

FORT WORTH.

History of the Grievances Leading Up to the Great Strike on the Gould Southwestern System.

The following communication from "Ironclad" to the Memphis Weekly Record shows very plainly who was in fault as to the origin of the great strike on the southwestern system. Just bear in mind that even a worm will curl up and sting when trod upon. These men in another year or so would have been required to pay Boss Gould a few dollars per month for the privilege of working for his manipulated lines:

"FORT WORTH, TEX., May 12.—In accordance with my promise, I send you a correct statement of the grievances which caused the great strike on the Gould southwestern system. In order to give a complete history of the affair I must refer back to the strike of March, 1885, and relate the causes which led to it. In the summer of 1884 a reduction of 25 cents was made on all unskilled labor, thus reducing them to \$1.25 per day. All white and black American laborers were discharged from the Big Springs and Sierra Blanca, a distance of 275 miles, and a contract made with Sesson, Crocker & Co., of California, to put Chinamen at work, they costing the company but \$1.75 per day. In September, 1884, the wages were reduced to \$1 per day for all unskilled labor. No one was allowed to work more than twenty-four days in any one month. A reduction of \$15 was made for board and 35 cents for hospital fee, leaving \$6.65 for a month's work. All skilled workmen were reduced in proportion.

The men employed on the railroads comprising Gould's southwestern system continued to work until another reduction of 10 per cent was contemplated by the greatest enemy the workingman has, Mr. H. M. Hoxie, first vice-president of this system of railroads, but seeing nothing but starvation staring them in the face, the men had to make some move to prove that they were not slaves. A committee was sent to see Mr. Hoxie and endeavor to have the wages placed where they were in September, 1884, but could do nothing; so in March, 1885, the men quit work all along the line from St. Louis to the Rio Grande and from El Paso to New Orleans. A settlement was desired, but could not be had until the governors of Missouri and Kansas acted as arbitrators, and the wages to be paid, as per written agreement, were the same as paid in September, 1884. No strike was to take place without first trying to settle all or any grievance by a committee of workmen and Mr. Hoxie, all of which has been lived up to on the part of the men. No reduction in wages was to be made by the railroad company without first giving thirty days' notice, ten hours to constitute a day's work, and all over-time to be paid time-and-a-half. The men received their pay as per agreement the first month after the strike, but the next payment was not as it should have been, all skilled workmen receiving from \$5 to \$10 less than the amount due them; unskilled laborers from \$3 to \$5. Nothing was said or done until the pay car came out in June to pay for May work. When the men received their checks from the paymaster they noticed a decrease in the amount they had worked so hard for and were justly entitled to. "They spoke to him, and he said he knew nothing about it. The foremen under whom the men worked said they had sent the time worked in to headquarters, and that the difference was made there. Men worked from ten to sixteen hours, and did not receive a cent for over-time. A correspondence was kept up in regard to the way men received their pay, from \$5 to \$10 short every month, but no reply or explanation could be had. A committee was appointed to try and adjust these grievances. They went to Marshall, Texas, to see Mr. Warden Cummins, superintendent of T. & P. railway. He said: "I don't know anything about it; you must see Mr. Hoxie."

"The committee goes to St. Louis and sees Mr. Hoxie. He says: 'I don't know anything about it; go back and see Mr. Cummins.' They did so. He sends them back to Mr. Hoxie, who refused to see or talk with them. To further his plans, Mr. Gould has the T. & P. railway placed in the hands of the receiver, and has Judge Don Pardee appointed his (Gould's) right hand man, Gov. John Brown, receiver. As soon as this was done they began to discharge all foremen connected with the Knights of Labor. Mr. A. C. Hall, foreman of the ear building shops in Marshall, was discharged for attending a meeting of the K. of L. This discrimination, coupled with the other grievances, is the direct cause of the strike of March 2, 1886. Some may say that Gould hated to see this strike, as it was money out of his pocket, but not so; he wanted it, and forced it, and by so doing has made the biggest speculation of his day.

"Now, to show you the truth, if this other road in Texas, which has no inlet or outlet, can and does pay its laborers \$1.75 per day, the Missouri Pacific is a monopoly in itself, and as he controls the Iron Mountain route, he handles the traffic in and out of this great State. He is now letting the other roads he has leased go like the T. & P. That is, he never keeps up the condition of the roadway and rolling stock, charges extortionate rates and pays men no wages, so as to cause strikes and run the stock down in Wall street, to be bought by him. The T. & P. road is ruined, while in the hands of Gov. Brown, to the interest of Jay Gould. The road is a wreck and the

rolling stock all played out. And what caused it? Gould has ground the money in Wall street and he should have spent to save this great trans-continental route, which Texas gave to have built 1,224,000 acres of her public domain. Please don't think this road is gone for good. Time will show you that Gould has manipulated all this stock, and bought it for nearly nothing, and he made the working men, as well as the public at large, suffer inconveniences that he might profit by it. When once Gould carries his point, you will see the Texas and Pacific bob up serenely.

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BOYCOTT BAUGHMAN BROS. A Virginia Coal Field. MIDLOTHIAN, VA., Feb. 22, 1886.

I have been anxious for a long time to furnish to your most excellent journal some information of a new coal field of bituminous coal in this region, but I have waited and hoped to see politicians fall into line, and casting aside partisan feelings, concentrate their energies upon the real interests of the country, instead of wasting time and keeping business in an unsettled condition by continually agitating the tariff question.

There exists in this region one of the greatest coal fields in the known world. The field is about 26 miles in length with a general strike of strata N. N. E. and S. S. W., and its breadth is from 4 miles and upwards. The angle of inclination is from 25 to 50 degrees. The coal is highly bituminous, and gives as good an analysis as the best coals in England. The coal is from 5 to 50 feet thick, and there is a seam at Midlothian 85 feet thick, almost free from bone or impurities of any kind. There is about 20 miles of this immense field of bituminous coal untouched, and as large as the late Mr. Vanderbilt's fortune was the dollars in it are as a drop in a bucket compared to the tons of coal this huge coal field will yield; a cubic yard of this coal weighs over one ton, and a seam of coal 3 feet thick will yield to every acre 4,840 tons, and after deducting a large percentage for waste leaves about 3,227 tons of available coal per acre, 100 acres should produce 322,700 tons from a 3 foot seam. A large area of this coal basin is 20 feet, and in other places 50 feet thick, but if we take off of the 20 foot seam 6 feet and put it at 14 feet, to make allowances for pillars, etc., then one acre should produce 1,004,000 tons, and if we take 8 feet off of the 50 foot seam and put it at 42 feet, to make allowance for pillars, etc., one acre should produce 3,065,000 tons.

Now multiply by 15 cents per ton for the vendor, and 85 cents or \$1 per ton profit for the vendee or owner or operator, and you will see what blessings flow from coal mining if it can only have the legitimate protection it is rightfully entitled to, but the benefits do not stop at the vendor and vendee, as this coal field should give constant employment to hundreds of men and boys, and thus give the farmers a market at their own doors. In addition to the large deposit of bituminous coal there exists right here in this district a continuous deposit of natural coke to one mile; this, rich and wonderful deposit is within close proximity to the Richmond & Danville Railroad, and when we consider how easily and cheaply and without any risk of loss it can be mined, I risk nothing when I say it offers a rare opportunity for safe and profitable investment. This excellent fuel ignites easily and makes a sweet, cheerful fire in stove or open grate, and it burns with a tenacity equal to the canal coal and is as durable. This deposit of natural coke is only 12 miles from Richmond, and if mined on a large scale and judiciously, and with constant energy, it can be delivered in Richmond at \$2 per ton, as the Richmond & Danville Railroad Company must have had Chesterfield's exuberant deposits of coal and natural coke in view, and to induce capitalists to come and work it, when they wisely fixed the freight on coal at the moderate rate of 45 cents per ton.

There exists all through the mile of natural coke I allude to, a workable seam of bituminous coal, and it is in close juxtaposition to the seam of natural coke, and can be mined from the same places of entry as the coke. A good lease on the coke and coal property can be obtained. But the immense fields of coal and coke Chesterfield county contains is not the only inducements to investments in this region; for, although the experiment has never been made, there are places that could be selected on the Midlothian Colliery that would doubtless yield for an indefinite period as large quantities of natural gas as the best places around Pittsburgh or anywhere else.

I have shown the Manufacturers Record to a good many intelligent gentlemen, and all I have seen or heard from unanimously applaud your wise and timely suggestions for a Southern convention on the tariff, and efforts, as well as I, hope your laudable efforts will be crowned with success, and that the circulation and patronage of the Manufacturers Record may rapidly increase.—JOB ATKINS, M. E., in Manufacturers Record.

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