LABOR'S LEGISLATURE.

MEETING OF THE TRADES AND LABOR COUNCIL.

[The] regular semi-monthly meeting of [the] Trades and Labor Council was held at [Labor] Hall, Yonge street, on Friday even[ing] last. President Nicholls occupied the [chair]. There was a fair attendance of dele[gates].

Delegate March presented the Legisla[tive Co]mmittee's Report, as follows:—

LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE'S REPORT.

Your Legislative Committee in this their second report for June 1891, beg leave to submit:

That it is worthy of favorable note as well as very creditable that the Grand Trunk Railway of Canada while determining on a reduction of salaries of its officials recently, exempted from the order the wages of its mechanics, engineers, trainmen, switchmen and laborers, and as a consequence no reduction will take place in the wages of the employees just named. This praiseworthy action on the part of the G. T. management is commended to the consideration of city aldermen as well as to other corporations who invariably become economical by reducing the wages of the workingmen in their employ.

Your Committee regret being obliged to report continued depression in all lines of business, and more especially as in work pertaining to the building line in the city of Toronto as well as throughout the whole of Canada.

Your Committee are ever careful in their utterances and as a consequence are not surprised to find bank managers in Toronto in their annual reports practically endorsing the position taken by your body during the past year as to the condition of trade and the lowering of wages throughout the country. For instance at the annual meeting of the shareholders of the Bank of Commerce held in this city on the 16th instant, General Manager Walker, in speaking of the financial situation, said that "the work in the woods has been done under favorable circumstances, and the output is correspondingly cheaper than in recent years; *part of the reduction in cost, however, is unfortunately the result of lower wages*." Neither is Manager Walker very much wide of the mark when he very tritely said "I am sure that if the superfluous shop-keepers and shop-keepers' assistants could be turned into farmers, there would be nothing whatever the matter with Ontario, providing, of course, they became industrious and intelligent farmers."

Your Committee submit the following without comment for the information of your body. The matter is from the *Mail* report of the proceeding of the House of Commons on the 16th instant, and speaks for itself. When the House was in Committee of Supply.

"Mr. Mulock said he desired to say a work or two in regard to the manufacture of woodenware in the penitentiaries. Although the Government had endeavoured to make the convict labor system as little injurious to private enterprise as possible, it interfered with the employment of free labor.

"Sir John Thompson said that manufactories of woodenware had been established, notwithstanding that Dorchester penitentiary was turning out these goods. They attempted to compete with the penitentiary, and having failed, they desired that the penitentiary be put out of the field. The manufacturers had objected to the prices at which the ware was being offered. He had convinced them that the Government was adhering to the ordinary market price, and not taking any advantage of the fact that they got their labor for nothing. At the time of making the last report the output of Dorchester, the only place where woodenware was manufactured was $2 250. In order to prevent the local inconvenience of these goods being placed in too large a quantity in any particular locality, an arrangement had been made to put the whole product of the institution in the hands of E. B. Eddy, Hull. This would guarantee them being placed on the market at fair prices.

"Mr. Mulock said that unless an assurance were given that the convict system would be discontinued, he would have to bring the matter up in the House again.

"Mr. Sproule said that if these penitentiary products were put on the market at a fair price there was no reason to complain.

"Mr. Armstrong said that convicts, who were a burden on society should be compelled to contribute something towards their maintenance which should not be a charge upon the hard-working people of the country. If that were so there was not a single occupation for convicts to which the same objection as that made by Mr. Mulock could not be raised. It was the duty of the Government to stand firm on this question."

Your Committee are much pleased in drawing the attention of your body to the fact that at a recent meeting of the Congregational Union in the city of Guelph, Rev. Jas. Pedley, as an answer to a communication from Knights of Labor and kindred associations, moved the following resolution and the same was concurred in after an approving discussion, viz.:—

"That the members of the Congregational Union, in response to the memorial presented to them by the joint committee of Knights of Labor, etc., etc., do hereby express their fullest sympathy with every effort that harmonises with Christian principle in the uplifting of the suffering poor, and are heartily willing to co-operate with them in any direction not inconsistent with the teaching of Jesus Christ, believing that with the growth of true religion there will be also the sure progress of the people."

Delegate March moved the adoption of the Report.

Delegate Bradley, in reference to the convict labor matter, said that while they endorsed the action of Mr. Mulock in regard to the employment of penitentiary convicts they must also condemn the course of the Ontario Government in the same matter. Convicts should be sent to work on the farms.

Delegate March said that they had at present no details at their command. They merely took the report as they found it in the *M*[ail].

Delegate Emmett said they should take a broader view of the question. Even if every convict were taken out of the way the condition of the workers would be little bettered so long as the competitive system remained.

Delegate Armstrong thought that improved machinery ought not to be employed in connection with convict labor.

Delegate Francis urged that labor men ought to be agreed among themselves as to what kind of labor convicts ought to be employed on before they agitated for a change.

Delegate Armstrong quoted Richard Trevellick's suggestion that they should make clergymen of them.

The Report was then adopted.

MUNICIPAL COMMITTEE'S REPORT.

Delegate Armstrong read the Municipal Committee's Report as follows:—

Your Committee beg leave to submit the following report:—

Quite a stir has been created within the past few days about the street railway. Rumor has it that the receipts are not so large as they were at this time last year. And we also hear that many deadhead tickets are afloat. All this leads one to believe that some influence is at work to hurry up the Committee to dispose of the franchise to some syndicate. Now, your Committee think that this rushing things is not in the interest of the city. If the franchise is to be given out to a syndicate, the Committee should be allowed ample time to digest the different tenders, and make the best possible bargain. Even if it would take a year to prove the value of the franchise, there should be no opposition raised. Whether the city runs the road, or gives it out to the most approved tender, it is to be hoped that the required specifications will be kept intact. It is current talk that the city hall officials are receiving passes or free tickets on the cars. This is not true, as your Committee have been informed to that effect, this afternoon, by those who are in a position to know.

It is to be hoped that the Police Commissioners will take some steps to prevent little children being conveyed to the police cells. Last Wednesday night six little ones were compelled to herd with fallen humanity in the cell at headquarters. This is simply an outrage. If their parents have violated the law and outraged society by their lewd habits, their children are innocent. Houses of ill-repute are generally raided at night, and when the police find little children in these places, it would be far better to allow the women to remain with them till morning. Even if they would escape in the meantime, the city would get rid of their presence. The Morality Department, which pays so much attention to cruelty to dumb animals, might spare a little of its superabundant philanthropy to bestow on helpless children.

Your Committee are pleased to note the spirited stand taken by the Engineer in defence of the policy which he has pursued since taking office. The Jolliffe clique cannot bend the Engineer to their whims. It is cowardly on their part to keep nagging at this efficient officer, who has saved thousands of dollars to the city by his ability and foresight. Not in the least has he overstepped the bylaw governing his department as yet. But petty fidgety, narrow-minded little aldermen, who have little axes to sharpen, cannot use the Engineer as a grindstone, hence they hurl their paper darts at him, which is only more annoying this hot weather than practically injurious. If aldermen think that the Engineer is incompetent; if they think he is extravagant in his department, let them produce proof, and then put before the Council a vote of want of confidence in him, but not keep pestering a business man in business hours, simply because he will not permit them to bask and lounge around his department.

The motion of Alderman Hallam to place $8,000 in the estimates for the establishment of technical training schools was lost, only three voting for the motion, viz: the Mayor, Ald. Hallam and Orr. Now, this is a grant that the Council is pledged to for the last two years. And it ill becomes the Chairman of the Executive Committee to kill the motion by stating that the assessment must be increased if the motion prevailed; but the same gentleman took pleasure in moving $3,335 to the amount voted for Exhibition Park which could have been readily dispensed with. Ald. Hall again had a tilt at the fire brigade. In this instance he desired the purchase of the horses left over for another year, but his wish was not granted.

Your Committee have always opposed the reclamation of the marsh lands by a syndicate, believing that the city could more advantageously undertake the work under the supervision of the Engineer. But now that the Beavis & Redway syndicate have secured the work, they demur from making a security deposit of good faith, as is the terms required for the performance of all city work. In the absence of such guarantee, your Committee must look upon this so called syndicate as of mushroom stability. Do they desire to sub-let the job? Where is their boasted millions at their back, when they will not make an honest deposit for the proper performance of the work? The original deposit called for was reduced on motion of Ald. Small to about one-half, and now they refuse to make any, apparently. They refused to adhere to the requirements of the Engineer; in fact they refused to do anything that was opposed to their own ideas. The work should be entered into by some one, or a part of it, if on no other ground but sanitation, and the advice of the Engineer should not be ignored under any consideration. If the marsh is reclaimed by this syndicate, they want a lease of it for forty-five years, the city receiving the taxes of the improved land with the ultimate object in view of owning the land at the end of that term. If the lease is an improvement one the city at the end of the forty-five years would be compelled to recoup the syndicate for such improvements. No one can blame the syndicate for making the best bargain out of the city, and at the same time the city is justified in getting the best terms they can. Your Committee have no reason to alter their opinion repeatedly expressed in previous reports on this question, that the city should undertake the entire work.

The ratepayers will be asked on the 10th of next month to vote for a bylaw to raise the sum of $300,000, for the purpose of acquiring certain properties west of Simcoe Street for railway purposes, and to pay the C.P.R. for the reclaimed land between Yonge and York Streets, and also to pay the city's share for overhead bridge. Now, if the bylaw is defeated, the C.P.R. will occupy their own property between Yonge and York Streets, an act which the citizens would do well to prevent, and retain that valuable plot for park purposes and as an outlet to the water front. Your Committee desire to impress upon the Trades Council the necessity of acquiring this valuable property for the city, but if the bylaw is not carried, the last chance is gone to do so. It may be mentioned that the site which is to be given to the C.P.R., west of Simcoe Street, will bring in an annual rental of $15,000, a sum sufficient to pay the interest charge on the debt to be created. Then the city will own a water front some 2,000 feet in length, extending all the way from Yonge, almost to Simcoe; and in this area there are some valuable dock privileges which can be leased for short terms, yielding from $15,000 to $20,000 per year rentals, and these rentals will no doubt increase as time passes. It is to be hoped that the bylaw will carry.

At last Monday night's meeting of the Council, when the estimates were being discussed, Ald. Kerr objected to the reduction of the debenture account of the Public School Board, and in support of his contention he said, that on account of the parsimony of the Council, the School Board were compelled to issue forty years' debentures to pay for necessary work. The mayor said that was a strange statement to make, as debentures should never be issued for such a purpose. He would see that the matter was investigated forthwith. Ald. Saunders and Hill supported the reduction, and pointed out that the school accommodation provided seats for 23,184 scholars, whilst only 21,000 were on the roll, and the attendance averaged 21,073. If these figures are correct, and some schools are reported crowded, then other schools must be meagrely attended. The result of this shows that the accommodation is not properly distributed throughout the city; and that trustees in the past did not look to the general good of the city, but indulged in a species of ward-grabbing.

All of which is respectfully submitted.

JAS. MORRISON, *Chairman.*

Delegate Davey said the statement of Ald. Saunders, that there was sufficient school accommodation, was inaccurate. Some classes were full to overflowing so that children could not obtain admission while there was abundant room in other classes.

Delegate Bradley said there were many vacancies in the higher grades while it was difficult to get children into the lower divisions. If the compulsory law was enforced the accommodation would be insufficient.

Delegate Emmett said that many parents sent their children to work in the day and to the night-school in the evening.

Delegate Benson said that the only way to remedy this was to secure higher wages.

Delegate Banton urged the Council to persevere in urging the City Council to retain the street railway as an experiment. There were any number of lies being sent afloat by the press and by interested parties.

Delegate Bradley charged the *Telegram* with deliberate lying not only in regard to the street railway but in misrepresenting the proceedings of the Trades and Labor Council (applause).

The Report was adopted.

EDUCATION COMMITTEE'S REPORT.

Delegate Davey read the following Report of the Education Committee:—

Your Educational Committee begs leave to submit the following report.

Your Committee view with feelings of much dissatisfaction the spineless attitude of the Public Library Board in tamely submitting to the niggardly action of the City Council, which recently reduced the estimates of the Board to the tune of $5,000, thereby compelling it to close three branches for lack of funds to continue them.

Had the money required to carry on these institutions been procured in the form of a grant from the city treasury, objection to the quiet submission of the Board could not be urged so strongly. But in this case they are legally entitled to ¼ mill on the city's annual assessment. Where was Ald. Hallam, the Council representative on the Board, this stickler for business principles in the conduct of civic departments. Why did he not support Dr. Sullivan, who appears to have been the only member of the Board who possessed the courage to advocate by legal means to secure the amount which the institution is legally entitled to. Your Committee can hold out no hope of any ref[or]m looking to the general welfare and interests of the masses while the present system of appointment obtains for any and every reason except fitness.

The Committee recommends that it be instructed to move in the matter of securing representation on the Board for the organized bodies of the city. And further to take such steps as it may deem wise towards having the three branches continued as heretofore.

Can any one tell the Committee when School Inspector Hughes proposes to "let up" in his raids on the city treasury. It is not long since that he posed as the head and shoulders of a deputation to relieve the city of $5 000 for the reception of a Mutual Admiration Society, in which he takes a lively interest. By the way, just the amount necessary to continue the three branch libraries. The sum that he now seeks though small in itself should be provided by the Public School Board or some public-spirited citizen of ultra patriotic pretensions.

The Committee in its last report to this body, directed attention to the action of the Ministerial Association of this city respecting increased religious instruction in the public schools, and in no uncertain sound resented the proposed interference as intolerant.

Now comes another phase of it, practically amounting to a rule or ruin policy. Your Committee would have probably regarded the whole thing as a huge farce gotten up to while away the time, and to amuse the delegates to the Anglican Synod—had it not been for the names of some of the clergy reported as having taken part in debating the proposition looking to the establishment of denominational schools, and the language used in the discussion. Your Committee most heartily condemns any project looking to that end and would respectfully suggest that they—the clergy—devote their leisure time toward building up and perfecting our present semi national system.

Your Committee note with regret the scant courtesy meted out by the different religious bodies to the request of the joint committee from the Council, D.A. 125, Nationalists, Single Tax Association, C.W.E. Association and Eight Hour League, to declare in favor of justice to the toiler, etc. In almost every case no action was taken except to instruct the Secretary to acknowledge the receipt, etc. A couple of cheering individual exceptions have, however, come under the notice of your committee, viz: Rev. Mr. Phillips of the city and the Rev. Mr. Royson, of Kingston. Both Rev. gentlemen emphasized the responsibility of society in decreeing the degradation and ruin of sweated wage workers who were debarred from a life of purity and health by reason of the pittance doled out by greedy employers. Your Committee sincerely trust that these gentlemen may continue to deal more frequently with such subjects and who knows mayhap their bright example will encourage their brethren of the cloth to burst the theological chrysalis and enter upon a friendly rivalry in the interests of the brotherhood of man.

Respectfully submitted,
F. C. CHIBBEN, *Chairman.*

A PLEASING INTERLUDE.

Delegate Robert Glockling called the attention of the Council to the presence of of the President of the International Typographical Union in an adjoining room. Delegates R. Glockling and Dower were detailed to ask President Prescott of the International Typographical Union to enter the room and take a seat on the platform.

Mr. Prescott was received by the Council with a hearty round of applause. In a brief speech he returned thanks for the honor done him and expressed his sense of the value of the training received in the Trades and Labor Council. In few places were the Central Labor Unions so influential as in Toronto. The cause of this was perhaps that while their aims had been radical, their methods had been conservative. He hoped that in his new position he would never forget the useful lessons he had received from the Trades Council.

Delegate Brunel read the Report of the Special Committee appointed to consider the advisability of arranging for lectures as a means of education in social reform which recommended deferring action until the summer was over.

The Report was adopted and the Committee discharged.

Delegate Robert Glockling, on behalf of the LABOR ADVOCATE Committee, reported progress and stated that they were visiting the subordinate bodies and urging on the members the necessity of supporting the paper.

Delegate Webb vigorously denied having used the language attributed to him by the *Telegram* to the effect that the aldermen would steal all the earnings of the street railway. He never said anything of the kind.

Delegate Bradley said that the workingman who would spend a cent on that rotten sheet was no friend of his kind (applause).

Moved by R. Glockling, seconded by Jas. Cumming:—That this Council endorses the principle laid down in Ald. Bell's resolution re hours of labor and wages of employees of the Bell Telephone Company. Carried.

WHERE WILL THEY TAKE IT TO?

THE "capitalists," as they love to be called, are saying "if the granger, element undertakes to legislate against our interest, we will take our capital out of the country." No danger, Messrs. Shylock & Co. You cannot scare us that way. Where will you take it to? If you go to Russia the Nihilists will make it hot for you. It won't do to go to Germany where the Socialists are fast coming into power. If you take it to France the Communists will make it lively for you. Your money will not be safe in England where the social democrats are making the very throne tremble. But if you can find a spot on earth to which you can take it, go ahead. We made the greenbacks, the best money the people ever had, and can do it again.—*Industrial Educator.*

THE population of British India, according to the census that was taken in February last, now runs up to 220,500 000, or an increase within ten years of 26,000,000. There is an additional population of 65,000,000 in those East Indian states that are under feudatory rule subject to British influence, with British protection.

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