

# Ontario Workman.

THE EQUALIZATION OF ALL ELEMENTS OF SOCIETY IN THE SOCIAL SCALE SHOULD BE THE TRUE AIM OF CIVILIZATION.

VOL. I.

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## A BROWN STUDY.

Early in April, when perusing our daily paper, and noting various items of contemporary history, our attention became attracted to an account of the nine hour movement among the working classes of Canada; and our interest was not lessened by the fact that our fellow typographers of Toronto had taken the lead in the movement, especially considering that we of the old country were among the latest to march in that direction. Of course it was scarcely surprising to learn that the agitation resulted in a strike; but it was both interesting and edifying to know, "that it was said," the Hon. George Brown, managing director of the *Globe* Printing Company, in his stern resolve to defeat the journeymen, had turned to at the case 'in shirt sleeves,' and that all the staff capable of handling a stick, had been pressed into type-setting for the occasion.

'Natur!' natur! pathetically remarks Mr. Squeers, when Snawley claps Smikie on his manly bosom—"What a blessed thing it is to be in a state of natur!" It is to be noted the Hon. Brown, while ploughing up *Globe* copy in his original and picturesque, if somewhat scanty costume, realised the force of the philosophic doctrine's sublime sentiment. We ourselves have often sweated through a publication in shirt and trousers, socks and slippers, with some little pride at our stoic disregard of the conventional in dress; but we feel that such feats were but the refinement of effeminacy compared to the spectacle of a man and a director 'spacing out' in a pair of shirt sleeves, without even the incubance of a wampum-belt or a cabbage-leaf girdle—fig leaves not being indigenous to Canada—to hamper his restless energy.

The Hon. Brown's blood being up, he does not rest satisfied with case work; but goes in for making root and branch work of the Toronto Typographical Union. A most determined fellow, Brown! A man very much after—about three-quarters of a century after—the original *Walters of Times*, he has thirteen compositors indicted for conspiracy, and warrants out for the apprehension of other ten, and by accounts to hand of date 26th April and 30th May, the case looked rather ominous for the thirteen; for by the 'common law,' as interpreted in Canada, it is 'conspiracy' to combine to raise wages, etc.; and before adjournment at the end of the second days' proceedings, the Court had succeeded in establishing the fact of the existence of a union among the printers of Toronto!

After all, however, it is open to conjecture that the desperate conspirators may yet escape the punishment due to the heinous offence of combining to secure a reduction of the hours of labor. Advices of the same date as above, though from a different source, describe the strike of printers in Toronto as virtually at an end, the employees having triumphed. Further, the victory of the printers is held to have settled the question for all other trades in the Dominion, throughout which employers are now generally acceding to the nine hour system, with less or more grace, as their varying idiosyncrasies move them. There is a reasonable probability, therefore, that the Hon. Brown has ere this withdrawn proceedings against the conspiring compositors, and himself returned to the discharge of his customary duties—duties which, if more onerous than type-lifting, we will suppose admit of a man's engaging in them 'clothed, and in his right mind.'

There are Brown's literal and Browns metaphorical on both sides of the 'Herring Pond.' The literal bearers of that respectable patronymic dispute the numerical palm with the ancient houses of Smith and Jones; the metaphorical Browns are also a numerous branch of the human family, and, as master tradesmen, make a considerable figure in current history. That class of masters—all masters, thank goodness, however honorable, are not Browns—belong to the fine old Conservative party. Nothing 'liberal' about them they can help it. The family 'arms,'

fifty emblazoned with a pair of shirt sleeves supporting a 'bar sinister' across the field of Progress, occupy one quarter of the shield; the other is significantly filled in by two captives at work in chains, and a sun setting to the west of the *Globe*. The motto is, 'The times change, and we don't change with them.' These metaphorical Browns claim a hereditary jurisdiction over their feudal vassals, the powerful and numerous sect known as The Working Classes, who have of late shown a restive and even aggressive spirit towards the Browns. Indeed they have on several occasions rather 'astonished the Browns' by taking liberties with their motto, paraphrasing it thus—"The times change, and we are changed with them;" sometimes even turning the sentence into classic Latin, *Tempor mutantur et nos mutamur in illis*—their impudence and Collins' sixpenny dictionary making them equal to that stretch of audacious quotation. As a matter of course, the Browns join issue with the mutinous rascals, and like the white plumes in the helmet of Henry of Navarre, the shirt sleeves of the captains of industry flash terrific in the van of the battle between capital and labour.

This is no exaggeration. Look, for instance, at the struggle in London and some of its concomitants. Take that notable instance of the compositors in one office turning out nearly to a man, and the Brown of the day appealing to the profession at large to supply their places. Not only was all that was asked by his old hands freely promised their possible supplanters; but Brown undertook to stand in the place of Providence to his new levies—to care for them in health and sickness—to provide them with ample incomes in the heyday of their manhood, and to pension them in their old age! Was not this very like his Hon. prototype in his shirt sleeves? True, this member of the Brown family made a very handsome amend—after finding that hands were not to be got. He reinstated all his old employees without exception, which is more than some of our local Browns did under similar circumstances. But then he aggravatingly gets once more into fighting costume in a small way. His compositors combine for fifty-four hours a week, and they—well, they get their demand, since needs must: the readers do not combine, and he gives them a forty-eight hour week without asking! With that arrangement there is no need to quarrel; but it is to be hoped that this member of the Brown family will not consider it incumbent upon him to go into his shirt sleeves when the humbler class of workers come to claim a similar privilege.

Nearer home, we recently saw a body of our brethren make a stand for a reduction of their hours from sixty to fifty-seven weekly; and judging from the universality of the short-time movement, one would have supposed that they would have little difficulty in obtaining their object. One employer, however, determined otherwise. So he made an offer to "equidistant" outsiders, that if they would only come on and take the places of his presumptuous employes, he would give no less than twenty-three shillings of weekly wages, with a share of profits at the end of the year! And be quick and engage, he said, for I am inundated with applications. There was a fine combative pair of shirt sleeves! seeing that the host of applicants amounted to five in all—two of them turn-overs; while as far as can be learned, none of the five engaged—which was probably as well for them, considering that the share of profits might turn out as mythical as the inundation aforesaid.

Really, it is pitiable to see so many Hon. Browns reduced to despair and their shirt sleeves, the more so that, causes of quarrel being numerous, the melancholy spectacle may recur from time to time. For Brown will fight, with all the stubborn valor of his ancestors in the cause of privilege—his privilege, that is—the maintenance of his right to pay low and work long, to brow-beat, to bully, to fine: and generally to

support all the distinctions which marked the master in the days when that worthy was entitled to cudgel his apprentices at discretion, and clap his journeymen into the stocks or into gaol. Mrs. Partington essayed to keep back the Atlantic tide with her broom; and the Hon. Brown thinks to stop the equally irresistible tide of progress with his shirt sleeves. The worst of it is, that—like all pig-headed folks, somewhat slow in the intellect—Brown not being able to discern the cause of this social revolution, considers himself a deeply injured man by its working. Probably he might learn something from a parable; that being the ancient way of pointing a moral, may commend itself to his veneration for the antique or the obsolete. Here it is: Once upon a time—the introductory sentence is original—on board a Panama steamer, three days after the vessel had left port, a passenger, with the look of a Californian miner about him, walked up to the steward, and demanded a sleeping berth. "Why, stranger," queried the steward, "where on airth have you been bunked for the last three nights?" "Oh," was the reply, "I've been sleeping on the top of a sick passenger; but he's got well now, and won't stand it any longer!" Now, as Brown makes his bed, so he will have to lie upon it. He has been sleeping atop of his fellow passenger for an unconscionable long time now; but the other has got well, and Brown must give up that eccentric style of repose, or take the consequences. If he is wise, he will endeavor to suit himself with a berth fitted to the altered circumstances; if the reverse—as he mostly is, only he thinks himself so very sagacious!—he need not be surprised to find himself put to considerable expense in the matter of washing and mending his shirt sleeves, not to speak of the irritation and discomfort of frequently finding himself "roasted," until "done," into a condition answering to the name which he either literally or figuratively adorns.—*Scottish Typographical Circular.*

## CANADIAN.

The workmen of Ottawa are moving to give unequivocal evidence to Sir John Macdonald, on his return, of their high sense of their obligations to him for his kind sympathy and active assistance since they commenced their efforts to elevate and improve their condition.

An old American gentleman stopped at Hamilton a night or two since, and went in for refreshments in company with a young man. They drank together, and sauntered along the platform. Shortly afterward the old man found himself minus his satchel, containing a suit of clothes, and also his money and other valuables, which he had carried about his person.

The *Guelph Herald* cautions bathers against lizards. A young man there, after bathing sat on the bank of the river partially in the water, and was surprised on rising to find a lizard attached to his leg. He took very little notice of the fact after removing the voracious reptile, but during the following week the limb began to assume large proportions, and became swollen and inflamed, and a piece may have to be cut out.

About half-past two o'clock on Sunday morning a fire was discovered in the stable in rear of Mr. Atkinson's house, corner of St. Mary and Cannon streets, Hamilton. So rapidly did the fire traverse over the whole building that it was impossible to save anything. Two horses perished, and a buggy, a set of harness, a quantity of hay, and all the contents of the barn were consumed. Mr. Atkinson had no insurance. The building belonged to Mr. Duncan McNabb, and was insured. The origin of the fire is a mystery.

Last week as a gentleman, name unknown, was walking between the Lower Suspension Bridge and the whirlpool, he discovered blood on the edge of the bank, which excited suspicions of foul play. He immedi-

ately returned to Clifton, and got a couple of young men from the village to go below the bank. There they found a place where the body of a man had fallen on the rocks; pieces of skull and brains were scattered about. The body had been thrown into the river, so no clue was left as to who either the murderer or the murdered were. Clifton did not seem excited about the affair.

**PAINFUL ACCIDENT.**—The other evening a young man named Elmer A. Thompson, son of Mr. I. V. Thompson, oil refiner, London, entered a still on his father's premises, and was found about an hour after lying within the still dead. It is supposed that the foul air brought on a convulsive attack, to which he was subject, which caused his sudden and melancholy death. The remains were conveyed to Brantford to-day to be interred in the family burial ground. The young man was eighteen years of age, well known and generally esteemed by his comrades.

**A DELUGE.**—Shortly after noon on Tuesday the country around Tavistock was visited, for about an hour and a half, with the heaviest rain fall known in the history of the oldest inhabitant. It literally poured down in torrents. On the farm of Mr. Lawrence Arnold, senr., near Tavistock, men were cutting hay in a field and when the rain came they took refuge from the storm. On returning to the field they discovered to their surprise that the hay which they had cut had all been washed away into an adjoining creek. The fireman in the Tavistock mills was unable to "keep up" steam during the storm, the rain being knee deep in a jiffy in the wood shed. The storm extended only about a radius of two miles around Tavistock.

An accident of a severe nature occurred to a man employed in the tool shop, near the G. W. Works, Hamilton. It appears that on Wednesday afternoon he was engaged in repairing the roof when his foot slipped and he fell the distance of 25 ft. to the ground, falling on his back. He was taken at once to his boarding house on Bay street and attended by Dr. Devlin, who administered chloroform. There are no bones broken; but at present it is believed that he has injured his spine. Had he fallen a few inches on either side than what he did, he would have smashed his skull; as it is he will be laid up for at least six weeks if not longer.

## AMERICAN.

The Jubilee was a financial failure.—The deficit is reported to be \$150,000.

A French colony in Franklin, Kansas, has established a velvet manufactory, the first in the United States.

The car shops of the Pennsylvania Railroad Company, at Altoona, give constant employment to upwards of 2,550 men.

A young man in New York is becoming independently rich by breaking off marriage engagements objectionable to his father at \$100 a time.

It is stated that upwards of three thousand women are employed in the departments at Washington as clerks, printers, librarians, copyists, and the like.

The census shows New York city to have 419,094 residents of foreign birth, out of a total population of 942,292, giving fifty-six as the per centage of native born inhabitants.

A factory is being erected at Fairfield, Conn., in which carriages are to be built consisting entirely of India rubber, with the exception of the axles and tires, this material being claimed to possess superiority over wood.

Two of the crew of a whaler which arrived at New London, Conn., recently, found that during their absence they had fallen heir to fortunes. The cook of the ship inherits a fortune of \$25,000, left by a near relation, and one of the foremast hands inherits \$10,000 left by his mother.

The strike in New York has procured for 25,000 men a reduction of the hours of labor

to eight daily. It has, by this means, inaugurated a general reduction throughout the country, which will be completely effected in a year or two. All the building trades in that city have adopted the eight-hour principle.

The "Elijahites" are a new sect who have founded a colony in Georgia, where they have all things in common. That is to say, Mr. Curry, their leader, holds the fifth of all the real estate and keeps the bank account for the benefit of the entire community. An exchange thinks the "Elijahites" would do well to keep a sharp eye on their leader.

A Conference of friends of laboring men and women was held at No. 14 Bromfield street on the 2nd instant, when it was resolved that an appeal be prepared for presentation to the pulpit, the press, and the lecturing profession in behalf of labor reform. A committee consisting of nine members was chosen to draw up the appeal. Another meeting of the conference will be called before the appeal is issued. Some earnest clergymen are giving their assistance to these measures. Other members of their profession will probably follow their example.

Active preparations are being made among the different trades for the Eight Hour demonstration to take place in New York on the 1st of August. A matter which threatened to make the affair abortive has been amicably settled in the withdrawal from the parade of the red flag of the Internationals. Some of the trades positively objected to turning out under this flag, and the matter excited no little agitation. The American flag, it is believed, is broad enough and strong enough to embrace all classes, and the introduction of the red flag would probably materially affect the imposing display.—*Union.*

## FOREIGN.

The publication of the names of persons in Liverpool who became intoxicated in public, has reduced the number of drunkards one-third during the past six months.

Cholera is steadily on the increase at Kiey, in European Russia. From the 14th of May to the 1st of June, the number of cases in that city amounted to 1,301, the number of dead to 532.

Strips of looking-glass introduced into roofs of the street lamps in London, cause them to give three times as much light as the ordinary lamp.

A great robbery of bank notes has been committed on Monday in the streets of Antwerp. One hundred and eighty-five notes of 1,000f. each were stolen from a clerk by a man of middle height, who is described as having no beard, and wearing coat and trousers of a grey color.

The International Workingmen's Association in their Congress, on Saturday, repudiated free-love and resolved to be neutral in politics; the association being solely a labor organization. There were twenty-two delegates present, representing twenty sections. None of the delegates are American born.

A new plan of dealing is being introduced into the retail grocery trade of England to induce cash payments for groceries, and also to make new customers, which is said to be a decided success. It is styled the "bonus system for cash payments for groceries," and consists in allowing a bonus of two and a half per cent., payable at the end of each six months, on all purchases made before that time. Here is a hint to some of our own enterprising merchants.

The wife of an assistant at an anatomical school of Lemberg (Austria) having died suddenly overnight, a *post-mortem* was gone into, but nothing but a red spot was seen on the left breast. At a subsequent autopsy (dissection), however, the broken point of a needle was found in the heart of the deceased. The husband has been taken into custody, being suspected to have punctured his wife's heart while she was asleep.