

CURIOUS TREE GROWTHS.

To the Editor of the Scientific American:

I inclose a print made from a negative taken not long ago on my father's farm in eastern New York. I don't know that there is anything strikingly unusual, but how the two trees in the center ever became merged into one has been a mystery to me. One part appears much larger than the other. The tree, or trees, is of second growth white pine, and growing from between the two parts is a yellow birch, though, as it grows out on the opposite side from that represented, it does not show in the photograph. Having noted with interest accounts and explanations of various natural phenomena in your paper, I have thought for some time of sending you a copy of this view. The tree stands in the corner of a wood on the farm of W. J. Morey, in Saratoga, N. Y.

Kearney, Neb. J. T. MOREY.

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American Boys and American Labor.

Shall American boys be permitted to learn trades, and, having learned them, shall they be permitted to work at them? These are apparently simple questions, and the answering of them is an apparently simple matter. Most persons thus interrogated would reply at once: "Certainly they should. Why do you ask such unnecessary questions?" We ask them because under the present conditions of trade instruction and employment in this country the American boy has no rights which organized labor is bound to respect. He is denied instruction as an apprentice, and if he be taught his trade in a trade school, he is refused admission to nearly all the trades unions, and is boycotted if he attempts to work as a non-union man. The questions of his character and skill enter into the matter only to discriminate against him. All the trades unions of the country are controlled by foreigners, who comprise the great majority of their members. While they refuse admission to the trained American boy, they admit all foreign applicants with little or no regard to their training or skill. In fact, the doors of organized labor in America, which are closed and barred against American boys, swing open, wide and free, to all foreign comers. Labor in free America is free to all save the sons of Americans. These are neither idle nor exaggerated statements. They are sober, solemn truths, expressed in studied moderation. So-called American labor to-day is a complete misnomer, as far as the trades are concerned. How has it come about that the United States, alone among the nations of the earth, has not merely surrendered possession of her field of mechanical labor to foreigners, but acquiesces when the foreign possessors exclude from that field her own sons?

The *Century* has been so strongly impressed with the evils of this anomalous situation, so unjust to American boys and so fraught with danger to the national welfare, that it has instituted a thorough inquiry into the causes which have produced it. The results of this inquiry will be set forth in subsequent articles, each devoted to a particular phase of the question. It will be shown that the two great causes have been the passing away of the old apprentice system and the enormous emigration to this country from all parts of Europe. It will be shown that all the trades unions of this country are controlled by men of foreign birth; that nearly all of them have such rules against the employing of apprentices that American boys can no longer, in any of the large cities of the country, learn a trade by working in shops with journeymen; that such boys as learn trades in trade schools are refused admission to the unions, not because they are not well taught, but because they have not served apprenticeship according to union rules, and are boycotted and persecuted if they attempt to work as non-union men.

It will be shown also that while all the unions combine in this effective conspiracy against American

boys, they admit freely to their organizations foreign workmen who have not served full apprenticeships, and who have only a slight knowledge of their crafts, and instruct them to a fuller knowledge while obtaining for them full pay as journeymen. It will be shown also that the bulk of foreign laborers who come to America are the poorest of their trades in Europe, the best workmen always finding abundant work and satisfac-

tion everywhere known as one of the sturdiest representatives of American character. He was an honest man, a good workman, a loyal, faithful citizen. To-day he is an almost extinct species. As a nation we lead the world in mechanical skill, yet we are the only nation in the world that has almost ceased to produce its own mechanics. We not only take the great mass of ours from other countries, but we accept their poorest specimens, and having accepted them, we allow them to control the field against our own sons. The consequences of this policy, already momentous, are destined to become more so as time advances. We are not only bringing up our sons in idleness, not only depriving our experiment in popular government of the invaluable support of a great body of conservative citizens of American birth, but we are accepting in place of such a body one that is composed of and controlled by men of foreign birth, whose instincts and character are not merely un-American, but oftentimes anti-American. This body, acting frequently as a unit throughout the country, is able to paralyze all business and industry, and to bring the nation itself almost to the brink of social revolution and industrial war. Is it not time that Americans began to think seriously of these things? Have not the developments of the past few years in the so-called conflicts between capital and labor been portentous enough to give pause to all patriotic Americans? Could anything else have been reasonably expected



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tory pay at home; that in addition to being indifferent workmen, they are in many instances men of inferior moral training and instincts, frequently of turbulent and anti-social proclivities and practices, and are often without sympathy for American institutions, and have no regard whatever for the country's welfare. It will be shown also that in addition to the foreign laborers who take up their abode here and possess the field, there are many thousands of others who come here in every busy season, work while that season lasts, and return to their homes when it is ended. It will be shown that while these "harvesters," as they are called, are admitted to the unions and are given work on equal terms with union members, the union authorities refuse American boys as apprentices and journeymen on the ground that the labor market is crowded, and the interests of labor will be harmed if Americans are allowed to come in.

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"STRIP, THE ELECTRICIAN."

A Brighton correspondent of the *London Daily Graphic* sends the accompanying sketch of "Strip, the Electrician," the clever fox terrier belonging to Messrs. Crompton, the electrical engineers, preparing to go to work underground. Strip's business is to carry each electric light wire through the pipe to the workmen waiting at the other end, who disengage it from her collar, to which the wire is fastened before she starts. The dog then scrambles through the pipe with the utmost vigor, and seems to understand perfectly what her business is, and does it without any delay. Before going to Brighton, Strip did good work for her employers in London, where she laid down many miles of electric light wire.

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The Stone Age in Tasmania.

At a recent meeting of the Anthropological Institute, Dr. E. B. Tylor, F. R. S., exhibited a collection of the rude stone implements of the Tasmanians, showing them to belong to the palæolithic or underground stage of the implement makers' art, below that found among prehistoric tribes of the mammoth period in Europe, and being on the whole the lowest known in the world. Fragments or rough flakes of chert or mudstone, never edged by grinding, but only by chipping on one surface with another stone, and grasped in the hand without any handle, served the simple purposes of notching trees for climbing, cutting up game, and scraping spears and clubs.

The Tasmanians seemed to have kept up this rudimentary art in their remote corner of the world until the present century, and their state of civilization thus became a guide by which to judge of that of the prehistoric Drift and Cave men, whose life in England and France depended on similar though better implements. The Tasmanians, though perhaps in arts the rudest of savages, were at most only a stage below other savages, and did not disclose any depths of brutality. The usual moral and social rules prevailed among them, their language was efficient and even copious, they had a well marked religion in which the spirits of ancestors were looked to for help in trouble, and the echo was called the "talking shadow."



"STRIP" THE ELECTRICAL TERRIER.