

Q.—To what article of goods do you now refer? A.—Well, it is a leading line, and I am sorry to say that we sell them without profit; but the average is from 16 to 25 per cent. After careful examination of our books and everything, I and my son have found that we were paying larger wages. A little larger, compared with the previous year, than we expected. This has been growing upon us a little by degrees, until the average price paid for the labor is the average advance which my son makes up to be about 20 per cent higher.

Q.—For about the same length of time? A.—Yes. Some hands get a little more and some a little less, but we strive to equalize the wages.

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OWEN MCGARVEY, Manufacturer and dealer in house furniture, Montreal, sworn.

By Mr. BOIVIN:—

Q.—How long have you been in business? A.—About forty years.

Q.—We want to get to the bottom of a question and to make it short I will ask you direct: Can you tell us if the furniture used by the medium class of mechanics is dearer to-day than it was ten or fifteen years ago, or if it is cheaper? A.—That is the class of goods purchased, generally speaking, by mechanics, and the laboring classes.

Q.—The medium class, from medium to lower class? A.—They are from twenty-five to fifty per cent lower now than they were fifteen years ago. The lower the grade the cheaper they are in proportion to quality.

Q.—And you think those goods are just as well made now as they were before the advent of the National Policy? A.—Probably they may not be so durably put together for the price. They are made to sell cheap, but they have got to about proportion, namely, from twenty-five to fifty per cent cheaper.

Q.—Do you think these articles, these goods made by machinery, are just as good as those made by hand? A.—Well, if the machinery is perfect they are just as good, of course some portions of every article are made by hand.

Q.—Do you manufacture? A.—We manufacture furniture and deal in it.

Q.—Are wages as high now as they were twelve years ago? A.—Very probably they are twenty per cent more than they were twelve years ago. We have from twenty to twenty-five men whom we pay from ten to thirteen dollars a week now. We paid them from eight to nine dollars a week then.

Q.—Do you use machinery in the manufacture of furniture? A.—No.

By Mr. GIBSON:—

Q.—Skilled work is largely if not wholly hand work? A.—Yes; such as carving and the making of goods to order.

Q.—Do you use much machinery in the manufacture of this cheap or medium class furniture? A.—We do not use machinery personally, but we contract with those that use it in the manufacture of this class of goods. Mr. Lynch of L'Epiphanie, makes our chairs and common class of goods, and has done so for the last thirty years.

By Mr. McLEAN:—

Q.—You say that certain classes of furniture are now twenty-five to fifty per cent cheaper than they were fifteen years ago? A.—Yes.

Q.—Is it a better class of furniture? A.—I have answered that question. Probably they may not be as durably put together, but they are a good serviceable article. For instance, articles which could be sold at that time for sixty-