

OUR BOARDING HOUSE

Reflections on Current Events by the Boarders.

Somehow, the political events of the week created little or no excitement among our boarders, and with the exception of an occasional spat between Sinnett and Phil, no notice was taken of our civic elections. Though we live here and work here and have as big a stake as anybody in the administration of civic affairs, still, being only boarders, we had no say in the matter; this may account for the absence of excitement among us. But I could never rightly understand why permanent residents should be deprived of a vote simply because they don't happen to keep house, and I shall be glad if some one of the many who tolerate and approve of this unjust discrimination will give me his reasons for doing so. However, this wasn't what I was going to write about. The fact is that Sharkey, who is generally more of a listener than a talker, argued some of his views, religious and social, in a way that left no doubt as to his ability to 'hoe his own row.' It is seldom that he takes the floor, but on this occasion he took it and held it, and as the subject matter may prove of interest to you I will give you the 'speech' as well as I can remember it.

"Of all events occurring during the last few days," said he, "the death of Charles Bradlaugh and the defeat of Senator Ingalls deserve more than passing notice. Not that I would for a moment compare the wind-bag from Kansas with the champion of individualism, but because the circumstances attending the death of the one and the defeat of the other are such as to cheer the hearts of reformers the world over. I am, as you know, a Nationalist, and could therefore never agree politically with Bradlaugh, but I will say with Annie Besant: 'If all individualists were as sincere in their desire to benefit humanity, as careful to respect the rights of others, as honest, as true, as self-sacrificing in their public interest as Charles Bradlaugh then I, too, would become an individualist; but it is with his religious views that I must deal in order for you to understand the significance of the events preceding his death. What these views were are best illustrated by his own words spoken in the Colliseum at Liverpool some fifteen years ago. 'Let us suppose, for the sake of argument,' said he, 'that there are a thousand religions in the world. My opponent (a Presbyterian minister) has examined one and adopted it, discarding the other nine hundred and ninety-nine. I, on the other hand, have examined them ALL, and I discard the thousand.' It did not require the terror of hell to prevent him doing a bad thing or yet the promise of heaven to induce him to do a good one. He was the recognized leader of that school of thought in England. By precept and example, by word and pen, he promulgated his ideas of natural law and the higher duties of man, and ridiculed the Bible as the Inspired word of God; and if ever mortal man was hated by the class who live by preaching what they seldom practice that man was Charles Bradlaugh; and to his honor, be it said, he had well earned their enmity. However, he was elected for Northampton. Now, had Bradlaugh been an ordinary man he would have taken the oath on taking his seat in Parliament, but he wasn't, and he told the Speaker of the House bluntly that he didn't believe in an oath. What followed is history. For years he fought, single-handed, the combined powers of bigotry and prejudice of the English House of Commons until, vanquishing all his opponents, he was allowed to take his seat in peace. But the history of the strife, which at times degenerated to personal violence and proved the intense hatred of his antagonists, was recorded on the minutes of the House and remained there until, by unani-

mous consent, it was expunged last week. The dying Reformer was unconscious when the leader of the House arrived to convey the news, but the fact remains that the growth of modern thought and progressive ideas has made the English House of Commons ashamed of the part it played ten years ago. It is safe to say that in the future neither Jew or Gentile, Theist or Atheist will be refused a seat at Westminster as the accredited representative of any English constituency, the howling of a few bigots notwithstanding, and this must be gratifying to reformers of every kind. It is one of the straws that show which way the wind blows. Now, let us consider the defeat of Senator Ingalls through the combined efforts of the K. of L. and Farmers' Alliance. What could either of these organizations possibly have against a man who publicly announced that 'the moral sentiment of mankind had been aroused at the unequal distribution of wealth, and at the unequal diffusion of the burdens, benefits and privileges of society,' and that 'there had been men rash enough to question whether any man could show a fair and legal title to \$200,000,000 or \$100,000,000 or \$10,000,000. If he were put on his voir dire he would hesitate, before admitting that, in the sense of giving just compensation and equivalents, any man in this country or any other country had ever absolutely earned \$1,000,000.' Again and again has he denounced the iniquity of the demonization of silver and the legislation-promoted plutocracy of his country, but all to no purpose. The industrial organizations had watched his actions at Washington and found that, despite his windy professions of friendship and goodwill, he had persistently voted in the interests of the money power; they saw in his support of the Force Bill that he was a better Republican than what he was a citizen, and determined to make him harmless. They had captured their own State at the last election, and knew that if their representatives were true to their cause Ingalls could not be re-elected; but they were well aware that unlimited money was at his disposal to buy the election if possible. The Farmers and Knights know the frailty of human nature, and taught by bitter experience, they took steps to compel their representatives to do their duty. At the opening of the legislature each representative elected by the industrial organizations and pledged to their platform found himself surrounded by Farmer delegates from his constituency who never, either sleeping or waking, allowed him to be alone or to be approached by the corruptionists of the Republican party. At the election of senator the galleries of the House were occupied by stern men who were delegated to 'shoot to the floor' each representative who proved recreant to his duty or -traitor to the cause, and Ingalls was defeated. It was expensive and a desperate thing to do, but for once the chosen representatives of the people lived up to their promises made before election. The Farmers' Alliance has gone into politics in an effective manner, and it does not at all propose to confine its operations to State Legislatures. They will have a large number of representatives and senators at Washington, and these, too, will be compelled to toe the mark. It shows that the people will not be humbugged any longer, and the nailing of Ingalls pelt to the Farmers' barn will prove a warning to all slippery and tricky politicians in the future."

BILL BLADES.

An Outrage.

Citizen—You appear to be excited, deacon; what's the matter?
Deacon—That was a great outrage at the opera house last night.
What was it? I didn't hear about it.
You've seen them pictures about town of ballet dancers in short skirts?
Yes.
Well, they were to appear in a play, and I went to see it, so that I might warn our young people against them.
What was the outrage you complain of?
They didn't appear. The mayor wouldn't let them.

STRONG MEN OF THE PAST.

Authentic Feats Performed by Men of Muscle.

On March 28, 1841, Thomas Thompson lifted three barrels of water, weighing together 1,836 pounds. He also put an iron bar on his neck, seized hold of its two ends, and bent it until the latter met. On another occasion he raised with his teeth a table six feet long, supporting at its furthest end a weight of 100 pounds. He also tore without serious effort a rope of a diameter of two inches, and lifted a horse over a bar.

Some years ago a negro appeared in London who, with one hand and his arm out straight, lifted from the ground a chair on which was seated a full grown man having on his lap a child.

It is on record that a German called Buchholz lifted with his teeth a canon weighing about 200 pounds, and fired it off in that position. While performing at Epernay, in France, the same feat, the barrel of the gun burst. Miraculously he was not killed, although several of the fragments were thrown over fifty yards away.

There are stories of other strong men who did not appear in public. A butcher lived in South Holland who killed calves by strangling them. A Dutch Count, in a private entertainment, bent an iron bar by beating it with his right hand against his left arm, protected by a leather bandage, bending it afterward straight again by beating it the other way.

Charles Louvier, a carpenter, of Paris, found it child's play to roll a tin basin between his fingers into a cylinder. On one occasion he carried off a soldier on guard who had gone to sleep in the sentry box, depositing both on a low churchyard wall close by. An equally amusing story is told of a Dane, Knut Kundson, a locksmith, who, while standing in a window on the ground floor, lifted with one hand half a bullock from the shoulder of a butcher who was toiling past with his load.—Chamber's Journal.

What Shorter Hours Have Done

The history of the short-hour movement in the century shows that wherever labor has risen above brutal drudgery, not only have hours decreased, but moral and intellectual product has directly resulted. Shorter hours means better men, a higher standard of comforts, increasing wants, a broader view of requirements of human existence, a dependence of moral relations—which is but another term of widening social relations—an expansion of the mental qualities, in intellectual attainments, increased production, a greater consumptive capacity, a larger conception of responsibility, a wider range for the exercises of human activities, closer relations of sympathy with our fellows, a keener sense of equity and justice, a more determined character, greater zeal in "works of well doing," restriction of the merely brutal passions, enlargement of sentiments—in a word, human progress.

Do You See the Point?

Workingmen are apt to be unfair toward one another, says the Boston Labor Leader. They are apt to impute wrong motives. In debating a question they sometimes forget to consider the merits of the issue involved, while personally attacking their opponents in debate.

How often do you hear the sting, "Well I wonder what Blank is making out of that? What is there in it?"

Now the natural faculty of weighing things fairly is a rare one. Even people of culture, and true culture does much to broaden men, are often swayed by bias. It may not be strange, then, that people who labor hard every day, and who have the brand of their toil driven into body and mind, should be intolerant. They have little time to waste on finical politeness, it is true.

But labor reformers ought to be fair. They ought to be much fairer than they are. They are as a rule thinking, intelligent people. They know more about real economy than the average professor. They should have sufficient knowledge of human nature not to be chronically uncharitable nor perpetually suspicious.

It is true that there are quacks and demagogues, corrupt leaders and manipulating politicians in the labor reform world. But they are exceptions not the rule. And it may be set down as a fact that he who is always hollering about fraud and corruption will bear watching himself.

Big Profits on Small Capital.

Tramp (to handsomely dressed lady on the avenue)—Please, mum, my family is starvin', and I'll have ter sell my wheelbarrow ter buy bread. It's just around the corner, mum. Would you like ter buy it?
Lady—Mercy me! What could I do with a wheelbarrow? I live in a flat, my good man. But I will help you gladly. Here's a dollar.

Tramp (to himself)—That's \$6 I've made ter day tryin' ter sell a wheelbarrow to kind people what lives in flats, and I ain't got no wheelbarrow nuther.—New York Weekly.

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