

ground that it abridged the personal rights of the citizen, thus conflicting with the fundamental law.

Though the "truck-store" system has been regulated long since in England by Parliament, yet cases still crop up which occasion litigation. There is one in progress at present in London. A laborer who lived in a cottage rented from a gas company went on strike with his fellow-workmen. When paid off, the rent was deducted from his full wages. The case was brought up in the House of Commons. At first the attorney-general gave it as his opinion that the company in deducting rent as stated did not act contrary to the provisions of the truck law. On reconsideration, the official stated subsequently that unless a written agreement existed between the company and the employee as to the method to be pursued, the truck act demanded the payment of wages in full, no matter what debts the laborer might owe to his employer. This shows that the question of "company stores" is effectually settled by the British workman.

In Europe there appears to be a peremptory demand for the eight-hour day. In this country, though the eight-hour day is talked about a great deal, there seems a disposition among labor men to unite in a demand for a nine-hour day. A trade convention representing 50,000 members held in Chicago recently adopted resolutions favoring nine hours, and steps were taken to accomplish this object universally among blacksmiths, machinists, boiler makers, and in fact all branches of skilled mechanics.

It must be admitted that the labor situation in the United States looks more hopeful just at present than it does in Europe, yet it is true that large bodies of idle men are reported in cities, and the arrivals at New York average 10,000 a week. In Europe in addition to the general stagnation of trade, new labor saving machines are being successfully put in operation. In London a machine for unloading vessels has been introduced which will throw thousands of dock men on the streets, and thus add to the mass of the unemployed and discontented. In the continental cities the unfortunate workmen are looking to Louise Mitchell and other notorious Communists and Anarchists as their social redeemers. They despair of relief by agitation surrounded as they are by armed military and police.

THE SPEAKER IN LEGISLATION.

In the April *Arena* Henry George, Jr., has an article on the "Speaker in England and America." It is somewhat anomalous that the official designated "Speaker" in our legislative bodies is the only member who does not speak on any question before the assembly, and should he desire to speak he must abrogate his functions as Speaker for the time and call some other member to take the chair.

The term "Speaker" as applied to the presiding officer of an American legislature is borrowed from England. In the British Parliament the Speaker is the representative of the Commons, who speaks to the Crown. As early

as Edward III the House spokesman was known as "Mr. Speaker." At the present time when a new Parliament meets, the Queen, through the Lords Commissioners, summons the Commons to the bar of the Lords, and signifies her pleasure that the former choose a representative to speak for them. The Commons return to their House, elect or choose a Speaker, whose name is submitted to her Majesty, who generally ratifies the appointment. The gentleman then becomes "Mr. Speaker" and is also presiding officer of the House of Commons.

Except in the matter of speaking for the House to the Crown, the English official has little more to do than act as chairman of the body. He has no power over committee appointments, he cannot advance or retard bills he cannot affect legislation in any way. His duty is simply to interpret forms, orders and rules. He must recognize a new member, and must give the floor to a member who has not spoken in the House in preference to other members rising at the same time. In case of a tie he has a casting vote, but his vote is subject to subsequent revision by the House. The intention is to deprive the office entirely of political partisanship, and it has succeeded.

The Speaker of the House of Representatives at Washington is a much more important functionary than his English brother. He appoints all the committees which direct and shape legislation. He can retard or promote bills, through these committees of course. The manner of procedure in the House is largely of his creation, inasmuch as he is the supposed font of inspiration for the committee on rules. He can recognize or ignore any member at discretion. He is a party man in every sense, and his great aim is usually to promote party policy.

The English Speaker receives a salary of \$30,000, annually, paid from the consolidated fund. He is provided with a magnificent official residence, and on retirement is eligible to a pension of \$30,000 a year.

The American Speaker receives \$8000 a year, only \$3000 more than the ordinary member. He must find his own lodgings and bear all his expenses. There is not even an official corner of any kind provided for him, except his desk and room in the House, and when outside the House he carries his office in his hat. He is not a "Speaker" in the English sense, and really there is little sense in calling him anything but Mr. Chairman.

A MODICUM OF JUSTICE.

The *New York Advertiser*, in summing up some reflections and arguments on the "Mormon" question, thus gives expression to what is now becoming a very common public sentiment:

"The time is not ripe for the admission of Utah as a State, but her present demand for a large measure of local self-government is certainly a just one, and should be conceded. Ultimately Utah must be admitted as a State, and she should now be accorded such measure of home rule as shall admit her upon probation and fit her for full membership in the American Union."

THE UTE REMOVAL.

THE *New Haven, Connecticut, Register* has a long editorial in regard to the proposed removal of the Colorado Utes to this Territory. It concludes the article as follows:

"The bill for the removal of the Utes distinctly contravenes and stultifies the humane policy of Indian administration which the government has recently adopted. That policy is one of education and civilization, with a view to fitting the Indian for citizenship. It involves schools, compulsory education, land held in severalty by Indian families, and the gradual merging of the red man in the general body of the nation. To pack the Utes off to a mountain wilderness, where cultivation of the soil is impossible, is only to prevent the operation—so far as this tribe is concerned—of the government's own distinctly chosen plan. It would be a retrograde step, not only destructive to the Indians concerned, whom it would consign to perpetual and hopeless savagery, but contrary to the honor and reputation of a just and humane government.

"The trouble is, the surrounding whites, and especially a railroad company, desirous of getting their line through, want the present Ute reservation in Colorado, from which now they are excluded. They have brought tremendous pressure to bear on Congressmen, both this year and last, to have this iniquitous bill passed. They have now won a victory in the House committee which, in the name of humanity and justice, we hope to see turned into defeat in the House at large."

A SUBJECT FOR CONTROVERSY.

SOME attention is being paid by the press to a statement recently made by Richard Hoe, of pressmaking celebrity. That gentleman says he can turn out a printing machine in London for one-fourth the cost of doing the same in New York. He asserts further, that the saving is confined entirely to the labor involved, the wage rate in England for skilled mechanics being only one-fourth of that in the United States. The difference in cost of raw material in both countries he says is insignificant, and would not make a factor in the cost of production. Printing presses are sold much cheaper in England than in the United States, but newspapers are no cheaper. On the contrary it is boldly asserted that newspapers are cheaper here, and more within the reach of the wage worker than in Britain.

Here is one more fact, if it is a fact, that will furnish food for discussion between free traders and protectionists. How is it that while the machine can be built at a quarter of the wage rate in this country the English workman has to pay twenty per cent more for the newspaper printed upon it? No doubt there are a good many interests involved in the production of the newspaper besides the making of the press that prints it, and these must be considered before any just conclusion can be arrived at either by the protectionist or the free trade agitator.

THE weather continues unprecedentedly cold for the time of year. A sharp rainfall in this valley today (May 2nd) was accompanied by thunder and lightning.