

ported having visited Ottawa, but they found that "the Government would not undertake to arbitrate" between the St. John Council and the Board, so that it was needful to come to an agreement. This was done, we are glad to see, at the meeting in question. The City Council offered, for the sum of \$500,000, to transfer to a commission to be appointed, all the city corporation wharves, slips and flats, and the warehouses connected with the wharves, all the leases of lands belonging to them fronting on deep water, all the harbor fisheries and fishing rights, privileges and control in the harbor up to high water, as held under the city charter with one exception. The Dominion Government is to be asked to loan the purchase money at 4 per cent. to the commission which will consist of seven members, three to be appointed by the Government, two by the Bouncil and two by the Board of trade.

—Though the Hamilton and North-Western Railway Company increased its earnings last year, it was unable to pay a dividend on the preference stock. The building of the line was financially a mistake, and a different result could hardly have been expected. In the report of the directors we read:—

"The net revenue of the combined lines for the year 1881 was \$463,983, or £95,133, of which the proportion payable to this company was \$138,895, or £28,540. The balance carried forward from previous year, less interim dividends on preference stock paid therefrom, was \$1,962, or £403, making a total of \$140,857, or £28,943, at credit of revenue account for 1881. The balance of total authorized issue of first mortgage bonds having been disposed of in 1880, the full amount of the annual interest appears for the first time in the accounts of the year, and with the interest on advances from Executive Committee, and mortgage on station properties, and separate establishment expenses, nearly absorbs the net revenue of the year."

Under a combined system of working, it ought to be possible to get rid of duplicate establishments. These roads are not so extensive that they could not be worked under a single set of offices. Suppose the experiment be tried.

MORE ABOUT STRIKES.

In nearly all that has been recently said at meetings of striking trades, and in too much that has been written on the subject of the relations of employers in Toronto to their hands, the arguments have been one-sided and no allowance has been made for the difficulties of employers. We are not among those who consider that the employer "has no rights which the working-man is bound to respect." Furthermore, it is but right that the concessions which have been made by labor in this city should be understood. The striking carpenters have returned to work on the terms proposed to

them weeks ago by the masters, and the painters are again at work, the female shoe-operatives went to work last week on the faith of a future adjustment of their "bill of wages." But now there are mutterings of discontent among the male operatives in Toronto shoe-factories, who are pressing for an increase of ten per cent. in their pay notwithstanding that they agreed in June last to present terms up to 1st July next. The ground upon which this is sought is the general one of the higher cost of the necessities of life.

But it is to be borne in mind that there have been increases in the rate of wages as well as in prices of commodities. These very men who are now asking a further advance, received an increase of pay equal to between 12 and 13 per cent. in 1880, and then, again, an advance equal to 7½ per cent. on 1st July 1881, making say 20 per cent. within 18 months. It would appear, however, that the wages these operatives receive weekly to-day do not go any further—some say not so far—as those received a year or two years ago. The reason for this, we apprehend, is not alone the greater dearness of the needfuls of life, which according to statisticians have not increased 20 per cent. since 1880. We question whether the most economic use is made of the increased wages received. For another thing the shoe operative, paid by the hour as he is, gets a smaller number of hours work in the week than he used to do, Toronto houses finding that—partly because of this very increase in the pay of the hands—it pays them better to buy goods ready-made from Montreal and Quebec factories, where labor is cheaper than to use their own high-priced labor. The tasteful and substantial Western pattern boots and shoes are being more closely copied, season after season, by Eastern makers, who are improving the quality of their goods and displaying a degree of taste in finish that induces Hamilton, London and Toronto manufacturers to make fewer boots and shoes and to buy a larger proportion of their stocks in the East than they used to do.

Among the peace-makers who came forward, doubtless with laudable intent, to help in adjusting matters between the masters and the strikers, were some half dozen of the city clergymen. We have no doubt that these worthy gentlemen, or some of them, had seen discomfort arising in the homes of their parishoners by reason of the strike, or else that they felt a not surprising dread at the prospect of the prolonged idleness of many a bread-winner. But we demur to their fitness as arbitrators. For one thing, they leaned too distinctly to the side of the workmen; some of them openly declared their prejudice against the employers. And besides, they are not, as a class, sufficiently versed in business affairs.

It is scarcely necessary now to allude to some of the incidents of the labor trouble; the absurd attempt to "Boycott" a newspaper, the *Telegram*, for refusing to be dictated to by the Printers' Union, not only so but to Boycott the merchants who should advertise in it! the con-

ferences by day and by night of committees and go-betweens; the mass-meetings of workmen from different trades for mutual encouragement the contributions of the Union Funds of one trade to assist in maintaining the strikers in another. There was doubtless the usual amount of flattery of the working man by demagogues and more than enough of abuse of the employer for "grinding the faces of the poor." It is as true to-day as it was sixty years ago when the Combination Act was repealed in Britain, that only coercion—which the repealing act made unlawful—could counteract the law of supply and demand. "The unvarying history of combinations to raise wages is either that new hands are brought in who drive the combining workmen out of the market, or that the *capital* and the trade find their way to some other place where production is free." Striking operatives and their friends need to learn that competition has reduced the profits of manufacturers, and that in some lines of boots and shoes it pays better to buy shoes elsewhere than to make them here. If the employers find they are not earning interest upon their capital, it will be a perfectly natural thing for that capital to be diverted into other channels, to the loss or ruin of those to whom it gave employment.

CANADIAN WOOLS.

The condition of the market for our domestic wools is by no means promising, and emphasizes what we have often written upon: the importance to this country of growing short wools in place of the long-stapled article now going out of vogue. As may be seen by our market report the outlook is unfavorable; Canada fleece wools are dull and heavy at the low prices which have so long ruled, and the new clip will still further increase the supply, with no perceptible enlargement of demand. There are still in Ontario several hundred thousand pounds of fleece wool, scattered about in lots of 10,000 to 30,000 pounds, some of it two years old, and some of it held for American mills who cannot use it and are now throwing it on the market. The May circular of Messrs. Justice, Bateman & Co., of Philadelphia, has the following as to these wools:

"The revolution in the style of dress goods, into which the bulk of the low medium and coarse combing wools have heretofore been used, points to a strong probability of these grades being neglected, and lower than last year. Already they are not so saleable as the rejected short clothing of the same grade, and bring only the same price. Therefore if the present conditions of the combing wool trade continue, it will not be safe to pay any advance for the coarse, long-stapled combing clips."

The Massachusetts mills which have been using wools of this class, on which they paid heavy duty, have been undersold in their own market by the Bradford worsteds and other cheap woolen stuffs. Indeed we are told that such establishments as the Pacific, the Arlington and the Washington mills are proposing to change their machinery that they may use shorter stapled wools. A Canadian fleece wool