

THE EARL OF DERBY AND THE LABOR WAGES PROBLEM.

There was a great banquet given recently by the Mayor of Liverpool to a number of distinguished gentlemen, amongst whom was the Earl of Derby—a nobleman who, besides being talented and learned, possesses that invaluable blessing to public men—a large fund of common sense. He is thoroughly independent, and may be said to have no political opponents, from the peculiar advantage he enjoys of being able to say plainly what he means without offending anybody, and without mincing matters in any way. At the Liverpool banquet in reply to the toast of his health, amongst other good things, he said one of the problems which just now is most exercising the minds of thinking men is the question whether, considering the enormous increase of wages in almost every kind of labor, and the consequences which that increase involves, we shall be able to keep up permanently the industrial superiority which we have hitherto asserted, and which was supposed mainly to rest on cheap coal, cheap iron, and cheap labor; and undoubtedly that is a problem which everybody is competent to state, and which nobody is competent to solve. (Hear, hear.) I do not find fault with those who are alarmists in this country. They are crying out before they are hurt; but, after all, that is the more sensible alternative, inasmuch as crying out after you are hurt does nobody any good. (Hear, hear and laughter.) But I am sceptical, for my own part, as to the reality or the imminence of the dangers which are apprehended for the future. Put it at the worst who is going to undersell us? Is it the Americans? Their economical conditions are the same as ours, with this important difference, that with them the laboring man has all the soil of a vast continent to settle upon, and by that inducement is constantly being drawn off from manufacturing employment. Is it the Continental competition that we have to fear? But the same causes which affect labor here affects it there also; and if you look to the other elements of the comparison, the superiority of England in point of capital and of natural resources remains untouched. (Applause.) If in any business, be it what it may, the demands of the working hand are raised beyond what the market will bear, orders fall off, business grows slack, and, by a natural adjustment, the demand for labor being less, wages of labor in that business drop again as certainly as they rose. I know it may be answered, "No, that won't happen, because rather than submit to fall back upon old rates, the men would emigrate or take to some other employment." Well, I have my doubts as to either of these results occurring. The mass of men do not easily turn to new work, especially if it requires skill and practice, and they are not easily wrenched away from home and country. If they are to go, I do not, of course, deny that temporary inconvenience may follow, yet, even in that case, there are limiting causes, which will operate. It is very questionable whether, in the long run, emigration has very materially lessened population. Greater prosperity in the working class means early marriages in this country. Children are better fed and better cared for, more of them grow up, and so the gap fills again. To put it in one word, I am not much disposed to believe in wages being permanently raised by any artificial combination beyond their level. (Hear, hear.) Up to this time again every scarcity of hands has led to cheaper production by improved mechanical agencies, and who knows but even the coal famine may be a blessing in disguise, if it teaches us to burn our smoke instead of being compelled to swallow it, and generally to economise our supply of heat and power? I am almost afraid to repeat the calculations which I have heard from competent men as to the saving which might be made in the production of steam power. Many will tell you—I believe it is not an extreme estimate—that, by taking the

country through, the same result as now might be got by the burning of one-half, or even two-fifths, of what is actually consumed. Is not that a subject worth going into more thoroughly than we have gone into it hitherto. (Hear, hear, and cheers.)

THE SHOEMAKER GRAPE GROWER.

It is not generally known that a shoemaker living in a garret in Soho bore off the prize for grapes at the Crystal Palace Exhibition, despite the fact of Baron Rothschild and many of the nobility being exhibitors. On examination it was found that he had produced the largest and the heaviest bunch, which moreover wore the most perfect bloom. On enquiry we find this is how he did it. First we will state that his father being a gardener, he had full knowledge of the vine's requirements. Noticing that the roof was suitable for the purpose, he next took stock of a chimney that faced his garret window, and soon decided that the plant should be so placed as to escape the north and east winds. Then having obtained a slip from his father, he purchased a butter tub, which, having sawn in two he filled the selected half with bullock's blood and suitable soil, and therein planted the slip. His ambition extended no farther than to grow a few green leaves to look at; but behold the result. The slip grew and sent forth leaves, and then appeared signs of a single bunch of fruit. Now, it will be asked, how is it possible that a tree, under such apparently adverse circumstances, could grow fruit surpassing that from the best regulated hothouses? Well, here at least are the shoemaker's reasons, and to our mind they seem conclusive. In the kitchen of the house lived a poor cabdriver for whom on leaving the ranks or streets at 12 o'clock at night, his wife was wont to prepare supper, an operation that necessitated a fire. In another apartment a baker and his wife dwelt. It was the custom of this man to leave about four, and before leaving a fire was lit and food prepared, and then, ere the chimney could get cold, the other occupants lit fires, and so the chimney always produced the necessary warmth to protect and nourish the vine that climbed up its sides. Well done, Crispin: long may the tree continue to grow, and never, like Mr. Neville, produce "Sour Grapes."

It is also a fact that Mr. Sinclair, a well-known master bootmaker of Stirling, is looked upon as one of the best grape growers of the kingdom. Well done again, and we will say a bit more in his praise if he will condescend to send us a bunch or two.—St. Crispin.

THE ANCIENT ORDER OF FORESTERS.

To the many of our readers who are members of the A. O. O. F., the following will be read with interest: The Daily News, in an article on the constitution of this society, says the numerical progress of the Foresters has been as follows: Number of members 1st Jan., 1853... 94,323 " " " 1863... 228,026 " " " 1st Dec., 1872... 411,988 On the 1st December last the order consisted of 254 districts, separated into 4,080 courts, containing 421,998 members. Of these members 400,217 were resident in the United Kingdom, and the remainder distributed in our colonies, the United States, Peru, &c. Within the last five years no less than 205,419 new members have joined the society, but as a set off to this 19,309 have died, and 107,207 have left. The average age of those who join is slightly over 24, and it is found that the majority of those leaving are very young lives; in fact, very many have not contributed six months. As Lancashire and Yorkshire are the strongholds of Oddfellowship, so is Middlesex that of Forestry, one district alone, the "London United," having 71,196 members. The accuracy of the statements that the least criminal portion of the whole community belong to friendly societies is well borne out by a reference

to the records of the Foresters and Oddfellows, wherein is set forth the name of every member convicted for felony. The advisability of holding friendly society meetings at publichouses is a point which has been much debated. No doubt cost and convenience often materially determine the question. A very large number of branches of these orders now meet at private places, and every year the number is increasing. During 1872 the receipts of the Foresters in Great Britain and Ireland in respect of sickness and funeral benefits were £491,558, and the payments on behalf of these benefits £376,031. The accumulated funds at the commencement of the year were £1,633,872. Beyond its duties as a pure benefit society, it has on several occasions authorized a collection amongst the members on behalf of some charitable object. It has furnished one or two Forester's lifeboats, granted £3,937 to the Lancashire Cotton Distress fund, and assisted other objects, such as the Chicago Distress fund, &c.

We desire to call attention to the advertisement of Dr. Wood of Ottawa. For the cure of cancers Dr. Wood has a wide reputation, and the success of his treatment should lead those who are suffering from that dreadful malady to consult him without delay.

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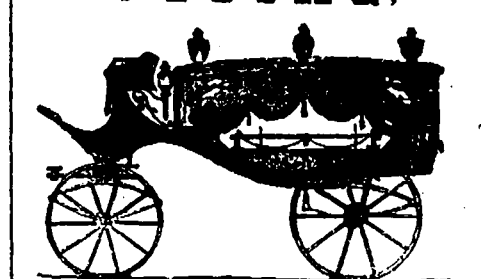
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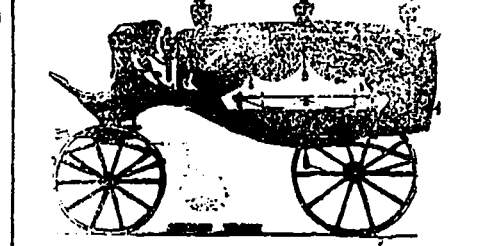
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THE COMMISSIONERS APPOINTED to construct the Intercolonial Railway give Public Notice that they are prepared to receive tenders for the construction of a "Deep Water Terminal" at Father Point.

Plans and Specifications may be seen at the Engineer's Office in Ottawa and Rimouski, on and after the 20th day of November next.

Tenders marked "Tenders for Harbor and Branch line," will be received at the Commissioners' Office, Ottawa, up to six o'clock, p.m., of the 20th day of December next.

A. WALSH, ED. B. CHANDLER, C. J. BRYDGES, A. W. McLELLAN, Commissioners

Commissioners' Office, Ottawa, October 17, 1873. 50-w

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