

VERDICT GIVEN AGAINST UNION

CENTRE STAR WINS SUIT FOR DAMAGES

Jury Assesses It at \$12,500, Finding There Was Malicious Conspiracy at Rossland.

(From Friday's Daily.)

Upon the conclusion of the plaintiff's case in Centre Star vs. Rossland Miners' Union, before Mr. Justice Duff and a jury yesterday afternoon, S. S. Taylor, K. C., acting for the defendants, said that no witnesses would be called for the defence.

This morning Sir Charles Hibbert Tupper, K. C., began his address to the jury on behalf of the plaintiff company. In the course of it he remarked that the important feature in the case, he said, was whether or not the cause of this strike was a palpably sham excuse for an union of men and their work on the work of the Western Federation of Miners of the United States.

The position of those concerned was to take the facts. They felt ashamed of the means adopted, and the excesses engaged in. It was not like the case of the English Trades Unions, which came into being with their books and showed everything above board.

The attitude of the defendants and their counsel was to keep before the jury the fact that the plaintiff company was not a bona fide business, but a mere union of men.

Referring to the disappearance of the minute book of the Carpenters' and Joiners' Union, he said it was unsatisfactory. It clearly prompted the belief that the book had been spirited away, and representatives did not dare to go into the witness box and contradict it.

The books of the Rossland Miners' Union had been found by the plaintiff company. The affidavit was intended to conceal the facts. The books showed that the union was organized in 1895. They became incorporated and changed their seal. From time down the Rossland Miners' Union was synonymous with the Western Federation of Miners, although they used the old name of the union, etc., for purpose of concealing. There was very good reason for this, and the defendants, to keep out of the box after having told direct falsehoods to his attorney.

Referring to the affidavit of the secretary of the union, given before the books were produced, denying that there was any attempt to surround the affairs with mystery, and that the books of the Rossland Miners' Union, No. 38, was an unincorporated body. But all the books were not produced.

Referring to the affidavit produced, he pointed out the dilapidated condition of the minute book. No officer of the union dare go in the box and explain the mutilation of the book. The pages from 403 to 405 were gone under date of April 26th, 1899, when information was required as to incorporation. Further mutilations existed. He referred to scratching out words and inserting others which might be harmless, but which might have a bearing.

Mr. Woodside, the secretary, had not kept the books as he should. Documents had been destroyed. In the face of all these difficulties the case had been established against the defendants, not by the evidence of so-called capitalists, but by men of their own class. The leaders of this strike, when no litigation was on, spite of the obligation of membership, published in their magazine all that took place in the union meeting which suited them. But when the matter was in the courts they proposed to exaggerate the force of this obligation, which was really not regarded as binding.

The Western Federation of Miners, which was able to contribute \$20,000 to the strike, had an immense power for good or evil. Nothing was urged against trade unions. But the Western Federation of Miners showed that it existed not for the good of the members, but for the benefit of those who controlled it. The fight was not against trades unions, but against the power of the union, whether organized or not, but against an organization which had shown its influence to be evil.

Sir Hibbert went on to quote from the minutes, showing that the purchase of lots and erection of the hall followed incorporation, which had been proved by the registrar-general.

The examination of officers of union duplicate set of officers and books, the incorporated and the unincorporated bodies, was, Sir Hibbert said, palpably untrue, and that they were one and the same organization.

The strike at Rossland was engineered by the Western Federation of Miners and by Wilkes. It was even accorded the minutes done principally in the benefit of the Northport workers, and not the muckers of Rossland.

The address was not completed when the court adjourned at 1 o'clock.

(From Saturday's Daily.)

Continuing his argument to the jury yesterday afternoon for the plaintiff company in Centre Star vs. Rossland Miners' Union, Sir Chas. Hibbert Tupper said that the strike was an illegal one. It was a wantonly and malicious strike. It was not brought about by the men themselves, but out of sympathy for trouble in another place. Wilkes felt very proud of the strike. It was intended to be a "general" campaign against the muckers of Rossland.

Boyer and Wilkes in testimony and letters showed that it was a strike in sympathy with Northport strike. The purpose was not to obtain from work until the pay of their fellow workers was increased. It was for the purpose of closing the mines.

There was, Sir Hibbert said, a discrepancy of between \$4,000 and \$10,000 in the accounts produced between the strike money received and the disbursements. This perhaps was a reason why some of these leaders did not go into the box and make clear everything.

Describing the system of picketing and terroring from the standpoint of his contention, Sir Hibbert held that by the Bonomi-Collifro incident it was proved that British justice would not permit the kind of action which might be allowed in parts of the United States. It was then the back of the strike was broken, and it was little wonder that property would be unmolested. He urged the jury not to forget the responsibility they had in deciding whether or not this Western Federation of Miners or the agitators in it should be held liable for the losses of Rossland and the country. The claim of the plaintiffs was not confined to Rossland. It applied to the whole of British Columbia.

Sir Hibbert said it was seriously stated as a defence that these men allowed the mines to reopen before Rossland was mined, although the companies were losing about \$20,000 a month.

The amount of damages was not the point which was sought. A verdict with damages would, however, result in preventing a repetition of such an affair as had happened at Rossland. This was not a vindictive action, was not attempted to harass or embarrass anyone.

S. S. Taylor, K. C., for the defendants, then addressed the jury. He said that up to the time the address of Sir Hibbert he had believed that the men for honest men, men who earned their living by the sweat of their brows, and who were an honor to Canada. But if Sir Hibbert was correct he represented perjurers, murderers, house burners, and other criminals. It had even been urged that he (Mr. Taylor) was a perjurer. He attributed this to the exuberance of Sir Hibbert. The latter had not treated him fairly in doing so, as he probably was better known to them than he (Mr. Taylor) was.

Mr. Taylor explained that when he made the affidavit as to the reference to the issues were in no wise the same as they were at present. The action of Sir Hibbert was cowardly in this matter. He had disclosed all that was asked for according to the issues then at stake.

Mr. Taylor wanted to know where the documents from the side of the mining company were. Where were the accounts and the letters written in connection with the men who really began the strike. Why was E. B. Kirby, the mine manager, not here to give evidence, as Sir Hibbert had taken the oath that he would offer that an amalgamation of the War Eagle and Centre Star. That was an exact copy of the letters of the company concerning in London, which Toronto instructing it all to Mr. Kirby?

The issues in this action were simple. A strike is unpopular. The workmen in any attempt to bring the wages up to those prevailing in other parts. A strike is justifiable.

There were only two things in the case. Was the strike justifiable, and was any legal right of the Centre Star violated? No matter what the conspiracy, if the men had the legal right to go out on the morning of the strike then there was no claim. If the Centre Star could discharge them or they could leave, then there could not be any damage.

The matter of fights in the city, etc., had nothing to do with this case. It was matter what malice there was against the Centre Star company, that had nothing to do with the case. Out of the contract system alone could any claim come. But this applied to the staff only. The breaking off of that did not interfere with the industrial warfare should be stirred up in Rossland again.

The question as to whether the Rossland Miners' Union, No. 38, Western Federation of Miners, was the same as the Western Federation of Miners, Rossland Branch, had nothing to do with the case until a judgment was obtained. The counsel for the company was looking to the sale of the hall. There was no attempt to keep the two associations separate. On the contrary the evidence of the registrar-general showed that the union attempted to incorporate under the Benevolent Societies Act.

He asked them to distinguish among the defendants. There was little evidence against the Carpenters and Joiners' Union. P. R. McDonald comes in with this union. Against others there was no case established.

His Lordship, addressing the jury, said that there was little chance of finishing the case even with a night session. The legislature at the last session had imposed an additional duty on the judge of preparing his case without the assistance of counsel by a clause allowing that an appeal might be taken on the ground of the charge being improper even if exception were not taken at the time it was delivered. He said he even looked into a few legal points in connection with the matter.

His Lordship addressing himself to the jury asked whether they wished to sit the following day or to adjourn until Monday. After deliberating the jury decided to sit this morning.

His Lordship decided that the court should adjourn at 10 o'clock this morning in the Centre Star vs. Rossland Miners' Union trial before Mr. Justice Duff. He included the Congress (foreman), A. Brechler, Henry McCandless, A. R. Langley, L. H. Hardie, R. Sangster, Chris. Spencer and G. F. Matthews, amongst the defendants.

Sir Charles Hibbert Tupper, for the plaintiffs, moved to strike from the action as defendants the "Blacksmiths" and "Helpers" Union, which did not exist, and the Rossland Co-operative Company.

In reply to His Lordship, Sir Hibbert said personal charges were confined to P. R. McDonald, Beamesh and McLaren. He followed by referring to His Lordship on points of law. He contended that there was no difference between contracts prevented and contracts broken. Resisting picketing for the purpose of peaceful persuasion was held to be unlawful, he said. Further, Sir Hibbert held that acts directed against other mines which were justifiable in the case of the Centre Star should be considered as proving what would have been done against the plaintiff company directly had the occasion arisen. Resisting picketing for the purpose of peaceful persuasion was held to be unlawful, he said. Further, Sir Hibbert held that acts directed against other mines which were justifiable in the case of the Centre Star should be considered as proving what would have been done against the plaintiff company directly had the occasion arisen.

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Wilkes and other leaders, and unconfronted, tried this applied to those present at the meeting. The strike was endorsed July 3rd, the vote taken July 4th, and approved of July 11th.

But apart from that, the Centre Star had nothing to say as to the correctness of the vote.

Coming to the contention that the strike was due to the Northport trouble, Mr. Taylor said it likewise had nothing to do with this. He cited the history of the proposed increase in the muckers' wages from \$2.50 to \$3.00, which began in April. Both issues likely entered into the accounts produced between the strike money received and the disbursements. This perhaps was a reason why some of these leaders did not go into the box and make clear everything.

There was no actual damage proved against the Centre Star. The extraneous was mined as well one time as another. The employees were cut down to a very low number. If a mine shuts down in connection with a strike the shut down is but an incident of the strike. If the men have the right to strike, whether they had a meeting or not, then no damage could follow.

The mining company never attempted to open the mine. The Centre Star applied for work were refused work. Pickets, even if they existed, could not interfere with the Centre Star when it did not want workers. The Centre Star could not collect for damages done to the Le Roi. The interference with the Le Roi in bringing in men to work was wrong. The men who were mixed up in the Beamesh incident did wrong. These matters were not the subject of the case. The amount of damages was not the point which was sought. A verdict with damages would, however, result in preventing a repetition of such an affair as had happened at Rossland. This was not a vindictive action, was not attempted to harass or embarrass anyone.

On July 13th, right after the strike, manager Kirby asked leave to allow the diamond drill men to be employed. Mr. Taylor held that a sympathetic strike in its broadest terms was lawful. It was not a strike in the sense of men to quit work might be clear, yet the question of whether or not they were justified in inducing others to quit work was a question for the jury to decide by the question of law.

On the question of damages, Mr. Taylor held there must be direct evidence of loss. Resisting picketing for the purpose of peaceful persuasion was held to be unlawful acts distinguished from the lawful acts.

His Lordship in changing the jury's verdict held that the defendants were liable for the damages. The justification set up by the defendants was that a strike might be lawful, Mr. Taylor held that a sympathetic strike in its broadest terms was lawful. It was not a strike in the sense of men to quit work might be clear, yet the question of whether or not they were justified in inducing others to quit work was a question for the jury to decide by the question of law.

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from doing what they lawfully were allowed to do. These offences were persistently following a person from place to place, following with others any person along a street or road and besetting and watching a person.

In the Horness case, where a miner was brought in by the Le Roi Company, they had very direct evidence that this man was followed about from place to place. There was no difficulty coming to the conclusion that things were done with respect to the men coming from Winnipeg which would be unlawful under the act. If they concluded that these things were done pursuant to the original arrangement, then they could not separate these directly concerned from the union which would have to bear the responsibility. They did not require direct resolutions, etc., in such a matter.

Another feature which would make the act contrary to law was the constituting of what would be called a nuisance. This was an actionable wrong apart from conspiracy altogether. Under nuisance a boycott which became a terror might be included. The congregating of large bodies so as to impede trade from whatever cause might also constitute a nuisance. A thing which one man might do and be perfectly within the law, which if done by a large number, and because it was done by a large number became a legal wrong. This entered into this action. The Rossland Miners' Union there was evidence to show was affiliated with the Western Federation of Miners. From the evidence they might draw conclusions as to the methods used by the Western Federation of Miners. This included the use of the "black list" and the sending of photographs to identify persons so placed. There was evidence as to the way the men who shared a disposition to go to work were treated.

The jury would have to decide whether or not a state of things was established which constituted a boycott towards the Centre Star with respect to getting labor. The jury would have to decide whether they thought when the strike was planned that these things were contemplated. If they decided it was then the jury would have to decide whether the plaintiffs agreed to do, and did unlawful acts then they were liable. There was, he thought, likely considerable misunderstanding as to what constituted a legal act in connection with these troubles. It made no difference, however, whether they intentionally did the unlawful things or unintentionally.

It was urged that the defendants induced men to quit plaintiffs' employ, and induced others from going to work for the purpose of inducing the plaintiffs to stop working. The plaintiffs' loss was increased by the miners and shorter hours for the carpenters, that it was in the interests of the defendants to resist picketing for the purpose of peaceful persuasion was held to be unlawful acts distinguished from the lawful acts.

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He alluded to the fact that though these men were charged with serious matters as that of committing illegal acts, etc., yet they did not think it worth while to go in the box and face the jury by giving evidence in their own behalf. The fact that they had given evidence some years before under the conditions under which evidence for discovery was taken was not a very strong reason for not going into the box and explaining matters.

If the vote was not properly taken then the construction was open, that coercion might have been employed, and that the strike being declared in this illegal way was for the aggrandizement of the Denver organization.

This was a very important feature of the case. There was evidence to show that about 300 men voted on this strike, and that about 1,000 men went out on strike. Why did these men who were not members of the union go out? Did they do so in order that the muckers should get increased pay or that these men brought about a condition of affairs such as to impel them to abstain from work for fear of the consequences which such an organization might enforce? The exact language used did not alone constitute the offence.

Before finding the defendants liable to damages they must find that there was pecuniary loss. The stoppage of such works for a continued period must result in a substantial loss as thought. Vindictive damages or damages for the full amount was not asked. The plaintiffs only asked for such substantial damages as would mark that there had been wrong done.

He asked the jury to find whether or not the business of the Western Federation of Miners, the corporation, was carried on under the name of the Rossland Miners' Union. This point it might be well to decide.

He reminded the jury to decide the question upon the law without considering the suggestion of Mr. Taylor as to the consequences of giving judgment against the defendants, by which they lost their property or of Sir Hibbert that Sir Justice Duff should be administered in Rossland as in other parts of the British Empire.

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