# LABOR'S LEGISLATURE.

## LAST WEEK'S MEETING OF THE TORONTO TRADES AND LABOR COUNCIL

### Poverty and Strikes—Assisted Immigration —Day Labor in City Work—School Teachers' Salaries.

At the regular fortnightly meeting of Toronto Trades and Labor Council, on the evening of Friday last, 7th instant, President R. J. Nichols in the chair, the credentials of the following gentlemen were presented, and, being reported correct, they were invited to seats as delegates, viz: Messrs. C. March W. Wilson and T. Rogers, Painters Union; A. McCormack, T. Izzard, D. Stanton, J. Letherland, C. Cochran and G. Ghuster, Bricklayers Union; J. W. Crockett, G. Blakeman and J. Hill, Marble-cutters' Union; J. H. Jameson, L. McLachlan and J. Hodgins, Street-Railway Association; J. Byrron, Cabinetmaker's Union; G. Warren, L.A. 2622; M. Cunerty, W. Boxall and L. Keys, L.A. 3181; and D. J. O'Donoghue, G. W. Dower and W. J. Coolihan, L.A. 2205, Knights of Labor.

Delegate O'Donoghue read the report of the Legislative Committee, which was as follows:

LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE'S REPORT.

"Your Legislative Committee, in this their first report for February, 1891, beg leave to submit:

"That at the first meeting after their election by your body last month, Messrs W. H. Farr and D. J. O'Donoghue were re-elected as Chairman and Secretary respectively for the current term of office.

"Your Committee have observed that at a meeting of the Associated City Charities, held recently, Secretary Pell, of the St. George's Society, took occasion to give warning in regard to the promiscuous distribution of charity, on account of the number of imposters now applying for assistance. He also said he was satisfied that there were numbers of unworthy people who were getting assistance from the House of Industry, and he thought there should be a city inspector to deal with such cases. Your Committee attach much weight to the views of Mr. Pell on this subject, because of his many sterling qualities of head and heart, and because his experience in this particular is of many years' special devotion to works of benovolence and charity. In view of this fact, also, your committee fel an understanding why his very valuable services are not utilized by having him elected or chosen on the governing board of the House of Industry. Perhaps his presence and good work there would cast a shadow on the vanity and self-sufficiency of some would-be charitable and good people.

"Your Committee also note that at the same meeting Rev. Dr. Lloyd Johnston said the House of Industry was now utterly incapable of relieving all the cases brought under its notice, on account of the large amount of destitution and distress in the city. In dealing with the causes of the destitution the reverend gentleman is quoted as saying: 'There is there is the tariff system, which seems to be impoverishing the great masses, and if matters go on we will all have to get around some big soup pot.' The strike of last year and the reduction of the number of corporation laborers, which left 300 or 400 unemployed, contributed to the distress that now exists in the city. The poverty was not confined to the east end. In the west end, in the prosperous district in which his church was located, there were many poor families, and a committee appointed to examine into the matter reported that there were sixty children who could not attend school because they had not sufficient clothing. A former large subscriber to the funds of the House of Industry had refused to continue his subscriptions because they gave assistance to some who were now in need and who had refused to work during the strike. The House of Industry could not refuse to aid helpless women and children, the families of these men, because they were not allowed to work by some tyrannical labor organization. They could not let these people starve.

"Your Committee, not desiring any injustice to the Rev. Mr. Johnston, took occasion to consult him as to the correctness of the language quoted. At the same time a request was respectfully made that he be good enough to furnish the names of those who said their destitution was due in the main to the strikes of last summer, as your Committee, being justifiably doubtful of the truthfulness of such assertions, were very desirous of investigating and learning how many applicants for relief were of those who were members of the Builders' Laborers' Union, for instance—a body which, during a strike of nine weeks, paid $5 per week to its married men and $3 per week to single men while idle during that time; a body which, while having paid out to its members a gross cash sum of over $15,000, at the settlement of the strike, had yet $1,000 in the bank and credit for thousands more in a like quarter; and very likely as much could be said for the Bricklayers', Masons and Stonecutters' Unions. The reverend gentleman denied the accuracy of credit being him with the use of the words "tyrannical labor organizations," but would not give either the name of the person who declined contributing to the funds of the House of Industry "because they gave assistance to some who were now in need and who had refused to work during the strike," or the names of the others referred to. His proposition, on the other hand, was that he be furnished with the lists of membership of the several unions, so that he may investigate for himself. Under these circumstances the inference as to lack of proper investigation in the first instance is very clear indeed.

It is really astounding how much even very good and kind-hearted clergymen have yet to learn of the many good things which may be justly credited to the organization of workingmen."

The report proceeded to quote from the Kingston newspapers the proceedings of a Farmers' Institute in Frontenac county at which Mr Rogers had charged the labor unions with crying down the immigration of European workingmen, and Hon G. A. Kirkpatrick had stated that "labor interests organized in cities wanted to rule the Government of the country and they notified the Government that there were more people in it than they could support. The Government were satisfied with all not prompted for another purpose, narrow selfishness rather than culpable ignorance induced Farmer Rogers to grossly misrepresent labor organizations. The position of the labor bodies on immigration was that as the land laws, resources, manufacturing interests and agricultural conditions of Canada were continually kept before the English public by a liberal expenditure of public funds, the ordinary influx of immigrants was sufficient to meet the legitimate demands of the labor market. They did not object to people coming to Canada on their own resources, but they would continue strongly and persistently to oppose the expenditure of public money in inducing mechanics and laborers without means to come here under false impressions as to the chances of securing employment and fair wages. Neither should encouragement be extended to the importation of street-arabs, orphans or inmates of charitable or criminal institutions. Canadian farmers, as a rule, only employed male help for two, three or at most four months in summer, when they got $18 per month, working from twelve to fifteen hours per day. As a consequence farm laborers are forced either to emigrate to the States or drift into the towns and cities during the remainder of the year to seek a precarious livelihood. Your Committee could not account for the extraordinary language imputed to Hon G. A. Kirkpatrick, as in no instance could it be shown that any labor organization had contemplated or endeavored to rule the Government of the country," or notified them that there were more people in the country than it could support. They inclined to the belief that the honorable gentleman must have been thinking of the Canadian Manufacturers' Association rather than of organized labor. They expressed themselves highly gratified by a passage of a resolution by the Ontario Central Farmers' Institute declaring that that body was opposed to all forms of assisted immigration

On a motion to receive and adopt the foregoing.

Delegate Holmes held that instead of appointing an inspector of those who applied for aid at the House of Industry, it would be more advisable for the city to have an inspector to look after the light-weight bread. He knew of cases where such inspection would be desirable, as bakers were selling bread under weight, and he could give the name of one person who had sold bread that was below weight. He desired to bring this subject to the attention of the Council, so that the proper committee may enquire into the subjects.

Delegate Davey desired to know if the report in the *Mail*, in reference to the remarks of Mr A. F. Jury before the Central Farmers Institute, was correct? He also desired to know upon what authority the Legislative Committee took upon themselves to invite an outsider to go with them while officially representing the Council?

Delegate Parr, chairman of the committee, vouched the accuracy of the report, stating that, as a matter of fact, there was but one reporter present at the time that Mr Jury was speaking, and that even he did not represent the *Mail*. Mr. Parr also explained in detail the circumstances which prompted the committee in its action.

Delegate O Donoghue was exceedingly surprised that anyone conversant with the history of the labor movement in Canada would have the temerity to attack the name of Mr. Jury in connection with anything concerning the working people's interests. Any man who had made so many personal sacrifices of money, time and stirling probity for the cause of labor, who was ever at the call and at the service of those who required his aid without fee or reward, as can fairly and honestly be credited to Mr. Jury, should be specially honored by the Council.

Delegate Davey disclaimed any intention of reflecting on Mr. Jury, and the report was adopted as read

Delegate Armstrong presented the report of the Municipal Committee, as follows

MUNICIPAL COMMITTEE'S REPORT.

"It would seem that day labor in corporation work is going to experience a studied opposition on the City Council by Ald Farquhar, of St. Thomas' Ward, and Ald Hill, of St. Paul's, during the present year only. It was scarcely expected that Mr. Farquhar, a leading light in the Contractors' Association, would, in an opportune time, put in a word for day labor, no matter how justifiable that word might be As it is impossible for a leper to change its spots, so it is impossible for Ald Farquhar to change the contractor's character, so long worn by him, to that of an impartial representative at the Council Board. In his endeavors to burst up the day-labor system, inaugurated so successfully by the engineer and the chairman of the Board of Works, he is ably seconded by Chairman Waterworks Hill, who never had sympathy for organized labor, but always threw cold water on the movement or strongly opposed it as circumstances permitted, as was instanced in his bitter attacks on the scaffold by law when that instrument was before the Council last year. At a recent meeting of the Executive Committee, Ald. Farquhar said: "If a private contractor carried out his work as the city does, he would be in the ditch. The city cannot carry out contracting works as a private contractor can The city gets loaded up with a lot of useless men on its pay roll and cannot get rid of them If the name of Farquhar was left out of the above statement, the remark might draw some attention perhaps unfavorable; but mattering where it came from, it is more of a compliment to the day-labor system than the contrary Your Committee believe from past experience and records that city contracting would be the death blow to keeping their work the same as the city does It is simply a falsehood for Ald Farquhar to say that the city pay roll gets loaded up with useless men Your Committee have, on more than one occasion, found the contrary to be the case Men of the Excavators' Union prefer to work for the city for the purpose of proving to the Board of Works that day labor is cheaper for the city, and better work is accomplished, and they invariably take an interest in getting the job, knowing full well that upon their aptitude and application to work depends in a great measure the universal inauguration of day labor on all civic work. The statement of Ald Farquhar, recently appeared in the *Evening News* some time ago, proves that sewers have been laid by day labor men more than 81 per foot cheaper than had been done under the contract system. Ald Farquhar's block paving in the fourth-west part of the city last year is a specimen of the contract system, the contractors would surely be in the 'ditch' if they were compelled to follow the style of work in block-paving done by day labor. The undersigned knows of a bad work was sustained by a court of competent jurisdiction, and why the boycott which was placed upon him then should be now lifted on his election as alderman by four of a majority, God only knows. The wire pullers only know. The luck which he and Ald. Hill are making in reference to the Bloor street sewer is not a far avrage job for comparison between the day labor and contract systems But your Committee could not allow to accept it as a test. Last Saturday your Committee, a member of which worked on the job, visited the sewer in question. The soil is simply quicksand. The sewer finishes a few yards east of Brock avenue, and within 725 feet of Dufferin street connection. The dimensions of the sewer are three feet by 4'6 somewhat wider than the original specifications called for, which necessarily increased the expenditure. At the bridge, where the sewer terminates, an outlet in a south-easterly direction was made, some three hundred yards in length, costing about $1,200, which was added to cost of sewer construction. This extra work was done for in accordance with instructions submitted to the contractors who threw up the job in disgust. Add to this three cents per hour extra which the city was compelled to pay in accordance with the fifteen cents per hour by-law, which came into force when the city took the job over, and cost of finishing the 1. aining 725 feet at about $3,500, the entire cost, including extras, will not reach the sum stated—very much under. And it is most natural to assume that the work is much better done than if it had been in the hands of a contractor. For the benefit of the citizens, Ald. Farquhar might go down in the manholes of some sewers constructed by his fellow-contractors, and he will find arches of some such sewers flattened out. Let him report also on them. If he wants information as to the cost of sewers, the Works Committee will be pleased to supply him in this respect. Ald Hill's statement that the city cannot construct brick sewers as well as contractors is all nonsense. The reason why he said this is easy of access. The worthy alderman owns a brick-yard in Eglinton, and he cannot sell bricks to the city, but he can sell to a contractor—which accounts for the milk in that cocoanut. It would seem that alderamen who had axes to grind in the construction of improvement lines generally get their work in shortly after election, and if organized labor on the day-work system stand in their way, they receive direct opposition, and the interested alderman constitutes himself in this character, thus winding up of his civic term, particularly if he desires to run again, a little taffy is thrown out, and, alas! too many workingmen bite at it. The fault of the aldermen is forgotten for the time being, and he goes again with the votes of those whose interest and welfare he is again prepared to destroy and cast aside. Mr. Lungrill is employed in the City Commissioner's Department, and his work is not permanent. During odd jobs and weighing coal is his principal occupation. As regards the necessity of having an official of the city to look after the weight of coal, and seeing that the people are not robbed, your Committee have no doubt. This occupation of weighing coal only lasts during the winter season. It should be enforced throughout the year. But the employment of an official who once acted dishonestly does not meet with the approval of your Committee.

"It is to be hoped that the drivers in the fire brigade will not be forgotten in the coming salary deal. The fact that they are not employed by the city is no reason why they should not receive more than seventy cents per day when they drive the city's fire trucks and hose reels The city should take over the entire plant and stock, and control the entire system In the absence of this change they should pay a portion of the drivers' salaries, so that they would receive a creditable wage, and your Committee believe the citizens would not object."

In the discussion of the report Delegate O'Donoghue thought that the city should control the drivers of the engines and fire brigade. He also wanted to add Ald Lucas' name to those of Aldermen Farquhar and Hill as being opposed to labor, and among those who should be sent "back whence they came" as matter of fact.

Delegate Armstrong said that several other aldermen's names should be added to the list. He would furnish the names next night. He thought that the city should pay part of the drivers' wages.

Delegate Parr thought that the city should take into its control the drivers

Delegate Webb thought it high time that this council takes hold of these aldermen What we want is to get a book and put the names of those objectionable aldermen and keep these names ready for election time

Delegate Fox presented the report of the Education Committee which was adopted without debate It was as follows

EDUCATION COMMITTEE'S REPORT

"The Salons of the York County Council still maintain their brilliant record They have decided to petition the Ontario Legislature not to grant free books to the Public schools of the province

"The Executive Committee of the Dominion Trades and Labor Congress, in a recent interview with the Hon Oliver Mowat and Hon Mr Harcourt among other things, discussed the proposed amendments to the School Act In discussing the proposatory—that the age of compulsory attendance at school be up to fourteen—the hon gentlemen expressed the opinion that the age of seven to thirteen was quite sufficient for compulsory attendance. If that opinion is an intimation that the Act will not be so amended as to make the age for compulsory attendance six to fourteen, then it is to be regretted. Your Committee believes that the proposed amendment is a much-needed one, and that the two years' additional schooling would make a very material difference in the education of the youth Many children at the age of thirteen are far from possessing a good education, besides a child at that age is much too young to be sent to work. It should rather be fifteen years of age before a child is allowed to enter a factory or engage in work of any kind. Of course, it does not necessarily follow that if attendance at school is not compulsory after the age of thirteen that a child would be forced to work, but past experience teaches that some parents are selfish enough to send their children to work as soon as they are capable of earning a dollar. The parent who does so is thus enabled to take a situation at a dollar a week less than the average child children are at school and not earning anything In consequence of this competition in wages the latter is compelled to do the same as the selfish man, and somebody gets the benefit, whereas, if all children were attending school they would be receiving an education which would fit them to take their part in the world without being handicapped as many are to-day.

"Your Committee take this opportunity of reminding those who have the petitions issued by your body, asking for free books, cumulative voting, etc, that the Ontario Legislature will assemble on February 11th. The petitions should be placed in the hands of the members of the House of the Assembly, or to be forwarded to this Council so as to have them presented at an early date.

"Your Committee regret to note the despicable manner in which the retiring Board of Public School Trustees of the Public Library Board was procured by a member of a School Board named E. F. Roden, who made the statement that the Judge had distinctly told him that he, the Judge, was not a candidate for re-election, whereas, as a matter of fact, the Judge had no communication with Mr. Roden on the matter. When public men are found with no more honor in them than this representative of St. David's Ward, then it would be well for the electors to leave them at home.

"The technical school project still hangs fire. At the last meeting of the City Council some debate arose on the proposition that $8,000 be provided in the estimates for technical schools. Ald. Hallam was the man with his usual objections, viz., that the sum is not large enough for three schools, and that one school is sufficient. It would be well for Ald. Hallam to understand that one school is not sufficient. Three schools at the least are needed for a city the size of Toronto. Your Committee strongly suspect that this gentleman from St. Lawrence Ward is doing all he can in his small way to thwart the technical school project. The Chairman made a strenuous fight for three schools, the matter ended, however, by the recommendation being sent back to the Executive Committee for further consideration. It is to be regretted that in this scheme is being made a shuttlecock of by a majority of the aldermen, who are apparently opposed to it, and have not sufficient backbone to say so These schools are sadly needed in Toronto, and it is high time that some decided action was taken in the matter"

The remainder of the report dealt with the application of the school principals and assistant teachers for an increase of salary, urging that if the principals salaries were increased a recommendation by the Finance Committee, the assistants had a still better claim, as an assistant only received about one third the income of a principal. Any increase of teachers salaries would necessitate an increase in taxation.

Delegate Davey, from the Special Joint Committee on street railway, presented a report detailing work done to date, and declaring in favor of the city taking control of the franchise through an election commission on an accumulative vote.

Delegate O Donoghue pointed out that such a proposition was clearly in conflict with a former resolution of the Council in favor of a commission to be appointed by the Mayor and High Court Judges. He therefore moved that that portion of the report be expunged, which was concurred in after a warm and lengthy debate in which delegates Dower, Fox, Bradley, March, Coulter, O'Halloran and Davey took a prominent part.

President Nicholls announced that in conformity with a communication from the City, and pending a meeting of the Trades Council he had re appointed delegates Armstrong, R. Glockling and W. H. Parr as representatives to act with the Esplanade Committee of the City Council. This action on the part of the President was concurred in.

Secretary Cribbin read a circular and the signature of Mr. Geo W Dower Secretary Treasurer of the Dominion Trades and Labor Congress, and dated January 20, 1891

Toronto, Jan 20 1891

To the Secretary of the Toronto Trades and Labor Council —

DEAR SIR AND BROTHER —Herewith you will find blank forms of petitions issued by authority of the Dominion Trades and Labor Congress, and addressed to the Ontario Legislature

Your body will please pass a motion instructing the presiding officer and secretary to sign the same and seal with the seal of your body and forward as soon as possible, to your local member for presentation to the Legislature

From past experience, the Executive of the Congress has learned that a petition, signed by the officers of an organization, has as much influence with the Government as one signed by individual members, and as it is almost impossible to procure the signatures of our members it has been decided to request that the petitions be signed as indicated.

Hoping that your body will attend to this important matter, and thus greatly assist the Executive Committee of the Congress in procuring necessary legislation for the benefit of wage-earners.

I remain, yours fraternally,

GEO. W. DOWER,
Secretary.

23 Wickson Avenue.

[The petitions referred to in the foregoing are those praying the Ontario Legislature to so amend the Municipal Act that Councils of cities, towns and villages may be enabled and empowered to pass regulations governing the erection and construction of scaffolds and scaffolding, and the appointment of competent inspectors of the same; that all citizens should have a right to vote on money by-laws; and to tax all lands held for speculative purposes to a value equal that of land which have been improved by labor and that improvements made by labor be exempt from taxation Also, that stationary engineers be compelled to undergo proper examination as to competency before being allowed to run engines.]

## THOUGHTS FOR LABOR REFORMERS.

FANATIC i the insects hissed, till they taught them to understand
That the highest crimes may be written in the highest law of the land
"Disturber and Dreamer!" the Philistines cried, while they preached an ideal creed,
Till they learned that the men who have changed the world, with the world have to agree.
That the remnant is not, while the masses are led like sheep to the pen,
And the instinct of equity slumbers until roused by instinctive men.

—*John Boyle O'Reilly*

SLAVERY to party is the true source of poverty.—*Duluth Age.*

IT is a pregnant and striking fact that American slavery was never afraid of American religion.—*Frederick Douglas.*

GOVERNMENT should be purely secular, and should give itself not the least concern about the religion or religious calling of its subjects.—*American Sentinel.*

CALL us a Nihilist, a Socialist, a Communist, anything you please, but be sure it is not too many names that you will forget to answer this question. Why should every industry in the country be taxed to support bondholders independent of labor? —*Nonconformist*

"YOU can't legislate money into the pockets of the people," and an old party motto. This Government has legislated a vast amount of money out of the pockets of the people, we take notice. Be candid about this matter and admit it like an honest man that the rule will work both ways.—*Alliance Times.*

THE perfidy of the metropolitan papers in their effort to deceive the people and guide them into the hands of the capitalists who are slowly sucking the life-blood of the nation, proves them to be greater traitors than ever Arnold was, who only handed a single country within its clutches. —*Nebraska Independent.* Just the same in Canada.

LIBERTY is not a placard stuck on the wall; it is a living power which we feel within us and without us—the protecting genius of the domestic hearth, the guaranteo of social rights. You have need of much patience, and of courage that never tires, for you will not conquer in a day. Liberty is the bread which nations must gain by the sweat of their brow.

## HENRY GEORGE.

DESCRIBING the personal characteristics of the economist a friend says: "George the social philosopher and George the man, are two curiously different persons. He stands alone among modern political economists, but socially he is the simplest and most approachable of men. He is conspicuous as a listener rather than a talker, and in any company of men he seems anxious rather to draw out the opinions of others than to exploit his own. His intellectual methods are peculiar. He has a habit, when reading a newspaper, of tearing out articles bodily and handing the ragged fragment to his son, with instructions to preserve it. Perhaps a month later he will suddenly call for the article, having hit upon a subject to which it bears some relation. In habit he is the most active and restless of mortals. He sits still only when at work, and a formal dinner has peculiar terrors for him because it does not admit of peripatetic performances between courses. He is a devoted husband and father, a sympathetic friend His chief associates are a little group of faithful single taxers, some poor, some well-to-do and a few rich."