

Communications.

OTTAWA.

MECHANICS' LIEN LAW.

(To the Editor of the Ontario Workman.)

SIR,—Now that the Mechanics' Lien Act of 1873 has become law, as far as the Ontario Legislature is concerned, I would ask your permission to express through the columns of your paper my opinion as to its merits, and the benefits to be derived from it by the mechanics of Ontario.

In the first place I take exception to the title of the Bill, for it conveys the idea that the mechanics of Ontario are the parties to be benefitted by its provisions; but I contend that the parties who will derive the benefit, are but as a drop of water in the ocean, compared with the workmen of Ontario; who those parties are, the first section of the Bill states in language plain and not to be misunderstood, that every mechanic, etc.; shall have a "lien or charge" for work done, but the work must have been performed "at the instance or request of the owner thereof," in the place of such language as that, does any man mean to say, that the mechanics of Ontario are entitled to a lien against the work which they themselves have performed, I say most assuredly not.

By the debate, on the third reading of the Bill, it would appear that the great objection to do a simple act of justice to the men who build up and maintain any country, was that it would be class legislation. Admitting that it would be, is it because we are poor and cannot purchase legislation, that we are not to have the same privilege extended to us, as is given to the merchant by the Bankrupt Law. Under which, and we see cases of it every month, they pocket their thousands, and coolly tell their creditors they will give them 15 or 20 cents on the dollar. But mark the difference when the workman is interested; he has been defrauded out of his wages by an unprincipled employer, he goes home and tells his landlord that he cannot pay his rent; is he asked if he can pay so much on the dollar? no, but as soon as the sun shows himself in the east, the landlord is up and impatiently waiting for the time to arrive when he can get his warrant, to pounce down and take the poor man's all; and, when we ask for a law to protect ourselves, that when pay-day comes round, we may be assured that we cannot be defrauded out of our hard but honestly earned pittance, we are given this "Act to establish Liens in favor of mechanics, etc." I would to God that those who deny us this simple act of justice, could but once feel the bitterness of the disappointment that arises when the poor man goes home to his wife and children, and tells them he has no money, that there was no money coming to the employer on this estimate, or, that the employer had cleared out and had received more money than there was work done, I say if they could only once feel this, they would be hard-hearted indeed, if they could refuse us the protection asked.

But it is argued if you get a law passed to enable the workman to take a lien direct against the work, you do an injustice to the owner, because he may have paid the money to the contractor, and under that law he would have to pay it over again to you. Very true, but that is easily answered. In the face of such a law, there is no owner of, any business capacity, who would pay his contractor up, but would deduct sufficient per centage off each estimate to protect him against loss, the result would be that owners would let their work to responsible men, and at remunerative prices, and those contractors who now take jobs at ruinously low prices, with the deliberate intention of defrauding somebody, would be thrown out altogether.

By the 11th section, the workmen are entitled to a claim against the lien-holders by "notifying the owner within thirty days," but I contend this clause is useless, as it provides a remedy, that in 19 cases out of 20 would not be required; for, I for one would be perfectly willing to run the risk of getting my pay from the employer who had a lien against the work, what is there to prevent a proprietor and contractor from combining to defraud the men, as for example, the contractor owes his workmen, say, \$3,000, the owners gives him a bonus of \$500, he gives way and refuses to take a Lien, what is the result, why the owner is just \$2,500 richer by taking it out of the poor man's pocket, or will this "Mechanics lien Law" afford the protection that its title would imply? I say it will do no such a thing.

I do not see why there should be any objection to giving the mechanic a direct lien against the work in this Province; for in most of the states the lien law gives that privilege and is found to work very well, and I earnestly hope that this Bill will be repealed or amended so as to give us the same privilege here; if not it will tend

more than anything else, to drive the laboring classes across the lines, where there is neither scarcity of work or good wages, and the only way to get it amended, is, by the workmen of Ontario combining as one man, and make such representations to the Government that they dare not refuse this act of justice. Let committees be organized all over the country, with one central committee at Toronto to govern and direct, and I do not hesitate to say that the workmen of Ontario can, by using legitimate means before the next session of the legislature, so influence the Government that they will be prepared to give us what we ask.

STONE-CUTTER.

Ottawa, March 14, 1873.

TORONTO.

LABOR MONOPOLY.

(To the Editor of the Ontario Workman.)

DEAR SIR,—Having treated of the monopolies of land and money, I now come to the operative source of all wealth—labor—without the expending of which nothing has existed or can exist. To control this lever, that draws, molds, and forms from the existing fulness of man's heritage and God's earth all that is necessary for our existence and comfort, has always been the great object of those who were shrewd and strong in the race of life. No man can exist independent of labor; but many do exist on the labor of others. Notwithstanding this incontrovertible fact, the actual laborer has long occupied a position despised by the actual robber. But times are changing, and sentiments, so far as labor is concerned, has undergone a wonderful change; so that at this moment, the actual laborer is more respected, than at any time since the formation of society. Certainly in no country under the sun is the position of the workman held in higher esteem than in this America of ours, where the bauble of the divine right of royalty and aristocracy has for ever exploded. But let us consider for a moment how a monopoly can be made to exist, in the sweat, sinew, and blood of man: In the first place, I consider it will take no amount of argument to convince those who are any way conversant with the history of our race, that not only is there a monopoly of the land, but also a monopoly of the machinery to work it, and that this machinery has been, and is still, the flesh and blood of our fellow-men. But the age of serfdom or forced servitude, in the general acceptance of the term, has and must disappear before the march of civilization, and upon its ruin for a time be built another system intellectually in advance of the preceding system of serfdom, but often, in a temporal sense imposing obligations that are unknown to slavery. Free labor sets free the mind; but the supplying of the temporal wants of the body rendered incumbent upon the former serf by the new state of things, has been extremely hard in old countries where competition is sharp; for the lordlings of society are just as hard to support under the new system as before. The relation that labor bears to non-producing consumers is just the same under the new system as under the old; the mode of performing the labor is only changed. The result produced under both systems is the same, that of supplying all the wants of the lives upon earth. And so must it continue to be as long as the present system exists; and although we who labor must acknowledge the great boon conferred upon all who have had the shackles of serfdom struck from their limbs, giving them the power to choose for whom they shall labor to support. Yet this system is not the perfection towards which the human race are tending; a system enabling one class of men to prey on the productions of another cannot always remain to curse the existence and blight the prospects of so many of our race. For as free labor has superseded the slavery of centuries, may we not look to the intellectual development consequent upon the changed situation of the producers of wealth to solve the great problem of human right; and the progress of human thought in this direction is not altogether without its fruits at the present day; for as true as God has placed in the hands of man power to work out his own salvation, it shall be worked out on principles of justice and equality. Already are to be seen little hives of producers among the more thoughtful and advanced of the great working army who have thrown off the power and influence of employer in their systems of labor, and stand in their little industrial communities sovereigns, so far as being their own employers; not stooping to ask any hazy fellow-work for the liberty to exercise their birthright, and give them leave to toil. Recognizing labor as the first and noblest duty of man, and holding to the principle that none have a better right to that produced than they who produced it,

will this system of Co-operation not spread? Most assuredly it will, until it shall have superseded the system of employer and employed as thoroughly as the free labor system has replaced serfdom with the spread of intelligence. What may be the governing principles of the new system I cannot say; that remains to be worked out by the experience of those who shall engage in the progress of the movement. Time and experience must fix the details, and we are sanguine enough to believe that such a change is in store for man. We can only speculate on the ends that will be accomplished, viz., that labor will be lightened individually, and more generally borne by the whole of mankind, who shall enjoy the fruits of their labor, and not the dregs of their productions. Power must cease to centralize, and localities 'sovereigns' in their own affairs; in fine, all unjust systems that give man undue advantage over man must cease to exist; and the glorious sun of justice, peace, on earth, and goodwill among men reign supreme—which is the final destiny that man under the Providence of God must work out for himself.

Yours, for the rights of all men,

JOHN HEWITT.

HAMILTON.

(To the Editor of the Ontario Workman.)

SIR,—The conscience of Mr. John Mowat seems to have been somewhat troubled until relieved by a full confession of the cause of his opposition given at the mass meeting in Hamilton. Now, I believe the very best thing a man can do when he is convinced that he has committed an error, is to confess and forsake the error of his way. Had it been possible for me to learn from his communication that he intended to pursue this course, I would have allowed him to pass on in silence. But, as he concludes by assuring us that unless the working class see with his eyes, hear with his ears, and accept his opinion as their only rule of action, he will continue to oppose. The gentleman seems to have got lost in a fog, and I will be obliged to follow, and, if possible, find and deliver him from the dangerous wandering of this deceitful way into which he has fallen.

"The first thing I observed was the severity with which the Ontario Legislature was attacked, and the appellation given to the meeting as an indignation meeting." So says J. M. Now, in all fairness, Mr. Mowat should tell us where he heard the meeting called an indignation one. It was not at the meeting of Presidents of the Trades' Union, held on the Saturday evening previous to the meeting, at which he was invited to be present, yet failed to attend. Would he inform us where he spent that evening? Neither could he learn from the posters and handbills calling the meeting, for they set forth that the meeting was called to consider certain measures which had been introduced into the Ontario Legislature, these measures vitally affecting the working class who were called together to express their unbiased opinion upon these measures, and to suggest such amendments as they deemed would make said measures really beneficial to them as a class. This appears to have acted as a nightmare upon our friend, and he, fearing that the Grit camp was in danger, rushed to the rescue, forgetting altogether the statement he made on Locomotive street on the Thursday week before the meeting, between the hours of 12 and 1 o'clock, at which time and place he expressed his hearty disapproval of the Lien Bill, even as then amended. So much for the very high satisfaction he felt and expressed upon that measure.

Now, as to the famous Arbitration Bill, I have already expressed my opinion on two occasions, pardon me if I refer this once to the "still born" measure. With regard to the election of Chairman, I said in Hamilton that every man on the voter's list (that is every man who signs the memorandum) should have a voice in the selection of the Chairman, even as every voter in a township has a voice in the election of Reeve. I believe in the diffusion of power, not in its concentration, which last seems the only object of the ill-starred bill, which places the question of wages out of the jurisdiction of the court.

Once more. The acts of every Government have been carefully scanned by the Labor Reformers since they appeared upon the public platform in this Dominion, and for the guidance of Mr. Mowat I will refer to the record of 1872.

Act the first.—The passing of the Trades' Union Act by Sir J. A. Macdonald in the last session of the first Parliament of the Dominion of Canada. This Act was called for, inasmuch as a combination of employers, known as the Master Printers' Association, had caused to be apprehended in Toronto men of unblemished character, and loyal subjects of her most Gracious Majesty. These men were arrested as

common felons under some old laws that had been drawn from their hiding place at the instance of Claverhouse the Second; but they were sent forever to oblivion by the prompt and grateful action of the DELIVERER of Canadian mechanics.

Where was the leader of the party that boasts that it is the life-long friend of the workingman? Was he in his place in Parliament, watching the passage of that bill, and seeing that its provisions benefitted those on whose votes that party had rode into power? No! The leader of that party was dodging in and out of the Globe office, rendering aid and comfort to the Grit chief in his day of trouble; and it is also said that he brought up a detective from Ottawa to hound down labor in the streets of Toronto, paying the expenses of said detective out of the taxes of Ontario. Such is the record of Act the first.

Act the second.—Labor sold. I thank thee, Mowat, for that word. Yes, sold in Toronto for fifty cents a day by this most inpolitic act of the Ontario Government. The reformation of the frail and erring sons of sorrow is indefinitely postponed, for it is perfectly useless to preach repentance to a man who knows that he is sold as a slave, and that his labor can be the only object of the purchaser. And this was the act of a Reform Cabinet in Toronto.

How were the much-abused Tories engaged about the same time? The working men of Ontario well remember, and for the information of John Mowat I will repeat it. Labor was taken by the right hand in Hamilton, and the undivided and heart-stirring support of the so-called Tories—(but, nevertheless, the real Reformers in the Dominion)—was given to place successfully a bona fide representative of labor on the floor of the Dominion Parliament, that a fair and full opportunity might thus be given to labor to let its wants be known.

Fellow toilers, remember that the party which tried in vain to crush you is now seeking the overthrow of your friends, and seek, by using such men as John Mowat and company as tools, to break up the unity that has hitherto existed amongst you. Beware of such men, who can speak fair when they desire to gain a purpose, yet when the hour of trial comes basely desert you. Watch the votes of your representatives in Parliament, and honor the men that honor you. Let all others know that a day of reckoning will surely come. Pardon me, Mr. Editor, for this digression. I fear I have exhausted both your space and patience. I shall not trespass upon either again, but resting grateful for this favor.—Yours, &c.,

ROBERT PARKER.

CARPENTERS' AND JOINERS' AMALGAMATED TRADE AND BENEFIT SOCIETY.

The following address has been made to the carpenters and joiners throughout Canada by the Hamilton branch of the above-named Association. We commend it to the earnest perusal of all interested:

FELLOW WORKMEN,

At no period in the history of Trades' combination was there ever such an urgent necessity for a complete understanding and oneness of action on all matters affecting the interests of working men, as exists at the present moment.

At no time has there existed such an urgent necessity for a constant communication between the Societies connected with the various branches of industry, and for amalgamating the various local and other Societies in the same trade into one consolidated body.

To give in detail the many reasons why such is desirable, would only be to repeat facts already patent to every Trades' Unionist in the Dominion.

With a view to the end above indicated, the Council of this Society cordially invite all who desire to promote the interests of the trade to enrol themselves as members.

The great advantage obtained by the influence of our Society since its formation, in reducing working hours, increased wages, the adoption of Codes of Working Rules, the establishment of Boards of Arbitration, and the formation of classes for promoting Technical Education, induces the Council to believe that our terms of admission need only to be fairly considered to at once commend them to the serious consideration of those whom they concern.

The benevolent objects of the above Society, whose funds are available for the support of their sick, infirm, superannuated, disabled and unemployed members, and for affording aid to families bereaved by death, has long been the pride of every intelligent man; and it is a fact, apparent to all who, by forethought and self-denial, make such provision for themselves and families not only to contribute to their

social, moral, and intellectual advancement, but by a strict adherence to rule and discipline, acquire a knowledge of business which qualifies them for positions of responsibility and trust.

TABLE OF BENEFITS.

Tool benefit, when a member six months.....	\$ 25 00
Tool benefit to any amount of loss when a member twelve months.....	25 00
Out of work benefit for twelve weeks.....	2 50 per week
Any member losing his employment through loss of tools, by fire, water, or theft, shall be immediately entitled to out-of-work pay.	1 50 "
Sick benefit for 26 weeks.....	3 00 per week
So long as sickness continues.....	1 50 "
When necessary to remit a member's sick pay, the expense is borne by the Society.	
Accident benefit.....	500 00
Superannuation benefit for life, if a member 12 years.....	1 25 per week
Do, if 18 years.....	1 75 "
Do, if 25 years.....	2 00 "
Funeral benefit.....	60 00
When a member six months.....	17 50

There is also a Contingent and Benevolent Fund to assist members in cases of distress, and each free and non-free member is entitled to the immediate benefit of such fund.

The value and importance of such a trade organization must be apparent to all, and it is to be hoped that the Carpenters and Joiners of Canada, being fully alive to their own interests, will make some efforts towards thorough organization and combination. Any further information, as to rules and regulations, and the general workings of the Society will be gladly afforded by Mr. Robert Bonny, Secretary, whose address is 50 Sheaffe street, Hamilton.

The WHITE HART, cor. of Yonge & Elm sts., is conducted on the good old English style, by Bell Belmont, late of London, Eng., who has made the above the most popular resort of the city. The bar is most elegantly decorated, displaying both judgment and taste, and is pronounced to be the "Prince of Bars." It is under the sole control of Mrs. Emma Belmont, who is quite capable of discharging the duties entrusted to her. The spacious billiard room is managed by H. Vosper; and the utmost courtesy is displayed by every one connected with this establishment.

New Advertisements.

THE JOURNEMEN FREE STONE-CUTTERS' ASSOCIATION, of Ottawa City, and immediate vicinity, hold their meetings in the St. Lawrence Hotel, corner of Rideau and Nicholas streets, on the first and third Monday in each month. The officers elected for the present quarter, commencing Monday, March 4, 1873, are as follows:—President, Robert Thomson; Vice-President, Joseph Hugg; Financial Secretary, William Gould; Recording and Corresponding Secretary, George Bisset; Treasurer, Robert Poutelle; Tyler, James Walker; Trades Council, Donald Robertson, James Kelly, James Walker, Joseph Hugg; Trustees, Donald Robertson, John Casey, William Clark.

TO THE MECHANICS OF THE DOMINION.

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN,

That in consequence of the men who were employed on the erection of the Presbyterian Church, not having been yet paid, the members of all Trades' Unions and others are requested not to engage at all with the Contractor who now has it, or any Contractor who may hereafter have said Church, until all arrears are paid.

By Order,

R. H. GRAHAM, Secretary.

Ottawa, March 1, 1873.

48-11

THE ST. LAWRENCE BANK.

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN,

That a second call of ten per cent. on the subscribed stock of this institution has this day been made, and payable at the office of the Bank here, on or before the 11th proximo.

By Order,

K. F. LOCKHART,

Toronto, 12th March, 1873.

Cashier.
49-cNEW SPRING GOODS.
T. EATON & CO.,

Invite inspection of their early Spring Stock of

White Goods and Prints,

Which they are now showing in enormous quantities and at extraordinary low prices.

CORNER YONGE & QUEEN STREETS,
42-2

THE QUEEN CITY CLOTHING STORE,

332 Queen Street West,
(OPPOSITE W. M. CHURCH.)H. J. SAUNDERS,
Practical Tailor and Cutter,

Begs to inform the numerous readers of the ONTARIO WORKMAN, that he will do his utmost to make his establishment one of the best Clothing Houses in the Western part of the city, and hopes by attention to business to merit a large share of public patronage.

Gentlemen's own materials made up to order.

49-14