

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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Labor Notes.

A new cigar makers' union has recently been formed at Elyria, Ohio.

On Tuesday the employers in the mason trade, Glasgow, conceded the demands of the men, and the strike is at an end.

The nine-hour system has now been in operation for some months at Aberdeen, and upon the whole seems to give mutual satisfaction to both employer and employed.

A meeting of weavers was held in the Masonic Hall, Galashells, on Monday evening, to consider a code of rules for the formation of a union, drawn up by a committee.

DUNDEE SLATERS' STRIKE.—This strike continues to a certain extent—two squads being still out. Messrs. Gauld and Laeburn, Mr. Rattray, and Mr. John W. Fyffe have acceded to the request of the men, who have resumed work.

The popular melodeon manufacturers of Guelph, Messrs. Wm. Bell & Co., invited their employees and a few friends to a social supper at the Queen's Hotel, on Wednesday evening last, as is their annual custom.

A Typographical Union was recently organized in Quebec. The following is the list of officers:

President—Simson Marcotte.
Vice President—George Grenier.
Recording Secretary—Joseph Vienno-Michaud.
Corresponding Secretary—Leon B. Lyon-nais.
Financial Secretary and Treasurer—G. C. Rousseau.
Marshal—P. Lizotte.

Some time ago the operative shoemakers of Blackford presented a petition to their employers, praying for an increase of wages. The masters, having considered the matter, have very handsomely granted the request of the men, whose wages are now advanced from ten to fifteen per cent.

The miners of the Hilda Colliery, South Shields, had a great demonstration on Saturday, in celebration of their having obtained the franchise. After the open-air demonstration, there was an evening meeting at the Mechanics' Institution, presided over by Mr. Stevenson, the borough member, who expressed a hope that the miners at Morpeth would be equally successful in obtaining the franchise.

Last week the operative shoemakers of Penicik petitioned their masters for a rise of wages, similar to what had taken place in Dalkeith. All of the masters agreed to grant the rise with the exception of the committee of the Co-operative Society, who refused to accede to the demand, and their workmen accordingly turned out on strike on Monday.

The seamen's strike in Belfast has terminated. The strike was confined to sailors connected with coal vessels; and, after a rather prolonged struggle, they have agreed to resume work at the old terms. A strike commenced on Monday among the same class of seamen at Drogheda. They assert that the owners agreed to pay them at the rate of £4 a month, but the owners denied this, and paid them at the old rate. The men, therefore, refused to continue longer at work.

The miners in the district of West Calder held a meeting recently, at which it was unanimously resolved not to return to work unless the advance of 1s. per day demanded some time ago was conceded. Following up this resolution, the colliers left in large numbers for the mining districts in the west.

A meeting of the Glasgow operative bricklayers was recently held, at which a deputation—in compliance with request—from the United Trades Confederation, and also one from the Trades Council, relative to the proposed building of halls for the trades of Glasgow. Both deputations were cordially received and attentively listened to. It was intimated that other meetings of the trade would be held to decide to what extent they would take part in the confederation and the erection of the proposed halls.

Minors' representatives from the various iron and coal districts in Scotland, assembled on Monday in Glasgow, and discussed the present state of the trade, the unsatisfactory condition of which they attributed to the exorbitant advances in prices made by the employers. The meeting declared its willingness to meet with the masters in conference, with the view of adjusting the whole wages question, and preventing strikes and lockouts in future.

At a general meeting of the maltmen of Edinburgh and Loth it was unanimously agreed that on Saturday first they should give in their warning to their employers, as they considered their present pay insufficient to meet their requirements. The present wages are 22s. per week for between 63 and 65 hours' labor, taking Sunday into consideration.

The miners of Kirkcaldy have now turned their attention from wages, and are seeking to have their houses let from year to year, instead of being at the mercy of their masters when disputes arise. This is the best move the colliers have yet made, and, if successful, will have broken the strongest weapon the masters have. The Muiridge evictions are still fresh in the memory of the miners, and will be a strong incentive to them to urge on the much needed change.

A meeting of the Edinburgh journeymen paper-rulers was held lately in Buchanan's Hotel, High street—Mr. Thomas Harley in the chair. The answer of the master paper-rulers to the memorial of the journeymen for an increase of wages was submitted to the meeting. The journeymen asked an increase of 2s 6d per week upon the present wages, and the masters, with the exception of two, have agreed to give 2s extra per week. The wages will now average about 28s. The meeting agreed to accept the offer of the employers, and passed a vote of thanks to them for the concession they had made.

CANADIAN.

Strathroy is making arrangements for having a Mechanics' Institute.

It is proposed to establish an implement factory at Colborne.

The Hamilton papers have agreed to increase their rates of subscription on the 1st prox.

This has been a good season for the Ottawa brickmakers, \$14 to \$16 per thousand being obtained for all they could make.

Hamilton proposes establishing a Fat Men's Club. No person under two hundred pounds is eligible for membership.

Three children have been drowned at Black Bay, near Thurso, by breaking through the ice. This is the first of the usual list of casualties from that cause.

A man in Harriston, while working on his farm, had a narrow escape. A villager, who did not perceive the old man, fired at a bird, and the ball passed through the back part of the rim of his hat.

A mutual improvement class is being formed in connection with the Mechanics' Institute of the town of Mitchell, under the provisions of the Agricultural and Arts Act. The object of the class is to encourage anything of a literary character; however, debating will be its most immediate object.

On Saturday afternoon an employee of the McClary Manufacturing Co., London, met with an accident of a most painful and horrible description. He is a young married man named George Shelton. He was conveying a ladle full of molten iron from the furnace to one of the moulds, and tripped and fell between two of the boxes in such a manner that he lost control of the ladle, which fell upon one of the boxes and emptied the burning liquid upon the unfortunate man's body from his breast downward. Help was instantly at hand, and immediately the poor fellow was turned over and the clothes torn from him, but not before the great heat had pierced through, and in many places actually cooked the flesh. Medical aid was summoned, and Dr. Woodruff rendered every assistance in his power to soothe the victim, whose sufferings were of the most excruciating character.

About 2 a. m., Sunday, the residence of Mr. John Leslie, Dundas, was entered by two burglars, who, making their way to his bedroom, demanded his money, at the same time telling him if he did not keep quiet they would shoot him. Mr. Leslie not being deterred by their threats from sounding an alarm and calling for help, the ruffians took him by the throat and attempted to choke him; but, although quite aged, he so struggled as to prevent their inflicting any serious injury. Meanwhile his calls aroused his sister. Hearing her approach the burglars immediately rushed for the front door. Mr. Leslie, although bruised and scratched about the throat, has happily escaped any serious bodily hurt. No clue has been found as yet to the discovery of the perpetrators.

FOREIGN.

A telegram from Melbourne, Victoria, states that a bill legalizing marriage to a deceased wife's sister has passed the legislature.

Three hundred laborers left Warwickshire for Plymouth, as the first batch of Agricultural emigrants to the Union settlement on the east coast of Queensland.

A joint Russian and German deputation is prospecting through Manitoba on behalf of a large party of Menonites, who propose emigrating from Russia and Germany.

Almost fabulous prices were realized at the Oxford pigeon and poultry show on Thursday, as much as £100 and £150 having been paid for prize Cochins and Dorkings, and £100 for Hylesbury ducks.

At Ashton-under-Lyne a torchlight procession of about 10,000 people took place on Sunday night week, and at one time seriously threatened the peace of the town, in consequence of the closing of the public-houses at nine o'clock.

Sir Charles Lyell declares that the entire continent of North America will be washed away into the ocean in four and a half million of years. And yet the people take an interest in real estate.

A telegram from Boston states that a young man named Henry Weston, an Englishman, twenty years of age, and formerly of Toronto and Woodstock, Canada, has been missing since Nov. 9th, and it is feared he has been killed in the great fire.

The Oxford and Cambridge boat race will, it is stated, most likely be rowed next year on Saturday, the 5th of April. At both universities the presidents are selecting their trial eights, from whom the selections of crews to contend at Putney is generally made. The formal challenge from the Oxonians will, it is understood, be sent to Cambridge this term.

The panic in coal is at an end, and the poor coal-mine owners have been compelled in many cases to make a rapid descent in price for custom. The Steam Coalowners' Association at Cardiff have reduced the market price of steam coal by six shillings a ton. There has also been a considerable fall in the price of coal in Fifehire and Clackmannanshire. The game has been a short one.

A DARK MYSTERY;

OR,

JIM BLAINE'S WONDERFUL STORY.

BY MARK TWAIN.

The boys used to tell me I ought to get one Jim Blaine to tell me the stirring story of his grandfather's old ram, but they always added that I must not mention the matter unless Jim was drunk at the time—just comfortably and sociably drunk. They kept this up until my curiosity was on the rack to hear the story. I got to haunting Blaine; but it was no use. He was often moderately but never satisfactorily drunk. I never watched a man's condition with such absorbing interest, such anxious solicitude; I never pined so to see a man uncompromisingly drunk before. At last one evening I hurried to his cabin, for I learned that this time his situation was such that even the most fastidious could find no fault with it. He was tranquilly, serenely, symmetrically drunk—not a hiccup to mar his voice, not a cloud upon his brain thick enough to obscure his memory. As I entered he was sitting upon an empty powder keg, with a clay pipe in one hand and the other raised to command silence. His face was round, red and very serious; his throat was bare and his hair tumbled; in general appearance and costume he was a stalwart miner of the period. On the pine table stood a candle, and its dim light revealed "the boys

sitting hero and there on bunks, candle-boxes, powder-kegs, etc. They said:

"Sh! Don't speak; he's going to commence." I found a seat at once, and Jim began:

"I don't reckon them times will ever come again. There wasn't a bullier old ram than he was. Grandfather fetched him from Illinois; got him from a man named Yates—Bill Yates—may be you might have heard of him; his father was a deacon—Baptist—and he was a rustler too; a man had to get up rather early to get the start of old Thankful Yates; it was him that put the Greens up to jining teams with my grandfather when he moved West. Seth Green was probably the pick of the flock. He married a Wilkerson—Sarah Wilkerson—good cretur she was—one of the likeliest heifers that ever was raised in old Stoddord everybody said that knowed her. She could heft a bar'l of flour as easy as I can flirt a flap-jack. And sp'n. Don't mention it! Independent? Humph? When Silo Hawkins came a browsing round her she let him know that for all his tin he couldn't trot in harness alongside of her. You see, Silo Hawkins—no, it warn't Silo Hawkins, after all; it was a galoot by the name of Gilkins—I disremember his first name—but he was a tramp—come into pra'r meeting one night, hooraying for Nixon becuz he thought it was primary; and old Deacon Gerguson up and scooted him through the window, and he lit on old Miss Jackson's head—poor old filly. She was a good soul—had a glass eye, and used to lend it to Miss Wagner, that hadn't any, to receive company in. It warn't big enough, and when Miss Wagner warn't noticing, it would get twisted around in the socket, and look up, may be, or out to one side and every way, while t'other was looking as straight as a spy-glass. Grown people didn't mind it, but it most always made the children cry, it was so sort of scary. She tried packing it in raw cotton, but it wouldn't work, somehow; the cotton would get loose and stick out, and so kind of awful that the children could not stand it no way. She was always dropping it out, and turned up her old deadlight on the company empty, and making them uncomfortable, becuz she never could tell them when it popped out, being blind on that side you see. So, somebody would have to hunch her, and say, "Your game eye hez fetched loose, Miss Wagner dear," and then all of them would have to sit and wait till she jammed it in again—wrong side before, as a general thing, and green as a bird's egg, being a bashful cretur and easy sot back before company. But being the wrong side before wasn't much difference any way, becuz her one eye was sky blue, and the glass one was yaller on the front side, so whichever way she turned it, it didn't match nohow. Old Miss Wagner was considerable on the borrow, she was. When she had a quilting or a Dorcas s'iety at her house, she gen'ally borrowed Miss Higgins' wooden log to stomp around on; it was considerably shorter than her other pin, but much she minded that. She said she couldn't abide crutches when she had company, becuz they were so slow. When she had company and things had to be done, she wanted to get up and hump herself. She was as bald as a judge, and so she had to borrow Miss Jacobs' wig—Miss Jacobs was the coffin-peddler's wife—a ratty old buzzard he was, that used to go roosting around where people was sick, waiting for them, and there that old rip would sit all day in the shade, on a coffin that he judged would fit the candidate; and if it was a slow customer and kind of uncertain, he'd fetch his rations and blanket and sleep in the coffin nights.

"He was anchored out that way in frosty weather for about three weeks once, before old Robbins' place, waiting for him; and after that, for as much as two years, Jacobs was not on speaking terms with the old man, on account of his disapp'ing him. He got one of his feet froze, and lost money, too, becuz old Robbins took a favorable turn and got well. The next time Robbins got sick Jacobs tried to make up with him, and vanished up the same old coffin and fetched it along with him; but old Robbins was too many for him; he had him in, and 'peared to be powerful weak; he bought the coffin for ten dollars, and Jacobs was to pay it back and twenty-five more besides if Robbins didn't like the coffin after he'd tried it. And then Robbins died, and at the funeral he bursted off the lid and riz up in his shroud and told the parson to let up on the performances, becuz he could not stand such a coffin as that. You see he had been in a trance once before, when he was young, and he took the chances on another, call'ating that

if he made the trip it was money in his pocket, and if he missed fire he couldn't lose a cent. And, by George, he sued Jacobs for the rhino, and got judgment, and he set up the coffin in his back parlor and said he 'lowed to take his time now. It was always an aggravation to Jacobs, the way that miserable old thing acted.

"He moved back to Indiana pretty soon—went to Wellesville—Wellesville was the place the Hogaloms was from. Mighty fine family. Old Maryland stock. Old Square Hogadom could carry around more mixed lickier and cuss better than most any man I ever see. His second wife was the Widdor Billings—she that was Becky Martin; her dam was Deacon Dunlay's first wife. Her oldest child, Maria, married a missionary and died in grace—et up by savages. They et him too, poor fellow—biled him. It wasn't the custom, so they say; but they explained it to friends of his'n that went down there to bring away his things; that they tried missionaries every other way and never could get any good out of 'em—and so it annoyed all his relations to find that man's life was fooled away just out of a derved experiment, so to speak. But mind you, there ain't anything ever really lost; everything that people can't understand and don't see the reason of does good, if you only hold on and give it a fair shake; Providence don't fire no blank cartridges, boys. That there missionary's substance, boys, unbeknowns to himself, actually converted every last one of them heathens that took a chance at the bar becuz. Nothing ever fetched them but that. Don't tell me it was an accident that he was biled. There ain't no such thing as an accident.

"When my Uncle Lem was standing up agin a scaffold once, sick or drunk, or suthin', an Irishman with a hod full of bricks fell on him out of the third story and broke the old man's back in two places. People said it was an accident. Much accident there was about that. He didn't know what he was there for, but he was there for a good object. If he hadn't been there the Irishman would have been killed. Nobody can ever make me believe different from that. Uncle Lem's dog was there. Why didn't the Irishman fall on the dog? Becuz the dog would a seen him coming and stood from under. That's the reason the dog weren't appointed. A dog can't be depended on to carry out a special providence. Mark my words, it was a put-up thing. Accidents don't happen, boys. Uncle Lem's dog—I wish you could a seen that dog. He was a regular shepherd—or, rather he was part bull and part shepherd—splendid animal, belonged to Parson Hagar before Uncle Lem got him.

"Parson Hagar belonged to the Western Reserve Hagers—prime family; his mother was a Weston; one of his sisters married a Wheeler; they settled in Morgan county, and he got nipped by the machinery of a carpet factory and went through in less than quarter of a minute. His widdor bought the piece of carpet that had his remains wove in, and people came a hundred miles to tend the funeral, and they had to let one end of the coffin stick out of the window. They didn't bury him—they planted one end and let him stand up same as a monument. And they nailed a sign on it, and put—put on—put on it—sacred to—them-e-m-o-r-y—of fourteen y-a-r-d-s—of three ply-car-pet—containing all that was—m-o-r-t-a-l of—of—W-j-i-l-i-a-m W-h-e—"

John Blaine had been growing gradually drowsy and drowsier—his head nodded once, twice, three times; then dropped peacefully upon his breast, and he fell, tranquilly asleep. The tears were running down the boys' cheeks—they were suffocating with suppressed laughter—and had been from the start, though I had never noticed it. I perceived that I was "sold." I learned then that Jim Blaine's peculiarity was, that whenever he reached a certain state of intoxication, no human power could keep him from setting out, with impressive unction, to tell about a wonderful adventure he had once had with his grandfather's old ram—and the mention of the ram in the first sentence was as far as any man had ever heard him get concerning it. He always mandered off interminably from one thing to another till his whisky got the better of him, and he fell asleep. What the thing was that happened to him and his grandfather's old ram is a dark mystery to this day, for nobody has ever yet found out.

"I have a great love for old hymns," said a pretty girl to her masculine companion. "I am much fonder of young haws," was the reply.