

THE SHORTEST DAY.

Wednesday, December 21, was the shortest day in the year. There are just eight and six-tenths hours of daylight, because the sun at present is farthest south. For the last six days the period of daylight has been approximately of the same length and for the next five days there will be little difference. After that you will begin to notice dawn peeping into your room just a little earlier day by day providing, cruel necessity forces you to rise at a seasonable hour.

"The most significant fact about today," said Weather Observer Beals this morning, "is contained in the proverb:

"As the days begin to lengthen the cold begins to strengthen."

The American Encyclopedia explains the difference in the periods of daylight as follows:

"The solar day, in consequence of the varying rapidity of the earth in its orbit, and the obliquity of the ecliptic is different at different times, and this difference is uniform throughout the year, but the time of natural day (or period of light) is different at the different points of the earth, according to their distance from the equator.

"The daily revolution of the sun takes place in circles parallel to the equator. If the equator and the ecliptic coincided the circle bounding light and darkness would always divide, not merely the equator, but all its parallels, into two equal parts, and the days and nights would be equal in all the parallels of the year; but at the poles there would be no light.

"Owing to the inclination of the earth's axis to the plane of its orbit (the ecliptic) the parallel of latitude in which the sun appears to be moving is continually

changing, and therefore the equator alone (being a great circle) always remains bisected by the circle dividing light from darkness; so that the days and nights here are always equal; while the parallels of latitude, not being great circles, are not equally divided by the circle separating light from darkness, at the time of the equinox, when the sun is moving in the equator; and, of course, only at this time are the days and nights equal in those parallels. As you approach the poles the inequality between the days and nights becomes greater, till at the poles themselves a day of six months alternates with a night of equal duration."—Portland Journal.

ENTHUSIASM.

Enthusiasm is the greatest business asset in the world. It beats money and power and influence. Single-handed the enthusiast convinces and dominates where the wealth accumulated by a small army of workers would scarcely raise a tremor of interest. Enthusiasm tramples over prejudice and opposition, spurs inaction, storms the citadel of its object, and, like an avalanche, overwhelms and engulfs all obstacles.

Enthusiasm is nothing more or less than faith in action. Faith and initiative, rightly combined, remove mountainous barriers and achieve the unheard-of and miraculous. Set the germ of enthusiasm afloat in your shop, carry it in your attitude and manner; it spreads like contagion and influences every fibre of your industry before you realize it; it begets and inspires effects you did not dream of; it means increase in production and decrease in cost; it means joy and pleasure and satisfaction to your workers; it means life, real and virile; it means spontaneous bed-rock results, the vital things that pay dividends.—FRYE.