LABOR'S LEGISLATURE.

MEETING OF THE TRADES AND LABOR COUNCIL

Election of Officers—Reports of the Legislative Municipal and Educational Committees.

The last meeting of the official half-year ending January, 1891, for the Trades and Labor Council took place on the evening of Friday, the 16th inst., President Robt. Glockling in the chair.

Their credentials of the following delegates being found correct and recommended for acceptance, viz.—J. A. Meyerhoffer, H. W. Fox, and Chas. Watts, L. A. 5,792; J. Davey, A. W. Holmes and H. Gibbins, L. A. 9,005; P. Tracey, G. C. Corney and H. Sanderson, L. A. 6,564, all Knights of Labor; G. E. Crowhurst, T. Bailey and M. Scullen, Lodge 67 Locomotive Firemen; W. V. Todd, Jas. Robertson and John Stilt. It being moved and seconded that these delegates be invited to take their seats.

Delegate Cribben, while disclaiming any personal objection, held that as nobody appeared to know whether Mr. Watts was a wage earner or not he would move, in amendment, that that credential be referred to a special committee for investigation.

Delegates Fox and J. Armstrong held that Mr. Watts was a wage earner, he being paid a salary as a lecturer and a writer of the Secular Society. On a division the amendment was declared lost, and Mr. Watts took his seat.

President Glockling delivered a brief valedictory address, after which he introduced Mr. Alex. McDonald, of Ottawa, a member of the Executive of the Dominion Trades and Labour Congress and Delegate from the Bricklayers' Union of Ottawa to the Bricklayers' International Union in session in Toronto; Delegate W. T. McGown, of Youngstown, Ohio, and Delegates C. Everts, of East London, Ont., as visitors, and they were accorded a hearty welcome. Mr. Macdonald, in returning thanks, said that organized labor at Ottawa fully appreciated the efforts of Toronto's Trades and Labor Council; in fact, they paid more attention to its proceedings than they did those of the House of Commons. Mr. McGowan said that as a Yankee he knew no national or geographical lines in the labor cause, and paid a high tribute to the people of Toronto for their kind and warm treatment of their American visitors on this occasion—he referred to Toronto's trade unionists in particular.

The President then called the next order of business—the election of officers, when

Delegate Banton rose to a question of privilege. He then, without comment, read an article from the *Manufacturer*, the organ of the Ontario Manufacturers' Association, of the 2nd instant, assailing Delegate O'Donoghue, of the Legislative Committee. He said he would take action in relation to it later on.

THE ELECTION OF OFFICERS AND COMMITTEES

was then proceeded with, and the results were:—

President—Mr. Robt. Nicholls, Branch 27 United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners of America.

Vice-President—Mr. George Bradley, L. A. 2,622.

Recording Secretary—Mr. F. C. Cribben, L. A. 6,250.

Treasurer—Mr. Charles March, Painters' Union.

Financial Secretary—Mr. Ed. Glockling, L. A. 5,743.

Librarian—Mr. H. T. Benson, Builders' Laborers' Union.

Sergeant-at-Arms—Mr. H. Weston, United Excavators' Union.

The first committee to be chosen being the Legislative Committee, Delegate Banton said that, in reply to, as well as in protest against the utterly untruthful attack upon the Council and the Legislative Committee over the shoulders of the secretary of the latter body in the columns of the *Manufacturer*, he moved that the old committee be re-elected. (Applause.) The motion prevailed, and the following delegates were declared elected by acclamation as such:—

Legislative Committee—Messrs. D. J. O'Donoghue, Charles March, W. H. Parr, Geo. Harris and H. T. Benson.

Municipal Committee—Messrs. John Armstrong, Robert Lamb, Jules Meyerhoffer, James Morrison and H. Weston.

Educational Committee—Messrs. Geo. Bradley, W. H. Fox, F. C. Waghorn, F. C. Cribbin and T. H. Fitzpatrick.

Organization Committee—Messrs. G. T. Beales, John Hill, T. Webb, W. Wilson and T. W. Banton.

Auditors—Messrs. W. H. Parr, W. Coulter and W. Davey.

Trustees—Messrs. D. J. O'Donoghue, R. Glockling and John Armstrong.

The retiring President here announced the thoughtful courtesy of the Executive of the Toronto Branch of the Iron Moulders' Union in honoring the Council in the invitation to the President to be present at the banquet recently tendered by the iron moulders to Mr. Martin Fox, their International President. He then installed the newly-elected officers.

President Nicholls made a short speech, thanking the Council for the unexpected honor conferred on himself, and promised that, while being found ever ready to uphold the character and extend the admittedly great influence of the Council, he would always be found fair and impartial while in the chair.

The usual half-yearly report of Financial Secretary E. Glockling, together with that of Treasurer C. March, on being read, were referred to the auditors. These reports indicated that the receipts for the half-year were $231 82, and the expenditure only $207.83.

Delegate O'Donoghue read the report of the Legislative Committee as follows:—

LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE'S REPORT.

Your Legislative Committee in this last report for their term of office, and first for the month of January, 1891, beg leave to submit

That they desire to acknowledge the courtesy of the chief clerk of the Emigrants Information office, London, England, in forwarding Circular No. 1, respecting the labor market of Canada, and dated January 1, 1891. As your body has been often before informed, a note at the head of this circular says:—

"This office has been established under the supervision of the Colonial Office for the purpose of supplying intending emigrants with useful and trustworthy information respecting emigration, chiefly to the British Colonies. The information issued to the public is mainly obtained from the various Colonial Governments and their representatives in this country. No pains are spared to make the information as accurate as possible, but the Committee of Management cannot undertake to hold themselves responsible for the absolute correctness of every detail."

The utter unreliability of this Government publication is at once recognized when it stated under date of the first day of January (the present month), in speaking of farm and domestic female servants, that "these are in demand in some districts. . . . Wages in Ontario average $8 per week." This circular also asserts that "there is considerable demand for children when properly trained"—as by Dr. Barnardo, for example. Among the items of advice we read that "all emigrants, especially those belonging to outdoor trades, like the building trades, which are very slack in the winter, should be prepared to take other work than that of their own particular trade" . . . and emigrants are recommended to accept the first fair offer of work." Your Committee hold that had this circular for January, 1891, told its readers that on that date and since hundreds of men, mechanics and laborers, were idle in Canada, and were ready and willing to "take other work than that of their own calling," but that, unfortunately, no "fair" or other offers of work were presenting themselves, it would be nearer the truth. In so far as Canada's labor market is concerned, the publication of this circular, so glaringly unreliable and evidently intended to mislead the working classes in Great Britain, is an unpardonable outrage, and is chargeable to our Federal Government and its representative (Hon. Sir Charles Tupper, High Commissioner), in London, England.

Your Committee some time ago received a stereotyped document, signed by an under official of the Department of Agriculture at Ottawa, acknowledging the receipt of the communication of your Committee asking for certain information of value to your body, and which could only be authoritatively given by Hon. John Carling himself. Your Committee much regret that so far that information has not been accorded. This is the second communication from your committee which the Minister of Agriculture, during his incumbency of office, has seen fit to ignore, and his discourtesy in the premises is in glaring contrast with the urbanity and promptitude of reply on the part of every other member of that Government in all correspondence with your representative committee.

Your Legislative Committee, realizing the value of the present Lien Acts of Ontario to wage-earners, direct the special attention of your body to the significant movement outlined in the following Circular, and copies of which have been published as advertisements in city newspapers. The promoters are extremely solicitous as to "mechanics receiving the price of their labor," but yet among the names of those reported as having promised their support to the movement referred to we do not find the name of one mechanic. The Circular referred to reads as follows:—

"*Re* THE MECHANICS' LIEN ACTS.

"'What this country wants in Law, Legislation and Judicial Rulings is a procedure less expensive, more effective, with fewer technicalities and more common sense.'

"These acts, it is conceded by all, have failed to carry out their intention. In the opinion of material men, contractors, mechanics, etc., it has become an imperative necessity to have such legislation as will enable material men to get the price of their material, and mechanics the price of their labor. The press has recently adverted to the present imperfections of the Mechanics' Lien Law, and several correspondents have contributed thereto; the result being that a number of lumber merchants, brickmakers, contractors, etc., who are interested in the working of this act, have resolved to form an organization having for its object the obtaining of the desired legislation. It is proposed that at the coming session of the Ontario Legislation to apply for the legislation required, or, at all events, as much as can be obtained. Meantime the initiators of the movement are obtaining accurate information as to the present state of the lien law in England, the United States and in Canada, and it is requested by them that all parties interested shall communicate to the undersigned their experience with the present Mechanics' Lien Acts, and what in their opinion would remedy the existing defects thereof. The following among others have expressed themselves as in favor of the movement, and have promised their support:—In Toronto and vicinity—The Yorkville and Carlton Brick Co., Capt. William Hall, William Hall & Sons, lumber merchants and agents for the Rathbun Co. of Deseronto; James Carnochan & Sons, lumber merchants; Bryce Bros., lumber merchants; William Booth, brickmaker; Walter Page, contractor; Harris & Duncan, contractors; Britnell & Co., stone dealers; Geo. Rathbone, sash and door manufacturer; Gillespie & Brooks, stone dealers; Isaac Bros., stone dealers; J. F. Pease Furnace Company; A. Hunter, planing mill; James Bateman, planing mill; Sam. Arnold, brickmaker; Richard Doughty, brickmaker; Robt. Goodings, brickmaker; James Pears, brickmaker; J. Carlyle, builder; D. Stephenson, lumber merchant; H. Williams, roofer.

"All parties interested desiring to aid in the obtaining of the proposed legislation, will please communicate personally or by letter with

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Your Committee are electrified in being thus told by the "material men" of Toronto that "what this country wants in Law and Judicial Rulings is a procedure less expensive, more effective, with fewer technicalities and more common sense." It is pleasing to know that the "material men" are coming to the rescue of the Legislature and the Bench of this country—to teach them that the mechanic and the laborer should always get the bone for their pay or wages after all others were first provided for. Seriously, your body being thus duly cautioned, should see to it that its Legislative Committee exercise great watchfulness in respect of any measure or measures of "common sense" introduced by these people who have learned that the present Lien Acts "have failed to carry out their intention" in securing mechanics the price of their labor. In this instance it will be necessary for the mechanic and laborer to protect themselves from their friends.

Your Committee desire to draw the attention of your body to "An Act for the enforcement of Orders under the Act respecting Masters and Servants," introduced by Hon. Attorney-General Mowat, and enacted into law during the session of the Provincial Legislature in 1889, at the instance and on the solicitation of your body. Under the provisions of this law when any person secures a judgment for wages before a police magistrate, that official has the like power and authority to enforce the payment of such wages as are possessed by a Division Court Judge in like cases. The securing of the passage into law of this most necessary measure of itself amply justifies the existence as it does the value of your body in looking after the rights and material interests of those who have to live by their wages. This will be especially manifest to those who devote any attention to the large number of people who are forced to resort nearly every week to that channel to secure the payment of wages earned. In this connection it affords your Committee much pleasure in bearing testimony to the very agreeable fact that Magistrate Denison, despite his unjustifiable and unreasonable antipathy to labor organizations and their membership, in his administration of this law clearly indicates that he has no sentiment in common with those who attempt to defraud employees in the matter of wages. In illustration of this your Committee draw attention to the fact that yesterday morning John McPhee, a master baker, was before Magistrate Denison, charged with not paying $4.50 wages due to his servant, Jennie Chappell. He claimed that the girl had gone out to a dance one evening, and not being able to get into the house on her return, stayed away all next day. Moreover, she had worked one month for $5 and was only to get $4 for the next month, but she now claimed to be paid at the rate of $5.

The Magistrate told the defendant that he should have paid the girl her wages and discharged her if he was dissatisfied, and added that he was surprised at hearing of any person being able to get servants at $5 per month. He ordered McPhee to pay the amount.

Your Committee, while not anticipating the exercise of any such philanthropy in Toronto under its existing municipal system, points with pleasure to the fact that the city of Chicago, Illinois, has had the good sense and public spirit to appoint five women health inspectors. Their salary is $1,000 a year each, and their duties are the inspection of places where women and children are employed, and the establishment of necessary sanitary improvements. They are clothed with police power, and have already accomplished great good in the remedying of abuses.

Your Committee have had representations made to them that more than one of those who during last summer occupied the positions and exercised the functions of captains and mates on steamers and steam ferries plying to and from as well as on Toronto Bay, were not properly and legally qualified. As the subject came under the notice of your Committee within the past week only, time did not permit a proper inquiry into the circumstances, and as the matter is of significant importance to the people of this city, it is strongly recommended that it be a special instruction to your incoming Legislative Committee, to enter into an immediate and careful investigation in the premises, with a view to securing or providing for the greater safety of the lives of those who trust themselves on board of such vessels.

Your Committee, in accordance with the instructions of your body, requested and were very courteously accorded an interview with Hon. John Dryden, Minister of Agriculture for Ontario, in respect of reported infraction of a vital provision of the Ontario Factories Act in some establishments in the city of Toronto. The subject of complaint was that, despite the clearness and imperativeness of the words of the Act in that behalf, the hour for dinner allowed women, young girls and children had been reduced to half an hour. The honorable gentleman listened with attention, and the subject having been discussed fully in all its phases, your Committee withdrew, well satisfied with the result of their mission.

Your Committee, while doubting the correctness of the assertion credited to Mr. Laughlin in charging that existing destitution is to an extent due to "the effects of the strikes" (early last summer) are not surprised, though regretting to read in the city press that "It is the experience of the visitors of the House of Industry that a great deal of the relief now asked for by the poor in the city is due to the want of work. Mr. Laughlin, the superintendent of the House, is of the same view and says he is besieged with people asking for work and that between this want of employment and the effects of the strikes there has been nothing like the demands this year for relief. There are about 1,600 cases on the books, and a large amount of fuel and provisions is being distributed every day. The want of employment has been brought to the notice of the Mayor by Mr. O'Sullivan, one of the managers, and his worship hopes to be able to have work started, he says, almost immediately.

Dr. D. A. O'Sullivan, in his communication to His Worship the Mayor, says that "the scarcity of corporation employment this year is given as a reason for many applicants for relief at the House of Industry. The majority of our native poor," he says, "in my experience, would prefer to earn their bread rather than solicit it from the poorhouse." Your Committee in its intimate knowledge of the views of the working classes of this city, are heartily in accord with the sentiment expressed in this last sentence of Dr. O'Sullivan's communication.

Your Committee, in the above connection, desire to introduce here the following paragraph from a city paper, dated Montreal, January 13th instant:

"Two young men named Martel and Hope reached Montreal to-day, having walked all the way from Ottawa. They came out from England in November, and with the exception of a few days' work had got nothing to do. On the way from Ottawa they cut cordwood for the farmers in return for food. Their condition was pitiable in the extreme, and they are now trying to get back home."

And yet Canada is now expending the enormous sum of $251,000 in encouraging immigration from abroad to this country, and with the result that in the year ending December 31, 1890, the number of immigrants to Canada by the seaboard was 8,589—an increase of 688 over the arrivals of the year before up to a like date.

Your Committee, in concluding, bearing in mind their experience of the past years, and being mindful of the importance of work yet to be done on behalf of the working classes, would strongly impress upon their successors the absolute necessity of close attention, activity, perseverance, as well as the exercise of sound judgment as to their duties respecting all matters pertaining to their duties as a Committee of your body.

All respectfully submitted.

W. H. PARR, *Chairman*

TORONTO, *January 16, 1891.*

Delegate O'Donoghue also presented a supplementary report of the Legislative Committee, in reference to the visit of Mr. Plimsoll, urging all labor bodies to take action, for the protection of the lives of sailors employed on cattle-ships. After an interesting and instructive debate on the report, in which Delegates Armstrong, Parr, Beales, Bradley, Benson, Crowhurst and O'Donoghue took part, the reports were concurred in.

MUNICIPAL COMMITTEE'S REPORT.

The Municipal Committee's report was then presented. It condemned the proposed University Park deal, pointing out that the whole of the land endowment of the University rightfully belongs to the city; that the University has never paid a cent of taxes on their land, and that were the University Senate to grant these thirty acres to the city it would be a slight return for the benefits which Toronto has conferred on them. The report condemned any grant of city funds to the Salvation Army. The final report of the Board of Works, in which facts were set forth strongly favorable to day labor, was referred to, and the suggestion made that the appropriation for 1891 should include a provision for securing yards for storing materials to be used in block-paving, asphalting and sewer construction, as a means of saving the profits which now go to middlemen—an increase of the pay of drivers in connection with the fire brigade, who now only get 60 cents per day, was urged. The management of the water-works department was strongly criticized, the statement being made that "imperfection and incapacity are depicted on every act which the controlling authorities have undertaken for the betterment of the system." A man well up in hydraulic engineering, and possessing more than the mediocrity of business ability, should be at the head of the department. Superintendent Hamilton did not possess these requirements.

Delegate Beales objected to the attack upon Superintendent Hamilton of the water works department, in view of his request for an investigation of his accounts.

Delegate Armstrong explained that there was no attack on the personal honesty of Mr. Hamilton.

Delegate O'Donoghue was informed that one Frank Langrell, who had last year been convicted of defrauding the city while in its employ, was ostentatiously dismissed through one door, and quietly let in through another door next day, and has ever since been in the constant employ of the city. This was setting a premium upon dishonesty. He desired the Municipal Committee to make enquiry. He also desired to know whether the salary of Treasurer Coady had been increased.

Delegate Armstrong promised the desired information.

EDUCATION COMMITTEE'S REPORT.

The report of the Education Committee was presented. It congratulated the Council on the re-election of Mr. D. A. Carey as Separate School trustee, and the return at the head of the poll of Ald. Gillespie, who made such strenuous efforts to obtain technical classes for artizans. While disclaiming any hostility to higher education, the committee condemned the proposed exchange of property between the city and University, and hoped it would be defeated if referred to the electors.

The report was adopted.

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