

# EMPLOYER AND EMPLOYEES.

Mine honest friends I call you not away;  
But like a master married to your good service,  
Stay till death

Shakespeare.

No better proof of the advancement of ideas in the past twenty-five years can be given than the changed relations between employer and employed during that period. Of course, legislation for the protection of workmen may have contributed to the result, but it is also due to the better understanding on the part of both of the mutuality of their interests. The mere question of wages is not the sole link which binds the employer and employed. The former gladly interests himself in the welfare of the most valued of his servants, and the growth of good-feeling is largely resultant from the spread of modern ideas as to the proper treatment of the toiling masses by the individuals or corporations who provide employment.

The "Financial News" (London, Eng.), of the 15th inst., discusses this topic in interesting and instructive fashion, and says:—

"A man who has faithfully discharged his duties through many years, and fulfilled the confidences reposed in him, is, in common gratitude, deserving of consideration at the hands of the one who has most directly benefited from his endeavours. Apart from the sentimental view, and on the mere utilitarian ground, it is doubtless simple wisdom to avail of any opportunity to cement this relation. Especially is this the case in instances which in many trades are common—that of a man with many years constant association in the concern. He has made himself the master of various secrets of manufacture and habits of business, which, should he elect to take his discharge and pass over to the other side, would, perhaps, seriously injure the prospects of the first undertaking, and proportionately brighten those of the latter. Valuable servants, moreover, are none too common, and nothing is too good for a good servant. Whether it be a lawyer with his clerk, a draper with his buyer, or a steel company with their analyst, in each instance there is conceivably an able servant with whom in the last degree it would be unwise to part. In many firms and companies the connection between employer and employee is legally of so slight a nature that it is probable that the latter would not hesitate to withdraw if tempted by a larger salary from another quarter, and particularly is this so if, for some chimerical reason with which his employer is unacquainted, he should fancy himself slighted or overlooked. Simple cash payment is not sufficient to permanently guarantee the connection between employer and employed. An over-riding consideration is wanted, which, without dictation or arbitrariness, shall produce a relation, financial certainly, but with a dash of sentiment, and which shall guarantee constancy on both sides. This being the need, it is interesting to see what insurance can offer to meet it. In the first place, however, there is the result to be considered."

The same paper then suggests a form of cheap liberality which is well deserving of consideration by many wealthy employers of labour in Canada:—

"To offer an employee a pension or a sum in cash when he is 60, the pension to continue, after his death, to his wife also, as long as she lives, and, furthermore, to provide that should he die before he is 60, his wife will receive a pension likewise, is indeed a very handsome honorarium. Thus, if he dies whilst in your service, his family is provided for, and if he lives, in addition to his own savings, he is generously provided for. All this being completed without any trouble to himself, it is, at least from the employee's standpoint, a very profitable contract. But the case of the employer is no less important; and a first consideration is the cost. For example, we may suppose that the employee for whom it is expedient to provide is aged 30. Well, the charge the employer has to face is an expenditure of £35 (about) per annum, payable for thirty years. This cost he may consider either as part or additional salary to his employee; but it will probably be more discreet to consider it in the latter light, as most servants do not care to contemplate that they are themselves paying out of their wages for their old age provision. The above policy on maturity should produce (with profit), say, £1,500; of this you can pay over to your servant £800, or an income for his own life and that of his wife. Then you would have in hand a balance of £700 to contribute towards the expenses of the policy, which for thirty years at £35 have amounted to \$1,050. If then you deduct the £700, the cost has only been £350, or about £12 per annum. A contract embodying an agreement that you will pay him this sum or pension at maturity, or will pension, in event of his death, his widow (£500 sunk in an annuity), will be a very serviceable bond between employer and employed."

One cannot but think as he reads of the thoughtful and kindly treatment accorded by some of the great men of the industrial world to their army of employees, that in the growth of this better understanding between master and man, we may yet find a future preventive of strikes, and the means of ensuring such a reign of contentment that the trades unions will be only for the purpose of social recreation and mutual improvement; the breeder of discord and the walking delegate will find themselves without occupation; and the period of a man's duty to those he serves will only terminate with his life.

**NORTH BRITISH PROMOTIONS.**—A special cable from London to "The Journal of Commerce and Commercial Bulletin," announces the appointment of Messrs. W. T. Price and J. M. C. Johnston as joint managers of the North British & Mercantile Insurance Company of London & Edinburgh, succeeding Manager George Henry Burnett. Several days ago it was announced that Mr. Burnett had decided to retire, but it was not expected that the appointment of a successor would be made so soon. Messrs. Price and Johnston, formerly held the positions of sub-managers of the fire department in the North British & Mercantile's home office.

Mr. Price will have charge of the foreign business of the North British, and Mr. Johnston will manage the home department. Both are old and tried North British men, and will ably fill the high places to which they have been promoted. The news will be of much interest in insurance circles on this side of the Atlantic, owing to the prominence of the company.