

against the longer continuation of the reign of whisky and its consequent damaging effects upon the morals of this city.

HENRY CLAY FRICK.

HENRY CLAY FRICK was born on a farm near West Overton, Pa., about 42 years ago. After receiving a common school education he entered a dry goods store as assistant remaining but a short time. He next became book-keeper in a distillery at Bradford. When about 21 years of age he went into the coke business, on a small scale, in company with two others, the firm being known as Frick and Co. The business expanded and became prosperous, and in 1876 Frick became sole owner, having bought out his partners. The following year he entered into partnership with two other men and gave a new impetus to his trade. In 1882 the firm of Frick & Co. owned 3,000 acres of coal land and 1,028 coke ovens. It was during this year that Andrew Carnegie became associated with Frick. There was some misunderstanding about coke, and the shrewd Carnegie noting that Frick was the coke king of Pennsylvania, entered into partnership with him in that industry.

In 1890 the Frick and Carnegie corporation owned 35,000 acres of coal lands, over 10,000 coke ovens, and forty-two of the eighty coke plants in the region. It also owned railroads, water pumping works, steam boilers, a vast system of tramways and horses and mules in hundreds. Over 11,000 men were then employed in the coke works.

In 1888, Stewart, the business partner of Andrew Carnegie in the iron trade, died. Then Frick was induced to take his place, and very soon developed into a master mind in iron as he had already done in coke. Both the industries from that time became more or less united, Frick becoming the active manager of all the works. The wealth of Frick and Carnegie combined is variously estimated at from seventy to one hundred millions of dollars.

Fifteen or twenty years ago all the hands with few exceptions employed in coke works were native-born Americans. In time a strong sprinkling of English, Welsh, Scotch and Irish crept in. Frick was always introducing some reform in wages. He kept Pinkerton detectives employed as laborers among the men, consequently he always knew what movements were in progress. In 1886 came the great strike by which the English-speaking laborers were driven out of the region, and thousands of Slavs, Huns and Bohemians introduced. Matters went on smoothly until last year when the Connellsville coke strike took place, in which were involved 15,000 workers. During that strike over a dozen persons were killed and many times more wounded. By the aid of the Pinkertons the men of 1886 were all ousted and Italians, negroes and others introduced. Mr. Frick is, whether justly or otherwise, one of the most unpopular employers of labor in this country.

THE world's railways are worth \$30,000,000,000.

THE READING COAL COMBINE.

ABOUT six months ago considerable excitement was occasioned by what was known as the Reading Railroad Coal Combine. This was an association formed of roads interested in the anthracite coal industry. It might more properly be denominated a trust, but the legal advisers of the combination carefully avoided using any term of that character. It was simply referred to as an agreement to cheapen operation, and consequently to give the public better terms. But shortly after the completion of the trust coal went up, and it has been creeping in the same direction ever since. This combination controls the anthracite output of the whole coal mining region, and the scope in the way of distribution extends from Buffalo and New York and from Lake Champlain to the Virginias.

About ten days ago the House of Representatives at Washington passed a resolution authorizing its Interstate Commerce Committee to investigate whether "the alleged combinations of the Philadelphia & Reading Railroad Company, the Lehigh Valley Railroad Company, the Central of New Jersey, and the Port Reading Railroad Company, or any combination between any of these roads and any other roads or canals or producers of coal, for any illegal or improper purpose, exist, and, if so, what is the effect on prices and upon commerce between the States."

The committee is authorized to sit during the recess of Congress at such places as may suit its convenience best. It is also authorized to subpoena witnesses and compel their attendance. In addition to a full report of the facts, the committee is instructed to make suggestions and recommendations, provided it is shown that the trust or combine is an injury to the people.

THE STREET SPRINKLING TAX.

THERE is much dissatisfaction among property owners over the street sprinkling tax. Many of them have been served with a notice that they have been assessed at the rate of seven cents per foot frontage. This counts both ways on corner lots. The service has always been miserable since the "Liberals" let the contract to a non-resident firm and rejected all local bids. But of that we do not wish now to make particular mention. The Council has recently created a new sprinkling district, and placed the tax, if we remember rightly, at only four cents per foot frontage.

In addition to this discrimination between districts, which, however, may be capable of satisfactory explanation, there is also discrimination in the supply. In one portion of District No. 1, the streets are sprinkled or flooded at least four times a day, in other parts of the same district only twice a day. Valuable property in the business locality which is benefited to a far greater degree than that in remote places, pays no more than the latter, and vacant or almost vacant lots have to pay very large sums against small and insignificant amounts paid by valuable business houses.

More than that. It is believed that the City Council has no legitimate authority to levy a special street sprinkling tax at all. It is a public service for a public necessity, to come out of the general funds obtained by general taxation. Investigation of the charter, with all its amendments, fails to disclose any definite bestowal of power on the Council to levy such a tax.

The consequence is that a number of aggrieved taxpayers have agreed to unite and resist the collection of this unequal, and as believed, illegal imposition. An injunction will be applied for, and those who unite in the application will be safe in not paying the tax until a judicial decision is reached. If the great body of the property owners take part in the suit, it will cost them but a mere trifle, and great confidence is expressed that the tax will be declared unlawful. In our special notice column will be found something of interest to all who desire to escape this burden, and prompt response to it on their part is necessary.

INTOXICATED CONGRESSMEN.

THE charge made in a campaign pamphlet, by Mr. Watson of Georgia, that some Members of Congress attend to public business and make speeches on important subjects while intoxicated, and that drunken members reel through the aisles of the House, needs the investigation it is to have by a congressional committee. Though made for a partisan purpose we fear there is too much truth at the back of it. No one familiar with affairs at the capital can deny, to himself, that evidences of indulgence in the intoxicating cup are often afforded in the halls of Congress and that such scenes are disgusting to sober citizens.

As to whether this vile habit is characteristic of members of one party only, there may be a difference of opinion. There is nothing, however, in the principles of either party which gives license to such conduct. And we think the anger occasioned by Mr. Watson's philippic is more over the partisan color he has given to his accusation than the disagreeable fact itself.

It is bad enough when men entrusted with the grave duty of legislating for the nation spend their "off" time in carousing and deep potations. But when they come to their posts of duty bleary-eyed and fuddled, thick of speech and thicker of mind, or unduly excited and stimulated by draughts of fiery liquor, the evil is worse in itself and of much graver consequence to the country. A few examples made to correct this evil would be in order. And the people who wield the ballot should see to it that men who are slaves to the habit of drink are not permitted to disgrace them and the country by exposing their folly in the eyes of the world.

A. TRICK OF THE TRADE.

A SAMPLE of the methods of the "Liberal" boss was given on Friday in the case of E. H. Parsons against C. C. Godwin and Wm. Nelson for criminal libel. The action was taken before