

OUR BOARDING HOUSE

Reflections on Current Events by the Boarders.

"There is one thing in connection with labor organizations in this city that I can't understand," said Sinnett. "The trades unions and Knights of Labor together are numerically strong enough to elect or defeat any candidate for municipal office in at least eight wards of the city; they can in three years capture that City Council if they only would make up their minds to do it. Now, why don't they? It isn't because they are satisfied with the administration of civic affairs, for they are not, if the speakers at the recent public meetings of the Trades Council are to be believed; and it is not because the aldermen of Montreal are friends of organized labor. There is not a single solitary man in the City Hall, from the Mayor down to the man who sweeps the place, that cares a continental for labor organizations or labor reform, and you know it. Now, what I can't understand is, that you continually elect your enemies to office instead of electing them to stay at home. Of course, I don't belong to a trades union or assembly, and don't perhaps see things as you see them. but I am bound to say that your actions in connection with municipal reform seem awfully ridiculous."

"I am not surprised at it," replied Brown, "because we do make ourselves ridiculous, and I might as well say it as think it. What we need badly in our assemblies, in our trade unions and in our Trades Council is discipline. We should adopt and enforce by-laws which would prevent members, delegates and organizations running wild at election times. Your are right in saying that we are numerically strong enough to elect or defeat any candidate, but we haven't got the gumption to do so. The Trades Council endorses one man and then the delegates, or some of them, go and spout for the other fellow; the whole thing is a farce. There never was an election in Montreal in which this was not done, and there never will be an election in which this won't be repeated until steps are taken to punish every political free lance in labor's ranks who runs wild at election time. We may, perhaps, lose a few windbags who will object to be muzzled, but it seems to me that the thing should be done. The same applies to our unions and assemblies. Labor, and by this I mean organized labor, must go into politics; it must take part in every election, because it is only in this way that its influence will be felt; but it must go in solidly. And every organization affiliated with the central body should be made to understand that it will be held responsible for the political action of its members. The man who belongs to a labor organization and deliberately refuses to vote or work for labor reform is a source of weakness to the cause and should be got rid of at once. With organized labor in this city, well disciplined and intelligently directed, it would not be necessary to petition the City Council for anything, for inside of three years it would contain enough of labor reformers who would not require prodding to give you all the reforms you want."

"And until something of that kind is done," said Phil, "you might as well 'be a dog and bay the moon,' as Shakespeare has it, as to petition that Council for anything. You can sue it if you like, and even win your case, but not an alderman cares a rap about that; it's no expense to them personally, and they only laugh at it. Teach them, however, that unless they represent you as you wish to be represented they will be 'fired out,' and they'll mighty soon change their tune. I don't believe in upsetting city by-laws in the courts; they should be upset in the City Council, and the only way to do it there is to use your vote in an in-

telligent manner on election day. The Statute Labor Tax cost us three or four thousand dollars and several years of hard work. We succeeded in abolishing it; but had the time and money it cost us been spent in perfecting our political organization we would have long ago had a Council which would have abolished it for nothing, which would have readjusted our water tax, have our streets and sewers built by day's labor and have our scavenging done in an intelligent manner. Private corporations would never have received such valuable franchises as the gas, the electric light, the telephone and railway companies have, and our citizens would have a street car service which would not make us the laughing stock of this continent as this one does. It is, however, never too late to begin. Our experience has been dearly bought; but if used to advantage in the future will not only be a cheap lesson but a first-class investment."

BILL BLADES.

FAIR DEALINGS TO EVERYONE

Fair dealings and justice to all is something that we should all very much like to see brought about; the time when absolute justice would govern the distribution of wealth, when every man who toils shall enjoy the fruits of his labor, when those who do the least shall not receive the most, when the laboring man's income shall not be limited to the barren point of a mere existence, when the ennobling influence of music, literature and art shall dwell in every home, be the same high or low. That would be a grand desideratum for which all devout men ought to work and pray. Just when it will come we cannot now declare. But of one thing we are satisfied. We are approaching that desired period. We are approximating that way. We see evidences of this in the various labor organizations which now exist all over the country, and, if not accomplishing all that they desire, they have arrived at that stage of competition when they are a privilege and a protection to the wage-earners who enlist under their banner and work for a common cause. Whatever the results, they champion the cause of the defenceless and oppressed workman. Besides, in them the spirit of independence and self-respecting manhood is fostered and encouraged.

THE UNEMPLOYED.

A Large Delegation Calls Upon the Mayor at the City Hall.

A large delegation of unemployed workmen waited upon Mayor McShane at the City Hall on Saturday evening last for the purpose of urging upon him the necessity of something being done by the city to provide employment for the large number now out of work. There were along with the Mayor: Ald. Prefontaine, Clendinneng, Shorey, Hurteau, Tansey, Nolan, Perrault, Lamarche, Hamelin and Savignac.

Mr. Darlington, at the request of the Mayor, stated the object of the deputation. In the course of his remarks he said that his coming here to ask the Council to provide work for the unemployed Knights of Labor and others was the saddest job he ever undertook. This was the first time in the history of the Order in this city that their members had to apply in large numbers for work, but they had to do it now. Mr. Darlington then read the petition from D. A. 18, after which he explained the various reasons for so many being out of work. It was well known, he said, that in the summer time thousands of our men were employed on the wharves in Montreal. It was also equally well known that in times gone by a large number of those men went to Portland, Boston, and other places to work in the winter, but this year owing to the enforcement of the alien labor law of the United States Canadians are not allowed to work on the other side of line 45 unless they renounce their citizenship, and being too patriotic to their own country they have decided to remain in Canada and trust to their own people to find work for them. And if the aldermen of the city of Montreal were half as patriotic as these poor people they would see that the confidence of these workmen was not misplaced. They would be wanting in duty not only to the city but to the country if they did not find work for these men at wages sufficient to keep them-

provide work, and if there were people out of work it was not the fault of the city or the aldermen. They should apply to the Provincial Government. The city had only a certain amount at their command, and no more could be spent. The Road committee would endeavor to provide work on Atwater avenue and on the Berri street subway. They would also try to procure an increased appropriation for stone breaking.

There was a slight manifestation of feelings and families with the necessities of life. Bear in mind, he continued, we do not come here to ask for charity, because you have no right to make a charitable society out of our civic institution; we only come here to ask for justice, believing as we do that every community should be compelled to find employment at living wages to those who are willing to labor that they and theirs may live. For some time past the corporation had been in the habit of finding employment by purchasing a lot of stones for men to break at \$4 or \$5 a toise. They did not want that, for unless a man was an expert it was impossible for him to make more than \$3 or \$4 a week at it, therefore they did not consider it manly or honest to ask any human being to try to support himself and family upon that, and the man who would advocate stone breaking for the unemployed was unworthy to represent any one, either in the Council or anywhere else, unless he was willing to pay at least \$1.25 a day to the men who do it.

Mr. Duffy followed in the same strain, and speaking of the scavenging contract said that the votes of the aldermen would be closely watched.

Mr. George Warren also spoke in French in a similar strain to the others.

Ald. Prefontaine replied that the Road committee had done everything possible to ing among the spectators during Ald. Prefontaine's reply.

Ald. Clendinneng and Tansey also addressed the deputation, after which Mr. Darlington in reply said,—"Ald. Clendinneng has remarked that the men present appeared to be clean and comfortable. I would like to know if a clean face is a disgrace. I am afraid there are many clean stomachs also amongst those present. As for the remarks of Ald. Prefontaine about working for 50c or 75c a day, if I were Mayor or an Alderman I would blush to suggest that another man should do what I would not be willing to do myself, and I am sure they would not be willing to do anything of the sort.

Mayor McShane briefly spoke, congratulating all on the moderate tone that prevailed and promised that, as Mayor, he would do, and had done in the past, all he could to procure work for the poor. He suggested certain improvements on the mountain park that might provide employment for a number of men, besides the Atwater avenue and the Berri street subway projects.

A vote of thanks to the Mayor and aldermen brought the conference to a close.

THE TRADES COUNCIL.

The regular meeting of the Central Trades and Labor Council was held on Thursday evening last, the president, L. Z. Boudreau, in the chair.

Credentials were read and accepted from D. A. 19, Jos. Beland, M.P.P.; and the Glassworkers' Union, Alf. Schaaf. There being some doubts expressed as to the Central Branch of the Early Closing Association being a bona fide organization, its credentials were referred to the Organization Committee for investigation.

The minutes of the previous meeting were read and confirmed.

The nomination of officers for the ensuing six months then took place as follows:

For President—L. Z. Boudreau.
Vice-President—J. P. Moncel, J.B. Dubois, J. P. Coutlee and R. Keys.

English Recording Secretary—P. J. Ryan and Ed. Farrell.

French Recording Secretary—P. Deguire.

Financial Secretary—E. Pelletier and J. A. Renaud.

Corresponding Secretary—P. Chattel and O. Fontaine.

Treasurer—Jos. Corbeil.

Sergeant-at-Arms—B. Rodier and W. Thibault.

Organization Committee—Messrs. Pelletier, Rodier, R. Keys, Gravel, Farrell, Desloges, O'Reardon.

Legislative Committee—Messrs. Darlington, Schaaf, Sandilands, Pigeon, Fontaine, Boileau, Coutlee, Thibault.

Committee on Credentials—Messrs. Jobin, Pigeon, R. Keys, Coutlee, Royal, Sandilands, Gibbons, Garrigan, Thibault.

Auditors—Messrs. Fontaine, Royal, Keys, Trudel, Thibault.

A resolution was passed endorsing the action of D. A. 18 in asking the City Council to establish public works for the unemployed.

Several reports and a large number of communications were disposed of and the meeting adjourned.

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