

OUR BOARDING HOUSE

Reflections on Current Events by the Boarders.

Bill Sinnett is a man who has never and does not yet belong to any labor organization, and like many more of his class, is always on the lookout for an excuse to justify himself in refusing to become attached to one. I believe Phil Garlic, at one time, tried hard to get him to join the K of L, but eventually gave him up as a bad job. Sinnett's stock in trade argument to all such solicitations was "You fellows don't know what you want; one wants to tax land, the other wants a graduated income tax; one wants the Government to assume control of railways and telegraphs, the other says this would discourage private enterprise and retard the growth of the country." It was in vain that Garlic pointed out that on great questions of principle the Order was unanimous; that its great object was to abolish the wage system, and that if its members differed at all it was only on the question of ways and means to accomplish this object. But no, Sinnett was out, and out he'd stop. Since then, however, he never misses a chance of hecklin' Garlic upon what he calls the the inconsistency of the Knights of Labor.

Last night he was at his old game; "here you are," said he to Garlic, "here's a paper that shows what kind of people you are. The Knights of Labor demand the enactment of laws providing for arbitration between employers and employed, and that the decision of the arbitrators shall have force of law. Now, here you have a paper, Le Trait d'Union, of the 2nd of October, whose owner and editor are both Knights of Labor, declaring that that demand is so utterly impracticable that it is surprised that the question is discussed at all. The article states that to enforce arbitration would completely destroy the liberty of contract of labor for which workmen have contended and suffered during long years. The question of salaries, it says, will always be one of contention, and this will only disappear with the modification of the mode of remuneration, and which the law is powerless to suppress. It has not done away with strikes in either France, England or Belgium, where councils of arbitration and conciliation exist; the most that can be said for it is that it has diminished their number, and that in cases of conflict, these councils have restrained the influence of men who, for gain or ambition have, by their counsel, rendered more difficult a good understanding between capital and labor. The article, in conclusion, warns Canadian workmen to study the subject before applying to Parliament for a permanent commission of arbitration. Now, here is more of your consistency, you and your order demand arbitration, and your Knight of Labor organ ridicules the idea."

"To begin with," said Garlic, "the Order of the K. of L. has only one official paper, and that is the Journal of the Knights of Labor and not Le Trait d'Union. In the second place, I question very much whether that article voices the opinion of anybody but the writer on this question of arbitration. We know from experience that boards of arbitration have done and are doing good, and for this reason we demand them. Even that article, though it professes to ridicule the idea, cannot help but bear testimony to the fact that it has diminished the number of strikes, and if it has done that then it has done good. And as to the assertion that so long as the wage system maintains, the amount of remuneration will always be the bone of contention between capital and labor, none of us deny that; but we contend that disputes arise between employer and employed not bearing

upon the question of wages which could be settled in a friendly way by councils of arbitration. Take, for instance, the New York Central strike. The men insisted on their right to organize; gold-bug Webb denied this, and inaugurated a systematic persecution of the K. of L. all along the line. Had the powers of the State Board of Arbitration been greater, or had the decisions of that board the force of law, that strike could have been prevented and millions of money saved to both sides. It is because we know this that we insist upon arbitration. To talk about liberty of contract of labor under the competitive system is all rot; can't you understand that when capital owns the tools of production with which you have to make a living it holds the power to reduce your wages to an amount barely sufficient to keep you alive; and can't you or won't you understand that competition compels the capitalist to use this power to its utmost. Are you so blind as not to see that all natural opportunities from which labor could derive a living are monopolized, are owned by speculators, landsharks and usurers, and that labor, in no case, can apply itself to nature direct without the payment to this tribe of all it produces excepting enough to maintain life and propagate its kind. As you increase this amount that labor must pay for the privilege of applying to nature direct you decrease the proportion of those willing or able to do so and force them to seek our large cities, there to enter into competition with each other in selling their labor; and then you talk about the liberty of contract of labor. The laborer has about as much of this liberty as a prisoner on bread and water has; the latter can either eat his bread and live, or leave it alone and starve; the former can do the same with his wages, and neither the one or the other will get fat on their diet."

"I agree with you," said Brown, "that courts of arbitration are desirable under certain conditions, and these are: 1st, That such courts or councils shall investigate all disputes between capital and labor on demand of one or both parties interested; 2nd, That they have power to compel witnesses, under oath, to answer questions put to them, even if such answer would incriminate the witness himself; 3rd, That the decisions of the council shall have force of law. Anything less would be as much a farce as that enacted in New York the other day. Each trade should have its own council who should be elected annually, one-half by the employer, the other half by the employees, the two parties to choose the chairman, who should have a casting vote in case of a tie. These councils should meet when called upon to do so and receive pay for actual working time lost by them and no more."

"And shall that council dictate to me," said Sinnett, "what wages I shall receive as though I was a helpless child unable or unwilling to look after myself?"

"Precisely," replied Brown. "We know, if you don't, that from an economic standpoint you are more helpless in the hands of your master than a child, and for this reason we would like to see you, in case of dispute, in the hands of men not directly interested in your quarrel, and we believe that more justice could be had for you from a council upon which you would be as much represented as what he is than if you was left to his tender mercies alone. In regard to the principles involved, who fixes the pay of the soldier, the man-of-war's-man, the Civil Service employee, the bailiff and others connected with public affairs, not even forgetting the cabman's fare who takes you home? Did you ever see a strike in any of these callings? And yet these people did not fix their salaries. No; both you and people like you will have to seek other cause to quarrel with arbitration. The independence of the individual has long since been superseded by interdependence, and the sooner you, and others like you, realize this the better for yourselves. BILL BRADEN.

REFUSING WATER.

A Test Case by the Central Trades and Labor Council.

A new phase in the water tax dispute came to light on Thursday morning in the shape of an action for \$3,000 damages, accompanied by a petition for a writ of injunction against the city, by an old lady named Clermont. The proceedings were taken under the auspices of the Central Trades and Labor Council, and the attorney in the case is Mr. Barnard. The facts as alleged in the declaration are that the plaintiff, who is poor and aged, having moved some two weeks ago into a new house, No. 259 St. Constant street, in the rear, and having asked the city to let the water in, she was refused, unless she paid down the sum of \$5. The plaintiff further alleges that her only means of support is a deaf and dumb daughter, who can earn but little; that the workmen who built the house having used the closets, the latter are now in a most filthy condition, which endangers the health of the residents; that the city is obliged to let the water into newly built houses when required to do so; that besides the illegality of the city's action in demanding the \$5, the refusal to give the water is an act of indescribable cruelty. Plaintiff then demands \$3,000 damages, and asks for a writ of injunction compelling the city to let in the water at once. No time was lost in pushing through the proceedings on the writ of injunction, and sharp at noon Messrs. Barnard and Ethier, with Mr. Lepine, M.P., Mr. Beland, M.P.P., and Mr. Helbronner, entered the judges' ante-chamber for the argument of the case before Judge Taschereau. Mr. Barnard having stated the circumstances of the case and ventured his former statement that there are no water taxes due at the present moment, Mr. Beland and Mr. Helbronner gave their affidavits as to their personal knowledge of the correctness of the facts mentioned in Mrs. Clermont's declaration.

Mr. Ethier then declared, on behalf of the city, that he had anticipated the demand of the petition and had just given orders to have the water let into the premises referred to whatever the circumstances of the case might be, reserving his rights, however, on the merits of the action taken. He therefore had no objection to the conclusions of the petition being granted. Judgment was accordingly drafted instanter, granting the writ, and Madame Clermont had a full supply of water by this time. The money side of the case will come up in the court later.

As soon as Mayor Grenier learned of the decision, he gave instructions to the Water Department officials to the effect that water must not in future be refused to occupants of newly built houses.

LOOK OUT FOR THEM.

To Organized Labor of America, Greeting:

For months past a systematic attempt has been made to destroy some of the most efficient unions of the iron moulding craft. The combination of the bosses and iron moulders, known as the Defence Association, has from time to time changed its mode of attack on the Iron Moulders' Union of North America, first about two years ago in attacking every local union throughout the country, and when defeated in this has now changed its tactics by concentrating its efforts to destroy a few of the local unions at a time; such is conspicuously the case in the Michigan Radiator Co. of Detroit, Mich., and the Co-operative Stove Works of Rochester, N.Y., and in San Francisco, Cal., where strikes for the maintenance of honor and principle have been in vogue for six months.

If there are some wage-workers so recreant to their trusts and duty, as to take the places of their fellow workmen engaged in an honest struggle, there is still another weapon to use which we can bring into effective play if we are but true to ourselves, hence the Executive Council of the American Federation of Labor have resolved and through me do now request you to give your attention to the product of the unfair concerns of the Michigan Radiator Co. of Detroit, Mich., and the Rochester Co-operative Stove Co.

These firms manifest a desire to antagonize and are defiant of the power of labor to either win fair conditions or honorable treatment, hence we call upon you to do all in your power to induce our fellow-workmen and sympathizers with our movement

No More Misrepresentation!

ALL OUR GOODS SOLD ON THEIR MERITS.

Select Your Furniture from the Largest Stock in Canada.



FEE & MARTIN,

Palace Furniture Store,

357 to 367 ST. JAMES STREET, MONTREAL.

to transfer their purchases in this class of goods to concerns or business houses more inclined to accord fair and honorable treatment to the just and reasonable demands of organized labor.

Fraternally yours,
SAMUEL GOMPERS,
President American Federation of Labor.

OUTRAGED AND MURDERED

Two Little Sisters Suffer a Terrible Fate at the Hands of a Villain.

Two little girls named Mary McGonagale, aged 14, and her sister Eliza, aged 12, were found dead in the woods about one mile from the village of Cumberland, Ont., on Wednesday afternoon. The two girls are the daughters of James McGonagale, who resides on John Gamble's farm, two miles from Cumberland. The children had been attending school there, were there on Tuesday, the 7th inst., and left for home with the other school children, but did not return, and their parents were not over-anxious about them, as it was a wet, stormy evening, and they naturally supposed the two girls had remained in the village, as they had previously done on a wet evening, staying at Joseph Foubert's. On Wednesday morning the father went to work as usual, supposing the girls were at school, but when five o'clock came and no children were home, the anxiety of the mother caused Mr. McGonagale to set out for the village, where he found that his girls had not been at school that day or since Tuesday evening. He then started to his brother-in-law's, Mr. Wilson, of St. Joseph, thinking perhaps the girls had gone to their aunt's. When he was absent the village men, thoroughly aroused, formed into several parties to search the woods for the missing girls, as it was learned that they were last seen half way home at five o'clock on Tuesday evening.

About ten Wednesday evening a party came on the two bodies, cold and dead, lying on their backs, with their heads together, in an unfrequented by-road, about an acre from the road to the village. The two girls were lying side by side, their clothes being deranged. The eldest, Mary, had a school book on her lap. Their tongues and eyes protruded, and a dark circle on each neck showed strangulation, with evidence of both being outraged. The coroner was notified, and an inquest is now going on. A warrant was issued for one Narcisse LaRoque, who had been seen on the road which the girls were on, and he has been arrested. County Attorney Maxwell and Detective Greer are on the way to Cumberland. Cumberland village is about sixteen miles from Ottawa.

MUSIC AND THE DRAMA.

The latest minstrel burlesque is called "The Kreutzer-Tomato."

Mrs. James Brown Potter is playing with an English company at Calcutta. George Melville has been engaged to support Fred. Bryton in his new play, "Jim."

Dan Lake, an old-time variety actor, died lately at Buffalo. He leaves a widow, who is on the stage.

C. Haddon Chambers has arrived from London to aid in the production of "The Idler" at the Lyceum.

Mrs. Langtry has leased the Princess theatre, London, and will open next month in "Antony and Cleopatra."

George W. Childs has begun attachment proceedings at Chicago against Edwin F. Mayo to recover judgment claim of \$1,281.

Henry Gremmels, jr., and Florine Jane Elliot, both trapezists of Barnum and Bailey's Circus, were married at Kansas City last Monday.

Paris is to have a theatre for deaf mutes, which will shortly begin its season with a new play by a deaf mute, called "Love and Death."

"The Pearl of Peking" company lately disbanded at Philadelphia and a cloud of attachments, but has been reorganized under new management.

A number of managers, headed by Stuart Robson, have very properly begun a crusade against the indecent posters displayed on the walls by these travelling companies.

The Frankfort, Germany, police have interdicted the exhibition actress' pictures in windows, and have also forbidden their display in American cigarettes placed on sale.

Carrie Rodcliff and Master James Ferris, of the "Siberia" company were hurt and the scenery of "Kauka" and "Siberia" was badly smashed by a collision at St. Louis last Sunday.

The Only Thing He Was Fit For

"Tis three year ago," said the parent in grief
"Since I sent my son Billy to college,
He's back and its really my honest belief
He hasn't an ounce more of knowledge."

"He won't read the papers, has nothing to say,

Is as stupid as any old hen is,
Won't work, spends the most of his time
Every day

In playing croquet or lawn tennis.
"And to think what I've spent on his
clothing and things

For his sake puts me now in a fury;
He ain't fit for any position, by jings,
Excepting to serve on a jury."

Landlady—"Mr. McGinnis, may I ask what you are trying to find out on this?"

Boarder—"I am trying, Mrs. Innes, to rescue an unfortunate fly from watery grave."