

OUR BOARDING HOUSE

Reflections on Current Events by
the Boarders.

"If your contention is correct," said Sinnett to Brown, "that the competitive system has a tendency to decrease wages and that the possession of the tools of production give the owners of them the power to reduce them to the lowest possible figure on which the laborer will consent to live, if all this is as you state, what is the use of organizing? The mere fact of men organizing will not alter existing conditions. The competition among traders will be as keen as ever and, as men must live, they will be as ready then as now to underbid each other in seeking employment."

"The simple fact of men organizing will strengthen their position," said Brown. "I have already told you that capital invariably attacks the point of least resistance. So long as men are disorganized it is easier and cheaper for the employer to reduce wages than it is to purchase more improved machinery, and naturally this would be the course which in such a case he would pursue to cheapen the cost of production; and no sensible man, understanding the workings of the competitive system, would blame him for it. But let the men be organized and it becomes impossible for him to lessen the cost of production in this manner. If there were no other benefits connected with organization than this greater resisting power which it imparts to labor in its direct dealings with capital, that of itself were well worth the trouble and expense it entails. But the fact of men being organized enables them to completely change the conditions under which they have hitherto lived and suffered. The keen competition among laborers could be relieved by shortening the hours of labor to eight per day. You must remember that as long as you have a large army of unemployed men in any given trade, no matter how good you are organized, there will be an ever-present danger of a reduction in pay. The first object of any organization, therefore, should be to remove this danger by finding employment for those who are in enforced idleness. The only feasible way to do this is to shorten the hours of labor and positively refuse to work overtime under any circumstances. Not only would you thus increase the prosperity of labor by a judicious interference with the law of supply and demand, but you would just as surely benefit the manufacturer himself, by creating an army of consumers out of men who now, by reason of their enforced idleness, are unable to purchase the articles he manufactures."

"It seems strange to me that men don't realize this," said Phil. "I for one would be perfectly willing to accept the eight-hour day with the eight-hour pay; not that I consider eight hours pay at my present rate of wages sufficient to live upon, but because I am convinced that the employment of the surplus labor would inevitably tend to raise my wages. If I should state the whole truth I would say that I firmly believe that, with an eight-hour workday among all trades, the average wages would be higher than it now is with a ten-hour day and that employers would be in a better position to pay it than what they are now. Among the vast army of unemployed many are a burden on the communities in which they live, and comparatively few are consumers to any greater extent than the bare necessities of life. Some live in houses of refuge and other charitable institutions; others are compelled to swindle their boarding-missus or else their butcher, their grocer or their landlord, while still others are driven to a life of crime direct. Now, all these constitute one of the great wastes of society of to-day. It is that section of the community who work who must eventually pay for the maintenance of the

pauper as well as indirectly reimburse the grocer, the butcher and the landlord for the losses they may have sustained. The same section also pays for the maintenance of our reformatory institutions and jails. All these losses, which must annually represent a large amount, must be borne by those who work. Now, I believe that the eight-hour day, by finding employment for all, will effectually prevent this terrible waste and that the fund thus saved will be employed or rather expended in making the homes of the workers more pleasant and their lives more cheerful; it will be expended in the purchase of articles manufactured by our employers and thus enlarge their market and stimulate trade. It will, in my opinion, create a home market for home manufactures by increasing the army of consumers by twenty per cent. For all these reasons, I believe I am well within the mark in saying that wages under an eight-hour day would not only be higher than now, but that the employers would actually be in a better position to pay them than what they are at present."

"Perhaps," said Brown, "but let labor look out for itself; capital is quite competent to hold up its own end. I am satisfied that the eight-hour day would prove a great benefit to labor; and while it can only be brought about by thorough organization, it is but one of the possibilities of organized effort, it is but one of the reforms for which we agitate, and great though it may be, it is after all but a side issue of the labor question."

BILL BLADES.

SCRAPS FOR CIGARMAKERS

GAS BILLS.

One of the impositions which our members have to contend with as a result of not being properly organized while not in force throughout the city is nevertheless an abuse on those who are employed in such shops where this unjust practice is in force. The one I refer to is the paying for the use of gas during the space of some four months in the year, and when it is considered that this period is the worst time for our trade, broken time being the rule, makes the impost an additional hardship, as the gas fee is charged just the same, and should an objection be made by one of those employees, he is placed on the list of kickers, which means that his time is limited, or perhaps discharged the following week. This is not all. The amount of money which is received from each man is 5c per week. Two gas jets supply ten men which amounts to fifty cents per week. The men as a general rule do not work a full week of six days on account of Saturday being a half day beside other lost time through waiting for stock, etc., still no allowance is made for such cases, the amount being deducted from their pay each week. In those shops some forty or fifty people are employed, each contributing their 5c per week, more than will pay the cost of gas consumed by the men, leaving a surplus which is not placed to credit of those who create the fund, which is a gross injustice. It may be said that five cents per week is such a small sum that it is not worth talking about, but that is no reason why it should be exacted from employees who toil like slaves in order to get a bare existence. If it is not worth talking about why is it deducted from their meagre salary? By what right have they to force a man to pay for something he has not received? Is this their way of doing unto others as you would they do unto you? Is it not sufficient proof that under such circumstances that it is nothing more or less than slavery to be compelled to submit to those unjust and tyrannical rules which are being enforced to such an extent in our city? I claim that the remedy to abolish such obnoxious and unjust rules lays in our own hands. We have an organization which, by practical application of its principles, combined with energy and perseverance on our part would enable us not only to better our condition but assist our fellowman to better his condition and demonstrate that only by practical organization will we be able to ameliorate our condition, a fact which seems to be lost sight of by our labor organizations in this city.

A WARNING.

It is said that a workman in one of our factories was discharged last week for not contributing to a subscription taken up by the foreman, with the remark "that this will be a lesson to you when I take up a subscription for a charitable purpose." If this is true it is a sad commentary on the

efficiency of our organization and shows the absolute necessity of a more thorough unity among our members.

A REVIVAL.

The revival of a chinatown scheme in one of our shops in which the men have to buy strings to tie up their work is merely an introduction to the coming winter prices and general lay off time which seems to be a settled fact in several of our shops.

A SUGGESTION.

Would it not be advisable for the Advertising Committee to ascertain the amount of money paid to our members for sick, death, out of work and traveling purposes for the present year for publication. It would give the public an idea of the manner in which we look after our members in time of trouble? Also the amount of labels used for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1890, and the amount of cigars manufactured in this city for the same length of time, as well as the total number of people employed at the trade, including boys, girls, apprentices, rollers and bunch-makers, the average wages earned and the amount of work done for the same; the number of machines in use in making cigars and the number of shops using the Blue label. Such statistics as those would do much towards placing our position before the public in its true light, and the result of such information would be of valuable assistance in creating a demand for our Blue label, which would mean the abolition of exacting rules now in force in many of our shops.

"SCRAPS."

THE WIDOW FLYNN CASE.

The following additional subscriptions to the Widow Flynn fund have been intimated:—

Previously acknowledged.....	\$580.75
Sir D. A. Smith.....	20 00
Hon. A. Boyer.....	10 00
Hon. J. A. Chapleau.....	5 00
Ald. Villeneuve.....	10 00
Ald. Clendinneng.....	5 00
R. J. L.....	1 00
Henry Baylis.....	1 00
A Friend.....	2 00
Cash.....	1 00
Justice.....	1 00
Cash.....	1 00
Fair Play.....	1 00
Cash.....	1 00
Cash.....	1 00
X. Y. Z.....	2 00
Progress Assembly, No. 3852, K. of L.....	5 00
J. Constantineau.....	5 00
Gazette Newsroom Compositors.....	9 00
Total.....	\$661.75

A NOTED PRINTER.

In the October issue of the Artist Printer there appears an excellent portrait and biographical sketch of William J. Kelly, of the American Art Printer, whose reputation among the craft as an artistic workman is second to none. The article is of interest to the craft here from the fact that it was in Montreal where Mr. Kelly first learned the rudiments of his art, having served his apprenticeship in the Witness office of this city. Mr. Kelly bears the reputation of having produced some of the most marvelous pieces of printing ever executed on the American continent and has been the recipient of a State medal for his beautiful conceptions, all of which bear the stamp of originality. During his career Mr. Kelly has been a consistent upholder of Unionism and is at present a member of "Big Six" and New York Pressmen's Union, as well as of the International Typographical Union. Mr. Kelly's success has not been attained without hard work and steady application, and his whole life is an object lesson for the young typo who wishes to make himself proficient in the "Art Preservative of all Arts."

PHILOSOPHICAL ANARCHY.

What It Means.

Anarchists claim full liberty would bring about a more congenial society, where all would be free to do as they liked without any other limits than natural impossibilities and the wants and rights of others. In the interests and for the welfare of humanity they demanded "liberty, equality and fraternity."

Man was naturally hopeful and peaceful, and harmony, friendship and fraternal feelings sprang from mutual confidence. The mission of the anarchist was not necessarily destruction, but to proclaim "Peace on earth, goodwill towards men;" violence was to be deprecated, except in self-defence, or for the overthrow of tyranny, but if carried away by virtuous indignation the people in revolt against oppression were to use bombs, etc., and bloodshed result, sympathy rather than condemnation should be shown to those who were driven to such extremes. But those who desired freedom would ignore all restrictions and refuse to recognize authority, ownership and privilege. People who are fair and upright need no restraint to force them to act fairly, and the wicked and foolish will not choose rulers to govern wisely and well. And, therefore, all authority was harmful and must be opposed by Anarchists, who wished to live in a brotherhood where liberty would reign supreme.

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"One of the Bravest"

and Finest things to do is to overcome your prejudice and remember there can be just as good Goods made in your own town as any other.

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