

SCIENCE.

FRIDAY, AUGUST 20, 1886.

COMMENT AND CRITICISM.

THIS AND THE TWO SUCCEEDING numbers of *Science* will be largely given up to the reports of the meeting of the American association at Buffalo. In this number is given the address in full of the retiring president, Prof. H. A. Newton of Yale, and, with this, abstracts of several of the vice-presidents' addresses. We are also able to present our readers with a portrait of Prof. Edward S. Morse, of Salem, the incoming president. Professor Morse, was born at Portland, June 18, 1838. His career as a scientific man is one of the results of the enthusiasm aroused by the elder Agassiz, Professor Morse being one of the well-famed group of young Americans who came about Agassiz during his first years in this country. Professor Morse's investigations of the mollusoids, worms, and lower arthropoids, his marked success as a lecturer in biology, his enthusiastic study of Japan and the Japanese, which he has partially set forth in his admirable 'Japanese homes and their surroundings,' are the works which lead us to congratulate the association on their choice.

CAPITALISTS AND LABORERS.

THE adjustment of the relations between capitalists and laborers is the greatest problem presented for solution in the present age. It is one that has baffled the skill of the wisest men in times past. There is a bitterness and alienation between these classes that threaten the peace of society and the stability of government. There are millions of discontented people to a greater or less extent under the influence of socialists, who openly publish doctrines subversive of all good government, and contrary to religion and morality. Their leaders are bold and reckless, and avow their purpose to disturb society in order to make what they call a just division of property.

Quotations, from writers worthy of confidence, were given, in order to show that the condition of the laborer is far better in all respects than it was fifty years ago. In the increase of wages, and the

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lessening of the hours of toil, he gains from fifty to one hundred per cent in money returns. Advantages of education, comforts, and privileges, and means of relief from sickness and pain, that formerly were unknown, are now common. This improvement in the condition of the poor gives no reason for the haughty rebukes of their employer, nor for his advice to them to be content with their condition. With all our boasted advantages of modern civilization, the condition of a large portion of the laboring classes is pitiable. Thousands have no employment, and thousands more are compelled to live on a mere pittance, and submit to conditions destructive of all manhood and nobility of spirit.

In New York city there are two hundred thousand women and girls employed in ninety-two trades. They earn from four to eight dollars per week. Hundreds of cases are reported where women work from fourteen to seventeen hours per day at from four to seven dollars per week. Loss of time, from ill health and inability to obtain work, reduces their earnings till they barely sustain life. Many persons receive twelve and a half cents a day. Many of them are wronged, and on various pretexts deprived of their pay. The rules of many factories are abusive and degrading. The home life of such laborers is pitiable, being passed in circumstances where decency and womanly respect are impossible. About nineteen thousand tenement houses accommodate about fifty persons each, and some of them three times as many. The condition of a large number of the poor is a reproach to our age.

It is a sore evil that has resulted from the effectiveness of machinery. It separates the wage-workers into a permanent class, making it more and more difficult for them to rise above it.

The improved condition of the laborer makes him more restless, gives him new views and higher wants, which he seeks to gratify. He now longs for more rational living, better food, better clothing, a better house, the education of his children, and time for self-improvement. While his circumstances have improved, he sees greater improvement in those of others. The product of the union of capital and labor is greater than formerly, and the laborer demands as his just due a larger share.

The causes of discontent among laborers are serious and wide-spread. One cause is the difference in views as to the relations between em-



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