

TRADES, UNIONS AND STRIKES.

The movement in Toronto in favour of the nine hours system which led to the printers' strike, has evoked a legal opinion from R. A. Harrison, Q. C., which it would be well for working-men's unions to ponder over before taking hasty action either to coerce their fellow-workmen or their employers. In so far as the strike in Toronto among the printers is concerned, it may be considered a "draw" between the masters and the men, except that the former firmly refuse to concede the privileges claimed by the Union of dictating the hours of labour, or, in fact, in any way directing the internal economy of the establishments in which they are employed. The masters meet the "nine hours" demand with the promise that men working on time be paid by the hour, leaving it optional with the workman as to whether he shall work nine or ten hours a day. The minimum of this offer is twenty cents per week more than was formerly paid for sixty hours' work; but under it the man who works but nine hours a day will earn only \$9.18 per week for his 54 hours of work, instead of the ten dollars he received for sixty hours. The offer of the masters is a fair one, as men of delicate health can work according to their powers of endurance, substituting eight or nine for ten hours if they please. But it strikes a vital blow at the aim of the National Labour League of the United States in so far as Canada is concerned, for that aim was to compel the universal system of nine hours as the computation of a day's work; and the master printers of Toronto will doubtless be supported by employers generally throughout the country. In fact we venture to say that many printers, especially those who have families to support, would much prefer an occasional opportunity of working a few hours extra, rather than be tied down to the fruits of nine hours' earnings a day.

The most important result of the strike, to those not actively engaged in it is, however, the opinion of Mr. Harrison, to which we have referred, and in which he gives an exhaustive resumé of the state of the law in Canada upon Trades' Unions and strikes. He points out the difference between English law as it now exists and the law of Canada in relation to these matters, and finally sums up as follows:

- "I can only come to the conclusion that combinations of workmen in Canada for the following purposes are illegal:—
- "1. To lessen or alter the hours for labour.
- "2. To obtain an advance of wages.
- "3. To fix the rate of wages.
- "4. To decrease the quantity of work.
- "5. To induce others to depart from their service before the expiration of their time.
- "6. To quit work before their work is finished.
- "7. To refuse to enter into work or employment.
- "8. To persuade others not to enter into employment."

It would be well for the workmen's societies in view of the state of the law as above presented, to act in all matters affecting their relation with employers with moderation and circumspection. But it is also to be noted that it is only the "combination" that is illegal; and it is justly illegal and deserves punishment as a crime against the liberty of the subject. Every man is free to make his own terms for his own work, but not to coerce others in disposing of theirs.

AUSTRALIAN AFFAIRS.

The Australian colonies had scarcely recovered from the profound sensation created by the murder of Bishop Patterson when news arrived from Fiji giving particulars of numerous fresh outrages of an equally atrocious nature committed by the natives. There is a general and loud call for revenge throughout the whole of the colony. This burst of righteous indignation, however, is not levelled against the immediate perpetrators of the recent murders. These untutored savages can hardly be held responsible for their acts of barbarity as long as the people upon whom they are perpetrated are allowed to treat them in an equally brutal manner. The horrors of the South Sea labour trade still continue to furnish the Fijians with a plausible excuse, and it is only to be regretted that they are unfortunate as to the choice of their victims; and that these acts of retribution do not fall upon the labour-traders themselves. A large public meeting of both sexes assembled in Melbourne "to consider the desirability of memorialising Her Majesty the Queen on the subject of the labour traffic in the Pacific, to which are attributable the violent deaths of Bishop Patterson and others." A long correspondence on this subject between the Home and the Colonial Governments is published in the local press, from which it appears that it is in contemplation to introduce this session into the Imperial Parliament a bill enacting that the exportation of natives without their consent is to be visited as felony on all parties concerned in the transaction. The bill also affords the colonial Government additional facility in apprehending and convicting such offenders. The Secretary of State, however, suggests that the matter is one in which Australia is mainly interested; that the South Sea trade is mainly an Australian trade, that the offenders are for the most part Australians, and that the trials will be held before Australian courts. He therefore desires to know whether the local government is prepared to incur the expenses of such prosecutions.

Sir James Martin, the Attorney-General and Premier of New South Wales, in his reply, however, without mentioning any plausible objection, declines to give a general promise to comply with this most reasonable demand of the Home Govern-

ment, and declares that the British Government must either annex Fiji, or recognise King Thakombau as an independent sovereign, with whom extradition treaties may be made, and to whom the rules of international law will apply. As this subject is one of the most vital importance to this colony and all nations engaged in trading in the Pacific, Sir James Martin will incur much blame should the negotiations with the British Government terminate unsatisfactorily.

A new and serious disease has broken out among the cattle in Geelong, and Little River in Queensland: the hind quarters of the animal become paralysed, and it is unable to rise; in other cases it is seized with a stiffness in the limbs which rapidly develops itself until prostration ensues. The disease is spreading fast on the Yon Yongs, where the cattle are particularly well provided for, and beasts in prime condition are attacked with equal severity. Various causes are assigned, but it is most generally attributed to some ingredient in the water.

A well-known and popular Australian sportsman appeals through the medium of the press to his brethren, to spare the laughing jackass, magpie, and hawk, on account of their utility in destroying a dangerous snake by which that colony is infested. In passing through Domain he observed a laughing jackass bending some object against a branch upon which the bird was perched. Upon examination he found it to be a black snake some fifteen inches long. Whilst on a visit near the Elephant-bridge township, he saw several magpies making an attack upon a black snake between five and six feet in length. The same year, in another part of the country, his attention was attracted by a peculiar noise in the air, and on looking up he perceived a laughing jackass rising with what appeared to be a piece of rope. Presently, however, it fell from a tremendous height, cut into three pieces, which being put together formed a black snake measuring fifty-four inches. He has had opportunities of observing different birds, and declares that hawks are also in the habit of destroying snakes in a similar manner. He believes the existing game-laws call for considerable alteration, and warmly advocates the proposed gun-tax. "Whatever the tax may be, it should be made obligatory on the holder of the license to carry it with his gun, and under a heavy penalty be obliged to produce it for the inspection of any person demanding the same." This would at all events be a check upon the devastations committed by overgrown boys and larrikins during the breeding period.

A remarkable incident is related as having happened to the claimant of the Tichborne estates whilst angling near Wagga-Wagga for cod. "Sir Roger" was bringing one out when a very much larger one seized the captive, and holding on with voracious tenacity, was with difficulty, owing to his weight, brought to grass, but let go the hold of his anticipated prey the moment before touching the bank, and within a few inches only of deep water. The eager fisherman threw himself upon his game and made good his capture at the risk of falling into the river. The first fish weighed three pounds, and his combal companion over eighteen pounds.

In the neighbourhood of Burrumatt Creek there is a loud outcry against poachers who infest that part of the country. Through the energetic exertions of Dr. King, several scores of English perch had been placed in the creek, and several cod and bream had been successfully reared. Fishing had been prohibited for some time. But the united efforts of several acclimatization societies could not keep pace with the work of this miserable crowd of poachers, who literally drag the fish out in bucketsful.

RE-VACCINATION.

(Issued by the Medical Department of the Privy Council, England.)

By vaccination in infancy, if thoroughly well performed and successful, most people are completely insured, for their whole life-time, against an attack of small-pox; and in the proportionately few cases where the protection is less complete, small-pox, if it be caught, will, in consequence of the vaccination, generally be so mild a disease as not to threaten death or disfigurement. If, however, the vaccination in early life has been imperfectly performed, or has, from any other cause, been but imperfectly successful, the protection against small-pox is much less satisfactory; neither lasting so long, nor while it lasts being so complete, as the protection which first-rate vaccination gives. Hitherto, unfortunately, there has always been a very large quantity of imperfect vaccination; and, in consequence, the population always contains very many persons who, though nominally vaccinated, and believing themselves to be protected against small-pox, are really liable to infection, and may in some cases contract as severe forms of small-pox as if they had never been vaccinated. Partly because of the existence of this large number of imperfectly vaccinated persons, and partly because also even the best infantine vaccination sometimes in process of time loses more or less of its effect, it is advisable that all persons who have been vaccinated in infancy, should, as they approach adult life, undergo re-vaccination. Generally speaking, the best time of life for re-vaccination, is about the time when growth is completing itself, say from 15 to 18 years of age; and persons in that period of life ought not to delay their re-vaccination till times when there shall be special alarms of small-pox. In proportion, however, as there is prevalence of small-pox in any neighbourhood, or as individuals are, from personal circumstances, likely to meet chances of infection, the age of 15 needs not to be waited for; especially not by young persons whose marks of previous vaccination are unsatisfactory. In circumstances of special danger, every one past childhood, on whom re-vaccination has not before been successfully performed, ought without delay to be re-vaccinated.

Re-vaccination, once properly and successfully performed, does not appear ever to require repetition. The nurses and other servants of the small-pox hospital, when they enter the service (unless it be certain that they have already had small-pox) are invariably submitted to vaccination, which, in their case, is generally re-vaccination, and is never afterwards repeated; and so perfect is the protection, that though the nurses live in the closest and most constant attendance on small-pox patients, and though also the other servants are in various ways exposed to special chances of infection, the resident surgeon of the hospital, during his thirty-four years of office there, has never known small-pox to affect any one of these nurses or servants.

Hobart Pasha endeavours to show, in a letter to the *Levant Herald*, how mistaken people are in the notion that, in the event of a war with England, America would have it all her own way. In the first place, he says, the declaration of war must come from America, and within three weeks of such declaration every port in America would be closed by the English blockading squadron. America has no seagoing fleet, excepting a few small-sized wooden ships which are used for the purpose of showing her flag abroad. She has monitors to defend her ports, and no doubt with them and the newly invented torpedoes, she would give plenty of annoyance to the English blockading fleets; but as long as war lasted with England no American flag would be seen on the high seas in a ship of war. Next, as to privateers, which America retains the right to use in the event of war, it is difficult to see where they are to come from, supposing the sea-ports in America are closed, unless they were fitted out in foreign ports, in which case the nation in whose port they were equipped would lay itself open to "Alabama claims" from England. Admitting, however, that America succeeds in fitting out a number of privateers to prey on English trade, it must be remembered that privateering in these days can in no way be compared to what it used to be before steam was introduced. Then the low, rakish, fast-sailing schooner, armed with a long gun, crept alongside the fat Indianman by superiority of sailing, and made her an easy prize. Now as the merchant in war time would send his goods in fast steamers, and the privateer steamer, which must always be cruising under full steam, frequently chasing vessels that in the end turn out to be neutrals riding out gales of wind, &c., thus using coal to no purpose, would be often in want of coal, and where is she to procure the necessary article? International law prevents vessels carrying belligerent flags from coaling in neutral ports, excepting under very special circumstances, and to go back to the American blockaded ports would be out of the question. It is said that English trade would be paralyzed—granted; but what becomes of the American market for her own produce? England would have the world open to her, America would be shut up to all intents and purposes. But people say Canada would be England's weak point. Even there much misconception exists. Canada is thickly peopled by most loyal people, who hate the idea of American rule. The American army is at present maintained on a very small scale, and experience has shown how difficult it is to make an army efficient for foreign service out of raw recruits. Such are Hobart Pasha's opinions of the prospects of America in the event of an "unpleasantness" between the two most enlightened nations on earth.

A letter from Athens in the *Magdeburg Gazette* says that the Greek capital is now almost blockaded by brigands. No one dares to go a thousand paces out of the town without an escort, and even then the undertaking is a very dangerous one, for the brigands are concealed behind rocks and in bushes, so that the whole of the escort might be shot down before their hiding-places could be discovered. The chief of these brigands is a man named Spanos, who has been notorious for his daring deeds during the last thirty years, and it may be said that he holds the destinies of Greece in his hands, for no progress is possible so long as the present state of things exists. The insecurity of property prevents the development of agriculture. No one dares to invest capital in land whose produce is sure to be annexed by the brigands. Nearly every day bands of peasants are brought into Athens who have been compelled by the brigands to furnish them with provisions, &c.; and as the lives of these unfortunate people are threatened when they do not comply with such requisitions, the Government only punishes them if they neglect to give information to the authorities. Half of the Greek army has been in pursuit of Spanos for months; but he and his band, which consists of only seven men, are still close to Athens, and it is even rumoured that he has on several occasions entered the city with the object of capturing some high personage, whom he would afterwards liberate only on the condition of his being given a large ransom and a free pardon. The nature of the territory, and proximity of the Turkish frontier, cause great difficulties to the troops, and they frequently pass hidden caverns and the short thick bushes which over the mountains without guessing that the brigands are in their immediate vicinity. The shepherds and the peasants are obliged for their own security to warn the brigands of the approach of the troops on such occasions. This is done according to a well-developed plan; they either throw stones with hieroglyphics upon them in places agreed upon beforehand, or lay down sticks on which they cut certain marks. If a military detachment enters a village to make inquiries about the brigands, the peasants take their sticks and begin cutting marks upon them in the first place to record the subject of the conversation, and next to enable the brigands—some of whom are generally posted on a hill in the vicinity with excellent field-glasses—to observe what is going on.

The Calcutta correspondence of the *Times* warns the public that another Southal insurrection may be approaching. The tribesmen, who, in 1855, rose to avenge themselves upon the money-lenders, have fallen under their power again, and have a new quarrel with the Zemindars, who, they say, charge them too much for their lands, and will not allow them anything for their betterments. They have consequently been holding meetings, and have announced that they will wait two months for redress, and will then redress themselves—that is, will "axe" all the money-dealers and landlords they can catch, and any Europeans who interfere. As it is nearly certain that Government will not draw a wet sponge over their debts, or advance them money at 5 per cent., they will probably keep their threat, and officials and share-holders in the East Indian Railway may have a bad quarter of an hour. The railway makes it easy to send troops, but Europeans cost too much to be wasted in those jungles, and the Sepoys do not like the Southals at all. They are not quite certain that they are human beings.

The Queen has given instructions for the preparation of a volume, in which the proceedings of Thanksgiving Day, as described by the various journals, will be posted.

There is a whisper, says the *Court Journal*, that one of the purposes of the Queen's visit to Baden-Baden is to make a match. An Austrian Archduchess is the lady mentioned.