

THE ONTARIO WORKMAN.

THE EQUALIZATION OF ALL ELEMENTS OF SOCIETY IN THE SOCIAL SCALE SHOULD BE THE TRUE AIM OF CIVILIZATION.

VOL. I.

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NO. 3.

THE NINE-HOUR MOVEMENT.

MASS MEETING IN ST. CATHARINES

(From our Own Correspondent.)

On Wednesday evening, pursuant to notice, a Mass Meeting in favor of the Nine Hours' Movement took place in the Town Hall, St. Catharines. The Hall was crowded to excess with the workmen of the town, several employers being among them. Mr. Rykert, M. P., being recognized among the audience, he was requested by the President of the League to accept the Chair, which he did after the audience by a unanimous vote had signified their approval.

Mr. Rykert, on taking the chair, said:—Gentlemen, I have been called upon to assume the position of Chairman this evening. I know I am not a workman; but I never refuse a call made upon me by the workmen. I have never expressed my opinion upon the subject of the Nine Hours' Movement to any one. I think it my duty to do all I can to elevate my countrymen; and I have to thank you heartily for the honor you have conferred upon me this evening. I have for a long time felt that the condition of the workmen ought to be improved; and every man has a right to express an opinion upon the subject. I am not seeking political favors at your hands by being present here this evening. I already occupy an honorable position which you have been pleased to bestow upon me, and I hope to fill it creditably. I am in favor of this movement; and when I find it in operation in England, Ireland, Scotland, and Holland, it shows there is something wanted here that ought to be gained—and the workmen know best what they want. At present there is in existence a law that favors moneyed men, and oppresses the workmen; and men who profess reform are quick to take advantage of it to gain their own ends. But Sir John A. Macdonald has taken the matter in hand, and in a few days it will be swept away. He (Sir John A. Macdonald) sees he has something to do to better the condition of the workmen, and he will do it. (Applause.) I think it a curious fact that the laborer of to-day should receive but little more wages than he did 20 years ago, while every article in the market has gone up one fourth in price since then. The workmen should have a right to appeal against what they consider wrong, and to persist in striving to obtain what they consider right—a privilege they do not possess while there is a law that recognizes combination among masters, and will not allow their workmen the same right. I know there is no need to appeal to the audience to allow each speaker that may address you this evening liberty to express his views, either on one-side or the other; for it is our duty to hear impartially the pros and cons of the question. I will now introduce Mr. Harris to the meeting.

Mr. Harris, in a speech of much merit, moved the first resolution, as follows:

Resolved,—That the workmen of St. Catharines, in mass meeting assembled, do unanimously affirm that Nine Hours' Labour question has become a matter of urgent social and physical necessity; and that they are determined to co-operate with other Leagues throughout the Dominion, in order to secure the change as speedily as possible.

The resolution was seconded by Mr. Jerny, which, on being put to the meeting, was unanimously carried.

Mr. Ryan, Secretary of the Hamilton Nine Hours League, was then introduced. He said he was pleased to see such a large and enthusiastic assemblage in the hall that evening. It proved conclusive the fallacy of the statements of the opponents of the movement, who said the agitation was caused by a few designing men. No faction, no clique, could arouse the feeling and earnestness that this movement had awakened throughout the country, not even Geo. Brown and the *Globe*. (Hisses.) Their course was justified by the success it had met with in England, and is endorsed by one whom even Geo. Brown would not call an alarmist or an agitator. One who had passed his life amid the cares of State, and was ever cautious in his movements—the Right Hon. Benjamin Disraeli, who at Manchester lately said:—"Take the working classes from 1832 to 1872, and what has been the result, immense benefit. Their progress

had not been inferior to any other sections of the community. Since that time their wages had increased, their hours of toil diminished, and means and leisure are the two great civilizers of mankind." (Applause.) Not only so, but according to the science about which employers talk so much and know so little—the science of political economy—they were justified in demanding an increased percentage in the profits of their work, and it was optional to themselves whether they took it in an advance of wages or reduced hours. And since the cry throughout the land was for a reduction of the hours now devoted to labor, it was right and proper that that course be taken. According to the laws regulating capital and labor, when work was plentiful they could legitimately ask for an advance; or if labor was scarce they could also do so. And in Canada, he was happy to say, work was very plentiful; it was not their fault if labor was scarce. They demanded it upon the higher ground of social and moral necessity. It was incumbent upon them to secure more time to enable them to enjoy life better than they have hitherto done; to gain an opportunity to improve their minds and recreate their bodies. They had as much right as their employers to see the green fields, and enjoy a rural walk. It was contrary to all divine laws to confine a large—nay, the largest and most productive—portion of mankind to the avul and the bench, whilst those who revelled in the wealth the laborer created did little or nothing as their share. Employers said that the reduction of the hours of labor placed them in a false position with regard to other nations with whom they had to compete—but he (Mr. Ryan) failed to see it. Canada's chief competitors were England and the United States. In England the Nine Hours' system was almost universally granted; in Scotland, where differences existed, it was not for 54 hours, but for 51 hours per week. In the United States the agitation was for a reduction of the hours of labor to eight per day; not only so, but wages and materials were both higher in the States than here; so that neither for that country nor Great Britain was there ought to fear. The speaker then quoted from statistics of cotton and coal, taken from reports in Parliamentary Blue Books, showing that the reduction of the hours of labor had raised wages and increased trade; and showed how the reduction in the hours of labor had been followed by the establishment of savings banks, free libraries, mechanics' institutes, a lower franchise, the establishment of the volunteers, and has ultimately led to a still further shortening of the hours of labor—from which further benefits may be expected to accrue. He showed how Rome, Spain, and France had fallen through their leaders increasing the material prosperity of the state, while the intellectual and moral status of the people remained stationary. We Canadians, continued the speaker, can no more hope to escape the fate of these nations if we follow their career than we can expect to see the glorious orb of day while a total eclipse obscures the sun. It is our duty to progress with the age in which we live, and seize every favorable opportunity presented to elevate and improve ourselves; and as we are individually weaker, because poorer, than our employers, it is our bounden duty to combine, and obtain by union what we would otherwise fail to obtain. And if we make a proper use of the opportunity now presented to us, we shall, ere the summer be past, rejoice from one end of the Dominion to the other in having obtained a concession of great advantage to ourselves and a blessing to our children. (Applause.)

Moved by Mr. Philipps, seconded by Mr. Watson: That the time thus demanded is necessary to enable us to fill with credit to ourselves and advantage to the State our various duties and responsibilities of fathers and of citizens.

Moved by Mr. Curnow, seconded by Mr. Hadson: That this meeting desires to express its sympathy with the printers and bookbinders of Toronto, who are now on strike for the nine hours movement.

Mr. Wm. Doughtie, from Toronto, then being introduced, said:—It could be no ordinary or local question that could gather such a large body of workmen together as was assembled on this occasion. If I read properly the expressions of those intelligent faces before me, I would say that this Nine Hour question has taken a firm hold upon the minds of the workmen of St. Catharines. He thought it unnecessary to expatiate at any length on the benefits accruing from the shortening of the hours of labor, as previous speakers had done

that point justice; he would simply state that it tends to raise us in the social scale. He thought no honest or Christian man could object to that. He would recommend their employers fairly and honestly to discuss this subject; but from experience he found that something more was necessary, therefore he thought they had better organize, for they might find as others had found, that the fine feelings of their employers, were locked up in those unapproachable treasures of knowledge, the *Ledger* and *Balance Books*. He said some gentleman had made the alarming assertion that this movement was an attempt to introduce the "Communist system of levelling." He contended that history informed us otherwise. In the British Isles where Trades' Unions have the full protection of the law, where the Short Time Movement has spread from one end of the land to the other, and where nine hours is universally recognized as constituting a day's work, no such "Communist levelling" has taken place; on the contrary, that outburst of loyalty which has been indulged in by all classes of the community, on the recovery of the Prince of Wales, proves beyond doubt that the masses are more loyal than they would have been, had this movement of Social Reform met with the same opposition there as it has met with from some would-be political economists and anti-reformers in Canada. It is not the accomplishment of reform, but the opposition to reform that causes revolutionary feeling to spring up among the people. He pointed to the effects of the insane opposition that this movement has met with, and said it was causing the best workmen to go to the United States. He wished God-speed to the industrial pursuits of that country, but as a British subject he would prefer to see those men treated in a manner that would induce them to stay in Canada, and build up the institutions of our country. He (the speaker) referred to the mass meeting that was then being held in Toronto, and said that the workmen of that city meant to act upon the advice of "Junius," viz "The subject who is truly loyal to the chief magistrate, will neither advise nor submit to arbitrary measures." That was the motto of the Toronto *Globe*; but he thought it must have been selected before that paper was unfortunate enough to possess its present managing director. He appealed to the meeting to support the Toronto Bookbinders and Printers now on strike. He said they felt the heavy responsibility resting on their shoulders, and that the eyes of every workman in the Dominion were upon them, and assured the meeting that in their vocabulary no such word as "fail" could be found. In conclusion, he hoped when the 60 hours week was a thing of the past, when all the turmoil of the present agitation was gone, that the workmen would prove that they could use their spare time properly; that they would be found beyond the limits of the decreed side-walks, viewing the landscape, and there learn lessons from the way-side flowers, and by thus conversing with nature, they would improve themselves, and frame their minds for those duties and services we all ought to engage in on the Lord's Day. Mr. Doughtie resumed his seat amid loud applause.

Moved by Mr. Messler, seconded by Mr. Tement: That this meeting pass a vote of censure upon the Hon. George Brown, and declare his paper to be unworthy of its confidence and support, and further that we seek to extend the circulation of the Toronto *Leader*, the workman's paper and friend.

Moved by Mr. James, seconded by Mr. Magness: That this meeting condemn the law existing at present, relative to Trades Unions, and that we as ratepayers of St. Catharines demand of our representatives their influence in repealing the same.

A vote of thanks was then passed to the Chairman and the meeting dispersed.

SERIOUS ACCIDENT.—As a gentleman and lady were driving toward Hyde Park, London, Ontario, on Wednesday, and crossing one of the bridges over the railway track, the horse was brought to a sudden stand-still by coming in contact with a telegraph wire which had been carelessly dropped across the bridge by a repairing gang. The stoppage was so sudden and unexpected that the occupants of the buggy were thrown violently against the side of the bridge, and the young lady very narrowly escaped a fall from the track below. As it was she sustained serious injuries. The horse plunged and reared, and finally, getting loose from the wire, ran away and made a wreck of the buggy.

Two children of a family named Turner, residing in a log house north of Chatham, were burned to death on Wednesday morning last, the house having taken fire while the inmates were in bed.

CANADIAN.

On Saturday last a man named Croselin, employed in Buck's stove factory, Collingwood, had one of his feet nearly cut off while working a circular saw.

The County Lodge of Good Templars held their quarterly meeting at Vittoria on Saturday. About 300 delegates were present. In the evening Mr. S. Capper, from Manchester addressed a crowded house.

A convict named Butler, who had escaped from the Penitentiary, was chased by a Woodstock constable and others. He stabbed the constable slightly, and was himself shot at twice, one shot wounding him in the arm severely. He was captured.

The body of a child was found in the Cornwall canal. An inquest and *post mortem* examination was held, which produced the following: "That the child was not over six hours old, and that it had not been in the water more than a week at the outside."

About 12 o'clock on Saturday night the large grist mill and distillery belonging to Mr. J. M. Ross, of Elora, was discovered to be on fire. The flames had made so much headway that it was impossible to save anything. The loss amounts to about \$17,000. Mr. Ross is insured in the Western and Liverpool & London for \$9,000.

Mr. Thomas Forbes, on the 12th concession of Minto, has lately lost thirty-one head of cattle, on account of scarcity of fodder. They comprised 16 sheep, 7 hogs, 4 cows, 3 steers, and 1 horse. Quite a large number of lambs are also dying from unknown causes. Among others Mr. Crow, of Minto, lost 11, Mr. Cox, 15, and Mr. Head 8.

About one o'clock on Monday morning a fire broke out in Mr. McDougall's row of two-story roughcast dwellings in Bessemer street, Ottawa; soon the whole row of four houses were enveloped in flames, and the fire then spread to Kirby's large dwelling on Daly street, which, with out-buildings, was burnt to the ground. The loss is about \$9,000; insured for \$5,000.

PAINFUL ACCIDENT.—About noon on Monday last as the freight train coming east on the Grand Trunk was backing in on the siding at the freight house, Guelph, a little boy, son of Mr. McCuaig, in attempting to cross the track slipped and fell across the rail. Two wheels of the end car passed over his leg, crushing it so badly that it had to be amputated. His recovery is doubtful.

MEETING OF CLERKS.—About sixty or seventy of the dry goods clerks of this city met last night in the Mechanics' Institute, to consider some measure to further the early closing movement. Mr. Allan, of Crofts, Powell & Co., was unanimously elected chairman; Mr. Gair, of A. & J. G. McIntosh & Co., Secretary; Mr. Campbell, of Geo. Burns, Treasurer. After some lively discussion regarding the movement, the meeting adjourned until Tuesday, 30th inst., when a full meeting of the leading dry goods men, and others; is particularly requested.—*London Advertiser*, 27th.

The *Harriston Tribune* says:—On Tuesday of last week, as the express going west was within a mile of Palmerston, Mr. Conductor Lillis, of Fergus, argus-eyed, saw a house near the road in the incipient stage of conflagration. He caused the train to be backed up, and, along with the passengers, went to the rescue. There was only one woman in the house, who was not aware of her danger until the crowd was rushing towards the house. Her surprise at the rush of visitors may be imagined. Their advent and the timely aid of a few pails of water were sufficient to subdue the flames. Thus the owners of the house are happy, and so is Conductor Lillis, to whom great praise is due for his philogenic backing up.

THE COLLISION ON THE GREAT WESTERN.—A collision, the result evidently of carelessness, occurred yesterday afternoon between two freight trains on the line of the Great Western Railway, between St. Catharines and Clifton. The mixed freight, consisting of about 30 cars, passed St. Catharines, bound east, about three o'clock, and had reached within about two miles of Clifton, when it was met by a westward bound freight, composed principally of empty cars. There is a slight curve in the road at this point, and therefore the two trains approached very near to each other before the engine-drivers became aware of their danger, but when they did they

promptly whistled "on breaks" and reversed their engines. It was too late, however; and perceiving that a collision was inevitable, they and their firemen jumped to save their lives. Joseph Dunn, the engineer of the eastward bound train, was slightly injured, and the fireman, Wm. Jones, severely, if not fatally. The locomotive of the train west passed through and over that of the eastern train, lodging on the tender of the latter, two of the cars passing to the outside of the track. The logs in three cars were mashed to pieces, and others more or less injured. Mr. James Radcliffe, who was piloting the eastern train, by promptly acting on the danger signal, saved a number of cars. Old railroad men say the collision and its results was one of the most extraordinary in their experience.—*St. Catharines Journal*.

FOREIGN.

LONDON, April 27.—Miss Nellie Grant, who is now in this city, at the residence of the Hon. R. Schenck, was yesterday presented to Queen Victoria. Since her arrival here, Miss Grant has been called upon by members of the ministry and diplomatic corps.

LONDON, April 27.—The Tichborne claimant publishes a letter to the public, in which he returns thanks for the previous subscriptions in his behalf, and asks for an additional sum of £400, to enable him to continue the contest for the possession of the Tichborne estate.

LONDON, April 26.—The Atlanta boat crew of New York, were entertained at dinner in Liverpool yesterday, by members of the London Rowing Club, who subsequently escorted their guests to the cars, and the whole party started for Putney. Large crowds of persons gathered at the stations between Liverpool and Putney as the train passed, and by salutes and liberal displays of bunting, gave evidence of their desire to accord the strangers a warm welcome.

LONDON, April 27.—A meeting was held in this city to-day for the purpose of giving consideration to the subject of the erection of a memorial statue of the lamented Governor-General of India, Earl Mayo. The attendance was immense, and included many of the most eminent men of the kingdom. The Duke of Edinburgh presided. Speeches were made by the Right Hon. Benjamin Disraeli, the Duke of Cambridge, the Duke of Richmond, the Earl of Derby, and the Earl of Shaftesbury, in favour of the project, and in eulogy of the distinguished dead. A committee was appointed, to receive subscriptions in aid of the memorial.

LONDON, April 29.—Particulars of the late earthquake in Syria, which caused such terrible loss of life, are now coming to hand. It appears that the fatalities were not greatest in the city of Antioch, as the first despatch intimated, but were heavier in the country in the vicinity of that city. A letter from Antioch, under date of the 4th of April, says the American Protestant church was severely injured. Four of the American community were killed; all the members of the families of the missionaries are safe. The number of persons killed in the city of Antioch is less than 300, but it is known that 1,600 people in the surrounding towns and country where the shocks were as severe, if not greater than here, were killed, and this number may be increased. The distress of the people will be only temporary, as the crop prospects are good. The supply of provisions on hand is moderate.

LIVERPOOL, April 29.—Two thousand cartmen in this city have struck work, and all business on the docks and in the warehouses is interrupted in consequence.

PARIS, April 27.—A large number of the members of the International society have been arrested at Lyons.

PARIS, April 29.—In consequence of the report of the committee appointed to inquire into the capitulations of French towns and fortresses during the late war, the government has determined to put two or three generals, who are censured by the commission, on trial before a court martial.

PARIS, April 29.—Gerton, convicted of participating in the slaughter of the hostages under the Commune, will be shot at Satory tomorrow morning. Blanqui has been sentenced to transportation for life.

BERLIN, April 28.—The labor troubles here continue. The builders and master masons have joined the master carpenters in the lock out movement. Thousands of men are thrown out of employment. The discharged workmen, who are of all trades, have united in an appeal to the public for support. They discountenance the use of force or threats to prevent others from working.