

business. But they are still doing business.

The accused iron workers have been charged with the crime of having destroyed the Times Building and the lives of twenty-one people. Months after the tragedy, with a grotesque and sensational setting, arrests have been made, and the columns of the press have been bulging with assertions of what is to follow, with the evident intent and studied purpose of inflaming the public mind to the point where the reprehensible acts of detectives and their allies may be lost sight of.

No good citizen, be he a member of a labor organization or not, desires crime to go unpunished. If the men charged with this terrible catastrophe be proven guilty then punishment should be inflicted.

To the minds of labor men experienced in the struggle for the right there is a conspiracy interminable in its ramifications, and more dangerous than is generally believed. Organized labor's sphere of influence has rapidly and potentially increased in the past half decade, and in this land of dollars the captains of industry realize that the men of labor are becoming an ever increasing force for the amelioration of all forms of abuses against humanity. With the steady advance of this humanizing influence greed and avarice must recede and more equitable relations established. Organized labor is inured to hardship, the justice of its creed is unquestionable and its courage undaunted. The men of labor protest that special innovations be inaugurated in an effort to cast odium upon it, but it is willing and every ready to meet in the open every antagonist, with hope and faith firmly imbedded that justice will eventually prevail.

RAILWAY MAIL CARS.

First Law for the Protection of Mail Clerks Will Become Effective In About Sixty Days.

Two legislative acts relating to the mail cars in use by the railways will become operative next July and on July 1, 1916. The first law going into effect provides that after July 1, this year, the government will not accept or pay for the use of wooden railway mail cars used between steel cars, or between a locomotive and a steel car. The other act, which in effect will compel the use of steel mail cars on all main lines, provides that after July 1, 1916, the railway companies shall not be allowed to use wooden mail cars in trains in which a majority of the cars is composed of steel. The railway mail clerks have for years made vigorous protests to the government against the use of wooden cars. They have insisted that the wooden cars were the most dangerous in the trains, the balance of the train usually being made up of steel cars, the result being that in any wreck the mail cars were splintered and their occupants almost inevitably killed or wounded.

None to Do the Chores.

More than four million people are estimated to attend moving picture shows in the United States every day. No wonder it is getting so hard to find somebody willing to do the chores.

UNION RECOGNITION.

The demand for recognition is one which a union cannot compromise if it is to be anything more than a society for the exchange of individual commiseration. Concessions made to individuals are easily withdrawn after strikers return to work and are restored to a pacific mood. Gradually the men find themselves being discharged, always for "cause," but actually as a punishment for having struck and as means of substituting other men willing to work for wages and under conditions which provoked the strike. Thus the price offered for the sacrifice of the union principle often, if not in a majority of cases, turns out to be dead sea fruit.—Dallas News.

LIABILITY PROBLEM.

Provisions of the Law Enacted in New Jersey.

In the course of a lecture on "New Liability Laws" in New York city Edgar M. Atkin declared that such laws were antiquated and unjust in every state of the Union except one. Then he said:

It is possible that the solution of the difficulty may be found in the senate act of the state New Jersey which recently became a law. This law is in three sections. The first part of the law states that the employee can recover compensation for injuries unless he was guilty of willful negligence and definitely abolishes the defenses that the accident was caused by a fellow servant or that the employee assumed the risk of his employment.

Section 2 of this law is based upon the draft of the late New York compensation act. It seeks to avoid the barrier of the constitution by providing that it shall be presumed that the law of compensation as therein set forth is a part of every contract of employment entered into after July 4, 1911—truly, a good day upon which to declare independence of antiquated theories of government—unless either employer or employee states in writing that he does not wish to abide by its liberal provisions. Men employed prior to that date may affirmatively signify their desire to avail themselves of its definite provisions rather than to remain subject to the uncertainties of litigation under section 1. The attitude of the employer cannot as yet be determined. He must abide by the most stringent liability law heretofore enacted, or he must pay to his injured employee varying amounts in proportion to the seriousness of the injury. Common sense will show the employee that the compensation act is the better for him to work under. The schedule of payments is complete and ranges to 50 per cent of his wages during fifteen weeks, but not to more than \$10 a week.

In case of death from injury payments to dependents run for a period of 300 weeks. The percentage of his entire wages to be paid range from 25 per cent to a widow to 60 per cent where a widow is left with five children. These payments are to be made without regard to question of negligence and can only be defeated by proof that deliberate failure to act, intoxication or recklessness caused the accident.

Strictly Union.

The Bricklayers' union of Sacramento has adopted a law by which any member who neglects or fails to attend the regular weekly meetings will be fined 25 cents, and if not paid this will be charged up as dues.

WORK WITH DEATH

Child Labor Near to Tragedy In Cotton Mills.

PERIL OF THE BACK BOYS.

Compelled to Clean Spinning Mules While Machines Are in Motion. Shop Rules That Are Meant to Be Broken.

The work of a boy in a cotton mill can't be as pleasant as a fishing trip, but it might be made just as human. There are a few laws regulating the toil of minors which are aimed toward the safety of child laborers. In "Through the Mill," in the Outlook, Al Priddy, who worked when a child in a southern manufactory, gives the following peep into child life among the spinning mules:

For the protection of minors like myself two notices were posted in the mule room and in every room in the mill. They are rules which if obeyed would have reduced the dangers of my mill work. The notices read:

The cleaning of machinery while it is in motion is positively forbidden.

All minors are hereby prohibited from working during the regular stopping hours.

If I had made any effort to obey the first law I should not have retained my position. The mule spinners were working by the piece and would stop their mules only under exceptional stress. The back boy who demanded that the machinery be stopped while he oiled the spindles was deemed incapable. It was even expected of me that I should with a hand brush clean pulleys whirling hundreds of revolutions a minute at the risk of having my hand drawn over the belt. I had to clean fallers, which if taken at the wrong minute on the change was like putting one's hands between the closing teeth of some wild creature. In cleaning the front spindles or oiling them I was in constant danger of being crushed between the carriage and the iron posts, which when they met left hardly an inch of space. Alfred Skinner, a close friend of mine, did get caught one day, and his body was pinned close and was crushed badly, but not too severely to keep him from his work—at his own expense—for more than four days.

The most dangerous cleaning I had to do was the cleaning of the back wheels of the mule carriage. The carriage runs forward for about three yards on tracks. It starts from the frame and spins the cotton thread as it moves ahead at a slow pace. Then when the thread is spun the carriage darts back swiftly and gathers the thread up on the spindles. This back motion is a swift rebound, just like a rubber ball which we throw and draw back by an elastic cord. The wheels are about ten inches in diameter, and the tracks on which they run are sharp, like knives. It was dangerous enough to try to creep after these wheels while they were in motion, for the waste was always wrapping around the axles or being lumped under the wheels, and there was the added danger of not crawling back swiftly enough ahead of the rebounding carriage.

I had to creep, almost at full length, under the frame and a long steel shaft, and crawl back out of the way of the returning carriage. I had to estimate just how low to duck and be careful not to back into a post or a box which would block my retreat. Yet that was the process, and no spinner would stop his mule for me.

If I let the waste lump under the wheels it would lift the carriage out of gear and break a thousand threads.

When that occurred there were oaths from the spinner, a lecture from the second hand and all sorts of disagreeable criticisms from the hands who were called upon to piece the broken threads together. One day I had my little finger dragged on the track and the end nipped. Almost every back boy of my acquaintance had had one of his fingers either nipped or cut off altogether. Once in awhile one of them would be caught as he backed and be severely maimed.

The only consolation we got in case of these accidents was a few days' "layoff," always delightful; free treatment by the "company's butcher," as we called the surgeon, and a loss of so many days' wages.

If a boy was absolutely bent on keeping that rule in regard to the cleaning of machinery he had to leave that part of his work until the mill was stopped for dinner or do it before the mill started in the morning. This, however, was jumping from the frying pan into the fire, for it led to an infraction of the second rule. "All minors are hereby prohibited from working during the regular stopping hours."

It was absolutely impossible for me to do all my day's work in the ten and a half hours of the regular working day. I did not shirk my work nor was I lazy. Neither was I undertaking more than would bring me an average wage. My weekly pay for the four mules was \$4.50. Not only was much of the dangerous cleaning left till the noon hour or the hour before starting in the mornings, but there was always some unfinished chore ahead to be done before the mules started. In addition to all this, the spinners hired me to work for them during the stopping hours. They gave me a quarter for cleaning a mule head and so much a week for keeping their rollers in order, for helping them in piecing up whatever broken threads were found and for work at many other details which they could leave until the noon hour.

LABOR IN HISTORY.

Social Progress of America Traceable to Trade Unions.

A. M. Simons, editor of the Coming Nation and author of several treatises on American history, lectured before the Socialist Literary society in Philadelphia recently.

His subject was "The Workers In American History." He said:

"Progress in America has come almost entirely as a result of the struggle of the working class. To the working class movement of the thirties we owe more than to any other cause our common schools, our right of trial by jury, universal suffrage, abolition of imprisonment for debt and a large number of other things that are commonly supposed to have been obtained by the Revolutionary fathers, but which these fathers were quite generally opposed to.

"Since the civil war social progress has been even more distinctly traceable to working class organizations. Take any one of the things that are said to mark the advance toward democracy in government or greater enjoyment for the masses of the people and you will find that long before it was created into law or incorporated in the platforms of any of the old parties it was announced and defended for years in the councils of the workers.

"There is no power on earth that can stop this conscious movement except labor itself. Labor has fought all the battles of the past, but always fought them for some one else. Now that it is fighting for itself it is certain of victory."