

OUR BOARDING HOUSE

Reflections on Current Events by the Boarders.

"Don't meddle with politics! Educate and agitate, and pass resolutions, and sign petitions, but if you wish to keep your organization intact don't go into politics. That has been the cry," said Brown, "ever since I joined my Union, seventeen years ago. At that time we confined ourselves to demanding better protection to life and limb in factory, mine and workshop; we strove to benefit our trade by regulating the apprentice system, and limiting the number of hours to ten per day. We thought that this was all that was necessary to protect our interests. We knew that politics created strife among outsiders, we saw it every day, and when our leaders and political friends advised us to 'shy clear of politics' we instinctively felt that they were acting for the best interests of our class. I don't even now question their sincerity. I believe they spoke and acted to the best of their knowledge. Well, we began to study the labor question in order to be able to educate our members. The more we studied it the more we realized that something more was wanted than a Factory Act and a regulating of the apprentice system to better our condition. It gradually dawned upon us that by the time we would succeed in limiting the number of apprentices to that point where the demand for tradesmen would exceed the supply and enable us to secure larger wages, the trade itself would have disappeared. New inventions had largely subdivided labor, and even at that time few of us, if any, and then only in smaller shops, finished an article right through. More than that, these new machines had largely increased production and the markets were flooded, and instead of only working ten hours a day many of us were working less than that, and I can't truthfully say that we liked it. However, it was the means of making us think; rents were increasing while thousands of us were in enforced idleness. Crops, though abundant, never seemed sufficiently large to place even the necessaries of life within our reach, and though undoubtedly some men were becoming millionaires, we had conclusive proof that the great mass of the people were fast becoming poorer. Not only were we unable to buy the goods, cheap though they were, which the new machines produced, but they actually robbed us of our old-time independence in so far that almost any 'handy man' could run them and turn out better work after a few weeks' experience than we could turn out without them after serving five or seven years to the trade; and the men who worked these machines were common every day laborers who had never learned a trade and whom we would not even then admit into our union. Some of the more advanced of our members saw 'the cat' fast enough; they realized that under the new order of things it had become necessary to improve the condition of these men who had taken our places if we wanted to advance our own interests; for if they could be induced to work for no less than we demanded, wages could still be kept up to a living point, whereas if we allowed them to continue as they had begun, starvation stared us in the face. Out of pure selfishness we were compelled to organize these men. Don't make any mistake about it; it wasn't sentiment, but dollars and cents that made us do it. In studying the various phases of the question we had come to the conclusion that the evils which we sought to remove were rooted deeper than we at first imagined. The Knights of Labor offered a platform which at once commended itself as thorough-going, and into it we went bag and baggage. And now we heard the self-same song we heard before: Organize, educate and agitate—but don't go into politics

or the order will go to smash. Our condition improved in so far as the organizing of the unskilled labor which had supplanted us was concerned, because their wages thereby being increased likewise increased our pay, but to educate our members in the duties of citizenship and then neglecting to give them an opportunity to cast their votes according to their new-found convictions proved as much a failure as did our first attempt to emancipate labor by passing factory acts or regulating the number of apprentices in each trade. Men attracted by the lofty aims of the Order joined us in large numbers only to drop out again in disgust when they saw the inconsistency of advocating 'constitutional' means and then religiously refraining from anything that had the least semblance of politics. Hence the gradual falling off in membership until the Order boldly went into politics. From the day that Livingstone and Powderly shook hands and pledged their organizations to united political action, from that day the Order has again advanced in leaps and bounds. Don't make any mistake; this world is full of MEN, men of honor, of singleness of purpose, of strong convictions who are prepared to follow any leader bold enough to face the issue fairly and squarely. The day of palliatives, of makeshifts, of apologies, is past; this is the time for action, and none but men of action can successfully lead labor's host. Do you believe that the laborer is still so ignorant as to make it undesirable to organize a labor party? The other day in Cincinnati 1,417 delegates of organized labor met, representing every State and Territory in the Union who thought otherwise. From north and south, from east and west they came, and all maintained that the people were not only ripe but clamoring for a party which would be of the people, for the people, and by the people. And there, in a hall which has seen some of the greatest political conventions of our times, among the unbounded enthusiasm of the leaders of labor's army, a party was born which will lead us to victory. Labor at last stands at bay; it has gone into politics, despite the warnings and friendly advice of the capitalistic press and the professional heeler; it has gone in to win, and capital stands awed and silent. The Associated Press has sent no despatches to its readers regarding that convention; it dare not do so, but every workingman should for once invest a few coppers and buy any good Labor paper, all of whom have reports in full, so that their readers may know when, and where and why it was found necessary to organize a labor party.

BILL BLADES.

ECHOES FROM THE POINT.

"Three straight" was the result of the Beavers match in the Independent Junior League, and in their favor too. A large audience was present, principally composed of members and players of the other teams in the league. They seem afraid now the same tale will be told when they visit the Point.

The work on the new Methodist Church is being pushed along at a rapid rate. The outside walls are now well under way.

St. Matthew's new church is to be opened on Sunday, June 21st. The Rev. Dr. Cook, of Boston, will preach at the opening services.

The subway is now beginning to look like as if somebody had been working there. It is about time.

Rumor says the Grand Trunk shops are to close on the 13th for a month's holidays.

The Grand Trunk Boating Club had several crews out practicing this week in the new four-oared sculls; also a number of crews in the doubles.

The syndicate in the shops struck oil in the Derby drawing. Held Common. That wasn't bad, was it?

By present appearances, a large number of new houses will be erected at the Point during the present summer. Large piles of bricks, stone and other building materials can be seen on almost every street.

A largely attended meeting of the congregation of Grace Church was held on

Wednesday evening to examine the plans submitted by the architects for their new church to be erected at the corner of Wellington and Fortune streets. It was decided to call for tenders for the building immediately.

Work is going on at the new Tail Race bridge on Lachine road.

WANTED, AN ELECTORAL PROGRAMME.

At the next elections there ought to be a programme drawn up on general, social, municipal, educational, and political questions that would guide workman voters, who now, in the absence of such programme, either abstain or misuse their votes. Upon the question of shorter hours on Municipal and Government employment, sub-letting and sub-contracting, although a little was done, it is insignificant compared with what is possible, if the workers are properly guided and instructed by a body which they are learning to trust. This confidence must be increased, and will only come from a wisely directed ambition on the part of that body to what it should be—the deliberative body for the London workers, sending forth in the name of its constituents its weighty utterance on public questions, which representative men could look to as an expression of working-class opinion, and which politicians would healthily fear.

Some, of course, there are who will object to a Trades' Council interfering with political questions. The objection comes too late; it is already committed to the task. The fear of difference among its constituents is imaginary. Politics to-day are not the nostrum shibboleths of a few years back. The growth of monopoly in all forms has narrowed down the differences that so acutely prevailed amongst the workers, and it is safe to say, and the experience of the Trade Union Congress confirms it, that beyond the eight hour question, which when settled, will give the worker what he first needs—more leisure and education—there is a minimum programme to be drawn up that would practically unite all workers upon the great questions of ownership of land, railways, tramways, gas, water, and other monopolies, individual ownership of which is injurious to the community.

Questions of housing the working classes, factory acts, age for children working, parks and open spaces, municipal workshops, education, and many other questions, must be grappled concurrently with the reduction of hours question.

The relation of the Labor Party of the future to the demand for local self government and autonomy by parts of our kingdom, empire, and colonies must be authoritatively discussed and decided upon; and it devolves upon some representative body of workmen to take the lead and initiative ere others, less qualified and desirable, exploit the growing sentiment amongst the people, not only for a freer individual life under happier communal conditions, but to prevent the diversion of this healthy democratic feeling by a middle class bureaucracy into an Imperial Caesarism, keeping one part of the people in subjection by using the other half of their fellows against the welfare of the whole working class.—John Burns in Labor World.

"EARTH TO EARTH."

Germans are not generally classed as an ingenious people, and the Prussian variety in particular is thought to lack novel ideas. But whilst showmen are over the universe, professional as well as amateur, are at their wits' end to devise a new exhibition, an unnamed genius of Berlin has quietly produced something original. Once upon a time, indeed, the late Duke of Wellington lent Apsley House for a demonstration of "earth to earth burial"; but since the objects exhibited were made of wicker work and filled with roses, lilies, and so forth, visitors were free to regard the whole business as a flower show. There is no such uncertainty about the Berlin display. It professes to offer a comparative study of coffins, and it fulfills the ideal with Teutonic conscientiousness. Thirty-two manufacturers send their interesting wares. The connoisseur in coffins can study and compare respectively the styles of Munich, Leipzig, Rostock, Warmbrunn, and the Erz Gebirge. Everybody knows what a fascination things connected with the "black job" possess for many minds. It was of George Selwyn, famed above all others for this mania, that Henry Fox gave a servant directions from his deathbed:—"Whenever Mr. Selwyn should call admit him, if I'm alive I shall be very glad to see him, if I'm dead he will be very glad to see me." Perhaps these Berlin speculators expect a rush of such hypochondriacs from every part of Europe to behold their coffins. Its must be rather an impressive spectacle in its way, calculated to inspire the beholder with a despairing sense of the vanity of human things. But we may doubt whether, upon the whole, it is sound business in these days to obtrude the dull and squalid horror of our funeral ceremonies upon the public. Not a few who visit that exhibition, we should say, will decide for cremation forthwith.—Evening Standard.

Rich Men of the Future.

A leather merchant not generally known to be a wealthy man, died some months ago in New York. A lawsuit arose from his will, which distributed great legacies among a score of colleges. The suit was compromised, and the legacies will be paid. Out of the estate of this unknown millionaire nearly four million dollars will be given to thirty-five colleges; half a million more will be divided between several hospitals.

It is impossible to estimate the good to students and the sick that these bequests ensure for years and years to come. There is no doubt, however, that in general a rich man's money had better be given away before his death than after it.

Many years may pass between the making of a fortune and the carrying out of the maker's will. Besides this useless delay there is the danger that bequests will be diverted from their intended purpose. While a man is alive he can see that his money is spent as he wishes. After his death there is no telling what legal contentions and unforeseen difficulties may bring about.

Money in itself is worth nothing. Its only value lies in what one can do with it. Many

young people are going to make fortunes within the next generation or two. If they will devote a share of their wealth, while they can still control it, to the wise, generous service of their fellow-men, the value of money will be realized as never before.

A SAD BRIDE.

One of the saddest marriages on record is that entered into by a former Russian officer, condemned to ten years' hard labor in the mines and a life-long banishment, and a young and a beautiful girl, possessing an ample fortune in her own right, who had faithfully and fearfully followed the footsteps of her lover. The bridegroom was brought to the altar of the prison chapel in the soil-d gray clothes of a sailor, his ankle bound by chains riveted in the iron waistband. The marriage ceremony over, husband and wife bade each other a sad but hopeful farewell; he to return to his gloomy, toilsome life, and she to wait wearily until her husband obtains the freedom of a colonist.

The Japanese murderer Jugiro was sentenced in New York on Thursday to be executed in the week beginning July 6.

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