

# Ontario Workman.

THE EQUALIZATION OF ALL ELEMENTS OF SOCIETY IN THE SOCIAL SCALE SHOULD BE THE TRUE AIM OF CIVILIZATION.

VOL. I.

TORONTO, THURSDAY, APRIL 3, 1873

NO 51

## Labor Notes.

The Electro-Platers of Birmingham are discussing the formation of a co-operative manufactory on their own account.

The masons employed on the Eastern Railway works, Jersey, have struck for an advance of 6d. per day. The present wages are 3s. 6d. per day.

The Huddersfield (Eng.) journeymen painters have decided to ask the masters for a reduction of hours of labor from fifty-eight and a half to fifty-six hours per week and an increase of one half-penny per hour in wages.

Five hundred journeymen bakers have posted placards in the streets of Stuttgart, threatening a strike unless their demands for an increase of wages, a reduction in the number of working hours, less labor on Sundays, and none at all on important holidays, are complied with.

An arrangement has been made between the Bradford (Eng.) masons and their employers that instead of the advance to come into operation in May next being at the rate of 3s. a week, it shall be 2s. a week. This agreement has been mutually brought about.

At an adjourned conference of painters at Airdrie, Scotland, held between employers and employed, it has been unanimously agreed to by the employers to advance the present rate of wages from 6½d. to 7d. per hour, and the country wages from 3s. to 4s. per week.

At a meeting of operative joiners in Edinburgh on Saturday a large number of them stated that they had given warning that morning in consequence of their employers refusing to increase their wages from 6½d to 7½d per hour. On and after the 1st of March the masters offered 7d per hour.

On Monday morning, 8th ult., work was resumed by the fitters, turners, and smiths, who have been on strike at Mr. Robert Holt's, Hope Foundry, Bury, England, where about 400 hands are employed. They struck for an advance of 2s per week, but the advance was made to only about three-fourths of the men, the remainder being considered unworthy of it. It is rumored that the men at other works will follow suit.

The Beaver Falls (U. S.) Co-operative Foundry have declared a dividend of 12 per cent. on stock, and have changed their by-laws, making all the profits up to 15 per cent. due to stock. They claim to have been successful beyond their most ardent expectations, and cordially invite moulders to join in with them, as the association is a "fixed fact."

A conference, which lasted three hours, took place in Leeds on Wednesday afternoon, the 5th ult., between deputations from the West Riding Coal-owners' Association and the Miners' Association, respecting the further advance of 20 per cent. demanded by the colliers. After both sides had been heard, the chairman, Mr. R. Tennant, stated that the men's application would be laid before a general meeting of colliery owners, and that the reply would probably be favorable.

On Saturday evening, March 8th, the United Wheelwrights, Smiths and Painters' delegate meeting was held at the New Inn Tavern, Old Bailey, London, to report on the nine hours and ten per cent. movement, and consider the best steps to be taken. From the reports of the delegates it appeared that the firms of Messrs. Norton, Randall, Harvey, Parke, Rickett, Macdonald and Bonas, as well as the Nine Elms establishment and Woolwich Arsenal had conceded the nine hours. Fourteen shops were reported as favorable to the movement.

At Berlin the difficulty with regard to the cab-drivers has been postponed till a special committee shall have investigated the matter; while, from Rome, we hear that the compositor's strike is now completely over, and that the men have obtained the increase of wages they had so persistently

demand. It has naturally been difficult to obtain news from Madrid, but we are at last informed that the strike of the postmen is over. These indispensable public servants patriotically resumed their work on the very morrow of the proclamation of the Republic.

At a meeting of the Berlin cab proprietors the reply of the Minister of Commerce to the petition sent by them to the Emperor was read. The Minister therein promises a thorough investigation of their grievances, but expects, however, that in the private and commercial interests of the public the petitioners will immediately resume their traffic. The meeting thereupon authorized the chairman to declare that until such an investigation had been concluded they would resume running at the old rates. The chairman at once entered into communication with the Minister of Commerce and the President of the Police.

The journeymen jewellers and watch-makers of Geneva have not yet come to terms with their employers. At a general meeting, held on the 19th of last month, it had been resolved to refuse the terms of 9½ hours offered by the masters; and only ten persons voted against the prolongation of the strike. Besides stipulating that a day's work should not exceed nine hours, the jewellers maintain that over-time should be paid 50 per cent. extra. The compositors of Leipzig are also still struggling against their employers. These latter submitted the details of the dispute to the employers' association, and this examination was concluded by a vote in favor of resisting the demands of the men.

## THE AMALGAMATED TAILORS' SOCIETY OF ENGLAND.

In issuing the seventh annual report of the above society, Mr. Peter Shorrocks, the general secretary, remarks:

"The number of members has increased by 4,147, and our funds augmented by £3,638, 10s. 5½d. Branches have been formed, and local societies have entered the amalgamation during the year in Abercromby, Ilkestone, Neath, Buxton, Lichfield, Middlesbrough, Bolton, Sutton-in-Ashfield, Southampton, Kirkburton, Mountain Ash, Cheltenham, Newark, Newport, Pontypool, Rugby, Rawtenstall, Jarrow, Grimsby, Bacup, Croydon, Alnwick, Hartlepool, Wrexham, Blyth, Houghton-le-Spring, Bridgend, Eastbourne, Castelford, Portsmouth, Greenwich, Haslingdon, Padliham, Gloucester, Whitehaven, Burton-on-Trent, Dowlais, Tunbridge, Wells, Winchester, and in London. Thus the number of branches have increased by 43.

In our last annual report we stated that the executive had been engaged on several matters of importance to the trade, and were paying the way to still greater progress. You will now be gratified to know these words are not flippant promises, but that the executive have used their utmost endeavours, and with economy, redeem their promise. Our labors have not only been directed to the strengthening of our society, and increasing its funds and influence, but the main object of our association being the protection and furtherance of the general interest of the trade, we have by our extended unity been enabled to gain advances in wages to the extent of £50,000 per year to our trade. The whole of this work having been accomplished by an outlay of £366 11s. 1d.

We have registered our rules under the Trades Union Act, thus receiving the protection of the law for our funds, and so making the society a strong and legally acknowledged unity, instead of a feeble, uncertain future, at the mercy of those who choose to practice upon us, and trusting to any stray Acts of Parliament, or wayward whims of magistrates, for redress. We have now powers conferred upon us which we may in future use to our advantage, and no doubt will be brought under the consideration of the executive.

The general summary of the accounts will show amounts paid for sickness, travelling, and funerals. An improvement in the health

of our society will be observed, if we take into consideration that the average paid during the year 1871 for sick was 7s. 10d., and for funerals about 3s. 4d. per member, whilst the past year (1872) shows an average of about 5s. 6d. for sick, and for funerals a little under 2s. 3d. per member.—*English Exchange.*

## THE INCREASING WEALTH OF THE WORLD.

We are at present in such a stage of the development of the industry of all civilized nations that the increase in producing capacity far outstrips increase of population, so that the amount produced and consumed on an average by every person far exceeds in quantity and value that which was ever before known. It should not be lost sight of that only food, fuel, and clothing are entirely consumed, but that all the other products of industry are utilized for building and manufacturing, by which operations nothing in reality disappears; but, on the contrary, the value of the manufactured material is increased. Thus the stone and timber are transformed into dwellings and furniture, the iron into railroads, engines, and steamships, and the produce of metallurgy into all kinds of tools and machinery, all much more valuable than the material used to produce them; so that in their case the value of property is raised by two steps, first by the production of the raw material, second, by the use of this in making the objects desired. Even the fuel consumed under the steam boiler of a manufactory gives more than its equivalent in the products of the manufactory; and who will deny that the value of the development of human society is not worth a great deal more than the value of the food and other necessities consumed by the human race? Therefore, strictly speaking, even in this case nothing can be considered lost, but humanity in general is the constant gainer. So the workman who earns his wages gives the products of his labor back to his employers, a value surpassing that of his earnings, if this was not so, he would not have been employed; and thus the workman has, besides earning a living for himself and his household, contributed his share to the increase of the wealth of the world. Even the Chinaman who, after several years of toil here, returns to his native home, carrying some of his earnings with him, if looked at from this point of view, leaves behind him in the results of his labors a greater value than all that he can possibly carry off; he has thus been a benefit to us, and has the full right to go where he pleases.

If we look at the statistics of the increase of productive capacity in various branches among different nations, we are especially struck at the development that has taken place during the last decade. Let us, for instance, take the single article of iron. In the United States, in 1860 it was confined to half a million tons, while in 1870 it was increased to over two million tons, employing 150,000 workmen; while 850,000 men are employed to work this iron into all kinds of machines, etc., making one million men employed by the iron industry alone. The value of the raw material is estimated at \$200,000,000, increasing by further labor to \$1,000,000,000. The production of steel manufacture in Germany is still more startling; in 1860 only 250 tons of manufactured steel, worth three millions of dollars, was produced by 4,000 workmen, while in 1870, 2,000,000 worth twenty millions of dollars, was the result of the labor of 14,000 workmen.

Let us take a totally different branch, cheese: in 1850 one million pounds of cheese were exported from here to England, and in 1870 seven million pounds. The State of New York alone has now nearly 1,000 cheese manufactories, which use the milk of more than 250,000 cows, making therefrom 80,000,000 pounds of cheese, which is 1,000 pounds of cheese for every three cows. The cheese production of the whole United States is now over 100,000,000 pounds, of which 60,000,000 are exported. England exports scarcely

3,000,000 pounds, while little Holland, which used to be the principal cheese producing country of the world, exports at present 25,000,000 pounds. This latter fact suggests the extent which the cheese production of the United States may reach in the course of years, and the wealth which its exportation will bring back, as the Hollanders used to boast that their cheese production alone was more valuable and reliable than a gold mine, very few of which surpassed the Dutch cheese in the profits realized.

We could easily fill many pages with other illustrations of the immense increase of the production which, as it continually far outstrips the increase in population, cannot fail to increase the sum total of valuable property. This view of productive capacity and its results is the best argument against that conservative class of people who sometimes raise their voice against useful inventions and new patents, under pretext that such improvements often take the bread out of the mouth of the workmen, who are unable to compete with hand labor against machine labor. Experience has proved that all such fears are totally groundless, and in every case have the machines which increased production been a blessing in the end, giving more labor and higher wages to those using them than they could obtain by their unimproved methods and much smaller productive capacities. So since the art of printing has superseded manual copying, there are probably a thousand printers for every manuscript writer of the olden times: when at a recent period the sewing machine superseded a great many of the most tedious duties of the seamstress, the prophecy that its use would impoverish a large class of women who made their living was not fulfilled. On the contrary, the sewing machine has been a benefit all round; and so it must be with every invention which enlarges the total amount of the valuable products of labor, and therefore contributes its share to the world's wealth.

## ADAM SMITH ON COMBINATION OF EMPLOYERS.

One hundred years ago Adam Smith treated with unrivalled lucidity on many of the questions which still agitate master and workman.

Adam Smith is an authority universally submitted to, and I think the readers of the WORKMAN may like to see a part of that which is more immediately interesting at the present moment. The following extracts are taken from the "Wealth of Nations," Book I Chap. 8.—"Of the wages of Labor."

Masters are always and everywhere in a sort of tacit but uniform combination not to raise the wages of labor above their actual rate. To violate this combination is everywhere a most unpopular action, and a sort of reproach to a master among his neighbors and equals. We seldom, indeed, hear of this combination, because it is the usual, and one may say the natural, state of things which nobody ever hears of. Masters, too, sometimes enter into particular combinations to sink the wages of labor even below this rate.

These are always conducted with the utmost secrecy till the moment of execution: and when the workmen yield, as they sometimes do, without resistance, though severely felt by them, they are never heard of by other people. Such combinations, however, are frequently resisted by a contrary defensive combination of the workmen, who, sometimes, too, without any provocation of this kind, combine of their own accord to raise the price of labor.

The liberal reward of labor, as it encourages the propagation, so it increases the industry of the common people. The wages of labor are the encouragement of industry, which, like every human quality, improves in proportion to the encouragement it receives. A plentiful subsistence increases the bodily strength of the laborer, and the comfortable hope of bettering his condition, and of ending his days, perhaps, in ease and plenty, animates him to exert

that strength to the utmost. Where wages are high accordingly, we shall find the workman more active, diligent, and expeditious than where they are low; in England, for example, than in Scotland; in the neighborhood of great towns, than in remote country places. Some workmen, indeed, when they can earn in four days what will maintain them through the week, will be idle the other three. This, however, is by no means the case with the greater part. Workmen, on the contrary, when they are liberally paid by the piece, are very apt to overwork themselves, and to ruin their health and constitution in a few years. A carpenter in London, and in some other places, is not supposed to last in his utmost vigor above eight years. Something of this kind happens in many other trades in which the workmen are paid by the piece, as they generally are in manufactures, and even in country labor, wherever wages are higher than ordinary. Almost every class of artizan is liable to some peculiar infirmity occasioned by excessive application to their peculiar species of work. Excessive application during four days of the week is frequently the real cause of the idleness of the other three, so much and so loudly complained of. Great labor either of mind or body continued for several days together is, in most men, naturally followed by a great desire of relaxation, which, if not restrained by force, or by some strong necessity, is almost irresistible. It is the call of nature which requires to be relieved by some indulgence, some times of each only, but sometimes, too, of dissipation and diversion.

"If it is not complied with the consequences are often dangerous and sometimes fatal, and such as almost always, sooner or later, bring on the peculiar infirmity of the trade. If masters would always listen to the dictates of reason and humanity, they would have frequently occasion rather to moderate than to animate the application of many of their workmen. It will be found, I believe, in every trade that the man who works so moderately as to be able to work constantly, not only preserves his health the longest, but, in the course of the year, executes the greatest quantity of work."

## TRADES GUILD OF LEARNING.

On Saturday a meeting was held at the office of the Working Men's Club and Institute Union, 150, Strand, for the purpose of taking steps for the formation of a Trades Guild of Learning, to promote the technical and higher education of skilled workmen. Lord Lyttelton occupied the chair, Mr. Stuart having delivered an able speech upon the subject, the following resolution, on the motion of the Rev. Henry Solly, seconded by Mr. Muir, was unanimously adopted, "That in the opinion of this meeting it is desirable to form a trade guild of learning, with a view of promoting the delivery of lectures and the formation of classes to assist the members of trade societies (and other skilled workmen) in acquiring knowledge of history, political economy, technical education, as well as of literature, science, and art generally. That the various trades unions in the United Kingdom be invited to connect themselves with this guild, by a small annual payment, which should give all their members admission to certain courses of lectures and to classes, either without payment or on reduced terms, also to the libraries and reading rooms, discussions, and social meetings where there can be provided by the guild. That if the requisite funds can be obtained, an agent commanding the confidence of trade societies be engaged to visit their lodge meetings by permission, and invite their support for the foregoing objects." After some discussion, a provisional committee was formed for the purpose of carrying out the desired objects.—*English Exchange.*

Books, Pamphlets, Posters, Handbills, and Job Printing of every description, executed at the ONTARIO WORKMAN office.