

the contract and sweating systems are more developed in this country. Englishmen visiting our industrial centres are amazed at the rapidity of the changes in industrial methods, from the changing of machines to the entire reorganization of an industry.<sup>1</sup> Thousands of men are thrown out of employment whenever these changes occur. However beneficial to society these revolutions in industrial methods are, they are unquestionably active causes of widespread unemployment or of irregular employment. Mr. Jack London, writing in the *Atlantic Monthly* on "The Scab," refers to the United States as a scab nation, and to the working-men of this country as scab workmen, because the workers in this country work more intensely, longer hours, and more cheaply than those of other great industrial nations.<sup>2</sup> In other words, we are underbidding the other nations by a lower standard of work, and underselling them as a result, not of fair, but of scab methods. Without question, the causes, which produce on the one hand long hours and overemployment, result on the other hand in short periods of work, underemployment, or unemployment.

The figures of unemployment, although very imperfect, show that the evil is widespread, even in times of prosperity. The census of 1890 shows that 3,523,730, or 15.1 per cent of all of the workers over ten years of age, engaged in gainful occupations,

were unemployed a part of the time during that year.<sup>1</sup> These figures are, however, criticised by the census of 1900 as incomplete. In the last census the number found to be unemployed at some time during the year was 6,468,964, or 22.3 per cent of all the workers over ten years of age, engaged in gainful occupations.<sup>2</sup> Thirty-nine per cent of the male workers unemployed, or 2,069,546 persons, were idle from four to six months of the year.<sup>3</sup> These figures are for the country as a whole, and for all industries, including agriculture. In manufacturing alone the unemployment rose to 27.2 per cent of all of the workers. In the industrial states of the East and North the percentage of unemployment is larger than for the country as a whole. The Massachusetts census for 1895 showed that 8339 workmen were unemployed continuously during that year, and that 252,456 persons were irregularly employed.<sup>4</sup> This means that over 27 per cent of all persons covered by the inquiry were idle some portion of the year. That this is not exceptional is shown by the Massachusetts census for 1885. At that time over 29 per cent of the workmen were irregularly employed. In other words, the annual wages of more than one workman in every four suffered considerable decrease by reason of a period of enforced idleness, extending in some cases over several months. In the industrial towns, such as Haverhill, New Bedford, and Fall River, the irregu-

larity of employment was even greater. In these towns from 39 to 62 per cent of the workmen were idle during some part of the year.<sup>1</sup> Still another investigation, made in 1897 in Massachusetts, showed that there were 100,000 workers in certain factories in that state who found employment when the factories were most active, but who were unemployed when the factories were least active.<sup>2</sup> This fluctuation of the number of employed means that about 30 per cent of the maximum number employed in the busiest season are rendered idle during the slack seasons. This uncertainty of employment is not peculiar to Massachusetts. In every industrial community, the same insecurity of livelihood, due to irregular employment, exists. It has been said that during the anthracite coal strike of 1902 the entire supply of mined coal was exhausted, but the excess of laborers in that district is so great that within a short time after the strike was settled a report was sent out on reliable authority that "intermittent labor is again the lot of anthracite employees. The collieries do not average more than two-thirds time."<sup>3</sup>

Men employed in navigation on the Great Lakes are particularly subject to seasonal demands for their labor. During the three months, January, February, and March, one-third of all the workmen are unemployed.<sup>4</sup> In the clothing trades of New York City it is very much the same. During the first seven