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**NEWS OF THE LABOR WORLD**

**Pittsburg, Pa.**—The new miners are machines. One of the most notable features presented by the statistics of bituminous coal production during the past year or two is the increase in the use of machines and in the quantity of machine mined coal. In 1889 the percentage of machine mined tonnage was 23; in 1906, 35.1. In the number of machines in use and in the amount of machine tonnage as in the total production of coal, Pennsylvania stands far in the lead with 45 per cent. of the number of machines and 45.6 per cent. of the machine mined coal. West Virginia stands second, Illinois, Kentucky and Indiana rank next. These states contribute over 90 per cent. of the total machine mined coal.

**Escanaba, Mich.**—Following the announcement of a further cut in wages 25 experienced machinists employed in the Northwestern shops here struck. Northwestern officials reduced the working time of all the shop men from ten hours to eight hours and orders were issued reducing the working time of shop employees to four days a week. The first reduction was accepted without question, but the second resulted in a walkout. It is claimed that orders have been issued to reduce the company's pay roll in the peninsula division 35 per cent.

**New York.**—On behalf of the Building Trades Employers' association an official statement was made of present conditions in this city and the intentions of the employers. Not for many years have there been so many men idle in the building industry as now, says the statement. The prevailing sentiment among the members of the association is not for reducing wages in the trades whose agreements expire at the end of December, but to exercise the privilege of selecting the best mechanic for any work they have in hand.

**Reading, Pa.**—Employees at the locomotive shop of the Reading company, who have been working 50 hours a week, will work 45 hours, or five days of nine hours. A suspension of at least five per cent. of the force of employees will be made in the different departments. The employees at the car shops will work 47 1/2 hours, with a half holiday on Saturdays. Seven hundred men in the roadway department of the Reading system were laid off. The remainder of the force will be put on nine hours a day.

**New York.**—Returns made to the state bureau of labor statistics for September show that the conditions of employment during the first half of the year were not so favorable as those of 1906, but better than those of 1905. There were more disputes between employers and employees up to the end of the second quarter of the year than for the last five years.

**Lexington, Ky.**—The suspension of light work on Thomas F. Ryan's South & Western railroad, the great new trunk line from the southwestern Kentucky coal fields to the Atlantic coast, has left 3,000 men idle. A telephone message received here states that the contractors are reducing wages, and fully a thousand more men have quit on that account.

**Harrisburg, Pa.**—It was announced by the Pennsylvania Railroad company that all shop forces here will be put on an eight-hour day. There will also be a large reduction of freight crews shortly, and a number of yard crews have been laid off.

**Norfolk, Va.**—The American Federation of Labor, with but few dissenting votes, placed itself on record as favoring a system of government postal savings banks and unanimously endorsed an appeal by the Porto Rican delegates to President Roosevelt and congress for reforms in that insular possession, with but one amendment, accepted by the Porto Ricans, calling for an immediate territorial form of government for Porto Rico.

**Washington.**—Of the 303 occupations followed by male bread winners all but nine have been adopted by one or more women. No women are reported as United States soldiers, sailors or marines, as members of city fire departments, as telegraph or telephone linemen, as apprentices or helpers to roofers and slaters, or as helpers to steam boiler makers or to brass workers.

**New York.**—A canvass of the situation reveals that 30,000 skilled workmen in the building trades are idle in New York. In 1903 and 1904, 60,000 men in these lines were working overtime, and work was accumulated ahead, waiting for men. To-day less than half of these have regular work.

**St. Louis.**—An effort is being made in Missouri to obtain an appropriation of \$50,000 for the establishment of a steel plant at Jefferson City, to be operated by prison labor. It is designed that this plant shall turn out shapes demanded by the counties for bridge building and other improvements.

**London, Eng.**—Trouble has been brewing in the boot and shoe trade of England over the question of a minimum wage. The men demand 32 shillings a week, and for the females 21 shillings a week. The employers, it is said, are inclined to favor the former, but not the latter.

**Philadelphia.**—An unfounded rumor that the Midvale Steel company would shut down its extensive plant was going the rounds of the financial district. Inquiries developed the information that not only had some over-zealous calamity howler run short of material and drawn on his imagination for what he lacked in facts, but that Midvale would be compelled to increase its force of thousands of workmen in the course of a month or so.

**Pittsburg, Pa.**—Notices at the local mills of the Spang & Chalfant company announced a reduction in wages of puddlers to five dollars a ton. The mill will be temporarily closed, throwing 600 men out. The H. C. Frick company plants at Connellsville laid off all of its shipping clerks. Many of the ovens have been banked. The plant of the Interstate Steel company at Breckenridge has closed. Two hundred and fifty men are affected.

**South Bethlehem, Pa.**—Officials denied the rumor that the Bethlehem Steel company was about to discharge several thousand men. The recent completion of the new Saucon plant necessitates the discharge of several hundred laborers, and in some departments there has been a reduction of forces for economical reasons, but the employment bureau is still open and any good mechanic will be given work.

**Chicago.**—Forty-nine railway systems in the west and middle west, many of them operating from Chicago, have made large reductions in the number of employees in the mechanical, construction and maintenance of way departments during the past few days. Between 25,000 and 30,000 have been laid off. No great reduction in the train service so far has been ordered.

**Indianapolis.**—Many of the labor union publications of the country have editorials in regard to John Mitchell, president of the United Mine Workers of America, in which they speak highly of the ability of Mr. Mitchell and express the hope that he will soon be able to resume his position as the head of the miners. The editorials show the widespread popularity of the man.

**San Francisco.**—According to information received from New Castle, N. S. W., the effect of the great strike of coal miners there is felt throughout Australia. Miners, railroad men and dock men are out in sympathy with the strikers, and all vessels bound for ports of the world which had put into New Castle to load coal are held up in the harbor.

**London, Eng.**—An international agreement forbidding night work in factories by women has been signed by England, France, Germany, Austria, Italy, Denmark, Spain, Belgium, Portugal, Sweden and Switzerland. It will be put in practice in December, 1910.

**Boston.**—Twenty-five thousand children between 14 and 16 years of age in the state of Massachusetts are not at school, was the statement in the caption of the charts made from the report of the commission for the industrial exhibit in Boston.

**Omaha, Neb.**—Six hundred thousand nickels in a bunch were turned loose in Omaha when the Omaha Street Railway company disbursed \$30,000 worth of the five-cent pieces in meeting the monthly pay roll of the concern.

**Norfolk, Va.**—By a vote of 154 to 50 the American Federation of Labor refused to place itself on record as favoring the government ownership of railroads and mines. The opponents took the grounds that government ownership of mines and railroads would prevent all strikes, no matter how peaceably they might be conducted, and that with a federal government opposed to labor, it might prove a death blow.

**Cleveland, O.**—The American Shipbuilding company laid off 1,000 men at the yards in Lorain and the plant will be closed. In the local yards a number of men were laid off. In the yards at Bay City, Mich., 400 men were laid off and the yards will be closed indefinitely. The money stringency is given as the cause of the curtailment.

**New York.**—General Superintendent Brooks, of the Western Union Telegraph company, said that there had been no change in the standard of operators' wages paid by the company and that the report from Mobile, Ala., to the effect that a reduction of ten per cent. was to be made was without foundation.

**Ottawa, Can.**—The experiment of recruiting skilled labor in England for Canadian factories has now been tried for seven months, and the committee of the Canadian Manufacturers' association, which is responsible for the labor bureau in London, is abundantly satisfied with the experiment so far as it has gone.

**Easton, Pa.**—The Freemansburg plant of the American Novelty company was closed. It will remain idle until after the first of next year. The company owns 32 plants throughout the United States. All will be affected by the suspension there.

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