

—a large proportion of what they do read is more chaff, containing hardly a grain of solid, intellectual pabulum, while it abounds in moral poison. The world is flooded with books and papers that pervert, pollute, debase and destroy the mind, and what little workingmen do read is drawn largely from this source—simply because of its cheapness and because they cannot be induced to form a carefully regulated taste for reading of a higher order. The newspapers are generally read by workingmen; but, while we do not desire to disparage the merits of such reading, we do say that the knowledge obtained through newspapers, though enabling us to form opinions on the questions and controversies of the day, is still very fragmentary, and tends to dissipate rather than discipline the mind. History, political economy, statistical essays, science of government, and generally, all books treating on social questions, should be read and re-read by workingmen, and, if time would permit, those higher studies that expand and beautify the mind could be afterwards indulged in. Many will say they cannot afford to buy books, but they can afford to buy tobacco and intoxicating beverages; why not cease buying, at least, a portion of the latter, and devote the money thus saved to the purchase of the former? The investment will pay you compound interest; try it for a year, and if you then think differently, we are willing to be called a false teacher. In conclusion, we make this broad assertion: The man who succeeds in making the workingmen of the world general, systematic readers of good books and periodicals, will do more for humanity than any man seen on earth since the God-man died on Calvary.—*Coopers' Journal.*

The Music Hall on the occasion of the first of the series of lectures by Prof. Pepper on Tuesday night, was crowded to its utmost limits, a large number having to go away, unable to gain admittance. The lecture gave the most intense satisfaction to all who were present.

Communications.

THE BALLOT BILL.

(To the Editor of the Ontario Workman.)

SIR,—In the issue of your useful periodical dated yesterday, I observe a brief notice of the second reading of the Ballot Bill introduced by me in the Ontario Assembly, and withdrawn after a short expression of opinion in its favor. I cannot help thinking you have, unintentionally, done me injustice by conveying to your readers the idea that from some improper motive, I abandoned the measure for this Session. Permit me to assure you that after advocating the adoption of the Ballot, when over opportunity offered, during the past quarter of a century, I did not prepare the measure merely for the purpose of casting it aside when its success seemed certain. The discussion which preceded the second reading not only elicited the views of the representatives of nearly every section of Ontario, but pledged the Government to the introduction of a thorough reform of our electoral machinery, with the use of the ballot instead of the open vote; and solely because I felt sure that the Attorney-General would bring in a more comprehensive measure next Session, extending the ballot to Municipal as well as to Parliamentary elections, did I consent to waive the prosecution of my bill this year. Legislation in 1874 will be in ample time for the next general election, which will take place in 1875; and I believe that the cause of secret voting has gained rather than lost by a delay, which cannot, under any circumstances, be productive of injury.

Hoping that you will find room for this brief explanation in your next issue,

I have the honor to be

Your obedient servant,

CHARLES CLARKE.

Toronto, Feb. 14, 1873.

HAMILTON.

(To the Editor of the Ontario Workman.)

DEAR SIR,—In reply to J. B., of Montreal, I have simply to say that one fact is worth a thousand arguments. I have obtained the following from the minutes of the Nine Hour League, Hamilton:—At a meeting held in the Temperance Hall, corner of King and McNab streets, May 13th, 1872, a deputation from the Bricklayers was received; they stated that the men in nine firms were ready and determined to strike on the 15th May. The President gave them to understand that the league could not sanction the strike. The

above is a true extract received from the Secretary of the Committee on Correspondence. This fills all the space I intend to devote to the vindication of the leaders in the nine hour movement. As resurrectionist is not going to be my business, I shall not again return to this subject. The living present and not the buried past shall now engage my attention:

I have much pleasure in informing you that the example set by Toronto is not to be lost, as the Canadian Labor Unity have engaged the Mechanics' Hall here for a mass meeting of working men. Opportunity will thus be given of discussing the conduct of the Ontario Government in forcing on such objectionable legislation as those bills which were protested against at the mass meeting held in Toronto. If the Government are determined to use a pliant majority to carry measures injurious to the best interests of the working class, we as a class will fall back upon our constitutional right, and petition the Governor not to sign the measures. We are very anxious that Toronto should have an opportunity of co-operating with us in this matter. Properly authenticated documents will be sent this week, asking such co-operation, as a special meeting of the C. L. U. will be held to arrange for the reception of delegates from London and Toronto. I hope you will favor us with your presence on the 28th, as every man who regards his rights and privileges as a British subject is called upon to enter his protest against the high-handed acts of our present Ontario Cabinet.

I remain yours,

WORKMAN.

Hamilton, Feb. 17th, 1873.

CHARADES.

No. 1.

My first in March, but not in June;
My second in song, but not in tune;
My third in iron, but not in steel;
My fourth in rasp, but not in wheel;
My fifth in hammer, but not in coal;
My sixth in horse, but not in foal;
My seventh in shoe, but not in feet;
My eighth in box, but not in seat;
My ninth in fire, but not in spark;
My tenth in anvil, but not in dark;
My last in George, but not in Brown.
The man to keep a workman down:
My whole may be seen from Bay street.

R. S.

No. 2.

My first is in port, but not in haven;
My second is in owl, but not in raven;
My third is in oyster, but not in shell;
My fourth is in water, but not in well;
My fifth is in ashes, but not in coal;
My sixth is in salmon, but not in sole;
My seventh is in anchor, but not in ship;
My eighth is in tongue, but not in lip;
My ninth is in butter, but not in bread;
My tenth is in harm, but not in dread;
My whole is a seaport town I ween,
In the south of England it will be seen.

C. T. C.

We have received only one correct answer to "Kate's" Charade, which appeared in No. 43 of the WORKMAN, and that also from a lady, Mrs. M., Toronto. The answer is *Cotton*.

If our numerous readers want bargains in Dry Goods, EATON & CO.'s is the place to go to them.

MEAKIN & CO.'S CHEAP DRY GOODS AND CLOTHING HOUSE, 207 Yonge street, three doors south of the "Green Bush" Hotel, and directly opposite Albert street, is the place for mechanics to make their purchases, as the goods offered are as good in quality as any in the market, and the prices asked unprecedentedly low. The laboring classes will find it decidedly to their advantage to patronize Messrs. Meakin & Co., as they will save money by so doing. The stock of goods at present on hand is large and varied. All kinds of clothing, ready-made or made to order. A first-class cutter is kept on the premises. Job lots of clothing and dry goods for pedlars are offered very cheap. See advertisement.

MR. JAMES WEEKES.—Our numerous readers are referred in our advertising columns to the old established New and Second-hand Furniture Warehouses, 247 & 249 Yonge St., Mr. James Weekes, Proprietor. This place of business is considered by all who have been constant customers of it, one of the cheapest places in the city, where both New and Second-hand Furniture can be bought. At present there can be found a good assortment of Sideboards, Lounges and House Furnishing Goods of every description. There are always on hand, Carpets, Stoves, and other Household requisites at exceedingly low prices. Another pleasing feature to Housekeepers, is, that they can always depend on Mr. Weekes exchanging Furniture with them, and neatly re-covering their Sofas, and re-caning their Chairs if required so to do. Mechanics and others who are in search of bargains are invited to call at 247 & 249 Yonge street, before purchasing elsewhere.

CENTRAL PRISON CONTRACT.

On Friday the Hon. Mr. Mowat moved that the House will, on Tuesday next, resolve itself into a committee to consider the following resolution:—"That the proposed contract between the Inspector of Prisons and Asylums and the Canada Car Company, respecting the labor of prisoners confined in the Central Prison, do receive the concurrence of this House." He then at length, referred to the circumstances under which the contract was made, with which our readers are already familiar.

Mr. MacDonald expressed his astonishment at the action of the Government in this matter during the recess. He had no doubt the Inspector had desired to make the best arrangements for the good of the Province and of the prison system, but he thought he had grievously failed. So far as the Government were concerned, the course they had taken had given the lie to the previous professions. They had got into power by persuading the yeomanry of the country that they were advocating the control of public matters by Legislature. It was, therefore, strange that the Government should, after such professions, have entered into a contract of such magnitude, and for such a length of time without the authority of the House. If this contract were now voted down, a cry would be raised that the House were repudiating their liabilities, but he hoped it would be long before the principle of repudiation was introduced into this country. The Government contended that the evils of the contract system in prison labor had been avoided by the present contract. He differed from that view. All the authorities on the question condemned the contract system, under which punishment was possible, but reformation, the more important object, was impossible. The prisoners would find that they had been sold as slaves to the highest bidder; they would be brought into contact with outsiders, and they would be removed from the proper supervision of the prison authorities. He read several extracts from reports of American Prison Associations strongly condemning the contract system in convict labor.

Mr. Lauder had expected that the Attorney-General would have given some authority for the action of the Government, but he had confined his remarks to a defence of the contract which had been entered into. The work contracted for was a heavy kind, and the Attorney-General should have given his reasons for adopting the manufacture of rolling stock for railways in preference to other kinds of labor, and should have given the authority of Mr. Langmuir for the action of the Government. He (Mr. Lauder) contended that in the manufacture of rolling stock it was impossible to maintain proper oversight over the prisoners. This particular work was of all others the very worst that could have been selected upon which to employ the prisoners. He held that the proper course for the Government to have pursued was to have sent a Commissioner to the United States to enquire into the various systems of employing prison labor in that country; and then, when the Commissioner's report was before the House, the whole subject could have been discussed intelligently. That would have been a common-sense mode of procedure, instead of hurriedly entering into a contract which had nothing whatever to recommend it. If that contract was not binding, then the House, acting in the public interest, should reject it; but if it was binding, so that the Company would have a claim for damages, if it were cancelled, it was only a farce to ask the House to assent to it at all. The only thing the House should have been called upon to do was to consider and determine the principle of whether the system of letting out the labor was advisable or not—not to discuss each clause of a long and elaborate contract and every other detail which should be left to the Government to deal with in case the principle was affirmed. He argued that that principle was unsound, and that all the authorities were against it.

Mr. Bethune approved of the principle involved in the contract, and did not think a case had been made out against the contract system.

Mr. E. B. Wood, after referring to the causes which had led to the establishment of the Central Prison, mentioned that in his first report the Inspector of Prisons had pronounced the opinion, that while the contract system of employing the labor was more productive pecuniary, yet it was not so advantageous so far as the moral improvement of the prisoners was concerned as the system of Governmental supervision. Subsequently, upon a review of the whole question, the Inspector, in an able report, had come to the conclusion for which his reasons were given, that it would be advisable at any rate for a period of ten years, to try the system of contract labor. He (Mr. Wood) did not see how this could be construed into a party question. It was purely a social subject, which was engaging some of the greatest minds of the day, and he did not think politics ought to be allowed to enter into it. The objections to the contract system were that it, as a rule, did not allow a sufficient variety of trades to be pursued by the prisoners, except by the outlay of a very large amount of capital. Still it was a system that worked admirably in the great State Prison of Illinois, which was to form the model of this prison, and also in Massachusetts and Connecticut, where they had had years of experience, and where, perhaps, they were more advanced in the work of prison reform than in any other part of the world. In New York they had

fallen back upon a modified system which gave the officers the more control, but in Buffalo there was a large prison which they had failed in conducting upon that plan, but which was now efficiently managed under the contract system. In all these cases the *per diem* allowance paid by the contractors for the labor was much less than in this case, and at the same time they had this greater advantage that the time for which they controlled the labor averaged perhaps four or five years, while no prisoner would be confined in the central prison for a longer period than two years. If the contract system could be so worked as to give the Government control over the moral training of the convicts, it seemed to him that the advantages of both systems would be secured; and taking all the circumstances into account he thought that if he had been in the position of the Government he would have come to the same conclusion they had arrived at. As to the right of the Government to make the contract, he had always maintained that this was just one of those things upon which action should be taken by the Administration upon its own responsibility. Of course it was within the power of the House to cancel the contract, and if it was an improper contract it should be cancelled, but that would involve the condemnation and removal of the Government.

Mr. Cameron believed the Government thought they were acting in the interest of the country in making a contract upon the recommendation of the Inspector of Prisons, in whom he had every confidence. At the same time he considered it unadvisable to have made this contract without offering it to public competition; for it might be there were others who would have employed the labor of the prisoners with advantage to themselves and with greater benefit to the country than the Canada Car Company. If he were to enter into an examination of the terms of the agreement, there were some things in it particularly dangerous. In the first place, it was impolitic to undertake to supply the labor of 215; and if the number at any time fell short of that figure to pay to the Company the difference between fifty cents and the ordinary cost of labor. It might be that the prison would not furnish more than 115, and the Company employing 100 men who were not prisoners at the ordinary wages, say \$1 50 a day, the Government would have to pay it \$100 a day until the deficiency was made up. This seemed to him to be an imprudent and imprudent arrangement, which might subject the country to considerable loss.

Hon. Mr. Mowat remarked that the member for East Toronto had said that there might not be 215 convicts in the prison, that being the number contracted for, whereas the Inspector's report stated that last year not less than 1,500 persons were incarcerated in the common goals who would properly have been subjects for sentence to the Central Prison. After some further discussion, the motion was carried on a division.

THOROUGH TAXATION REFORM.

The Anti-Income Tax Leaguers are in the field, in pursuance of the promise which they made last month in Guildhall. They have, for the present, said nothing quite new on the subject. We know that the tax is, properly, a war tax. We have long agreed that it is "inquisitorial." The inquisitorial nature of it tempts people to commit fraudulent evasions of its commands. Its general unpopularity has made escapes from any of its provisions a venial offence. In short it is a bad tax, a tax levied to cover extravagant expenditure; and an unjust tax—since it presses alike on earned income and income from property. We wish the Leaguers, then, speedy and complete success; but we fear they are not going the right way to get it. Their uncompromising attitude will cost them friends. If they would be content, first, with a reform of the provisions of the tax; and then steadily work towards its demolition, we should be hopeful of a little early instalment of good work. To begin with, the expenditure must be reduced. The Leaguers must prove that the country can be properly governed at about seven millions sterling less than is now spent. We believe they might demonstrate this, and make it solid groundwork for their agitation; but, at present, they have no good foundation for abolition, albeit they have plenty for reform of Schedule D.

The view of the taxation of the country taken by Sir Charles Dilke, in his annual speech to his constituents, is a broader one, and one more likely to produce alleviations of the taxpayers' woes, than the narrower survey of one grievance by the Anti-Income Tax Leaguers. Sir Charles reminded his hearers that, according to the Financial Reform Association, the workmen of the country paid nearly twice as much per cent. as did the rich. The workman's taxes are almost entirely upon necessities: those of the rich are chiefly upon their superfluities.

Here is a basis for a National Taxation Reform Association:—

"Suppose that income to be £50 a-year for each family; supposing the workmen to be five millions of families, this would give 250 millions for necessities. Now, their whole income was computed at 325

millions by Mr. Baxter, leaving only 75 millions for superfluities, which, on this principle, would be locally and imperially taxed. On that 30 millions of taxes were raised. The rich were two millions of families, which gave 100 millions for necessities; but they had 500 millions, leaving 500 millions to be taxed, which bore little more than 60 millions of taxes."

The readjustment of these shameful irregularities would include the thorough reform of the income-tax, to begin with; and the reduction of the national expenditure by far more than seven millions sterling.—*Weekly Times.*

MARRIED.

HUSON—JORDAN.—On the 13th inst., by the Rev. Mr. Clarke, Geo. E. Huson, of Ottawa, formerly of Toronto, to Annie, second daughter of John Jordan, Esq., of this city.

ELLIS—LOVELOCK.—In this city, on the 13th inst., at the parsonage, St. John's Church, by the Rev. Mr. Williams, Mr. James Ellis, engineer, T. G. & B. R., to Miss Lizzie Lovelock, youngest daughter of Mr. Wm. Lovelock, all of this city.

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