

51 Daily Ontario

WORK

The writer, in addressing the members of the Belleville Consumers' Economy League the other day, stated that he had been going to church with more or less regularity for "nigh onto forty years" and he had never yet heard a sermon on the subject of Work—just plain, commonplace, unromantic Work. He recommended that the wives of one or two clergymen, who happened to be present, should carry a message from the meeting to their husbands that the latter should prepare and deliver a sermon or a series of sermons, expounding the gospel of Work.

We have no doubt the message was duly delivered but regret to say that we have not as yet had any intimation, by way of the announcement of subjects of sermons in our advertising columns that the message has been acted upon.

We have had sermons a plenty on the subject of Rest. There is a hymn that tells us in verse of indifferent quality, that:

"On the other side of Jordan
In the sweet fields of Eden
Where the Tree of Life is blooming
There is rest for you."

We must confess that a Paradise where there is a deadly, monotonous round of eternal rest has small attraction for us. We prefer that fuller and richer pleasure, that comes from doing, accomplishing and achieving.

"I know what pleasure is for I have done good work," wrote Robert Louis Stevenson in one of those pregnant sentences that convey to us a world of meaning.

And we wish to say right here that we do not believe that earth affords or that the paradise to come will ever afford a greater pleasure than that which comes to us from a congenial task well accomplished.

This good old earth has for several thousand years been dominated by a false idea. This is the idea that Work is a curse.

The mistaken notion came, we think, from the old-fashioned theology which took too literal a view of the position of our first parents and their subsequent expulsion from Eden.

It is true the history, as it is recorded in Genesis, tells us they were sent out of the Garden because of their disobedience and were thereafter compelled to labor more strenuously for a living. But we are, unable to accept the opinion that their previous life in Eden had been entirely one of pampered ease. We are told in the 15th verse of the 2nd chapter that "the Lord God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it." That passage, if it means anything implies that Adam had a duty to perform and work to do. But even as it was he and Eve got their living too easily and Satan soon found mischief for the idle hands.

It is strange how any one reading the wonderful story of the Man of Nazareth could gather from it any other impression than that of the nobility and divinity of all manly effort.

It is true that the profiteers and aristocrats of lordly Jerusalem passed sarcastic remarks about the humble Carpenter from the obscure Village of Nazareth. He worked with His hands, and it was the utmost presumption for Him to assume to teach pharisaic philosophy, at the center of religious thought in the eastern world. But the Carpenter left His bench, not because the work was severe and the hours long. He left the menial toil, that he had forever ennobled, because He had a message to deliver to a world that He knew needed it.

And for three years thereafter He labored and endured and suffered, as only His gentle and supersensitive spirit could suffer and endure, for He was a Man of Sorrows and acquainted with griefs.

But we also believe that in those three years He reaped ineffable joys. For when He went about healing the sick, restoring sight to the blind, feeding the hungry, blessing the little children and delivering His new message of love and universal brotherhood, the sunshine that He scattered must have been reflected back to Him in that supreme satisfaction that comes only to those who go about doing good.

Just now there is no gospel that needs to be preached so zealously and continuously as the gospel of Work.

It requires a courageous preacher, to expound that gospel, for it is not popular.

Everybody is taking the other course or preaching the gospel of more pay for less work.

We have all been hunting out the soft jobs for ourselves until there are no longer soft jobs enough to go round. Each generation is becoming lazier than the last.

When we were young the agitation was for a day's work limited to ten hours. Later the boon sought was an eight-hour day but now

the aim is a six-hour day with all of Saturday and Sunday as holidays.

A lady from New York, now visiting in Belleville, told The Ontario of an experience she had prior to leaving New York. She wanted to get some furniture packed to forward to Boston and she went to a man who did that kind of work. She made her request and he asked in an amazed and injured tone:

"Why, don't you know this is Saturday?"

"Yes, I know it is Saturday, but what has that to do with it?" asked the lady in return.

"Why, we never work on Saturday here, you know."

"Doesn't your wife ever work on Saturday?" doesn't inquire the lady.

"Ye-es, she does," hesitatingly admitted the man.

"And doesn't she also work on Sunday?" persisted the lady.

"Ye-es, she does that too," was the even more reluctant admission.

"And doesn't she work longer than eight hours a day for seven days a week?" was the further relentless inquiry.

"She sure does," owned up the man.

"Now, see here," said the lady in measured tones, "I'd just like to know how long you lazy men think that we women are going to put up with that kind of nonsense? We've got the vote and we're going to use it and one of the first things we intend to do is to see that some of you shirkers put, in an honest week's work. I've got some furniture to pack and I want it done today, for I have to leave. Will you do it?"

The furniture was packed that same day.

We have resided in Belleville now a little over ten years. We have been noticing the habits of people more or less during that time.

There are some whom we know pretty well who in all that ten years we have never seen doing any real work. And they are healthy, able-bodied men and far more capable physically, of producing some of the goods the world needs so badly than are thousands of others who are slaving from morning till night in order to make ends meet.

That was a good rule we had, in regard to loafing, during the later years of the war. The law should be revived for the food scarcity is now greater than ever and the disposition to streets during production hours seems also greater than before.

Many big-voiced agitators, with small reasoning capacity, have been spreading the foolish and pernicious doctrine that we must have short hours and reduced output so that there will "be enough work to go around."

No more mischievous nonsense could be preached for it is that sort of teaching, acted upon generally, that is creating the present hardship and world-wide scarcity of the essentials of life.

The members of the Ontario Legislature and Cabinet were recently the guests of the Toronto Independent Labor Party and the Toronto District Labor Council when they were tendered a banquet. Jimmy Simpson presided and Premier Drury was chief guest, receiving a very warm welcome. In his speech Mr. Drury spoke of the similarity of the wants and claims of the Labor party with the United Farmers. They had much in common, and he believed that they would give the country the kind of government that it needed and wanted. Labor and the Farmers were the same people with the same methods. There was only one point regarding which the Farmers and the Labor men differed and he said:

"I am sympathetic toward every aim of Labor but one, and that is the plan to make work for all, to shorten the hours to let it go around. If we see to it that men who earn the goods get them, then the more goods we produce the better we are off. So let's get to work and see that the producer gets the value of his product. We must work and produce the things we need. Why should we care for the value of the dollar provided we by working can get what we want of the things we need in life?"

Commenting upon Premier Drury's remarks, The Hamilton Times had this to say:

In our opinion it is a mistake to believe that short hours makes work for others—make work go around so that more men will be employed. The less work produced there will be less demand for the raw materials, making less work for those engaged in producing these. Less goods will be produced and there will be fewer to sell, which again will reduce the number of people working along commercial lines, and fewer goods that are produced the dearer they will be. At the same time there is a certain limit over which men should not have to work if their health and family interests are to be considered.

On the occasion of his recent seventy-third birthday, Thomas A. Edison departed from his life-time custom of doing great things and then refraining from writing or publicly talking about his accomplishments. So pregnant with wisdom were the few simple words contained in his birthday message and so vital in suggesting a solution of one of the greatest problems before the people today, that his message ought to be featured in every newspaper in Canada.

This is the message:

"On my birthdays, I like to turn for a moment and look backward over the road I have traveled.

"Today, I am wondering what would have happened to me by now, if, fifty years ago, some fluent talker had converted me to the theory of the eight-hour day and convinced me that it was not fair to my fellow-workers to put forth my best efforts in my work?"

"I am glad that the eight-hour day had not been invented when I was a young man. If my life had been made up of eight-hour days, I don't believe I could have accomplished a great deal.

"This country would not amount to as much as it does, if the young men of fifty years ago had been afraid that they might earn more than they were paid. There were shirkers in those days, to be sure, but they didn't boast of it. The shirker tried to conceal or excuse his shiftlessness and lack of ambition.

"I am not against the eight-hour day, or any other thing that protects labor from exploitation at the hands of ruthless employers, but it makes me sad to see young Americans shackle their abilities by blindly conforming to rules which force the industrious man to keep in step with the shirker. If these rules are carried to their logical conclusion, it would seem that they are likely to establish a rigid system of vocational classes, which will make it difficult for a working man to improve his condition and station in life by his own efforts. I have always felt that one of the principal reasons for American progress in the past has been that every man had a chance to become whatever he wanted to be. It used to be fashionable to be ambitious. The employee planned to become an employer; the unskilled man sought to become more skillful. A young man was not well thought of, if he was not striving for a higher place in life. There appears to have been a change in recent years. The present disposition is seemingly to say, in effect: 'I am what I am and so I shall remain. I aspire to nothing better than my present job. I ask for nothing, except larger wages and shorter hours.'

"Of course, I realize that the leaders of Union Labor have their political problems and that they must appeal to the collective intelligence of their followers, which is lower than the average individual intelligence of the same men, but there ought to be some labor leader, strong enough and wise enough to make Trade Unions a means of fitting their members for better jobs and greater responsibilities. I wonder if the time will ever come when the unions, generally, will teach their members how to be better workmen, and train the ablest and most ambitious to become bosses and employers. In other words, will the Trade Union grasp its opportunity to become a school of industrial and commercial training for its members—the poor man's college and a friendly rival of our technical institutes and schools of commerce? If that time ever does arrive, Trade Unionism will be one of the world's greatest forces in social progress, and I think there will be a much better understanding between capital and labor.

"I hope I may have enough birthdays to enable me to witness something of that kind. I feel like it now. Inasmuch as the Prohibitionists have buried 'Johnny Walker' under the 18th Amendment, and he has no further use for his trade-mark in this country, I'll borrow it and say that I am still going strong."

What is the truth about this six-hour day or eight-hour day or ten-hour day?

The truth is that in many occupations men may work ten hours a day without the slightest injury to their mental, moral or physical nature. There are other occupations, again, where the work is of such a heavy or exhausting nature that eight hours or even six hours a day is plenty long enough.

Farming is a strenuous occupation and yet farmers work from twelve to sixteen hours a day during the producing season and suffer no ill effects. From the farm the city recruits its new resources of brains and energy, as statistics abundantly prove.

Far more people die because of the rust that accumulates from too much leisure than because of overwork. Thomas A. Edison is a stirring example of the truth that hard work does not kill.

All wise counsellors have been telling the country for months that it will be impossible to go on forever paying more for less hours work and less product per hour. Every one whose opinion is worth heeding has been pointing out

that it will be impossible to go on indefinitely flinging away money in handfuls for more luxuries and indulgences and then assessing the amount upon industry and commerce in the forms of boosted pay and inflated profits. This is the mistake of thinking that easy money, cheap money, is wealth, whereas the only real wealth is created by the efforts of hands or brains operating on natural resources with the aid of proper tools.

This matter has been much agitated of late. The wasters and cormorants may disregard the truth, but money is sensitive and the investment market has a subconscious perception and judgment that are in the long run unerring. Probably the present flutter is not of great importance; it is unlikely that any serious catastrophe will develop from it; but it is a lesson and a warning. It is a lesson to all who are engaged in straining conditions of any sort to an unnatural degree.

It is a lesson to strikers, it is a lesson to profiteers, it is a lesson to idlers and wasters, to those who are doing less than the natural day's work and to those who are spending more than the natural day's pay. A real collapse in the financial world would put a stop to the whole carnival of folly at once, and would substitute a period of penal contraction in all directions. Let all join in praying that such a calamity may be averted as is involved in a depressed attitude towards enterprise and investment, a shrinking of capital because of alarm from its normal work of keeping industry and commerce going to top speed.

The remedy, the great preventive of such a misfortune is all round moderation, restoring confidence. The country suffers from something of a fever of making and spending. Hygienic extremes in the opposite direction are unnecessary, indeed unwise. What is most needed is a period of common sense marked by head work, fair play, controlled personal outlay and steady savings.

Sixteenthly, and in conclusion, let us observe that slavery in the olden times produced the impression that work was an evil and a curse; that rest was the ideal.

But we know better now. Work—not slavery or overwork and certainly not idleness—is the divine plan of the ages. It is a god-like plan producing happiness and the only real satisfaction and genuine success.

There is only one explanation of absolute failure—only one. And that is lack of hard work.

We all admire the achievements of Thomas A. Edison, whose birthday message we quote above.

When you think of his reputation and success in the world, read over again that birthday message to understand that success was not something that he picked, ready-made off a tree, but was the fruit of toiling for fourteen hours a day and often more.

Recently Edison said another thing that every reader of The Ontario should learn by heart:

"Genius is one per cent. inspiration and ninety-nine per cent. perspiration.

Their are ten thousand kinds of success but in every one, hard work is the cornerstone, the foundation, the mortar for the brick, the one thing without which there would be nothing.

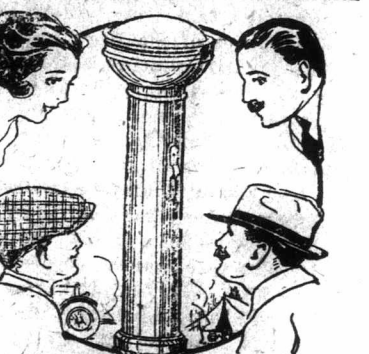
Experts have estimated that in the Canadian Northwest there are today something like 20,000,000 acres of vacant land, all of it within a score or so miles of railways. This vast acreage is exclusive of that held by the Dominion Government, the Canadian Pacific and other railways, and the Hudson Bay Company. In order that this land may become settled, an organization known as the Western Canada Colonization Association has been formed. It is composed of prominent Canadians, many of them leading financiers of the east, and has the backing of the financial and commercial interests of the prairie provinces. A large part of this land is owned abroad, and it is because of this, to a considerable extent, that it is remaining unsettled. The object of the colonization company is to act for this ownership in placing settlers, a work that neither the Government nor the railways can take up where privately owned land is concerned. With both of the latter the colonization company will co-operate so that powerful financial and other assistance can be had. The company will see that the newcomers will be placed at points best suited to them and they will be looked after until properly established, with expert advice and information.

The scheme promises to bring immense progress and prosperity to the Northwest, which will, of course, be reflected throughout the entire country. In order to finance the project an appeal is being made to the business corporations of the Dominion for a fund of \$1,500,000. Of this sum more than \$300,000 has been already subscribed by public-spirited financial and business men.



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accompanied by Winters motor Sunday last to returning in the Clara and Ethel were guests of on Saturday for her of Brighton, quent sermon to King St. church last, also attend- afternoon men's Bible class ch appreciated. Catherine St. Gore Front St. n Belleville the Mrs. Clifford Da. o recently come ed. or public school other and sister h school here 24th under the mas Hatton had ter, Mrs. Clark. evening last. olt the mis- ot driven into st week at the for him, it was ow about well. thing stores in advertizing their reduction, dry lead we hope y follow and onable and sen- ast Trenton is ther helping to Mr. Pickle who is held out for tre works over on the evening asion Monday l sermon was adies and one mersed in the road from the It. the 24th Mr. accompanied by went for a joy r Fox Stock- Mr. and Mrs. ide Farm on x visited Miss anday. ering from the lle had the his arm last me this spring. ned with Mrs. n on Tuesday, ie entertained it and Isaac milking mach- a delegate to in session at ing Up Being Erect- ril only about permits have Belleville for however other of erection but permits issued in 1919. The are not of the substantial cost of making its effect them will be one storey side of Isa- estimated to is erecting a as street, two and stucco y Mr. W. J. e. erecting a and one-half Charles St. street a two welling is be- White. uilding a two n Dufferin St. f \$1,800. Hyde and Mr. turned yester- p to Toronto, Victoria Day ueen city. has returned Belleville where