A STRIKE THAT HAS NO PARALLEL

A STORY THAT READS LIKE A PAGE FROM "LOOKING BACKWARD."

ESWICK, Cal., Dec. 30.-(Special Correspondence.)-A strike which has no parallel in the long history of labor troubles resulted on November 19 last in the complete shut-down of the immense plants of the Mountain Copper Company, Ltd., at Keswick and Iron Mountain, across the state line, in Shasta County, California, and for over a month not a wheel has turned in the big corporation's \$15,000,000 establishment. The 1100 employes quit to a man, and the story of the strike is so full of enlivening incidents that it reads more like a romance of the "Looking Backard" type than a plain recital of 20th century facts. The remoteness of the camp has thus far served to prevent the newspapers from getting anything save the most meager reports.

The strikers have taken absolute por session of the town of Keswick, have rented the hotels and lodging-houses, completely furnished, and comfortable quarters have been supplied without cost to all the men. This was done on December 5, when the company announced that it would not accede to the demands of the men, but would close its works down for 10 years, if necessary.

"And we mean what we say," said the

"All right," responded the strikers, "we will wait 10 years for you."

And so it started. The hotels and lodging-houses were rented, together with innumerable cabins scattered on the Shasta hillsides about the smelter, and today the long slege is on in earnest. It is in the immediate charge of Keswick Smeltermen's Union, No. 142, the local labor organization, but back of it is the powerful Western Federation of Miners, which No. 143 is affiliated. The Federation has indorsed the strike, and has promised to spend all of the \$3,890,000 in its treasury, if necessary, to support the men.

Everything Free.

The result is that the strikers, in addition to quarters, have these things supplied them:

If unmarried, they eat three meals a day at a great restaurant just equipped.

If married, they draw regular rations of groceries, meats, etc., from a strike commissary, organized and conducted on a sort of military basis. They get free fuel,

There are two harber-shops open day and night for their accommodation.

Twice a day "sick call" is sounded and contract physicians attend to the alling. Medicine also is free.

Stamps and stationery are supplied to those who wish to do any correspondence, There is a free theater. The rending and clubrooms are furnished

with up-to-date literature. Cobblers and tailors-these from their own ranks-do all needed repair work.

A two-story bathhouse is always ope to them.

Tobacco rations are issued daily. And the only duty required of them is service as sentries on eight-hour shifts every day-a duty, however, that is sternly insisted on. In addition every mon has been solemnly sworn not to leave Keswick, the oath following his pledge not to permit any stranger to pass the picket line into camp while he is on guard. Thus Keswick, for the time being, is a little nation in itself, and no man knows how long it will be able to maintain so remarkable a status.

Those who look for a speedy settlement base their belief on the present threat of equipped 12-mile railroad between them, international complications. The company | and connected the smelter with the Southis English, with headquarters in London, ern Pacific by another road. It is said and no stock at all is held in this coun- that they spent between \$5,000,000 and



A DEPUTY HAVING DRUNK TOO MUCH ATTEMPTED TO GO THROUGH THE PICKET LINE.

bought Iron Mountain-a misnomer, by doubt the figures. the way, for the mountain is simply one

Investment of \$6,000,000.

The company sent over here as its gentremendous five-furnace smelter at Keswick, constructed a modern and fully try. It is the richest corporation doing \$5,000,000 in making all these improved union camp in the West, and an eyesore

susiness in California, owns a refinery in | ments before ever a single ounce of ore coal and coke-carrying ships. When it neers who have seen the plant do not

But it proved a good investment, nevergreat, inexhaustible mass of low-grade theless. The percentage of copper ran copper ore-there was no town of Kes- only from 7 to 15 per cent, but there was wick and no settlement of any sort in the a not inconsiderable amount of gold in every ton of ore, and during the past eight or 10 years the company has regularly been declaring large dividends. The eral manager Lewis T. Wright and a money it has paid in taxes has not only large staff of assislants, all English, They supported Shasta County, but has given opened mines at Iron Mountain, built the | the county a surplus so big as to make it the envy of every other community in the

During all this time General Manager Wright employed nonunion men at both the mine and the smelter and on the con-

to the labor organizations. The latter Paterson, N. J., and has its own fleet of was mined, and practical mining engi- finally decided to take a hand in the matter, and the Western Federation of Miners sent B. F. Barbee, its organizer, to Keswick to form a union. He succeeded in doing this, but most of the work was done in secret, and it was some time before General Manager Wright and his staff knew what was going on. But as soon as he got wind of the affair he began to take

retailatory measures.
In the early part of November he in some way secured a list of the officers of the local union and some of its most act-ive members, and by the middle of last month they had been dropped one by one from the company pay rolls. Among the first to go was John L. Donnelly, president of No. 143, who had been employed as a furnace feeder. There were individual protess in plenty, but a reason was given for every discherge, assuable because as a furnace feeder. There were individas a furnace feeder. There were individed in the callionia.

State Legislature: Frank Brown and Jay
by property, and armed them. The strikers grounds all as a furnace feeder. There were individually property and armed them. The strikers grounds as a furnace feeder. There were individually property and armed them. The strikers grounds as a furnace feeder. There were individually formation and the callionia of the callioni

surprise of every man not in the secret, sion, Mr. Wright declined to receive the the men quit work. The day shift went off duty at 8 o'clock in the evening, announcing that they would not report for duty the next day, and the night shift stayed away altogether. In the space of 60 minutes the smelter, with its lb towering stacks which had spouted fire by night and smoke by day without a moment's intermission since its first furnace was "blown in." lay silent in the big gulch, dying like some strange animal might die

The next morning it was lifeless, and the people of Keswick, for the first time In many years, ate no sulphur fumes with their breakfasts. The men at the mine and on the railroad struck, too, and a committee of strikers composed of Frank W. Fowler, who won fame some years ago as a member of the California

committee or have any communication with it, and he said so with some vigor. Whereupon the strikers held a mass-

meeting and agreed without a dissenting vote to remain out until the company granted recognition of their union and reinstated the discharged men. The West-ern Federation of Miners was communi-cated with, and on the following day Or-

cated with, and on the following day Organizer Barbee came from Denver with a
fat check. Since then President Henry
Moyer, of the federation, and other high
officials have reached Kenwick, and day
by day the strike has developed the curious situation which exists at present.
The company promptly had Sheriff
Behrens swear in two score of its clerks,
foremen, bosses and heads of departments as special deputies to protect its
property, and armed them. The strikers
erected tents all about the company's
grounds, sent large details of pickets to

MR. CARPENTER WRITES OF THE BLACK COUNTRY

leading into camp to warn away every man who might want to go to work. Nearly 200 men were on picket duty at a

time, and this number has been slightly increased since. Of course trouble followed. Some strangers refused to be turned away from the camp, and these the strikers ducked in the Sacramento River and forced to board outgoing freight trains. Once they tackled a deputy by mistake, shooting followed, and there were arrests. Another time a Deputy, having dronk too much, attempted to go through a picket line with a big pistol in either hand. There was more shooting, but the weight of evidence in court was against the deputy, and he was sent to prison for two months by

Justice of the Peace Thompson.
At Iron Mountain an unpopular boss was deliberately kidnaped, forced to walk to Keswick, and put aboard a train. He got off at Redding, swore out a score of warrants, and his assailants are out un-der heavy bail. Last week Thomas Craze, a smelter boss and special deputy, was assaulted, and in addition to causing the arrest of the men who attacked him, he had President Donnelly and Organizer Barbee taken into custody. They secured their liberty on \$2000 ball each, and will be tried December 29. The union is bailing its men out as fast as they are arrested, and already it has furnished security to the amount of a small fortune. The company, too, is protecting its own employed in this way.

In this way.

But it is not necessary to recount the many conflicts that have been brought about by the intense feeling on both sides, nor to give the detailed experience of the strike pickets in maintaining their iron-clad cordon about the camp and practically shutting out Kerwick from the rest of the world. When this phenomenal condition of affairs was brought about the cittion of affairs was brought about, the cit-izens of the county, becoming alarmed, formed a committee of arbitration to seek formed a committee of arbitration to seek a settlement. Judge Sweeney, of the Su-perior Court, was at the head of this committee, and they interviewed both sides. But neither would budge an inch, and no progress was made.

Present Status.

The net result is that the English officers and the small army of deputies eat and sleep and have their being in the company grounds. The strikers have them pany grounds. The strikers have them surrounded, but make no effort to touch company property, for they are extremely anxious not to have any troops of the National Guard sent here. Thus far they have kept the real situation from getting to the outside world, but it will be impossible, of course, to prevent publicity under the dreumstances. A local newspaper correspondent, suspected of writing articles in which the strikers did not appear cles in which the strikers did not appear to advantage, was forced at the pistol's point outside the lines on the night of December 9.

The company will say no word as to its intentions, save that it will not take the strikers back. There is a persistent ru-mor—and it has caused a general shiver in shasta County—that they are quietly re-cruiting a new force of men in the Coast cities, and will attempt to bring them to Keswick in a body. There is no evidence thus far that this is so, but if it should be the truth the news will be of speedy interest in Sacramento, if not in the Na-tion's capital. There are arms and men enough in the camp to equip a regiment

And all the time the strikers, when off duty, are thoroughly enjoying themselves. On the occasion of The Oregonian correspondent's visit an amateur minstrel and spondent's visit an amateur minstrel and theatrical performance was the night's attraction, and the local opera-house was nowhere near big enough to contain those who wanted to attend. This too, in face of the fact that while the show was inprogress a score of campires on all the surrounding hills showed the presence of that indefatigable line of watchers at the picket tents. picket tents.

In a small way the two great branches of the Anglo-Saxon race have locked horns in Keswick, but the question of what it will grow into is one of genuine serious ness. Both sides admit that much.

WHERE WOMEN DO MEN'S WORK IN MINES

ASMES, Belgium, Dec. 11 .- (Special car along the coal mountain. Two wo ndence.)-I amin the heart of one of the richest coal mining regions of Europe. Belgium is only about ne-third the size of Indiana, but it has deposits of coal and iron which make it hum like a beehive. It is the busiest ports about as many people to the square mile as any country of the world. Its annual product, of coal amounts to 22,-600,000 tons. It uses the greater part of this at home, and also imports fuel from Germany and England. At present the people are looking to the United States as a possible source of manufacturing fuel, and the day may yet come when the mills here will be largely run through coul from the United States.

The Black Country of Belgium.

The Belgium mining conditions are entirely different from those of our coun-Our mines are near the surface and it costs but little to get the coal to the cars. Those of Belgium are far down under the earth, and every ton has to be lifted by machinery to the surface. Some of the mines which I visited today are more than a half mile deep. The water has to be fought at every turn, and mighty pumps are employed to keep the works dry. There are tunnels cutting the earth this way and that at a depth of 2000 feet. Over them are other tunnels, and the whole country is a catacombs, made by getting out the coal. The mines have to be timbered. The wood is cut from the forests near by, but the most of it is not over six inches thick, and as it comes to the mines it looks like telegraph poles, each 56 feet long, tapering to a point at the end. Such timber stands in great stacks about each mine. It is unloaded from the cars by women, who handle the poles like so many

those of Pennsylvania, Ohio or Tennessee There it is mountainous. Here at Wasmes the land is flat, and the only elevations are from the dumps of the mines. The coal here is filled with waste. It has to be sorted and the refuse is carried out

Belgium's Coal Pyramids.

This coal region is far different from

upon cars. There is so much of it that a pyramidal mountain soon rises up beside h mine, standing out like a black cone against the blue sky. There are such pyramids everywhere in this part of Belgium. Some of them are dead, the mines which produced them having been worked out and abandoned. Others have ladders their backs and a framework on the with a rattling sound empty them. Some of these pyramids are smoking. There is much sulphur in the coal and spontaneous combustion often starts a fire which burns for years. Instances are known of people going to sleep on the dumps and being suffocated by the fumes

Take your stand with me on one of these coal mountains just outside the mining town of Wasmes and look about See the farms covered with rich crops, with these coal mounds rising above them. There is one at our right,

men are pushing it, and with the glass you can almost see their muscles swell as with bare arms they cast it on the

Now look at that mound at the left. It is hundreds of feet high, and, like the others about it, it is an evidence of the workshop upon the continent, and it sup- enormous waste that the miners have to contend with. Every bit of coal that is brought to the surface has to be picked over and the waste is evidently more than the coal itself.

Near every mound you see the huge

buildings of the coal workers. They are not unlike those of the United States, but the scenes about them are different. Tiger Lilies and Black Dinmonds.

In the United States the work is done altogether by men. Here most of the labor above the surface is performed by women. And such women! Lusty young girls of from 16 to 20. Preity girls, resycheeked, round-armed and plump, with faces smutty with coal dust, but at the e time comely. Their eyes are bright their heauty is accentuated by the coal dust on their faces, through which the red flames forth like that of the dark

mose rose. They are very tiger lilles set in a background of black diamonds. Come with me and let us visit one of the mines. We enter the great works where the mighty shaft is jerking up and down raising the coal to the surface. At the mouth of the opening stand a half dozen of these Belgian girls, their heads done up in blue and white handkerchief turbans, their sleeves rolled up high above the elbows and their shapely ankles plain ly showing between the ends of their skirts and their white wooden clogs. See them grasp that car as the engine stop. and shove it over the rails to where it i to be dumped for the sorters. As they do so another gang of girls takes their places to handle the next car, and others shoot the emptles back to the other side of the shaft. There is no fooling about The women work like bees with the strength of horses. They do more than the men, and they are, I am told, more conscientious in their work.

Sorting Conl. Leave the shaft and come with me to

the sorters. The coal rolls down a chute into the cars. Women stand at the side of the chute and help it onward with hoes. Girls of 14 to 20 sit further down picking the refuse and slate out of the coal with their hands. Still further on there are more turbaned, bure-armed maidens, sooty and dirty, working away as fast as their fingers can move, and in the railroad car itself, into which the coal drops, there are other women hoeing the coal this way and that, sorting the waste. All the work is done by the piece, and the girls are paid in proportion to the amount they perform. I asked as to the wages, and was told that the rate is 2 cents a basket, and that the best workers can pick about a basket and a half every hour, thus earning as much as 30 cents in their day of 12 hours.

Among the Women Miners,

And still the women miners of Belgium are far better off today than they have are far been in the past. Their condition heart came into my throat as they smiled. has been notoriously bad. For time little children were employed in the with great, bug-like bags crawling over it. Take your field glass and look at them. They are not bags. They are wothem. They are not bags. They are wolled glass and look at the first the shaft. Now women under 21 are protected to the shaft. Now women under 21 are protected to the shaft. Now working underground, There comes a hibited by law from working undergr



THREE GIRLS WERE LOADING BRICKS,

and hence those whom you see on the surface are young girls. They could get etter wages down below, and many of them will leave the surface work and go into the mines as soon as they are old

enough. a result, the surface girls are not bent and broken, and those I saw were as well developed physically as the prize golf girls of the United States. And still they were toiling like so many horses, pushing the cars this way and that. Some were lifting great lumps of coal weigh-ing from 15 to 20 pounds each, and others were doing all sorts of work which in

America would be done by men. one place a ditch was being dug and lined with brick and cement. A girl of 15 was mixing the mortar with a hoe, and a little further on at a brick pile three sturdy girls were loading bricks upon a wheelbarrow, which a fourth girl pushed upon the car when it was full. They were working hard, and the perspiration stood out in white beads upon their dusty faces.

Wages in Belgium.

I have said that the women who sort the coal earn about 30 cents a day. Some get less, but there are others who make as much as 40 cents, and in the mines

miners get 79 or 80 cents underground, and about 50 cents at the surface. Boys of 14 and 15 are paid 42 cents, and children about 26 cents and upward. Altogether, there are 124,000 eniners in Belglum, and of them all I doubt whether 10 per cent make a dollar a day.

And still the Belgian working day aver-ages from 10 to 12 hours, and the average number of working days every year is more than 300. Low wages and long h people here, and of these nine-tenths work 10, 11 or more by 11 or more hours per day. Of all the workers one-fourth make less than 49 cents a day; one-fourth from 40 to 60 cents, and another fourth from 79 to 8 cents per diem

Woman's Work and Wages. Women are everywhere paid less than the men, and about half of the female workers make less than 20 cents a day, while in the whole country of more than

295 women get as much as 80 cents a day. Among the best-paid women here are those who work underground in the mines. The work is hard and degrading. It unsexes those who are thus working away day after day in the semi-darkness, and in time makes them animals. In old age they are little better than the horses

6,000,000, half of whom are women, only

which stay in the mines until they die Some of the horses will live from 10 to 20 years after going down underground, but they become perfectly blind at the end of three years.

How the Miners Live.

I have been interested in the life of the people. Every great mine has its dwellinghouses about it, a collection of little two story bricks built together in blocks, Each house has five rooms, two on the ground floor, two above and a little attic under the roof. The families are large, and the average number of children is six or The miners are miserably poor Nearly every one pays a rent of \$19 or \$20 a year for his home, but only the fewest save money. The people are great drink In this region every third house is a saloon, and the most of the wages go for drinks. The people drink alcohol, and women drink as well as the men. Belgium spends more than eight times and its annual drink bill is about \$5 per head, or \$35 per family. I am surprised at the number of saloons. They are known as "estaminets," and you see them every-where. There is hardly a block in the city without one or more, and they are scattered along the country roads. are more than 200,000 saloons in Belgium, they are paid as high as 46 cents. Men and donkeys which work with them and and it is said that one person in every

urday and lay off over Monday. Similar enditions prevail in England, where drunkenness is, if anything, worse than

seiling intoxicating drinks.

There are a number of workingmen's associations in Beigium. The men have their trades unions and their co-operative societies. There is one kind of organization, known as "Mutualities," which has over 50,000 members. There are societies for mutual help so formed that the members support each other in times of trou-

ble, providing medical attendance and

other such things. ny of the societies are protected by the Government, and to some the state gives subsidies, increasing their funds for dical attendance and support in time of sickness. The government now has pensions for such workingmen of over 65 who need them, and also associations which insure the lives of workingmen at

abor which has to do with matters relating to workingmen, and there is also what is known as the superior council of labor, organized to consider labor interests and prepare measures regulating them for pre-sentation to Parliament. This council is composed of 16 workmen, 16 manufactur ers and 16 scientists. It is said to be of great value to labor interests.

The governments are becoming more and more paternal in many of the European countries. They are taking the place of a father to the people and trying to benefit them in a variety of ways. In Belgium the state has erected dwellings for workingmen in certain localities, and on easy terms. It is helping the farming interests by schools of agriculture, and through its railroad service is reducing freights and facilitating the marketing. I have epoken of the postal arrangements of Switzerland and France, whereby the farmer can express his goods to consumers through the postoffices. Here in Belgium the government has put on fast trains for England for the shipment of dairy prod-ucts. It facilitates trade and it seems to he on the outlook to help the producing

I am surprised at the enormous manu facturing industry of Belgium. The country is a very beehive of work. It has about 6,000,000 people, and fully 750.00 of them are at work making something to sell. The factories are as thick as in the black country of England, and the land teems with house industry. are about 25,000 workshops which employ on the average only three hands each and an enormous amount of cotton and

linen cloth is woven at home.

On the Eastern edge of the Belgian coal field is Liege, which, has 175,000 peo ple, and which was built up out of manu-factures of iron. It is the Sheffield of the country, making vast quantities of firearms for home use and export. It has 20,000 workmen, who make nothing but guns, and most of these work at their own homes. The manufacturer furnishes the material and the workmen take it home and make the different parts of a One man may be employed upon locks, another on barrels, getting from 2 to 3 cents for his work on each gun. It is only recently that much machinery has been introduced and this is used only

Parts of guns are also made for export. We get many of our steel gur barrels from Liege, and also the Damasi gun barrels, which are made nowhere else in the world. The secret of making the and 25.

30 of the whole population is employed in | Damask barrels is carefully guarded, being handed down from father to son. Only Many of the workmen get drunk on Satthe most skilled of the workmen tan make these barrels. The ordinary roughbored barrels are turned out in great quantities; they cost from 60 to 70 cents aplece, when ready for export.

When the United States has finally settled its mining troubles our exporters can study the Belgian market with profit. This country imports something like 2,000,-000 tons of coal a year, the most of it coming from France, Germany and England, and necessitating comparatively heavy freight charges. There are six lines of steamers salling between Antwerp and the United States, and American coal should be landed there at low rates. The freight rates of the present are based upon the grain rates, and are consequently high

The Beigium coal will not compare with the best grades of our coal. The anthra-cite here has not the hardness nor brilliancy of the Pennsylvania product, and it is lighter in weight. Some of the Bel-gian bituminous coal has 75 per cent slack, so that it is used for the making of briquettes rather than for export.

Some of the Belgium mines have given

out, and, as the coal area is limited, the country will eventually have to import more than it does now. Not only here, but in all parts of Europe, there should be a market for American coal, and if carefully nursed a business can be built up which will materially increase the balance of trade, which is already in our favor FRANK G. CARPENTER.

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The Patter of the Rain,

Nothing else can soothe my senses Into slumber sound and deep; Nothing else can calm my spirits Into deep and dreamless sleep; Nothing else can soothe my being Bright with Dreamland's warp and woof, Like the patter of the raind Like the rain upon the roof.

Or the cares that oft depress; Nothing else can soothe my sorrows To complete forgetfulness Nothing else wields half the magic-Gainst the ills of life a proof-Of the ratter of the raindrops, Of the rain upon the roof.

Ian Buchanan Roseburg, Or., December, 1962.

While at Portland here we listen To the patter of the rain, And for days and weeks together All pray for a change in vain; Pray that one bright ray of sunshine Through a rifted cloud will glare And give us one more assura-That the sun is still "up there."

'Nothing," writes a bard out southward. Nothing else wields half the magic Of the rain upon the roof." Then let's send him a kind greeting And all pledge him "the giad hand" If he'll run up here and show us How much "magte" he can stand

OLD MAN OUT OF A JOB. The Lincoln Conspiracy.

On what days were the chapters of the Lincoln conspiracy published in The Ore-gonian? I think I have saved all of them, but I wish to be sure. MRS. R. R.

December 7, 8, 10, 12, 13, 15, 19, 20, 21, 24