

exposure along the vein has been made. The new mines may, however, be exceptionally rich, and we shall rejoice to find that they are. If the price of copper could be reduced low enough there are many purposes to which it could be applied besides those to which it has hitherto been confined.

In sending an Agent General to Australia, Canada is taking a practical step towards the cultivation of trade relations with that part of the world. American consuls, in several countries, do a great deal in this way, more, perhaps, sometimes than is compatible with the dignity of their position. Canada has no consuls; a general agent will, so far as commerce is concerned, give us the best and only possible substitute. Mr. Alex. Woods, to whom the office has fallen, is personally visiting several Canadian manufacturers, whose wares he may be instrumental in introducing to the Australians. But, once more, excellence of workmanship and general quality will especially be required to recommend our manufactures to that market.

The suburban villages of Montreal which were last year the scene of small pox pestilence and the cause of it in the adjoining city, are being rapidly absorbed by the municipality. Hochelega and St. Jean Baptiste are already annexed, and St. Gabriel asks to be allowed to follow suit. There have, too, been some annexations to Toronto, within a few days. The "Annex" and part of East Rosedale have come in; a few individuals in the latter place, being permitted, on request, and as a special favor, to continue to enjoy the bliss of exclusion from the benefits, the comforts and the taxes of city life. If the advantages which the taxes purchase are not worth what they cost, civilization is indeed a failure, and the sooner we go back to barbarism the better.

### THE "LABOR CONGRESS."

At the Trades Congress recently held in Toronto, an aggressive spirit was the predominant characteristic. Labor does well to unite; it has something to gain by doing so, provided it acts in a reasonable spirit. But from the strikes, which are generally the offspring of these unions, it is difficult to believe that, on the whole, labor does not suffer more than it gains. At the recent labor gathering, general questions of public policy, with which workmen have less to do than some other classes, were passed upon. In this particular, a labor organization assumed to play the part of counsellor of the nation. That it had any special qualifications for this task no one will pretend. Among other things, it pronounced the opinion that "the Dominion Government should issue all moneys for the purpose of a circulating medium, to be a legal tender for all debts, public and private." The statement is very general, and is capable of different meanings. It may mean, for instance, that the government should issue the currency, misnamed money, in the same way that the American Government issues currency to the

National banks, or it may be, and probably is, intended to mean that the government should issue its own obligations; but whether the note is to be redeemable or mere fiat money is a point on which we are left in the dark. The currency is everywhere a stumbling block to the trades' organizations: they never pronounce upon it without falling into grievous errors, the result of inadequate knowledge of the subject.

On the question of exemptions, the Congress blew hot and cold. In one resolution, it resolved to ask for "the removal by Dominion and Provincial governments of all such exemptions." In another, it asked for an increase of exemptions on incomes from \$400 to \$800. That this was done solely in the interest of a class, and that class the one making the demand, there is no attempt to conceal. Working men can fairly claim no greater rights than any other class, and they do themselves great injustice when they make exclusive claims of this kind. There is something to be said in favor of publishing the assessment rolls, as proposed, but the objection of cost is serious.

There went forth a protest against putting convict labor into competition with the labor of honest working men; but a proviso was added which shows that only the sort of working men there represented was meant. For navvies or farm laborers no such tenderness was shown; no objection was made to convict labor coming into contact with that of these workers; on the contrary, it was recommended that convicts "may be profitably employed by laboring on public works, under proper guards, or by laboring in new countries improving the lands and woods for intending settlers." Convicts so employed would displace navvies and farm laborers. The labor union is quite willing to have some other person's ox gored, but it calls aloud for special protection to its own. This one-sided treatment of the convict-labor question harmonizes well with the treatment of exemptions; but in both the Union shows itself wanting in the essential principle of equity. It is not difficult to assent to the proposition that "labor should be ennobling to mankind;" but then it should not be forgotten that the convict is a part of mankind, and that he is specially in need of every meliorating influence that can be brought to bear upon him, that of continuous labor being among the most beneficent. The convict is a man whose liberty is forfeited and taken away in the interest of society; but his reformation is more important than even his punishment, and he can be reformed only by learning the means of earning an honest livelihood by labor. Many a one falls into crime, because he has no self-trained habits of labor, no love of work, and in his demoralized condition, no aptitude for work. Give the convict a chance to reform; it is a duty which civilization owes to itself. If the convict is to labor, as he certainly should, the element of competition must come in, in some form: in consequence of what he does there will be less for others to do. This cannot be avoided, unless by condemn-

ing the convict to idleness and thus perpetuating the moral condition which was the cause of his crime.

### PROVINCIAL FOREST AND PARK.

Mr. A. Kirkwood, in a letter addressed to Mr. Pardee, Commissioner of Crown Lands for Ontario, proposes to set apart for a provincial park and perpetual forest 330,000 acres of land and 60,000 acres of water. The declared object is "to set aside a forest reserve principally for the preservation and maintenance of the natural forest," and to protect "the head waters and tributaries of the Muskoka, Petewawa, Bonnechere and Madawaska rivers, wherein it shall be unlawful for any person to enter and cut timber for any private use, or disturb or destroy the fur-bearing animals." In this forest the wild animals are expected to be tamed and domesticated "to some extent, for use and profit." The preservation of these four streams in undiminished volume is pointed out as important to manufacturers. The lands which it is proposed to reserve have already been surveyed, and comprise the townships of Coningsby, McLoughlan, Bishop, Freswick, Bower, the township south of Bower and east of Coningsby, Peck, the east part of Hunter and the southwest quarter of the township east of Bower. Here, within reasonable distance of civilization, Mr. Kirkwood proposes to establish "a national forest and park," to which he gives the name of "The Algonkin Forest and Park."

As the lands have been surveyed, full particulars of the character of the region is in possession of the government. The proposed selection, it may be taken for granted, contains much picturesque scenery, and would be found to be appropriate for the purposes designated as well as being easy of access. The lands are almost due north of Toronto, at a distance of about one hundred and fifty miles. A park formed there would be more central than one, for which a good site could easily be found, north of lake Huron or Superior. A similar reservation might possibly follow north of one of these lakes, in course of time.

The proposal is one which will, we think, recommend itself to public approbation, even in this money-making age. Indeed, it is based chiefly on economic grounds. In carrying out the details some difficulties would be met. It would be hard to prevent the stealing of timber, and harder still, perhaps impossible, to prevent the hunting of wild animals. Still, enough could be done to ensure the preservation of deer, which will otherwise disappear before long. But in the perpetual forest would be the greatest value of the provincial park. The timber harvest could be gathered, as it matured, and the young trees left to attain the size that might be made the standard below which none should be cut. Precautions would have to be taken against the ravages of fire, to which the park would be specially liable, from the numerous camp fires that would enliven its gloom.

One of the four rivers which have their sources within the limits of the proposed park, the Muskoka, flows into the Georgian Bay; the three others, the Petewawa, Bonne-