

LABOR'S SCANTY SHARE.

Cut in Wages of Steel Workers Works a Hardship.

Workingmen throughout the iron and steel trade and its allied branches are feeling most keenly the sweeping reduction in wages made this year, but particularly at Pittsburg, Pa., because there the cost of living is actually advancing.

Rents are being marked up all over the Pittsburg district, after several successive advances in past few years. The workmen are being ground between the wage reductions of the Steel Trust and its competitors on the one hand and the higher cost of living, due to the exactions of the beef and other trusts controlling the necessities of life and the capitalists controlling the ground on the other hand.

In many cases the advances in rent amount to over 25 per cent from the high prices of the past two years. In scarcely an instance is the rent reduced.

The conditions in Pittsburg are particularly bad owing to the influence of the steel trust. Its policy of concentration is a two-edged sword.

The trust abandons a plant in some prosperous country town and the town is beggared. The equipment is set up where the trust already has large plants, the workmen must come and there is no room for them. Landlords and storekeepers can charge what they like; the workmen must live wherever the trust decrees the work is to be done.

Pennsylvania, Ohio and Indiana are full of little towns which, before the great trust era, beginning in its strength in 1899 and culminating in the United States Steel Corporation, were prosperous through the operation of moderate-sized mills which the storekeepers and nearby farmers had encouraged to locate. The men were well paid and the whole town was prosperous.

Some of the towns which the tinplate trust has almost killed are Blairsville, West Newton, Connellsville and Ellsworth City in Pennsylvania; Lisbon, Irondale and Cambridge in Ohio, and Atlanta and Milledale in Indiana.

Wage reductions have been general since about the first of the year in the whole iron trade, covering common labor, skilled labor and office men. None has escaped.

The total number of men employed in the iron and steel industry, from the coke works and ore mines to the finishing mills is roughly about 350,000, receiving in wages last year about \$250,000,000. The average reduction to date is between 20 and 30 per cent, or about \$60,000,000 per year, and not a thing in the way of decreased living cost, at least in Pittsburg, to make up for it. Whatever calling there is in Pittsburg is in the direction of higher cost of living. These men represent probably 250,000 to 300,000 families, or a total population of perhaps 1,500,000. These men cannot make up for their wage reductions by sending their children out to work. There is no demand for their work in a steel mill at any price. It is no place for them.

In the past two years the Steel Trust's payment for wages, excluding the high officials' salaries, were about \$225,000,000. In the same two years the Steel Trust's profits applicable to capital were \$255,000,000. This sum includes, besides what the report designates as "net earnings," the payment of various bondholders, banks, etc. Labor gets \$225,000,000 in two years; capital in various forms gets \$255,000,000.

Take the water out of the stocks of the great corporations and there

would be a return of prosperity to the worker, profit to the legitimate owner, but the gamblers who put the water in the stock would have to go to work.

WILL PULL TOGETHER.

A Strong Central Body Has Been Organized in Los Angeles.

LOS ANGELES, Cal., March 31.—(Special Correspondence).—As the result of the most important labor meeting in the history of Southern California, held Saturday night, March 19, the County Council of Labor will be reorganized and the new body, to be known as the Central Labor Union of Los Angeles County, will be based on entirely different lines. By unanimous vote of the delegates present, representing practically every union of this community, a plan was adopted providing for the organization of department councils, such as the building trades, comprising carpenters, bricklayers, painters, plasterers and so on; the printing trades, consisting of typesetters, pressmen, photoengravers, mailers, stereotypers and the like; the provision trades, taking in butchers, bakers, milkmen, etc., thus classifying all unions into groups which will transact all business properly coming within their jurisdiction, and in turn these department councils will elect delegates to the central body, which will pass upon only such matters as may be submitted by any department council. No boycott can be levied without the sanction of the higher body, and no union affiliated with any department can levy more than one boycott at one time, it being necessary to adjust one misunderstanding before entering into another. Under this plan there will be no such thing as a union withdrawing from the central body and retaining its standing in the labor movement, as it will be necessary to withdraw from the department council first—a step that would at once place the union taking it outside of the assistance of all unions of a similar calling, and likewise out of the general movement. It has been said that this plan, which was submitted to the executive council of the American Federation of Labor while those officers were in San Francisco more than a year ago, was pronounced a very effective mode of organization. The proposition will be submitted to a referendum vote of all the unions of Los Angeles county, and if an affirmative vote is received, application will be made to President Gompers for a charter. The vote will be canvassed April 20.

Under the leadership of the notorious Los Angeles Times, the Citizens' Alliance is displaying much activity, their principal work being the flooding of Southern California with mechanics of every description for the purpose of cutting wages and thus weakening the unions. At the recent convention of the National Citizens' Alliance the Times was given three cheers by the assembled union-haters and Otis was lauded as a little tin hero.

Is there an anti-Times committee in Portland? If not, organize one.

and write to Arthur A. Hay, 331-332 Wilson Block, Los Angeles, Cal., and get a printed list of advertisers in the Times, and then go to work to induce them to withdraw.

Ministers to Be Admitted.

Ministers of the gospel will be welcomed as delegates to the Chicago Federation of Labor.

The latter at its meeting recently, after listening to the Rev. Charles Stelzie, who made the proposition for an alliance of the church and labor, instructed a committee to report an amendment to the constitution providing for seating representatives of the Presbyterian Ministers' Association.

Objection was raised to the admission of the ministers, several contending they were not producers.

"What trade unionists can oppose some Christian who wishes to tell you what is right and what is wrong," said Delegate James J. Linehan. "Let all the ministers' associations come to us. The day is coming when the ministers will have to organize to prevent reductions in their wages."

"The professors expelled from universities will also have to organize to protect themselves from discharge for getting closer to humanity."

"The labor movement would be benefited if every minister would unite with us," declared Delegate J. J. Ryan.

"No organizations on earth are misrepresented as grossly as those of labor," said Delegate George J. Thompson. "The request of the ministers to attend our meetings shows that they do not believe the denunciations we receive."

Delegate Langville said that labor organizations existed only in Christian countries, and that the first teaching taught "peace on earth, good will to men."

The request of the Rev. Stelzie was granted by a practically unanimous vote.

SHERIFF'S SALE.

By virtue of an execution issued out of the Circuit Court of the State of Oregon, for Multnomah County, in favor of the Continental Insurance Company, against S. B. Riggen and Flora I. Riggen, for the sum of \$678.20 with interest from April 30, 1896, until paid at 8 per cent per annum. I have levied upon the following described real property in Multnomah County, Oregon, to-wit: Lots Nos. 31 and 33, block 42, Irvington Park; lots Nos. 20 and 21, in block No. 14, and lots Nos. 18, 19 and 20, in block No. 2, in Riverside Addition to Albina; lots Nos. 23 and 24, in block No. 2, in Brainerd Tract; lot No. 10, in block No. 14; lot No. 1, in block "E"; lot No. 25, in block No. 6; lots Nos. 2 and 4, in block "D"; and lot No. 9, in block No. 15, in Highland Park; lots Nos. 6 and 7, in block No. 9, in Seventh Street Terraces, and will, on the 2nd day of May, 1904, at the hour of 10 o'clock A. M., at the front door of the County Court House of said County, sell at public auction to the highest bidder for cash all the right, title and interest therein had by said S. B. Riggen and Flora I. Riggen on the 7th day of February, 1896, or since acquired by them in and to said real property to satisfy said writ and accruing costs.

W. A. STOREY,
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