the only means. When labor is dissatisfied, let it go in a peaceable way to the employer and state the grievances; if they cannot come to an understanding, leave the matter to disinterested parties and then let each party abide the decision. Is not this true justice? Let not the men be idle nor the wheels of industry stop. In this way prosperity will continue, and a better feeling will exist between capital and labor. Wherever this has been resorted to as a means of settling disputes, much good has come out of it to both parties. Let organized labor insist upon this in all cases of disputes and the people will soon recognize the justice of their demands and public sentiments will enforce the principle.—*Budget.*

Organized Labor Coming to the Front.

There has perhaps never been a time in the history of this country when capital has felt the power of organized labor as it does to-day. There is a disposition manifesting itself everywhere to look at labor in a different light, and to recognize the fact that those who produce the wealth of the world by honest toil are entitled to a fair division of the profits. This is a hard lesson for capitalists to learn and they only learn it now by force of circumstances. It is true that while they recognize the fact to day, they will be ready if opportunity offers to put the heel of power and oppression again upon the laborer, and it behooves the laborer to keep a watchful eye and guard every point that is subject to attack from those who would gladly see their power destroyed. There is an undoubtedly strong feeling among the people generally, those who would not be classed as either capitalists or laborers, that the laborer has not been justly treated, and that the tendency in this country to bring the control of capital into the hands of the few is not calculated to perpetuate the freedom so dearly bought, and so fully recognized in the past. But the feeling is also strong in the minds of the people in general that the only way to bring about a reform that will be permanent is by quiet, persistent organization and agitation. They deprecate strikes and mob violence, and while their sympathies are with the laborer they will not tolerate any disposition to interfere with the business of the country. We believe that labor is on the road to success in this country, and that the Knights of Labor, an organization that reaches perhaps more classes of laborers than any other, will eventually win a victory for labor such as this country has never seen. All reforms are slow, yet justice will always prevail. Let working men and women everywhere be patient, do the best they can where they are, but keep their claims before the people, remembering that capital is a mighty power and will not yield without a struggle. A long pull, a strong pull and a pull together will accomplish wonders.

Boycotting.

The action of the Knights of Labor of Richmond in boycotting a rat establishment in that city, seems to have created a commotion in the capital of the State. A public meeting was held last week to consider the question involved, at which any amount of palaver was poured out on the mechanics and laboring men from lips unused to the melting mood, on ordinary occasions, when the laboring man was concerned. Some of the speakers asserted that "boycotting" was in violation of law, and others that it was calculated to disturb society and array capital against labor, &c. It cannot be denied that the labor element of this State is its most conservative factor. It has been so docile and non-resisting that it has simply been permitted to follow the dictates of political demagogues and to do their bidding, or to be itself boycotted. Neither can it be truthfully denied that the Democratic party has pursued a system of boycotting in the State since the war. It has compelled laboring men to vote for the ticket it has put up, or be deprived of the means of making a living for their families. Farm hands have been notified that if they did not vote as their employers voted they would have to hunt for other homes, and mechanics have been notified that if they dared to vote against the Democratic party they would be refused work at their trades. In whatever avenues of business Republicans have engaged, they been unmercifully boycotted because of their political opinions. We recognize in the movement of the Knights of Labor and the Typographical Union of Richmond a protest against the petty despotism which has been practiced in the State by the Democratic party, and believe it but an advance step in the direction of laboring men of all classes asserting their manhood and independence of political marplots, who stop at nothing to accomplish party ends. If political rings are formed to compel men to vote against their convictions on penalty of being deprived of employment or patronage in the business in which they are engaged, it is perfectly legitimate for laboring men to unite to protect themselves. It is an awakening sense of individual right, of self-respect and manhood independence. By uniting they can defy the political despots who conspire to force men to vote against their convictions and their interest, under the threat of being boycotted in their business, whether as common laborers or mechanics. There is not a town or county in the State where this system of boycotting has not been enforced. The threat has been made in this town to men engaged in business and men dependent upon their daily labor that if they voted the Republican or temperance ticket they would be boycotted, and the threat has been carried into execution on more occasions than one. Labor must respect itself, manifest its manhood, if it desires to be respected. It should turn a deaf ear to the plaints of political demagogues, evoked by fear of the crushing of the party machinery, and not from any concern for either the mechanic or the laborer or society. They know that the party rings are held together by the tyranny they practice, and that they cannot exist where they are resisted by well-ordered combinations. Hence the fears because of the strength and will shown by the Knights of Labor. We should like to see an Assembly in every town in the State, and for the mechanics and laboring men of the State to make it known that they have rights, both political and social, which they will defend and maintain, let the hurt fall where it may.

Who in this city that has opposed the party machine and the rings who has not been either directly or indirectly approached with a threat, either openly made or insinuated, affecting his business? What mechanic here has not felt the fierce persecution of this influence who has had independence to disregard its behests? And doubtless it has been the same in Richmond, and to this cause may be traced the revolt which is shown in the action of the Knights of Labor. We hope to see the time when society will be so well ordered, and the sense of justice and tolerance so prevalent, that every man can openly proclaim his opinions and give them emphasis at the ballot-box, without inviting upon his head the wrath of the rings, and the shafts of persecution, because he elects to be a man.—*Valley Virginian.*

The Eight-Hour Movement.

BY CARL IBSON.

The movement in favor of an eight-hour standard workday is already in full speed at most all industrial centers. Slowly, but sure, it is carried over to the workingmen at smaller cities and towns, where the interest in this movement is not so plainly shown as in larger places of industry. Most all intelligent wageworkers of the country are well aware of the fact that the shortening of the workday means virtually an increase of wages. Even from the side of bossism, it is understood and uneasily felt that this movement has already become irresistable. Bosses endeavor to lead it into obnoxious roads, as a cigar manufacturer is trying to do in *John Swinton's Paper* of New York city. After assuring the workingmen of his sympathy and well wishes, he wants to show that the sudden shortening of the workday of two hours would be at a great loss to capital as well as labor. Thousands of employers would not be able to stand the expenses for such an increased want of help and would therefore fight this measure to the utmost. Consequently there would follow a great many strikes, which will bring misery to all concerned and would also result in an industrial and social panic and would form a far worse state of production, as there is to-day, thus preventing the workingmen to better their condition as a class. To keep off such a catastrophe, he proposes to shorten the workday by degrees. From the first of May one-quarter of an hour per day, six months thereafter again another quarter, and so on, till after four years, the eight-hour day would be accomplished. Whoever has the least knowledge of social economy can see at once that this well-wisher to the workmen has motives which are not honest. Should the standard workday be fixed in that manner, as this Shylock proposes, it would not in the least be a benefit to the working class; contrary it would, through establisment of practical steam work and improvements of machinery, enable the bosses to produce the same quantity of goods with the same number of hands, as he does to-day; the enormous number of idlers, which we want to do away with, would not be decreased and wages would consequently be kept down as low as now. Should the eight-hour system become a practical and periodical success it must in all ways be accomplished in a sudden and energetic manner. We dare in no way allow the capitalists time enough to improve their machinery and so enable them to produce the same quantity of goods in eight hours as they did before in ten. No, we must under all circumstances introduce this measure at once, so as the boss is forced to cover this lapse by engaging more help. In this manner there would be a market for labor and the enormous number of idlers would be decreasing. These, formerly tramps, would be found working in factory, field and farm and the competition of labor would be little enough to be harmless, if not at all abolished. An increase of wages would certainly soon follow, especially if the workmen are thoroughly and well organized. Through such an increased number of money-earning individuals the number of consumers would also enlarge itself, thus bringing a solid condition of business in general. We all know that the money-earning wageworker has always been the largest consumer.

But, let this always be looked upon: "The labor movement shall and must become a success to the end." The shortening of two hours of the workday can only bring relief for a certain time. After some years the improvement of machinery and establishment of practical steamwork will create such a speedy production that it will again become a necessity to shorten the hours of labor. Look at England and Switzerland! Inspectors of factories there show us that only a few years hence of the establishment of the ten and eleven hour system the same quantity of work was accomplished as hitherto in twelve and thirteen hours. This shows, evidently, that only a sudden action in regard to the eight-hour movement will bring direct and immediate relief.

Although there are a great many yet who are in doubt that the shortening of work hours will bring an increase of wages.

When trades unions comprise the majority of mechanics, when mechanics have obtained all necessary schooling and knowledge of their trades in their respective unions that enable them to make production co-operative among themselves, when the labor party once is controlling government, then it will no longer need the shortening of work days to better the condition of labor. Evils will be rooted out radically, if such should appear. But for to-day, let us welcome heartily the introduction of the eight-hour workday.—*Syracuse Laborer.*

Sixty Silver Speeches.

A universal groan of horror goes up all over the length and breadth of the land at the announcement that there are sixty members of congress waiting to be heard upon the silver question. Sixty speeches! And sixty speeches upon a question as clear as day and which could be settled precisely as well without controversy or debate. When these sixty speeches shall have all been delivered, and when more than sixty more members shall have obtained "leave to print" their views on the question in the Congressional Record, will the House of Representatives be any better able to come to a decision on this momentous question? It is to be feared not, for the matter is one that is not likely to be settled on its merits, but upon selfish grounds, as interest seems to dictate. Such a question is not helped much by debate.

However, we are getting to be pretty well used to this continual flood of talk at Washington. And after all, it serves a good purpose. When congress is talking we can at least congratulate ourselves that it is doing nothing worse.—*News-Letter.*