

company for the past three months. He was formerly a member of the firm of Green, Woodman & Sweazey, an electric light wiring company which has its office in the Jacobson block. He had been in the employ of the telephone exchange at Omaha for at least eighteen months before coming to Denver, and was in the firm of Green, Woodman & Sweazey for over a year. He was always considered a capable and careful man, and was given district No. 5 of the company's lines for this reason, as it is in the dangerous portion owing to so many electric light wires being in it.

About a week ago he received a shock near the telephone building on Lawrence street and fell twenty to the ground.

He has a father and mother living in Hillsdale, Mich., and his father was expecting to make him a visit in a month. He also has relatives at Des Moines, Iowa, but none in Denver.—*Denver News.*

EXPERIMENT IN STATE SOCIALISM.

The curiosities of the animal and vegetable worlds in Australia bid fair to find their counterpart in interest in the political and social developments taking place in that antipodal world. We have seen already that such changes may occur without the knowledge of the outside nations. For the welding of the Australian colonies into one federated republic was completed almost before the people of Great Britain, who are most interested, were aware of it. This other change, the transformation of government in Australia into something closely approaching the ideal of the State socialists, has gone forward even more silently, and has now proceeded far enough to present the world with interesting lessons in the way of results.

In Australia in general, and especially in the colony of Victoria, the labor organizations have carried pretty nearly everything before them. Strikes have been more numerous and more formidable than in any other country. As a rule, the strikers have succeeded in their objects. The organizations have, moreover, obtained very complete control over the political authorities. These have catered to the labor vote, until the vote is practically supreme in the determination of internal affairs. We have, therefore, a community whose affairs are arranged and conducted essentially on the labor plan. The eight-hour day is practically accepted, not only in all the leading trades but by the local and colonial authorities. High wages have been secured in the same manner. Severe restrictions on the number of persons engaged in any trade are in effect; and the surplus of labor—for there must always be a surplus where such limitations are enforced—has been employed by the authorities in the construction of public works. The industrial organization of the South Sea colony is fairly established on the trade union plan. A high protective tariff secures home industries against competition from countries where longer hours and lower wages are in force. The public lands of the colonies are held mostly for the future. There is a

system of minutely detailed factory acts, which regulate the employment of labor in manufacturing industries. There is a tremendous educational machine. There are early closing acts for shops; and, in fact, everything that organized labor has asked from the State, it has received. Organized labor is the State, and it has put in operation all the least doubtful of the socialistic ideas that have been suggested elsewhere.

These facts in the case are gathered from the single review of the subject which has appeared, as far as we are aware, an admirable paper by Mr. Charles Fairfield, in a recent publication. Now as to the results of a system which is urged for adoption in this country as well as in others. And these, fortunately, are obtainable from an entirely reliable source. A large portion of the latest number of the consular reports of the United States is devoted to an elaborate report on the state of labor in Australasia, by Mr. G. W. Griffin, consul at Sydney. From this we may gather exactly what has been accomplished by this experiment in State socialism. Mr. Griffin states, to begin with, that foreign immigration has practically ceased. The labor organizations in the colonies have decided that they want no further competition, and have ceased to assist or desire an addition to their numbers. As a consequence, many industries languish from lack of skilled labor for their conduct. We come now to the question of wages. It is not open to question that the laborers of Australia secure a high rate of remuneration for a day's work restricted, in nearly all employments, to eight hours. That is one side of the subject, and the side which labor unions are able to control. Let us look at the other.

"It is the experience of American workmen in Sydney," says Mr. Griffin, "that the cost of living, in spite of its being a free port, is fully 30 per cent. more than it is in nearly all the cities of about the same size in America. Wheat and bread is about one-half dearer than in San Francisco. Tins which retail here for 30 cents each can be purchased in the United States out of season for 12 cents each. Tea and coffee are 20 per cent. cheaper in nearly all the larger cities in America than in Sydney." And so on through the list. A point to which we wish to call the especial attention of our friends who are advocating government control of railroads is that, although all the railways are owned and controlled by the government, freight rates are 100 per cent. higher than in the United States. So the high rates of wages is more than counterbalanced by high cost of living; and the workman purchases a short day's work and a high wage at the cost of increased charges on every necessary of life. He has simply followed the example of the Highlander, who proceeded to lengthen the skirt of his kilt by cutting a piece from the top and sewing it to the bottom of the garment.

Not the least significant fact in this review is the relation of the State and its finances to the socialistic regime. Where trades are bound by rigid rules, the number of persons admitted to them is restricted and non-union labor is denied the right to exist, something

must be done for the overplus of labor thus excluded. It has been provided with employment by the State. As a result, the small colony of New South Wales alone, without any war to waste capital, has accumulated a public debt of \$226,904,844. The same is true of other colonies, while even works of private enterprise, which have to be conducted by labor receiving prices artificially high, have been bonded for tremendous sums, and are compelled to operate under a scale of extravagant charges in order to pay returns on an enormous debt. The colonies are constant borrowers in the markets of Great Britain and the continent. They have not yet shown an ability to maintain themselves, on the existing economic basis, without a constant assistance from capital drawn from external sources. In short, the regime of Australasia, bordering more nearly on the socialistic than that of any other civilized country, is not on a paying basis. Income and outgo for the laborer have both increased, leaving him in about the same situation, with regard to saving, as his fellow worker in countries where wages are regulated by freedom of supply and demand; but the whole community is poorer by reason of the limitation of production, through trade union regulations, and it is kept in working order only through a steady increase of public and corporate indebtedness.

The system of financing in these colonies is both loose and reckless. Nobody knows exactly what the indebtedness is. For example, the State railways of Victoria report a great surplus on hand; investigation shows that it is obtained by carrying forward this year's expenses to the next year's accounts, and that a deficit really exists. It was at last admitted, a year ago, that the net earnings of the system for the twelvemonth was over a million dollars short of the accruing interest on bonds. Extravagant management and the prosecution of needless public works, "to give employment to labor," has increased the public indebtedness to such an extent that Australian loans cannot be floated without difficulty in England. During the last seven years the expenses of the government of Victoria have increased by 41 per cent., while the population increased 15 per cent. only. Public and corporate debts rose, in the same time, \$22,000,000 higher, while the annual exports of produce and manufactures dropped from \$12,000,000 to \$9,000,000. Small capitalists are scared away by the tyranny of the labor unions, and large ones by the increase of debt and taxation with the decline of production and exports. If a country can find prosperity along these lines, it will accomplish a feat never hitherto performed in the known world.

Meanwhile the condition of the individual laborer does not appear to be what one ought to expect in a workman's paradise. When wages are spoken as "high," it is rather by way of comparison with English wages than with those which prevail in other countries like Australia, where abundant land and opportunity, with scarcity of population, foster demand for labor. Mr. Griffin's report gives exhaustive tables of wages in the different occupa-