

STRIKING BUTCHERS FIRM.

THEY ARE HOLDING OUT AGAINST THE CUT IN THEIR WAGES.

The Situation at Swift's More Threatening, but There is a Prospect of a Settlement at Schwarzschild's—Fear of a General Strike Allayed.

All interest in the strike of the packing house men against a reduction of wages is directed to-day to the extensive packing and dressed beef plant of Swift & Co. There is no indication of trouble of any kind at the Armour Packing company's plant and the situation there is the same as yesterday, the forty or fifty pipe fitters and machinists who refused to accept the reduction still refusing to go to work. At the Schwarzschild & Sulzberger plant all hands are taking a rest to-day, but there is a general belief that when the whistle blows to-morrow morning every employee will be found at his post.

At Swift & Co.'s, however, the situation is more serious. The butchers were notified last night by the local management that it would be useless for them to kick against the reduction, and that they would have to accept the new schedule of wages or quit work. This was accepted by the butchers as meaning that if they refused to accede to the company's demands their places would be filled. A meeting was held last night and the situation thoroughly discussed. When the whistle blew at 7 o'clock this morning all the cattle and sheep butchers refused to enter the gates, and the killing operations of the plant are practically suspended.

The butchers are well organized and they declare they will stay out a long time before they will return to work at reduced wages. There are no idle butchers in the two Kansas Cities, and as they have advised their fellow workers at Chicago and St. Louis not to come here, they say it will be impossible for the company to get enough butchers to run the plant.

The company's local manager, H. C. Thom, refuses to talk about the situation, further than to say that the men will have to come to terms, and that no concessions will be made.

ITALIAN WORKMEN DRIVEN OFF.

The striking butchers are not only conducting themselves in a quiet and orderly manner, but are keeping away from the saloons and liquor joints. This morning at 7 o'clock, however, the presence of about twenty-five Italians at the gates applying for work roused their indignation and a small sized riot was witnessed. With boards and sticks the irate butchers moved upon the Italians and drove them across the Union Pacific railway yards and sent them across the river to their homes in "Little Italy" in this city. Chief of Police Quarles of Kansas City, Kas., and Captain Porter were called to the packing house, but when they arrived there was nothing to indicate that anything unusual had happened.

The reduction at Swift & Co.'s affects all employees with the exception of those who receive \$1.50 a day and less. No action has been taken by employees in other departments. It is believed that they will continue to work under the new scale of wages until they see how the butchers' fight will end. No fears of a general tie-up of the plant are expressed on the part of the company, although the butchers claim to have the sympathy of the employees in other departments. They say that if it becomes necessary these will go out and the plant will be compelled to shut down.

SWIFT'S FORCE REDUCED.

This afternoon the manager for Swift & Co. received instructions from the firm's headquarters to reduce the number of men employed in the packing house and in the office. This action will throw about 250 men out of work.

At the packing house of Schwarzschild & Sulzberger the butchers killed all the export cattle in the pens, as they agreed to, and quit work at 3:30 yesterday afternoon. Manager A. F. Nathan laid the case before the men and explained to them the necessity of making a general reduction in the operating expenses of the plant in this city, as well as in New York. The company purchased no cattle for to-day's killing, and the men were all told to lay off to-day and return to work to-morrow. The butchers expect that some concessions will be made them, and they are confident that their differences will be adjusted by to-morrow morning and they will all be at work.

The Armour Packing company's plant was running this morning with a full force of men, excepting in the pipe fitting and machinist departments. Superintendent Tourtelotte said that the company could get along very well with only small forces in these departments, as there was very little work to be done. No cut in the wages of the butchers or the \$1.50 workers is anticipated and no trouble is feared.

Fears of a general strike among the workmen at all the packing houses have subsided and it is now believed that the trouble will be confined to Swift & Co. The crippling of the packing industry at this time would be a severe blow to Kansas City. It would not

only affect the live stock and meat interests, but would have a tendency to depress almost every line of business. The packing houses at this point turn out a product of from 60 to 70 millions annually and they consume cattle, hogs and sheep each year the value of which runs from 40 to 50 millions. The number of men employed ranges from 6,000 to 8,000.

The packing house managers, in stating their side of the case, say that they have been forced by reason of the depression in trade and finances to make heavy reductions in the operating expenses of their plants. Some of the packers have accomplished this by laying off large numbers of their employees, others have been working a short time and others still have undertaken to inaugurate their retrenchment by reducing the wages of their employees. In this way, they claim, they will be enabled to keep as many of their old employees as possible, and fewer men will be thrown out of work. In making these reductions they have applied the cut to those who can best stand it, the unskilled workers receiving small wages not being affected.

Reid Bros., successors to Kingau & Co., have announced no reduction in the wages of their men, and it is stated no such action is anticipated. No reduction in wages has been made at Fowler's and at Dold's, the old forces being retained and the working time governed by the volume of business.