

**How the Country is  
Affected by the  
Strike.**

A civil war might cost the country less. A fight to a finish will not pay either side. It will not pay the company to crush the men (nor has it shown any desire to do so); and it certainly will not pay labour, organized or unorganized, to cripple one of the largest employers of labour in the Dominion. There is not an issue at stake in the controversy that will be settled by the strike, that could not be settled without it. The South African war has had an unexpectedly happy issue, but the same end might have been attained at less than the price that staggered humanity. A free South Africa and a United Empire have been won by an unspeakable sacrifice of blood and tears and treasure which might have been got for a little diplomacy and a moderate amount of common sense.

The parties to a quarrel are seldom the best judges of the merits of the question at issue. That it is first their own business, is true, but for that very reason they are not in a position, even with the best intentions, to judge impartially, and in this particular case everybody's business is affected by the strike; although not everybody is interested in the outcome. Whichever side wins in a protracted struggle, the victory will not be worth what it is going to cost the victors. It is a case for arbitration if ever there was one. The management has made offers of increased wages which to outsiders, look generous; the men question whether the increases will prove as substantial in cash as they look on paper. To attempt to decide an issue of that kind by an endurance contest, in which women and children will do most of the endurance, and by which the earning capacity of a great wage-payer will be injured, seems a wanton extravagance. This is not saying that at no point is a strike justifiable; it is not saying that in the present case the strikers may not have justification. A long strike will mean the absolute extinction of a vast amount of capital which under ordinary circumstances would be divided between workers and shareholders; the lion's share most decidedly going to the former. The victors may eat their "Christmas dinner" in Pretoria, but they may have to wait for it a long time after Christmas, and then find the banquet very expensive. The possibility of such a strike as this makes a Labour Department and strike laws look supremely ridiculous. The whole business of the Dominion is suffering from an industrial earthquake; and we are blandly assured that everything has been done with the most strict regard to the law and the etiquette prescribed for such occasions. When the strike has gone on for a few weeks or

months and everybody is exhausted and ready to make it up and be friends, a gentleman from Ottawa will arrive on the scene and "settle the strike." In acknowledging the plaudits of an appreciative press, he will murmur modestly, "Oh, we always do it that way."

If the law is strong enough to compel arbitration it should be enforced and if not strong enough it should be made strong enough. The Booths have been compelled to shut down for want of railway facilities and other great employers of labour may be similarly compelled.

Would it not be well for the two  
**The Rest Cure.** eminent physicians who are members of the Board of Control, to prescribe a few weeks rest for the City Council during the balance of the hot season. Judging by some of its proceedings on Wednesday, it is not only in danger of making itself a laughing-stock, but of bringing unmerited ridicule upon others. But the weather is hot.

**Yorkshire Insurance  
Building.**

We are glad to learn that the interested parties having come to an agreement work on the new Yorkshire Insurance building, on St. James Street, will now be proceeded with rapidly. Messrs. Peter Lyall & Sons will commence the demolition of the old walls immediately and the steel work will be commenced in about three weeks' time. The foundations and walls will be strong enough for a ten story building.

**Cost of Living.**

The Labor Gazette for July contains a condensed report of the official investigation of the cost of living in Canada during the last twenty years. The tendency of prices was downward from 1890 to 1897; they fell considerably in 1898, and have been rising ever since. In the last twelve years prices have advanced one-third. Shortenings of hours, slackening of effort and a general rise in the standard of living are suggested as the main causes.

**An Imperial Chamber  
of Commerce.**

A proposition is on foot and in a fair way to succeed to establish an Imperial Chamber of Commerce in London. The project promises not only to be of considerable service to the Empire, but to be financially remunerative. It is proposed to erect a magnificent building on one of the busiest thoroughfares in London, which would provide not only a Chamber of Commerce, but a Colonial Exchange, a meeting place to deal with all questions of Imperial interest, offices for the colonial governments, and other big colonial institutions needing permanent representation in London.