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Meets in the Ville-Marie Hall, 1623 Notre Dame street, the first and third Thursdays of the month. Communications to be addressed to JOS. RENAUD, Corresponding Secretary, P. O. Box 414

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Meets every FRIDAY evening at Eight o'clock in the K. of L. Hall, Chaboillez square. Address all communications to
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PROGRESS ASSEMBLY,
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Meets every First and Third Tuesday at Lomas' Hall, Point St. Charles.

BUILDERS' LABORERS' UNION.
Meets in Ville Marie Hall, 1623 Notre Dame street, every TUESDAY at 8 P. M.
Address all communications to
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FREE LABOR.

By R. B. Cunninghame Graham, M.P.

Now, I can understand a free swallow or a free beaver, but a free laborer seems rather to pass my understanding. A swallow flies by nature, a beaver builds his dam without the aid either of plumb line or political economy, a man is forced to labor by necessity, never, I believe, by choice. Free labor is supposed to be by its advocates (generally wealthy men) to be the inalienable right of a free man to sell his labor for what it is worth.

That is just the point. I too agree that a man should be able to sell his labor at its full value. Some labor, of course, is sold much above its real worth. A Judge, a Chancellor of the Exchequer, a successful lawyer, a ladies' doctor, a ballet dancer, and a jockey all seem to me to be able to dispose of their labor at more than its real value. When we come, though, to miners, hedgers, sailors, furnace-men, and railway servants it appears to me they always sell their labor at much less than its real value. I am strengthened in my opinion by the fortunes I see made from their labor day after day. It is a common saying that labor makes wealth, as indeed it does. When, though, did anyone ever see a man get rich by sheer hard work. If work did it what fortunes we should see in the docks amongst the laborers! Carters ought to have a balance at their bankers; hammermen should tip-tilt their noses at any investment under 10 per cent. Strange, though, it is not so. A man may slave with hammer, pick, pen or paint-brush all his days and not grow rich, even though he be industrious. Close attention even to business will not make men rich in these days.

Nothing but speculation will do the trick with speed. I heard a story of a man who went to Newcastle with a fit of delirium tremens coming on, and in that state ordered a 1800 or 2000 ton of iron to be delivered at Glasgow every three months. The fit passed off, the iron came in, my poor boozer scratched his pate, and wondered why and where and how and when he ordered it. However, he goes into the market and disposes of it. Again, the consignment comes, and my friend, not knowing what to do, again disposes of it, and so on until the agreed on time had expired. Then he makes out his accounts, and finds he has made £30,000 on the transaction. Now, what is the connection, you may ask, between this drunken, speculating sot and the free labor that one hears so much of now-a-days? Just this, if labor really were free, and could dispose of itself at its real value, would it be possible do you think, for the results of labor to be squandered or gambled with so recklessly? What a man makes himself with toil and trouble that he guards, and prevents others from making docks and churches of.

Free labor is unknown, in England or in Scotland. The labor of the men who made the £30,000 the drunkard filched in his boozing fit was not free at all, but, on the contrary, slave labor, or rather labor driven to work by stress of starvation. This cry of freedom for labor means that those who today live on the slavery of labor see that, through combination, labor is escaping from the thralldom of its fictitious "freedom"—freedom like the freedom of a mouse in the receiver of an air-pump. In the old days in Botany Bay, when an old "lag" or "lifer" behaved well they branded him (not brutally but with a sufficient number) and bound him to some squatter without wages till death did them part. This was called making a man a free laborer.

Name of ill omen, and one which the working classes should remember. Plausible enough, no doubt, to say. The interest of the public must be considered first. Strikes are disagreeable. It is impossible that one section of the people shall interfere with trade and the convenience of the rest. Worst of all that any part or section shall say to any man, "You shall not take the job until you join the Union. Plausible enough to talk of the tyranny of Trades Unions. I want to know, thou h, what the working classes are to do? On the one side Morley and Gladstone tell them to combine, and not come whining to the State (their own State, be it remembered, kept up by their labor.) On the other hand, Salisbury, Balfour and the ship-owners (Liberal and Tory) tell them they shall not combine, or, if they do, they will not be employed. Both parties I have mentioned equally agree, whether Union or non-Union, if they in a strike, pushed on by hunger, come in conflict with authority, to shoot them down. What is this

tyranny of Union we hear so much about? Do we not say to a child, "Eat that and this. refrain from that?" We say so because the child has not strength of himself to resist temptation. In the same way the Unions say the collective wisdom and experience of a trade outweighs the individual discretion of a man. They find that in a trade where men, for instance, make their individual bargains for their labor with their employers some men cannot earn a living wage at all. Therefore, so far from a man being free to sell his labor, practically he cannot sell it at all, but is obliged to take anything the employer likes to give him for it. This, of course, is very advantageous to employers. If they had their will they would (and even do) treat labor like a mere commodity, to be bought and sold just in proportion to its competition value at the moment. Almost all the miseries of modern life arise from the acceptance of this theory, even in part.

Labor is not simply a commodity, amenable to mere offer and demand. That to some extent it has been so accounts for the gigantic fortunes and gigantic misery everywhere around us. Labor, though, has something in it different entirely in its essence from that of any jute, pig-iron, rags, bones, fireclay, sawdust, or other marketable stuff whatever. To be fairly sold it must in the selling leave a living margin to the seller. If on one hand wealth is free to offer and to tempt, and on the other poverty is free to take and to be tempted, inevitably ensues—wages are driven down to subsistence and to reproduction point. The merry days of jovial, Ricardo and of light-some Malthus, and their imaginary iron law, would be nothing to it. What does all this show of commiseration for the hypothetical free laborer, the man who wants to work for a starvation wage, if the other fellows did not stop him, mean? If all this injury is being done, or going to be done to the working classes by Trades Unions, how is it that the clamour comes from the employing classes, not from the so-called free laborer himself?

For years and years employees have complained of the rate of British wages. All the time the non-Union man has profited by the Union effort, even if outside of it. Unions have kept wages up, and hence the cry of freedom for labor from those whose whole endeavor has been to lower wages, and in so doing take away from labor the semblance of real freedom it has. No man is free to sell his labor if he knows that two weeks' idleness means the workhouse. No man is free to sell his labor if he knows that by accepting a low rate of wages he damages the interest of his class. No man in so disposing of his labor really benefits himself in the long run, for in the end he finds himself deserted by the employers who have made a tool of him to beat his fellows with. They serve him as the Spaniards served traitors who sold their towns in the old days—set them on a horse dressed in fine uniforms, parade them through the town with a band playing, spread a banquet for them, line their purses with gold, and shoot them at evensong. Surely, though, it's monstrous if a man, cry many, who has a sick wife and hungry children, that he should not jump at and accept a job at good wages, no matter what Tom, Dick and Harry say. So it would seem at first sight. Tom, though, and Dick and Harry have wives and children too, and if by their efforts and self-sacrifice wages have been raised, surely they have a right to say that through the inconsiderate action of a few their lifelong work shall not be nullified. From the earliest ages of the world the rich have always struggled against the combination of the poor. The reason is self-evident; singly the poor man can make no bargain with the rich; fate has thrown beforehand his hungry children and his wife into the scales. Combined, the battle becomes equal. Hence the cry of protection to the honest working man who wants to sell his labor on his own terms means down with Unionism. What is the legal power of a Trades Union? May it only receive subscriptions and act as a Benefit Society? Or may it picket, boycott, and say to the employer you shall not employ any one but on our terms? My object is, and always will be in these cases, to put the matter plainly. Hypocrisy is the national failing of England and Scotland. A middle course gives us a middle cause—something that is not right nor yet quite wrong; something neither bread nor wine, but just between the two; religious atheism, drunken sobriety, hot ice, and marvellous strange snow. I fear me I shall never do for these men. Either a Union has full power to exercise pressure of all kinds (of a legal kind) or it is a Benefit Society. As far as I can see there is no middle course. If honest, well-disposed,

but feeble-minded men think it a good thing to put off the evil day of the inevitable coming struggle between capital and labor, why, they are free to do so. I myself prefer to have the tooth out suddenly if it must come, and not sit shivering in the dentist's torture chair, asking if it will hurt much. Labor to be free must be well combined, and thus in combination sell itself by the class and not by the man, or else the weaker will go to the wall. The free labor cry means that the capitalist classes are on their side combining to crush out the last vestiges of labor's freedom, to make men free as bales of jute are free, to be bought and sold. If, as I have often said, all wealth is produced by labor, then, indeed, one would imagine that labor might be allowed full power to make what terms seem good to it, and in what way it shall produce. Think not I wish to see the fight prolonged for ever. Regarding, as I do, labor and capital, and as two oarsmen in a boat, each pulling to forward the boat on different sides, but labor as a galley slave chained in a galley of his own making, forced to pull with oars not his own choosing, and to carry capital (made like the galley oars, and all out of labor's sweat) a dead-weight in the stern, pushed on to row, moreover, by the spectre of hunger in the offing—taking this view, naturally I think the sooner the forces of capital and labor come face to face the better for all concerned. Labor shall be free—not free to sell itself on any terms for bread (as at present) but free to combine to sell itself on its own terms. If not, though it produces capital, it is a slave, and the production not a free, but merely an involuntary act. All that has happened in the last two years goes to point out that the tendency of every branch of labor, skilled and unskilled, is to combine, and that the free—that is non-Union—men are in the main the offal and scum of labor—drunkards, corner men, and loafers, who hitherto have been the fund from which the capitalist classes have drawn to keep down wages. Now the time has come for all labor to be really free—that is combined. Let it be, therefore, understood free labor means those who elect to remain outside the ranks of union, untouched by modern thought; those who base all happiness on the present pot of beer, and fail to grasp the means of self enfranchisement. If, then, the capitalists think by espousing the cause of men they must themselves despise, that free labor is a broken reed indeed, we shall see society in the future divided into two classes—the one side working men, and on the other the capitalists, pimps, loafers, drunkards and free laborers.

Through the Tunnel.

A railway mail clerk, who has a car to himself, left it for a moment to run forward and speak to the engineer as the train stopped for water at a station in the Allegheny mountains, just west of the great tunnel. When the boiler was filled and the train started he sprang for his car.

The entrance to the car was on the side, and a solitary handle offered itself to the grasp of the passenger. As the clerk seized this hurriedly and pulled himself up he discovered to his horror that the door had jarred shut and could not be opened from the outside.

At that moment the train shot into the tunnel. The man shrieked for help, but the noise of the train drowned his cries, and with both hands grasping the handle, his feet on the iron step and his body glued to the side of the car lest he should be dashed against the jagged wall, as he was carried into the darkness.

As the tunnel is a mile long and the atmosphere almost stifling, the helpless man's predicament can be better imagined than described. When the train came out into daylight again the engineer looked back, as usual, to see if the train was following, and discovered the mail clerk in his perilous position.

The train was stopped as quickly as possible, and the engineer and conductor hastened to the man's rescue. He was all but demented, and on being assisted to the ground fell unconscious.

For six months afterward he was under a physician's care, and when he had recovered from the shock he said:

"The tunnel seemed at least ten miles long, and my head, I thought, was hollow, with the smoke rushing in at my mouth and nostrils and pouring out again through my ears. Whenever I think of it my brain reels and I feel myself crouching, just as I crouched against the outside of that car, while being dragged through that horrible darkness."—Washington Star.

How to Make Money.

A man who is wise, careful and conservative, energetic, persevering and tireless, need have no fear for his future. But there is one other thing. He must have a steady head, one that weather the rough sea of reverses from which no life is altogether free, and one that will not become too big when successes attend his efforts. Keep out of the way of speculators. Take your money, whether it be much or little, to one whose reputation will insure your good counsel. Invest your money where the principal is safe and you will get along. But don't forget the acorns. It is from little acorns that great oaks grow. See that you begin aright early in life. Save your money with regularity. By so doing you will more than save your money; you will make money.—Henry Clews in Ladies' Home Journal.

A Valuable Possession.

We can have no more valuable possession than a good hereditary—an inheritance of longevity, and if this has not descended to us, it is generally because ancestors, more or less remote, have squandered it.

Such an inheritance gives constitutional vigor, keeps its possessor safe amid almost every form of microbial disease, secures the needed recuperative energy in case of attack, makes life worth living up to the normal end, renders old age green and sunny, and keeps up intellectual activity to the last. Mr. Gladstone in his ninth decade, is more than a match for most men at fifty at their best. No one would guess from the latest products of Dr. Holmes' pen, or from his genial spirit, that he had been for two years an octogenarian.

After all, care is necessary to the prolongation of life; not anxious care, but care to avoid harmful transgression. Mr. Gladstone still keeps up vigorous exercise and Dr. Holmes uses his great knowledge of the laws of health and life to keep himself not merely alive, but in good working condition.—Youth's Companion.

A Good Fee.

Ministers in New England villages are not usually the recipients of liberal salaries, and the number of marriages in a year is seldom large enough to make the fees much of an addition to the slender sum. The fees themselves are apt to be slight, and sometimes are omitted altogether, although the clergyman is usually presented with some little "remembrance" of the happy occasion.

One clergyman has a good many amusing stories to tell of his wedding experiences, but he once received a wedding fee which has never been duplicated, and which, he says, lasted ten times as long as any other which was ever given to him.

He performed the ceremony which united the daughter of the Widow Robbins, the thriftiest housewife of his parish, to a poor but estimable young man, whom the widow had selected for her son-in-law, and with whom her daughter had dutifully fallen in love.

The wedding was a merry one, and as the officiating clergyman was putting on his coat in the hall, ready to start for home, the Widow Robbins bustled out to him and said: I sent Harry over with your fee about half an hour ago, Mr. Lathrop. I told him people wouldn't miss the groom for a few minutes, and sure enough they didn't. He said he gave it to your wife, and I hope you'll like it; you always have.

Mr. Lathrop murmured his thanks and hurried home to be greeted by his wife, whom a severe cold had kept in the house, in a voice shaking with suppressed laughter.

Where is my fee? demanded the clergyman. I hear it has been put into your keeping.

It's on the dining room table, faltered his wife.

He strode out to the dining room, and there on the table were ranged four rows of glass jars, three in each row; they were well filled, and labelled respectively, currant jelly, chili sauce, sweet pickles, and last but not least, raspberry jam.

We had a good laugh, of course, says Mr. Lathrop, but we also had some of that fee the very next day, and we never enjoyed one better.—Youth's Companion.

The Typothetae of America have selected Toronto as the place for the next meeting, to be held in August, 1892. W. O. Sheppard, of Toronto, was chosen president at the Cincinnati meeting.