

min't, I'll climb up there an' break every bone in yer skin, yo spalpeen, so sure as my name is Jamie Butler."

"Who! Who! Who-oo!" sez he, as impudent as iver.

I said never a word, but layin' down me bundle an' takin' me stick in me teeth I began to climb the tree. When I got among the branches I looked around quietly till I saw a pair of big eyes just forinst me.

"Whist!" says I, "an' I'll let him have a taste of an' Irish stick," an' wid that I let drive an' lost me balance an' came tumblin' to the ground, nearly breakin' me neck wid the fall. When I came to me shtis I had a very sore head wid a lump on it like a goose egg, an' one half of me Sunday coat tail torn off intirely. I spoke to the chap in the tree but could get niver an answer at all, at all.

Sure, thinks I, he must have gone home to rowl up his heel, for by the powers, I didn't throw me stick for nothin'.

Well, by this time, the moon was up an' I could see a little and I determined to make one more effort to reach Dennis's.

I went on cautiously for a while and thin I heard a bell, "Sure," says I, "I'm comin' to a sittin' now for I hear the church bell." I kept on toward the sound till I came to an old cow wid a bell on. She started to run but I was too quick for her, an' got her by the tail an' lung on, thinkin' she would take me out of the woods. On we went like an old country steple chase, till sure enough, we came out to a cleavin' an' a horse wid a light in it. So leavin' the old cow puffin' an' blown in a shed, I went into the house, an' as good luck would have it, whose should it be but Dennis's.

He gave me a rail Irish welcome, an' introduced me to his daughters, as purty a pair of girls as iver ye clapped eyes on. But when I told him me adventure in the woods, an' about the fellow who made fun of me they all laughed, an' roared an' laughed, an' Dennis said it was an owl.

"An' an' what?" says I.

"Why an owl, a bird," sez he.

"Do ye tell me now," sez I. "Sure it's a quare country an' a quare bird."

And thin they all laughed agin, till at last I laughed myself that hearty, and dropped right into a chair, between the two purty girls, an' the old chap winked at me an' roared agin. Dennis is me father-in-law now an' he often yet delights to tell our chidder about their daddy's adventure wid the owl.

FOOTSTEPS ON THE OTHER SIDE.

And when he saw him he passed by on the other side.—*Luke N. 31.*

How many weary pilgrims lie,
And watching wait, and waiting sigh
For steps that never wander nigh,
But pass upon the other side;
For step that trampled heart and brain
And made their lives a lingering pain,
And pass and never come again—
Lost footsteps on the other side.

How many walk with bleeding feet,
Seeking the loved and lost to meet,
While the dear visions flit and meet,
And vanish on the other side;
While life's fresh love and youth's sweet trust,
These Eden-blossoms in earthly dust,
Lie bruised and broken, stained and crushed,
Nenth footsteps on the other side.

And so we watch, and watching sigh,
While youth and truth and hope go by,
While life and love and gladness die
With footsteps on the other side;
And so we wait with ear and eye
For one dear echo floating by—
A grief, a woe, a wandering sigh—
A footstep on the other side.

O, heavy hearts, that ache and break!
O, heavy eyes that droop and sleep!
Why must ye ever wait and weep
At footsteps on the other side?
Why must ye ever lie forlorn,
And ache, and wake, and weep so long,
Because one foot has gone wrong
And passed upon the other side.

THE OBJECTS OF TRADES UNIONS.

Mr. B. Knight, General Secretary of the Boilermakers' and Iron Ship Builders' Society, read the following able paper on "Trade Societies—their necessity, objects, and usefulness; Trade Councils—their necessity and utility," at the recent Congress at Leeds:—

It would be impossible for me to deal very fully with each section as named above, in one paper, so I must, therefore, content myself with a cursory glance. *The necessity.*—Union is a principle, the worth of which is so universally recognised, and its power so widely acknowledged, that it may appear to some a superfluous duty to impress upon the minds of such the necessity for trade unions; but it is a fact, nevertheless, that there are many, alas, too many, who require, even in this land of ours, information upon a subject so very important to their interests and so conducive to their welfare. The principal reason why trade societies are necessary, is because capital refuses to share with labor its due proportion of the benefit resulting from universal progress. The wonderful vast growth of wealth gives increased power to the possessors of it; and if labor had not learned, or learning had not put in practice the art of combination, the latter

must have been reduced to a condition bordering on absolute serfdom. We, in the great struggle for life, only get what we are strong enough to claim, the weakest always go to the wall; and whenever there is a class willing to be enslaved, we always find another class ready to enslave it. Within the past two years the efficacy of combination has become so apparent that nearly every workman who finds himself without the pale of his trades union cannot escape the conviction that he is recreant to the duty he owes to himself as well as his co-laborers, to whose efforts, perhaps, he is solely indebted for an advance in all that adds to his social enjoyment.

Some people hold the idea that if a workman wishes to raise himself above his present unsatisfactory condition, he must push well, get to love money, care little how he acquires it, and care nothing at all for the welfare of his brother workman, and then he may succeed. But we are glad to say the best working men see the folly and ineffectiveness of such counsel as this. Vernon Lushington says: "It is altogether a false method to begin with the individual as such—to begin with so-called individual rights—instead of social duties." The absoluteness of such alleged rights, as for a man to work as long as he please, make his own bargain in all cases, do what he likes with his own, &c., is comparatively a new claim in the world. It has come good in modern general reasonable basis, and may have more good work of that kind to do. But, after the experience of the last fifty years we ought to know that to reasonable social obligations, any one of these "rights" ought to humble itself, and confess that it is no right at all. All patriotism, all social order and well being depend on this; and one main good of a trades union is, that it does require every member to consider that first, and his own profit second. John Stuart Mill says: "I confess I am not charmed with the idea of life held out by those who think that the normal state of human beings is that of struggling to get on; that the tramping, emsling, elbowing and treading on each other's heels, which form the type existing, is the most desirable lot of human kind, or anything but the most disagreeable symptoms of one of the phases of industrial progress. That the energies of mankind should be kept in employment by the struggle for riches, as they once were by the struggle for war, until the better minds succeeded in educating the others into better things, is undoubtedly more desirable than that they should rust and stagnate. In the meantime, those who do not accept the present very early state of human improvement as its ultimate types may be excused for being comparatively indifferent to the kind of economical progress which excites the congratulations of ordinary politicians. The mere increase of production and accumulation, for the safety of national independence, it is essential that a country should not fall much behind its neighbors in these things. But in themselves they are of little importance, so long as either the increase of population, or anything else, prevents the mass of the people reaping any part of the benefit of them." There are some who tell us that we can get a fair remuneration for our labor without the aid of trades unions. They ask us to wait until there is a demand in the market for our class of labor, and as the demand increases so in a corresponding ratio will our wages increase. Now, we assert that notwithstanding the air of plausibility that such statements wear, such is not the case; sad experience has taught us this. We say, however great the demand for our labor, and however limited the supply, we will find a reluctance on the part of employers to raise wages, unless compelled to do so by the combined efforts of the men. In fact, we have but little chance of obtaining an increase of wages single-handed. The following is a case which came under the writer's notice. A few months since a large number of non-union men in the employ of an extensive manufacturer, and who were working considerably below the average rate of wages given for their class of work, held a meeting to discuss the wages question, and to appoint a deputation to wait on their employer in order to solicit an advance. On the following day the deputation went to the office to lay their claims before him, and as soon as they had made known the object of their mission he would not even argue the matter, but discharged them at once. And this act of tyranny was done to prevent any more coming to him, and to frighten those in his employ into submission, as he knew well the men were not members of any trade society, and therefore helpless. This is one of the many proofs that workmen cannot obtain their just rights without combination. Another proof of the fallacy of the before-mentioned theory, is the condition of the agricultural laborer, which has been brought so prominently before the public within the past few months. We find with reference to this class of men, that between 1811 and 1811, the population of Great Britain increased by nearly seven millions, and the agriculturalist diminished by 300,000. Seven million more mouths to feed, and 300,000 fewer hands to feed them. The disproportion has continued to increase since then; each succeeding census adds to the fearful sum, each following decade swells the dreadful total. From 1811 to 1871 population has increased at the same rate, and in England alone the population employed in agriculture diminished 400,000. During the last sixty years the landlords' gain has increased 150 per cent., the wages of the laborer about 30; and in the space of time, meat has increased 100 per cent., better 30, rent 70,

and other necessities in proportion, bread alone remaining stationary. During the autumn of last year so scarce were agricultural laborers that farmers were not able to obtain men to gather in their corn. And in the face of these facts, some people talk about the law of supply and demand as being all sufficient to regulate wages. But how has the poor agricultural laborer fared under it? He has been ground down to the very dust, kept under a reign of terror, in ignorance and dependence, subject to the parish parson and the parish squire for his hard toil, paid a miserable pittance, neither fed, lodged, nor cared for half as well as his employer's dog; living, if living it deserves to be called, upon the very smallest amount of food sufficient to sustain life, and in this position he would have remained had not unionism been extended to him, had there not been a Joseph Arch and other kind friends to labor amongst them, and help to raise them from a state of degradation, and how these good men have been assailed by those who ought to have been co-workers with them. To me there seems a selfishness in preaching to men that there is nothing better for them than to be content with their wages, and lead sober, decent life, only to do good to himself and save his own soul. Those who try to gather these laborers into associations in which the fundamental rule is that they shall not consider every man his own, but every man another's wealth of which the essence is that each shall contribute to a fund for the good of others, as well as himself, preaches a higher and more Christian doctrine.

The Objects of Trade Unions.—It is generally acknowledged that one, if not the principal object of unions, is to obtain for the workmen the best rate of wages which their services will command, and then to reduce the number of hours in which the wages are to be earned. There are people who argue that the interest of the public is to have all produce as cheap as possible, and that, therefore, the larger the profits which is retained by the producer, the worse for the public interest. But this conception of the public has something outside the whole body of producers, who collectively form, perhaps, four-fifths of the population, is singularly narrow. The interest of the community is the welfare of the various classes which compose it, not the multiplication of products at constantly cheaper prices. The notion that the public is a gainer whilst goods are continually growing cheaper, even though this end be obtained at the expense of each class of the community in turn suffering in liberty, health or comfort, is disposed of by being stated. Such a theory would lead to the conclusion that slavery was a public benefit if it could be shown that slave labor would conduce to increase production at a lower rate.

Let us look at the question from another stand point. Supposing workmen are earning a surplus beyond their average earnings, and the operations of trades unions be so successful as to keep down the rate of profit to the average, and to convert the whole of that surplus into wages, it is plain that the cost of production would not be raised thereby. The surplus may be appropriated by the capitalist, or by the workman, or divided between them. Each will no doubt endeavor to secure to himself as much as he can.

Equalization of Labor.—As a general rule the scarcity of labor does not materially raise its price, while the abundance always lowers it. The unemployed determine the rate of wages; whether these unemployed be men dismissed in consequence of a slackness of trade or new hands, the same result follows. Suppose in a body of 1,000 workmen there are fifty equally good with the rest who cannot find employment; in this instance the rate of wages will not be determined by the 950 employed, but by the fifty unemployed. As a matter of course masters will employ those whom they can hire at the lowest wages. If the fifty unemployed offer to work for 20s. per week in the place of 25s. masters will discharge that number of their present workmen if they will not submit to the reduction, to find a room for those who will work for the lesser sum; but the surplus of labor remains undiminished. The working men discharged, urged by necessity, gladly offer to work for 20s. per week also, and thereby supplant the fifty who are getting 25s. In this manner the trifling redundancy of fifty men reduce the wages of the entire body of operatives. Now to prevent this, trade societies step in, and either purchase this surplus labor or remove it where wanted.

Arbitration and Conciliation.—In all well-regulated societies one great object is to settle all disputes that arise between their members and employers by arbitration or conciliation rather than resort to strikes. We have found (in the society I have the honor of representing), by long experience, that four-fifths of the disputes which arise can be settled by conciliation. All that is needed is that the employers will meet certain representative workmen, and there are few who will not amicably discuss the matter in dispute before any harsh steps are taken by either party. We cannot indulge in the hope that disputes will not from time to time arise, between workmen and their employers, and with every disposition on the part of both employer and employed to act with fairness. Misunderstandings will occur. It would be a mistake to assume that a disposition to strike and interfere between employers and their workmen is a phenomena peculiar to unionism. These are the ordinary incidents

of the association of workmen in masses. How readily will a body of men, who are dissatisfied with their wages, subscribe a small sum for the purpose of a strike, and form a trade union, which scarcely exists, or is intended to exist beyond the immediate occasion. The fact is, the frequency of disputes coincides with a weak, fluctuating, and poor union, and certainly the least orderly, where the union has acquired no real command over its members, or is struggling into existence. All well-established societies seek to diminish the frequency and the disorder of strikes, and to prevent their occurrence, if possible, and we hope much good will be done in establishing Courts of Arbitration, on the plan recommended by Mr. Mundella and Mr. Rupert Kettle. These courts of conciliation are an imitation of the Conseils des Prudhommes, in France. Each council was there established by decree of the Government, and consists of a President, a Vice-President (not necessarily either employers or workmen), and six members elected by employers and workmen. The aim was to obtain a settlement of trade disputes by judges who were the equals of the disputants. The proceedings were inexpensive; the judges were unpaid; and a delegation of the council, consisting of one employer and one workman, sat in judgment almost daily. The result in 95 out of every 100 cases brought before these tribunals was a reconciliation between the parties. And though appeals were permitted to the superior courts of law, they were rarely made. More frequent and familiar interchange of thought would break down the barriers which divide the different orders and conditions of men, and a kinder spirit would pervade the atmosphere in which we live. It is melancholy to think how true it is, "that one half of the world knows not how the other half lives."

The Usefulness of Trade Societies.—All societies of long standing and efficiency offer to their members many advantages, and perform certain functions, of the usefulness of which no question whatever can exist. Almost without exception they have a sick fund, by which a certain amount is payable weekly to sick members during their illness. The question may be asked, do not friendly societies, such as Odd Fellows and Foresters, meet this want? To this we answer, yes; but our wants do not end here. All trade societies make provision to meet the wants of their members when thrown out of employment through sickness and other causes over which they have no control. The Boilermakers and Iron Ship Builders' Society paid £10,000 in twelve months to their members thus situated. We pay a member his weekly allowance when sick, not because he is sick, but because he is not able to earn anything for the support of himself, wife, and family. If the support given by societies to their members when sick is commendable, the support given when members are out of employment is equally so, for when the hands of the bread winners are involuntarily idle from any cause, the result is the same to the family. It is plain that no friendly society whatever could guarantee working men support whilst out of employment, unless, like a trade union, it possessed some organization for collecting information respecting it periodically, or the right to call on members on the fund to take offers of employment, and send them to the markets where they are in demand. No ordinary friendly society could pay members when out of employment, when a movement, over which it has no control, might, at any moment, increase the numbers out of work; and when it could have no effectual means of ascertaining that the want of work was absolutely involuntary and inevitable. A trade society can do this because it has special means of closely watching the movement of the labor market generally, and of each individual member, where necessities it relieves. It is beyond argument that all the following objects are in every way meritorious, and could not be met but by a trade society, such as the elaborate system of reports of the state of trade, the publication of periodical statistics, the allowance to members on travel, the list of members in search of employment, and of employers seeking workmen, the sending of members to the precise spot where labor is wanted, the payment of accidental benefit, and superannuation to our aged members. Another sphere of usefulness is, improving the quality of those connected with us; fostering in them a greater spirit of independence to the capitalist; subjecting them to a wholesome discipline for the promotion of energy. Preventing them by the use of our funds from undergoing the temporary demoralization consequent on the fall of wages; and to make them more effective workmen. To raise the character of a workman is to make him feel that he is not an isolated agent, subject to oppression, but a member of a strong united body, capable at once of defending his rights; and in every movement that really raises him in dignity and in worth, we see fresh manifestations of that divine energy which rules the universe, and which flows ever in affluent measures over the world. There may be rocks ahead upon which many laboring bargues may go to pieces. There may be many things to overcome, but the effort is no sound, that it will bear the strain of many failures, whilst from each failure a determination will be borne that will bring ultimate success the nearer.

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THE NEW REFORM MOVEMENT.

During last summer conferences of working men were held at the Cannon Street Hotel, London, under the presidency of Mr. Samuel Morley, M.P., with the object of drawing up a new political programme in accordance with the views of advanced reformers. This programme having been agreed to, a committee was appointed to send it to workmen throughout the country, and obtain their opinions thereon. The result has been that more than a thousand working men in about 300 towns and villages have given their adhesion to it. Recently another meeting was held at the Cannon Street Hotel, London, to which all those who signed the programme were invited in order to agree on future action.

Mr. Morley, M.P., who presided, opened the meeting by expressing his gratification at the progress already made, and his confident hope that the result of their efforts would largely tend to shape future legislation. He thought that before working men attempted to make great organic changes in the constitution of the country, they should endeavor to use the power they already possessed to accomplish some of the great reforms which they all had so much at heart.

After Mr. Howard Evans had read the report of the Committee, the meeting proceeded to consider the recommendations therein contained. It was agreed to form a national association, to be called "The Reformers' Union," to consist of individual members, and such existing associations as had special objects in view included in the programme and were willing to co-operate; membership to consist in a general adhesion to the programme, and a subscription of any amount. The officers of the association to be a president, vice-president, treasurer, secretary, general council of 35, and executive of 15. After the first year the general council and officers to be elected by the branches.

As a Mines' Regulation Bill had been passed since the programme was drawn up, it was resolved to strike out the clause on that subject, and to add to the programme "An equitable amendment of the law of conspiracy."

It was also resolved to select a few points as test questions at the next election, and it may be taken as an evidence of the earnest sympathy of the working men in the towns with their brethren in the rural districts that among them are "Household Suffrage in the counties," and "The utilization of the waste lands by the Government," such lands to be let to small cultivators and co-operative associations; the Public Works Commissioners to advance money for the improvement of such lands on the same terms as they now advance money to great landowners.

The General Council was then elected, and Mr. Howard Evans was appointed secretary.

A special resolution was passed, denouncing the conduct of the Government in attempting to suppress the right of public meeting in the parks.

The meeting, though a prolonged one, was hearty and earnest in its character. Among those taking part in the proceedings were Messrs. Guile, Cromer, Mottershead, Osborne, Weston, Yeats, Wade, Davidson, Patterson, Boon, White, Potter, and Sinclair.

A vote of thanks to Mr. Morley for presiding was carried by acclamation.

The new association will at once proceed to form branches, and obtain the affiliation of existing societies throughout the country.

Another clever gentleman has been deceived by the hydrants. It was New Year's, and he was rejoicing under the influence of about a thousand drops of joy. He ran against a hydrant, while homeward bound, working long holidays. He happened to mistake the hydrant for a colored boy. "Sense me, sonny," said he, patting the hydrant paternally; "didn't run you down because you was black. Grow up (hic) and be a useful man (hic). Initiate (hic) my example." And he laid a quarter on its nozzle, and went on with a lighter heart, and the satisfaction that he had made one poor soul happy.

A man in Kansas whose front name is John tried a new experiment for cleaning stove pipes the other day. He wrapped a lot of powder—some pounds, more or less—in a paper and put it in the stove, and in order to compel it to go up the pipe, shut the door, and placing his feet against it, heroically awaited the result, like a mule with a howitzer strapped on its back. In due time it went off; and so did John. It was an even race to the door, but outside the powder was ahead. Whether it was disgusted at the vile use to which it had been put, or whether the soot was too compact to be moved, is not known. At any rate, as a cleansing method, John thinks it a failure; but as a private earthquake, where the excited population go up in a balloon, as it were, and come down more or less mangled, he is free to maintain that it is a decided success.