

OUR BOARDING HOUSE

Reflections on Current Events by
the Boarders.

"We are going to run our business to suit ourselves and we will not, on any account, allow any interference in our private affairs," is what ninety-nine out of every hundred employers shout as soon as they have any trouble with their help," said Phil. "Now, if a manufacturing establishment in reality is a private affair, then the stand which the employer takes in this case would have, at least, something to serve as an apology for his actions, whatever they might be, but I contend that this is not the case, and will prove to you that no manufacturing establishment, in this country at least, can rightly be called a 'private affair.' To begin with, there are many employers of labor who receive from the municipalities where their business is located, a bonus. Sometimes this bonus is in the shape of land grants; at other times it is exemption from taxation or else a grant or subsidy of so and so much ready cash, but in most cases it consists of the three combined and often represents more capital than in reality is invested in the buildings and machinery of the whole industry. If the manufacturer is exempt from taxation it follows that the rest of the community must pay his share, and to this extent the people acquire an interest in his business. The same may be said of land or money grants; the community must tax itself to help him carry on his business which, by this very act, ceases to be a 'private affair.' For a manufacturer so circumstanced to talk about running his business to suit himself, or to protest against that kind of interference which would compel him to treat his help in a humane manner, is all rot. The community has become his partner in business in the same proportion as the bonus granted is to the actual capital invested in the enterprise. This being the case, the people have a perfect right to fix a minimum rate of wages as a protection to those of their number who are employed in that establishment, and they should exercise it."

"I agree with you as far as manufacturers are concerned who receive a bonus," said Sinnett, "but, for the life of me, I can't understand by what right you could interfere with those who receive no bonus, and you'll admit that, after all, these form the large majority among manufacturers."

"I admit nothing of the kind," said Phil, "and more than that, I maintain that there is not in the whole Dominion a single manufacturer who does not receive a bonus, and a mighty big one at that. What else do you call our tariff? Isn't it a bonus which the people of Canada pay to those among them who are manufacturers? You and I, and every mother son of us who work for wages, must actually pay from thirty to thirty-five per cent. more for the goods we use than what they can be bought for in the cheapest market; and the money thus taken from us goes towards building up our 'infant' industries which their owners consider 'private affairs.' Private property indeed! You might with as much right call your post offices, court houses and other public buildings and your whole canal system private property, for just as surely as the people of Canada pay for the one just so surely are they being made to pay for the other."

"Even so," said Sinnett, "isn't it a fact that the people of Canada find work in these factories and workshops which have sprung up since the introduction of the national policy, and isn't that something of a benefit?"

"Great Scott!" roared Phil, "we don't want work! It's grub, and boots, and clothes, and comfortable homes that we want; and we want a

little pleasure and recreation now and again. And that is just exactly what we can't get, for while we are building up these 'private concerns' for our employers, they are importing a host of laborers from the older countries of Europe to compete with us and thus reduce our wages. You talk as though our class was specially created to work their soul-case all to pieces for the benefit of our 'infant industries'—I don't. I am satisfied to work for a living, but I object to living to work. Work is right enough and, no doubt, is good; but a fellow may even get a surfeit of a good thing. At any rate, there is a disposition among our employers towards a reduction of wages; it doesn't matter a button whether this is caused by keen competition or whether it's the result of insatiable greed, sufficient for us to know that such is the case. I have, I think, shown that manufacturing concerns are not 'private affairs,' and that the whole people have a direct interest as partners in them. Let us insist upon our right to fix a minimum wage by law, which shall at least be sufficient to keep him who works well nourished and comfortable. Either that or else abandon a policy which taxes all of us for a favored few."

BILL BLADES.

THE DEVIL TO PAY.

BY LEWIS FREELAND, IN THE STANDARD.

(CONCLUDED.)

But the people were constantly begging to be allowed to work, and the more they begged the less attention was paid to them. And when they did get a chance to work they were not allowed to receive, no matter where they worked or how much they made, any more than the people who had charters to work in the very poorest places in the kingdom. And that was little enough, as everybody knew.

Withal the people increased and multiplied, and to help them out for their trouble they invented great machines, which did marvelous work; but neither the people nor the machines could work without permission of a charter owner, and the more the people worked and the more marvelous their machines the more the charter owners charged them for the right to work, until even the machines fell into the hands of the few, and the people could not make new ones, because charters to work had become so very valuable except in the very poorest places only the few were able to buy the right to work, and the poor were trying to hire themselves out. And so it appeared that, happen what might to make work easier and more fruitful, the charter owners got all the benefit.

In these days a prophet arose who told the people that the charter owners had no right to forbid them to work or any right to make them pay that working. But the charter owners railed at the prophet as a devil (the devil having put it into their heads to do so), saying: "Have we not bought and paid for these charters?"

And then arose a priest who, seeing how the people were oppressed and robbed by the charters, denounced the charters and demanded that they be abolished; but the devil ordered the priest to be put down, and he was put down.

And yet every one marvelled that there were so many poor and that the poor increased. But the priests taught that it was not marvelous, for God willed it, whereat the devil again rubbed his hands together and gently switched his tail, now this way, now that, saying to himself: "It won't be long now until the devil is to pay!" And he was right.

Pretty soon everything was in readiness, and from advising king, and lord and charter owner, the devil turned to advising the poor.

"See how the rich revel in the wealth you have created!" he said to them. "Why do you not burn and murder and pillage? Is there no manhood in you? Are you slaves?"

But at first the people protested that that they were opposed to murder and pillage, and asked why they should not abolish the charters, as the prophet and priest advised, which would need neither murder nor pillage.

"Away with your prophet and your priest!" shouted the devil. "They are in league with the rich. Make no half-way measures! Let there be no compromise! Lay waste! Lay waste! See, I will set you an example," and with that the devil touched the tip of his tail to the palace of a charter owner and instantly it was ablaze; and then the devil's scheme, so patiently planned, culminated. Like rats from their holes rushed a million debased and desperate men. Half famished and all in rags, aiming at nothing and caring for nothing, spurred on by revenge, hitting right and left, burning, killing, plundering, they laid waste the land.

The devil was indeed to pay!

LABOR DAY CHAMPIONSHIP.

Now that the question of supremacy is to be settled, as far as the Labor Day championship is concerned at the Central Trades and Labor Council's picnic, there is a hum of eager expectancy throughout lacrosse circles. The ball will be put into play promptly at 3.30 p. m., when captains of both teams promise to put up a game of lacrosse which for science and speed has not been equalled in this class or surpassed by any of the senior teams. Thirteen solid gold medals, emblematic of our national game, will be awarded to the victorious team. The officials of the match are: Referee, H. Brophy. Umpires, Dr. Elder and J. Williamson.

In connection with Labor Day sports on the Exhibition grounds there will be a tug-of-war on a gigantic scale between members of two prominent organizations in the building trades. A handsome prize is to be given the winners, and there is considerable speculation as to which of the rival unions will carry off the prize.

A MONTREALER TO THE FRONT

The Montreal Garrison Artillery has the honor of the premier position in the big shooting match at the Dominion Rifle Association meeting at Ottawa. The all absorbing attraction was the competition for the Governor-General's prize by the 100 top scorers in the Grand Aggregate. The match began at 9 o'clock yesterday and the greatest excitement prevailed among the competitors and spectators owing to the unprecedented number of ties. The conditions are 200, 500 and 600 yards, seven rounds at each, with Martini-Henri rifle. Staff-Sgt. Drysdale, of the Montreal Garrison Artillery, is declared the winner of the blue ribbon of the meeting, the badge and \$250, with a total of 92.

The Juvenile Band.

The Committee of the K. of L. Juvenile Band are requested to meet in the hall this evening at eight o'clock. A full attendance is requested as there are some matters relative to the turn-out on Labor Day to be discussed.

Election of Officers.

At a meeting held on the 18th of August, the following gentlemen were elected officers of the Building Trades Council: President, Jos. Corbett; vice-president, Geo. Brooks; French recording secretary, L. Thivierge; English recording secretary, Thos. Kent; financial secretary, E. mile Pelletier; treasurer, M. Lavigne; warden E. Charbonneau.

LABOR DAY!
PROCLAMATION.

WHEREAS MONDAY, the 5th day of September instant, has been selected by the Central Trades and Labor Council for holding their grand Labor Parade and Picnic, the undersigned Mayor of the City of Montreal respectfully invites the citizens generally to observe that day as a Public Holiday, and to close their places of business on that occasion in order to afford the citizens at large an opportunity to take part in the celebration.

JAMES McSHANE,
Mayor.MAYOR'S OFFICE,
City Hall,
Montreal, Sept. 1, 1892.

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