

## American Notes.

The question of convict labour has lately attracted a good deal of attention. The second yearly report of the National Commissioners of Labour which has recently been published, shows that the competition of the prisoners exercises a very serious influence over the condition of trade. In Rhode Island, for example, considerably over one half of the shoemakers are prisoners, and as they supply goods at less than a third of the cost at which the free tradesman can do so, numbers of these are driven to look for other means of support, those who remain at the work for which they have been trained being obliged to content themselves with starvation wages. The supporters of protection point to this and other similar instances to be found all over the States, as an example of what must occur generally in even an intensified form, if freetraders should succeed in opening the American markets to the competition of the pauper labour of Europe.

The worst form that the convict labour system takes is most probably that of the mining industry. To carry on this the men are hired out in gangs for certain periods, their employers or owners for the time being the wealthy capitalists or corporations. But the result on the condition of the free miner is that, in innumerable instances, he is forced to make the hopeless attempt to support himself and his family on a pittance of 30 cents a day. The features presented by the mining camps recall the worst tales told of the back plantations in the days of slavery. The escape of the prisoners is provided against by the maintenance of packs of blood-hounds, each of which is confided to the care of a man called the "hunter" and whose business is to track the runaway. Escape from the hound is impossible, and unless refuge be taken in a tree the unfortunate human quarry is inevitably torn by his fangs in a deplorable manner. Worse things than this, however, are told of the matter. A revelation has recently been made of a certain camp in Georgia, where a man who complained of being sick while he was at work beside a fire was, nevertheless, kept going under the lash until he fell dead on the spot. A negro who attempted to escape from the same camp was also wantonly shot dead, although the fact of his being still chained might have answered for his easy capture. Stories of the gross immorality prevalent in the camp are also narrated. Is it any wonder, therefore, that the corporations and capitalists, as well as the system of prison labour, should be loudly complained of.

The misunderstandings arising from the action of the Canadian authorities with respect to the fisheries have become aggravated by the seizure in Behring sea of four British schooners accused of poaching in the Alaskan seal fisheries. When Alaska was ceded by Russia to the United States in 1867, it is alleged by some that the division of Behring sea also took place, a certain line passing westward from Behring Strait to the South of Attou Island, dividing the Russian waters from those that were American. The States would thus monopolise by far the greater portion of the sea—which also includes the islands of St. George and St. Paul—where seals abound. The sole right of fishing in these islands has been conceded by the Government of the States to the Alaskan Commercial Company, and it is not denied that the Government in doing this acted within their rights. What may possibly be disputed is the point as to whether Behring sea is to be looked upon as a closed sea. It was so claimed by Russia when she owned the territory on either shore—but it is alleged that the American Government did not then acknowledge the claim. In any case a large number of settlers in British Columbia derive their living from the seal fisheries, and claim the right to exercise their calling in any part of Behring sea situated at a distance of three miles from the American shore. The four vessels which have now been captured and taken to Sitka, the Alaskan capital, where the seal skins have been removed from them, are alleged by their owners not to have transgressed the three mile limit—but to have purchased the skins from Indians, who have a right to capture a certain number of seals. But an American skipper also arrested on charge of poaching, says he took his seals far out at sea—where, nevertheless, it is denied that they are to be found. The question, then, may prove a more difficult one than if a mere matter of poaching were involved, and may lead to some serious complications. It remains to be seen whether Mr. Chamberlain, who has been appointed to the Presidency of the Fishery Commission, will prove more enlightened or more successful with respect to it than in regard to Irish affairs. But as it is said he only accepts the appointment to avoid the necessity of either going openly over to the Tories, or breaking with them altogether and rejoining the Liberal party—the matter appears doubtful. What a man undertakes in a half-hearted way he can scarcely fully succeed with. That the question is grave, however, is additionally shown by the announcement that the English Government will immediately strengthen the defences of Halifax and that the cruisers watching the interests of the Canadian fisheries will be reinforced by two men-of-war. A cruiser or two despatched to Behring sea is all that seems wanting to make the situation indubitably threatening.

Alaska is now exciting a considerable degree of interest. The murder of Archbishop Seghers, who had so heroically devoted himself to the service of the Indians, and who was shot by his servant, evidently attacked by a sudden mania for he seems to have had absolutely no motive for the deed, appears to have brought the condition of the country prominently forward, not to speak of the troubles of the seal fisheries. Professor Thomas Meehan writes in the *New York Independent* recommending that Christian missions should be undertaken as a sure means of civilising the natives. The Indians, he says, are docile and ready to accommodate themselves to the manners of the white men, if only they are placed in proper hands. He gives us reason to doubt, however, that this has as yet been done to any important extent. He describes some of the missionaries now in the country as follows:—"One I met who had a rare mineral that I

recognised. 'Yes,' he remarked, 'I know. An Indian had it who did not know the value of it. I got him to let me have it for a silver dollar. When I get to Portland I expect to get twenty dollars for it.' There was no harm in this, but somehow I could not help noting that the Indians in his charge were 'no good.' Another whom I met I had known of incidentally in former years as a mechanic at rather low wages, though we never met personally. Referring to this he observed: 'I could hardly make out at my trade. But I joined church (I am using his exact language) and finally got here, where I have to stay for (I think three) years, and I get double what I could have made at my own trade.' I did not meet this gentleman at his mission. I cannot speak of his success in converting the Indians."—But such are hardly the Christian influences likely to prove successful.

### A WOMAN FROM AUSTRIA.

NEAR the village of Zillingdorf, in Lower Austria, lives Maria Haas an intelligent and industrious woman, whose story of physical suffering and final relief, as related by herself, is of interest to English women. "I was employed," she says, "in the work of a large farmhouse. Overwork brought on sick headache, followed by a deathly fainting and sickness of the stomach, until I was unable to retain either food or drink. I was compelled to take to my bed for several weeks. Getting a little better from rest and quiet, I sought to do some work, but was soon taken with a pain in my side, which in a little while seemed to spread over my whole body, and throbbled in my every limb. This was followed by a cough and shortness of breath, until finally I could not sew, and I took to my bed for the second, and, as I thought, for the last time. My friends told me that my time had nearly come, and that I could not live longer than when the trees put on their green once more. Then I happened to get one of the Seigel pamphlets. I read it, and my dear mother bought me a bottle of Seigel's Syrup, which I took exactly according to directions, and I had not taken the whole of it before I felt a great change for the better. My last illness began June 3, 1882, and continued to August 9, when I began to take the Syrup. Very soon I could do a little light work. The cough left me, and I was no more troubled in breathing. Now I am perfectly cured. And, oh, how happy I am! I cannot express gratitude enough for Seigel's Syrup. Now I must tell you that the doctors in our district distributed handbills cautioning people against the medicine, telling them it would do them no good, and many were thereby influenced to destroy the Seigel pamphlets; but now wherever one is to be found, it is kept like a relic. The few preserved are borrowed to read, and I have lent mine for six miles around our district. People have come eighteen miles to get me to buy the medicine for them, knowing that it cured me, and to be sure to get the right kind. I know a woman who was looking like death, and who told them there was no help for her, that she had consulted several doctors, but none could help her. I told her of Seigel's Syrup, and wrote the name down for her that she might make no mistake. She took my advice and the Syrup, and now she is in perfect health, and the people around us are amazed. The medicine has made such progress in our neighbourhood that people say they don't want the doctor any more, but they take the Syrup. Sufferers from gout, who were confined to their bed and could hardly move a finger, have been cured by it. There is a girl in our district who caught a cold by going through some water, and was in bed five years with costiveness and rheumatic pains, and had to have an attendant to watch by her. There was not a doctor in the surrounding districts to whom her mother had not applied to relieve her child, but everyone crossed themselves and said they could not help her. Whenever the little bell rang which is rung in our place when somebody is dead, we thought surely it was for her, but Seigel's Syrup and Pills saved her life, and now she is as healthy as anybody, goes to church, and can work even in the fields. Everybody was astonished when they saw her out, knowing how many years she had been in bed. To-day she adds her gratitude to mine for God's mercies and Siegel's Syrup,

"MARIA HAAS."

The people of England speak confirming the above.

#### AFTER SEVERAL YEARS.

"Stoke Ferry, January 9, 1884.

"Gentlemen,—I have used Seigel's Syrup for several years, and have found it a most efficacious remedy for liver complaints and general debility, and I always keep some by me, and cannot speak too highly in its praise.—I remain, yours truly,

"HARRIET KING."

#### AFTER MANY YEARS.

"Whittle-le-Woods, near Chorley, December 26, 1883.

"Dear Sir,—Mother Seigel's medicine sells exceedingly well with us. All that try it speak highly in its favour. We had a case of a young lady that had been troubled many years with pains after eating. She tells us that the pains were entirely taken away after a few doses of your medicine.—Yours truly,

"E. PEEL."

#### THE EFFECTS HAVE BEEN WONDERFUL.

"Ilford Road Dispensary, Dukinfield, May 3, 1884.

"Dear Sir,—I am happy to inform you that the sale of your Syrup and Pills increases here continually. Several of my customers speak of having derived more benefit from the use of these than from any other medicine. In some instances the effects have been wonderful.—Yours very respectfully,

"PRO. EDWIN EASTWOOD, J.B."

ROUGH ON PILES.—Why suffer piles? immediate relief and complete cure guaranteed. Ask for "Rough on Piles." Sure cure for itching, protruding, bleeding, or any form of piles.