

Ontario Workman.

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

VOL. II.—No. 38.

TORONTO, THURSDAY, JANUARY 1, 1874.

No. 90.

Labor Notes.

A society called "The Brakeman's Union of America," has recently been incorporated under the State laws of Illinois, with headquarters at East St. Louis.

The Lehigh rolling mills, owned by the Youngstown Rolling Mills Company, resumed work on Monday, having received large orders.

The carpet weavers, who are on a strike, held a mass meeting on the 19th inst., in Friendship Hall, at which resolutions were adopted against the contract system.

The Crispins of Chicago held a Mass Meeting on the afternoon of the 14th inst., to protest against the reduction of wages which the employers proposed to make.

In the Shenandoah Valley all the collieries except the Kohinor and Gap began work Thursday, Dec. 10, on three-quarter time, under rules similar to those adopted by the Philadelphia and Reading Coal and Iron Company.

A delegation of the working men of New York called on Commissioner Van North, Friday, and demanded work for the unemployed laborers. They also demanded that the work be furnished direct from the city authorities, and all contracts abrogated.

GREENOCK TRADES' COUNCIL.—This Council met on Friday night, and complimented the Executive of the Glasgow and West of Scotland Demonstration on the efficient arrangements made. The delegates were instructed to consult their trades as to the appointment of a delegate from Greenock to the approaching Trade Union Congress at Sheffield.

A meeting of the convict warders has been held to consider the best means of improving their position. In addition to the metropolitan establishments, the Working, Dartmoor, Chatham, and Portland prisons were represented. Resolutions were passed pledging the meeting to continue the agitation for shorter hours and the abolition of unnecessary fines and penalties.

At a meeting of the laborers at the Surrey Commercial Docks, on Tuesday, it was resolved to accept the terms offered by their employers—10 per cent increase of their wages at once, and a further increase of 10 per cent. on the 1st of January—and that they should work amicably with the men who had been brought from the country until they could be drafted back.

The goods guards and shunters employed by the Manchester, Sheffield, and Lincolnshire Railway Company are memorialising the directors for 3s. per week advance of wages, and extra remuneration for all time worked beyond ten hours per day. They also ask for three days' leave of absence annually, without loss of pay, and other minor concessions.

Between 300 and 400 miners employed at the Monk Bretton Colliery, near Barnsley, struck work on Thursday, owing to alleged grievances. The men, it appears, wish to set aside the award of an arbitration with regard to prices paid for straight work, but the association will not allow them to do so. They have, however, set the union at defiance, and struck work. It is said that, as the colliery is likely to be laid idle for some time, the owners will give notice to their customers that they cannot supply them with coal.

The Executive Committee of the National Agricultural Laborers' Union met on Monday at Leamington, many districts having taken premature action as to a sick and benefit club. The Committee resolved that as the National Agricultural Laborers' Union are taking the necessary steps to secure on a sound basis a sick and benefit society, it is desirable that districts should await the result of the efforts of the Union before attempting to undertake so important a matter without due consideration.

An adjourned conference of delegates from the laborers unions favorable to a federation, was held at the Rose Tavern, Old Bailey, lately, under the presidency of

Mr. George Odger, of the London Trades Council. A General Union of the Agricultural and General Laborers was formally established, and rules adopted. The expense of the general council, from whom the executive committee will be chosen, are to be met by a levy of a halfpenny per quarter upon every financial member, paid in advance, and, as there are about 60,000 financial members in the districts who have already joined the federation, the sum, it is thought, will be amply sufficient. Mr. George Shipton, secretary of the London Trades' Council, agreed to act for the present as general secretary.

A strike has taken place in connection with a number of the Railway Engineers of the United States. The cause of the difficulty was an attempted reduction of the wages of the engineers. Messrs. Jessup, Zeigler, Price, and Cummings, the oldest engineers on Little Miami, state that about two years ago Col. Thomas Scott and Messrs. McCullough and Laing made an agreement with the engineers in regard to their salaries, to the effect that the contract then made should not be violated by either party without both parties previously discussing the matter. The engineers claim that this agreement has been violated. A communication has been published from Mr. Chas. Wilson, Grand Chief Engineer of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers, condemning the action of the men, and advising all persons engaged in the strike to resume work.

LABOR PORTRAITS.

"Men who, in advance of law and in opposition to prevailing opinion, have forced into national recognition the hitherto disregarded rights of labor."

JOHN D. PRIOR,

GENERAL SECRETARY OF THE AMALGAMATED CARPENTERS AND JOINERS.

Mr. John Darnel Prior was the eldest son of a Dissenting minister, and was born in the parish of Bradford, in the county of Devon, on July 27th, 1840. His father endeavored to give him a tolerably liberal education, intending to make him a schoolmaster; but the duties of a pedagogue proved so distasteful to the youth, that, in 1854, he was, at his own desire, apprenticed to the trade of a carpenter and joiner in the town of Plymouth. Shortly after the completion of his apprenticeship, he became a member of the Independent Order of Odd Fellows, Manchester Unity; and after passing through the various offices of his lodge, he was elected as secretary, and continued to hold that office up to the time of his removal from Plymouth.

In the autumn of the year 1862, a few of the carpenters and joiners of Plymouth became alive to the necessity of uniting for mutual protection and assistance, and Mr. Prior was one of the founders of a local trade society, which, in the spring of the succeeding year, was incorporated as a branch of the Amalgamated Society of Carpenters and Joiners. At that time, his leisure hours were fully occupied in keeping the books of his employer, and performing his duties as secretary of a large Odd Fellows' lodge; and although he was a regular attendant at the meetings of his trade, and felt a lively interest in all questions affecting the wellbeing of his class, he filled no office as a trades unionist. In May, 1864, a general lock-out of the building trades in Plymouth, Stonehouse, and Devonport took place, lasting three weeks. Mr. Prior was elected on the lock-out committee, and during the struggle he addressed a series of letters to the local newspapers, signed, "A Locked-out Building Operative," which greatly tended to turn the current of public opinion in favor of the workmen. In 1865, the carpenters and joiners of Plymouth once more unfortunately became involved in a struggle with their employers, and Mr. Prior was elected secretary of the strike committee. During the protracted contest which ensued, he became well known in the trade, and an election taking place at that time, he was elected a member of the General Council of the society. The strike eventually ended in a victory on the part of the men; but the town being over-stocked with joiners, for whom remunerative employment could be found elsewhere, Mr. Prior decided to set them an example by removing to London. Shortly after his arrival in London, he was elected a member of the Executive Council of the society,

and he was twice re-elected to that important office. He was one of the members of the General Council meeting in 1868; and his ability and intelligence as an officer of the society soon became well-known to the members.

On Mr. Applegarth's resignation of the office of general secretary of the Amalgamated Society of Carpenters and Joiners, Mr. Prior was elected at his successor in June 1871, and at two subsequent elections the members have testified their appreciation of his services by re-electing him by overwhelming majorities.

The unfortunate differences which existed at the time of Mr. Prior's accession to the office of secretary, and which subsequently led to the separation from the society of a considerable number of members, rendered his duties unusually difficult and onerous. Unprovided with books or documents, in a strange city, with an executive council inexperienced in the duties of their office, he had to create the necessary machinery for carrying on the business of a great association; and the promptitude and ability which he displayed in attending to the requirements of the various branches greatly tended to restore confidence throughout the society. The differences which then existed are now numbered among the things of the past, and it is indisputable that his zeal, intelligence, and tact have mainly contributed to the amicable settlement which has been arrived at. Nine-tenths of the numbers who in 1871 left the society have now returned to its ranks; and old opponents have forgotten their former differences, and are working harmoniously together for the common good. That the members of the society are not insensible to the services which Mr. Prior has rendered at a critical period in its history, or to the admirable manner in which their general business is conducted by him, is evidenced by the near approach to unanimity with which he has recently been re-elected.

Mr. Prior is not unknown outside the organization of which he is the general secretary. In 1865 he took an active part in the formation of the Plymouth branch of the Reform League, and as their representative he attended the St. Martin's Hall Conference in 1866. In 1867 he was selected by the Society of Arts as one of the artisans sent by that body to visit and report on the Paris International Exhibition. Previous to his acceptance of his present office, he was for a while associated with Mr. Lloyd Jones in the discharge of the secretarial duties of the Labor Representation League, and he is still a member of the business committee of the league. His sympathies, both in regard to direct representation in Parliament, and in all other matters in which the rights of labor are involved, are strong and active. Since his removal to Lancashire, he has been engaged with other kindred spirits in endeavouring to establish among the workmen of Manchester and Salford an organization independent of party, having for its object the discussion of public questions from the workman's point of view, and the adoption of equal laws for all classes. He has also identified himself with the co-operative movement, being a member of the board of directors of the North of England Co-operative Printing Society, to which office he was re-elected at the last half-yearly meeting, at the head of the poll. Being yet a comparatively young man, we may hope that Mr. Prior will continue for many years to render useful and valuable services to the cause of progress.

A few details as to the origin, growth, and present position of the Amalgamated Society of Carpenters and Joiners will appropriately conclude our sketch of its chief officer.

The society was founded in London in the year 1860 by a few carpenters and joiners, who had learnt from their experience of the great lock-out of the preceding year, the necessity for a national organization similar to the one which had been already established in the engineering trade. Its original rules were to a great extent borrowed from the Amalgamated Society of Engineers, and it still closely resembles that society in its constitution and objects. From London the young society speedily extended itself into the provinces; branches were before long opened in Ireland, Scotland, and America, and it is rapidly becoming a great international organization, having one common fund, and governed by one code of rules. It has, at present, 244 branches, and 13,700 members, with an accumulated capital of £27,000. The society is registered under the Trades Union Act; and the members have recently decided to avail

themselves of the powers conferred on them in that Act, and erect new premises for general offices and the general secretary's residence in Manchester. The following figures will give some idea of the progress which it has made:—

NUMBER OF BRANCHES, MEMBERS AND FUNDS At the end of alternate years from the formation of the Society.

Dates.	Branches.	Members	Capital.
Dec. 1860	20	618	£321 3 2½
1862	38	949	849 8 10
1864	81	3,279	4,566 10 0½
1866	187	8,002	13,052 4 3½
1868	218	8,736	17,179 16 1
1870	236	10,178	17,568 19 4
1872	226	11,246	22,236 1 6½

AMOUNT OF BENEFIT PAID

From the formation of the society to December, 1872.

Out of Work Benefit	£42,862
Tool	3,720
Sick	34,726
Funeral	6,587
Accident	3,490
Superannuation	520
Trade Privileges	14,472
Benevolent Grants	2,788
Grants and Loans to other Trades	565
	£109,731

CURRENT EVENTS.

A Constantinople telegram says that the Porte is negotiating with English bankers to obtain an advance of £5,000,000.

The Governor of Pennsylvania proclaims that the State paid £1,504,672 70 of its debt during the past year.

Some Chinamen have purchased for \$24,000 a fine building in an excellent neighborhood in San Francisco and turned it into a joss house, much to the disgust of property owners near by.

The total number of postal telegrams forwarded in the United Kingdom, during the week ending November 22, was 341,769, showing an increase of 39,105 on the corresponding week last year.

Negotiations are in progress between Russia and China for a revision of the Treaty of Commerce of 1860. Russia desires that the whole of China should be made accessible to its merchants and available for its commerce, and especially that the restrictions imposed upon the tea trade, and limiting it to the frontier places, be rescinded, so that Russian importers may deal directly with the growers.

Secretary De Lano received a despatch on Tuesday, stating that the Sioux were again off their reservation, and killing cattle and committing other outrages. The settlers had applied for relief, but the nearest military post is at Fort Laramie.

A new style of paper for dining-rooms has medallions of game and birds, real skin and feathers being used. The figures are raised on light background, which is very effective. Flowers are also introduced of wax and linen tied together with bright colored ribbons.

The Ladies' Council of the Yorkshire Board of Education called a public meeting at Leeds recently for the purpose of considering the desirability of founding a school of cookery. The Mayor presided, and, after resolutions in favor of the scheme had been passed, a working committee was appointed.

The editor of the Kokomo (Indiana) Tribune who was robbed of \$400 in an Indianapolis hotel, the other night, attributes the affair to "an over-ruling Providence, and his forgetting to wear his nose glasses when he bolted the door."

The export of grain from Montreal this year, in spite of the early closing of the river, amount to 11,700,000 bushels, against 12,450,000 in 1872. The increased shipments of butter are noteworthy. 154,400 pkgs. against 116,500 last year, and of cheese still more marked, being 390,300 boxes against last year's 208,400. The Montreal Witness says that Canadian cheese now ranks above American in the English markets, and that our butter shows an improved quality.

The book keeper at the Grand Trunk Station has made up the shipments of butter and cheese for the season ending 3rd December, inst. There were 56,928 boxes of cheese, and 879 tubs of butter, shipped, the weight of which was 4,162,140 pounds. Nine hundred and ninety-seven packages went via Portland. The value of these commodities at 12½ cents a pound, would be \$499,456 80—or nearly half a million of dollars.

The steamer Gipsy Queen, belonging to the

River Tyne Improvement Commission, struck the wreck of a sunken lighter in the river Tyne at five o'clock Christmas morning, and went to the bottom in five minutes. There were between 50 and 60 workmen on board the boat at the time of the disaster. Twenty of them were rescued; the remainder, thirty or forty men, were drowned.

Fresh complications regarding Cuba are reported. It is rumored that Great Britain has announced, like Mr. Winkle, that she "is going to begin," and that a large fleet has been ordered to rendezvous in Cuban waters. It is also asserted, as well as denied, that the United States Government has admitted the Virginians was not entitled to the protection of the flag, and that Spain has demanded the restoration of the vessel and prisoners.

Prince Bismarck seldom gets the worst of a controversy; but he caught a Tartar not long since. It appears that Bismarck thinks French should not be retained as the language of diplomacy, believing the German better entitled to that honor. Accordingly he wrote a note to Prince Gortschakoff in German. But he was completely taken aback when the latter replied in Russian, a language Bismarck does not understand. The German Minister should have thought of that before he took so unusual a step.

Recently, as the West Highland mail car from Glasgow to Inverary was proceeding along the road past Loch Restal, at the head of Glencoe, the conveyance, a four-wheeled one, drawn by two horses, had toiled up the ascent from Glencoe in the face of a dreadful storm of wind and rain, and had just reached the head of the gorge that descends towards Glenkinglas, when a blast of wind came sweeping through the pass, and fairly lifting the vehicle off the ground, hurled it, horses, driver, and all, sheer over the embankment facing Loch Restal, the whole rolling over and over down the slope into the bed of a mountain torrent at the edge of the loch.

The granite sarcophagus presented by Queen Victoria to the empress Eugenie as a receptacle for the remains of the late Emperor has arrived at Chislehurst from Aberdeen, and been placed in the handsome mortuary chapel which has been erected to cover the Emperor's tomb. The sarcophagus will stand on a tessellated pavement in the centre of the new building, and will be approached from the interior of the church by two steps through a double bay, divided by columns of jasper. This approach being always open, the tomb will always remain in view of the congregation. The work will be completed by Christmas, and the coffin will then be removed across the church to its new resting-place. The translation will not be attended by any ceremony, but will be conducted in the presence of some of the French nobility, and there will be solemn service on the 9th of January, the first anniversary of the Emperor's death.

At a meeting of the Cardiff Board of Guardians, lately, attention was called to a remarkable revolt of female inmates on the previous day. Some time ago the guardians resolved to introduce foreign meat into the dietary of the house. The paupers expressed their disapproval of the innovation, and sent food away untouched. The guardians resolved to continue its use. On Friday morning, when the nurse entered the lock hospital for the purpose of giving the inmates their breakfast, she was assailed with a shower of spoons, bread, and other articles. The master was sent for, and order was temporarily restored. Subsequently, however, several of the women jumped out of the windows, got into the adjoining garden, and amused themselves by a series of antics resembling those of lunatics. They were eventually taken into custody and committed to prison for twenty-one days.

According to the Berlin journals the Poles in Western Prussia are throwing every possible obstacle in the way of the teachers, who, in accordance with recent instructions, confine themselves to the use of the German language in schools. Parents, it is stated, prohibit their children from speaking German, endeavour to intimidate the teachers by anonymous threats, and throw the German school-books into the fire. It is narrated that in one village school, in the district of Stuhwet, the teacher took great pains to teach the Polish children to sing the song, "I have devoted myself," ("Ich hab' mich ergeben.") As soon as he arrived at the words, "My German fatherland," the children refused to repeat them after him, and threats and even corporeal punishment had no effect.