

A LABORING MAN'S FRIEND.

Sketch of the Interesting Career of Grand Master Workman Powderly.

It serves them right; they should organize." These words, writes a Scranton, Pa., correspondent of *The New York World*, were often on the lips of Terence Powderly, the father of the present general master workman of the Knights of Labor, Terence Vincent Powderly. When gathered with his children around the family hearthstone he would talk to them of the importance of laboring men working together for a common cause. Holding up a bundle of sticks he would exclaim: "See, how easy it is to break these one by one, and how difficult when all together." His youngest son, Terence Vincent, was especially impressed with these teachings, and his father often said: "Terry will make his mark some day."

Mr. Powderly's father came to this country in 1826. He was then about twenty-five years old. He was a powerful man, fully six feet tall, with a strong constitution. He married before he left Ireland, and his first son was born on the ship coming up the St. Lawrence. He landed where the present town of Ogdensburg, N. Y., stands to-day. Two years were spent in Ogdensburg, and then he started further south. He stopped at Utica for a few months and then continued his journey, arriving at Carbondale, his future home, early in 1829. In those days the coal was obtained by stripping the earth off and hewing the coal out with picks. As the process of mining advanced, Mr. Powderly became a mine boss, and he also opened a small store, which was managed by his wife. If he had been a little less careful he might have become one of the richest men in Pennsylvania. A farm of over four hundred acres was offered to him for about \$600. This farm contained some of the largest deposits of coal in the state. Its yield has amounted to a great many hundred thousand dollars and still seems inexhaustible. Mr. Powderly, however, had a horror of going into debt, and he refused his opportunity. He thus lived and died a poor man.

Terence V. was the youngest son in the family of twelve children, several of whom are now living. Three brothers are living at Carbondale and one on a farm in Sullivan county. Joseph, one of the elder brothers, has just been appointed post-master at Carbondale.

Grand Master Workman Powderly was born on January 22, 1849. His studies were confined to reading, writing, arithmetic and geography. At 13 he was apprenticed to a machinist. He was not a model boy in the sense of his never getting into mischief, although he generally had his lessons. The schoolmaster, Mr. Bernard McTighe, maintained discipline, and he had occasion one day to punish young Powderly severely. McTighe, who was a small man, passed the place where Mr. Powderly was at work on his way to school and Mr. Powderly called out to him and said:

"I hear you thrashed my boy yesterday."

"Yes," was the reply, "I thought it was necessary."

"What did he do?"

After the schoolmaster explained, Mr. Powderly said: "You did perfectly right."

Young Powderly's studies did not end with his apprenticeship to the machinist trade. His was a naturally thoughtful, inquiring mind, and his evenings were passed in reading. He earned enough money to buy a copy of Shakespeare's works, and was very fond of his achievement.

When he first entered the machine shop Powderly was set to work boring out holes in car wheels. Notwithstanding his reading he paid close attention to his work and was advanced from time to time until he became master of the trade.

In 1867 Miss Hannah Devers, his schoolmate and sweetheart, left Carbondale with her parents for Scranton. "My brother," said Mr. Powderly's youngest sister, at Carbondale, "is not very much of a ladies' man. Oh, no, he is not a woman-hater by any means," she added, smiling, "but he is not fond of society."

Mr. Powderly left Carbondale in 1869. Two years before he joined the Knights of Labor. The order was then in its infancy in Carbondale, but soon gained quite a little local celebrity by the intelligent manner in which he discussed the future of the organization. On arriving in Scranton, Mr. Powderly entered the machine shops of the Delaware, Lackawanna and Western Railroad company. He received \$2.50 a day, spent his money carefully, neither smoked nor drank, and became one of the most trusted employes about the shops. "Mr. Powderly was a quiet man in many ways," said Mr. Gurrill to-day. "He could talk well enough, and no one ever saw him standing around the street corners, and I never saw him stop to talk with anyone on the street for more than a minute until after he became candidate for mayor. After he became mayor I was the only man he left on the old police force of the city. Mr. Powderly wanted it reorganized and better men appointed."

In 1874 Mr. Powderly married his Carbondale sweetheart. By this time he had become one of the leaders in the local labor committee of Scranton and

was attracting attention to himself. He became a member of the Columbia Literary society, where he made his first reputation as a speaker. He also took a course at a commercial college. After the term Mr. Powderly resumed his studies at home. He formed the personal acquaintance in 1876 of Uriah Stephens, who was then at the head of the Knights of Labor. He used his influence in Mr. Powderly's favor, and he was made the head of the labor organization in Scranton. During the strikes of 1877 he urged peace and moderation, and his counsel at that time, given in a quiet way, probably saved thousands of dollars' worth of property in Scranton.

Following the riots the labor organization nominated a full county ticket at the fall election. Mr. Powderly was made a member of the county committee. People endeavored to ridicule them out of the contest, but the ticket was elected by a large majority. The following spring Mr. Powderly was nominated by the labor party for mayor of Scranton, and he was elected. The republican press charged Powderly with being the candidate of the Molly Maguires, and predicted, in the event of his election, that the city would be turned over to that lawless gang of ruffians, but it only served to arouse the sympathy of the people in his behalf. The people of Carbondale indorsed him strongly. Mr. Powderly made a most excellent and conservative mayor. Two years later, when he was again nominated by the labor party for mayor, his predecessor, McKune, came all the way from Canada to take a hand in working for his election, and the next time after that the democrats indorsed his nomination. He could have been elected again but he declined.

Mr. Powderly is now entering on his seventh year as general master workman of the Knights of Labor. Mr. Stephens died in 1879, and Mr. Powderly, who held the position next in power, that of general worthy foreman, became his successor. During his terms of office the Knights of Labor have grown from a comparatively insignificant gathering into an organization of the greatest power and importance, with a membership reaching far up in the neighborhood of the millions.

Mr. Powderly's mother died about ten years ago. Some idea of the size and extent of the family can be learned from the fact that sixty children and grandchildren were gathered at her funeral. Mr. Powderly, however, has no children. His father died during his first term as mayor. Most of the Scranton city officials went to Carbondale to attend the funeral.

In spite of all his opportunities Mr. Powderly is still a poor man. He lives in a very modest cottage on the outskirts of Scranton, and it is doubtful if the house, lot, and furniture would bring more than \$500 if put up for sale. The salary of his position is only \$1,000 a year, but his traveling expenses are paid by the organization. Mr. Powderly does not appear to be changed by his advancement. He has the same kindly greeting for his friends as when he was an ordinary machinist. He is not without ambition, but it is believed to be confined entirely to the cause which he represents. He has been urged to accept the nomination for congress in this district, and in his case it would be equivalent to an election, but he has declined peremptorily.

His whole life has been consecrated to the cause which he represents. If it does not go out in the struggle he is now making against disease a great future unfolds itself before him.

Coffin Factories.

There are thirty-four coffin factories in the United States, and they "run out an average of 150 coffins and caskets a day." The largest factory is in Cincinnati; it covers acres of ground and its shop facilities are so great that it manufactures everything necessary to a complete funeral, except corpses. Anything from a tack up to a hearse can be seen in process of manufacture on their premises. Next to Cincinnati, Chicago has the largest coffin factories. The biggest coffin kept in stock is six feet nine inches in length and has an opening of twenty-eight or twenty-nine inches. The average opening is only eighteen or nineteen inches, and the average long coffin is six feet four inches. The longest coffin turned out by any factory is a nine-footer, in which the dignitaries of the Catholic Church are buried. Such a coffin was used at the burial of Cardinal McCloskey, the extra length being required for his crown which he wore in death. About twenty-four hours were taken to put this coffin together, but any ordinary coffin, that is, a coffin of extra large size, no matter what its cost or the character of the trimmings or upholstery, can be put together from the rough boards in three hours at the utmost.—*Cincinnati Commercial Gazette*.

The Butting Brother and His Horse.

There is a colored preacher who lives near Jasper, Ga., that rules his horse by butting him. If the horse is fractious or stubborn he takes the kinks out by deliberately seizing it by the ears and butting it squarely in the forehead until it falls on its knees. This is generally done at the second or third butt, when the old parson steps behind and drives ahead again.—*Conyers (Ga.) South*.

THE BREWING TRADE.

History of Beer—Enormous Proportions of the Trade.

During the last general election the liquor trade received considerable attention from newspaper men and politicians, and since then the feverish activity of revivalists and temperance people has kept it constantly before the public. The brewers in particular have attracted a great deal of notice, and the clippings from the New York papers alone for the last twelve months would make a good-sized volume, but it would read more like fairy tales than facts to those who understand the subject. The official trade journals wriggle themselves in a perspiration in every issue over the wicked stories of the temperance cranks and the callousness of the public. The brewers certainly are very often misrepresented, and of their general character and business methods most people are entirely ignorant.

The history of beer in this country is very interesting. The pioneers in the business were William Penn and Jacobus. Jacobus built his brewery in 1644, on what is now the corner of Pearl street and Old slip, where he also established a beer garden. He afterward became the first burgomaster, and his beer and justice gave equal satisfaction to the citizens of New Amsterdam. Penn's brewery was at Pennsburg, Bucks county, Pa., where the excellence of his brew was considered by no means the least of his virtues. A hundred years that doughty soldier Gen. Israel Putnam was running a brewery and tavern at Brooklyn, Conn.

The manufacture of lager beer in America only dates back about forty years, but it has gone ahead and spread itself like the mustard seed in the parable. There are now about 2,200 brewers in this country, and they sold last year over 19,000,000 barrels of malt liquors. Of this New York and Brooklyn alone contributed near a quarter. The next largest producers are Milwaukee, St. Louis, Cincinnati, Chicago, Boston, and Newark, in the order named. An estimate of the capital invested in the trade would probably reach at least \$150,000,000. Ninety-five per cent. of the brewers are Germans, and a more enterprising and public spirited class of men it would be very hard to find.

The twenty-fifth annual convention of the United States Brewing association, which was held in this city last year, served to remind New Yorkers what a powerful body of men the brewers are. Their influence in politics is necessarily very great, and they know how to turn it to the best account. Besides this association there are some twenty subsidiary organizations throughout the country, of which the United States Brewers' and Maisters' association is the best known, the election of Mr. Cook, a Rochester brewer, as secretary of state of New York having been largely the result of its efforts.

The Association of the United Lager Beer Brewers of New York city and vicinity confines itself strictly to trade affairs, such as regulating the credit system with saloon-keepers. The saloon-keepers, as a rule, are men of small capital, but as their business is for spot cash, they ought to be able to pay their bills every week. Under the rules of this association a brewer must be satisfied that a new customer has paid his debts to other brewers before supplying him with beer. Before this rule was made \$100 was the maximum credit a brewer could safely give, whereas now he can give credit to four times that amount with comparatively little risk. Unfortunately the association has not been able to regulate prices, and competition is so intensely keen that the market is practically demoralized. In the early history of this industry a well-established brewer considered his name as his principal stock in trade, but the business nowadays is entirely in the hands of collectors, to whose caprice the brewers must submit. The trouble is that the great number of new breweries which have sprung up in and around New York during the last few years, and the extensive growth of the old establishments, have not been met by a sufficient increase in the consumption of beer. The expectation of a large increase in the demand have been considerably checked by the general depression in trade, and there are probably few local breweries working up to anything like their full capacity. Consequently, the brewers have to tax all their resources to retain their trade, and they offer so many inducements that their margin for profit is reduced to very narrow limits. The regular price of lager beer is \$8 a barrel, but the majority of the brewers have adopted a sliding scale of discounts, varying from 5 to 25 per cent, making the price equal to \$6 a barrel. Besides this they have gone into the way of giving their customers ice-boxes to keep their beer in, putting in plate glass windows, fitting up their bars, etc., and the man who makes the most presents gets the trade. The percentage of profit in the business is much less than is generally supposed at the best of times, and these and other items eat into a brewer's earnings enormously. The retailers are the men who make the big money. They buy their beer for \$6 a barrel and squeeze five hundred glasses out of it, which at 5 cents a glass amounts to \$25.

The only wonder is that this competition among the brewers has not been at the expense of the quality of their beer, which is better to-day than it ever was.

An attempt was recently made by some of the larger brewers of New York and vicinity to form a pool similar to those existing in Rochester and Milwaukee, the object of which was to regulate prices and correct the other abuses we have mentioned. The proposition was to form a money pool, the members pledging themselves to sell only at a fixed price, allowing no discounts and offering no "illegitimate" inducements in order to make new customers; in short, to retain their own trade at a fair profit, and interfere with each other as little as possible. Any infringement of the rules was to be visited by a money penalty, to insure the collection of which the members would be required to deposit a certain sum with the pool on entering. The project fell through, however, and it is hardly likely that such an attempt will be made again.

While the ale trade is subject to the same excessive competition, it has not outgrown itself so greatly. Ale brewers had a severe setback some years ago because of the deterioration in the quality of the brew, but they realized their mistake before it was altogether too late, and have now more than recovered their lost ground. Ordinary present use ale sells for \$12 a hoghead, equal to two barrels. Ale costs less to make than lager, so this price is proportionately greater.

Some of the New York brewers have tried to introduce the English system of controlling their interest in a saloon by taking a mortgage on it. Every week from twenty to forty chattel mortgages to brewers are recorded on saloon fixtures. The system has only been partly successful on account of the ease with which a mortgage can be changed here.

The best-paying line of the brewing business is in exporting and shipping, of which the New York brewers control a large share. In Cuba, Mexico, the West Indies, and elsewhere, lager beer is crowding out English ale. Until recently New York and western brewers found a valuable market in the south, but since the invention of ice-machines new breweries have been built in all the chief centers of the southern states, and outside brewers have been forced to find other outlets for their surplus stock.

The competition in other large cities is just as keen as in New York, and the trade is in much the same condition everywhere. Fortunately brewing materials are now very cheap, hops in particular being 5 cents below the cost of production. Some brewers go to the length of saying that the present struggle can only end in the "survival of the fittest," and the trade generally is disposed to await developments before further increasing its facilities. At the same time it is universally admitted that the brewing trade of the United States is still in its infancy, and that eventually the biggest breweries and the best beer will be found on this side of the Atlantic.—*New York Star*.

Celestial Shovel-Makers.

"You may say," said a leading front street merchant to a reporter, "that the American hardware trade is flourishing like a green bay tree. The value of what is strictly known as hardware in this country last year amounted to nearly \$60,000,000 of which nearly half was made in Connecticut. If you include small firearms, agricultural implements, cut-nails, and ornamental iron-work, which I consider hardware, though many do not, the total value of the American production will reach \$100,000,000. English, French, and German manufacturers send us about \$2,000,000 worth of hardware yearly. We have, however, lost one source of revenue, and it makes a funny story. The Chinese have got ahead of us. Up to last year we had a monopoly of supplying the Chinese with iron shovels. Owing to our facilities for transportation we could undersell our English brethren. Now the Chinese are making their own shovels and underselling us. The manufacture is carried on at a place called Chefoo, near Shanghai, and hundreds of men and boys are engaged in the business. What do you think the Chinese make the shovels from? Old boiler tubes are cut into short cylinders just the length of the shovel, ripped open, heated, flattened out, and hammered into shape. The shovels are taken into the interior of the country on the backs of mules, and our advices state that nearly every Chinese cottager within a radius of from two to three hundred miles around Shanghai is supplied with one. The Chinese makers sell their shovels at from 25 to 40 cents each, according to size and quality. However, the supply of old boiler tubes may become exhausted, and then we Yankees will have a clear corner on the Celestial shovel-makers."—*New York Mail and Express*.

The Fireman's Story.

"Where have you been?" asked the foreman of a Western volunteer fire department of a member who arrived soon after the fire had been extinguished. "Been (hic) workin'." "Been working? What kind of work have you been doing?" "Been (hic) to the drug (hic) store 't get some chemicals (hic) for the engine."—*New York Graphic*.

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