

Q.—How do carpenters' wages compare with the wages of other mechanics in Toronto? A.—Taking the building trade they are no doubt under the other trades.

Q.—But mason and bricklayers cannot get in so much time as carpenters can they? A.—No, not as a rule. I have found, I may say, that our own trade is considered the most disorganized trade in the various building trades; there seems to be always plenty of them about. That has been the case all through my life; we are always complaining and at the same time we are never getting better. There are always getting to be more in the field; I suppose they learn the trade because they like it; it is considered a genteeler trade than others and I have always come to the conclusion that we have to pay for our gentility. I am well satisfied myself, however.

By Mr. ARMSTRONG:—

Q.—Do you think you could get higher wages than you do if you were not organized—if you had no Union? A.—Well, I don't know. Take for instance, when I was in London thirteen years ago, when I went there the wages were five shillings a day, six pence an hour. It is now, I think, nine pence or nine and a half pence, which is an advance of something like fifty per cent. But take where I was born in Elgin, Scotland, wages have increased according to what I am told by men now with me from Elgin—wages have increased, without any societies or anything of the sort, two hundred per cent., and as that is the case I do not know whether they have been the means of keeping up wages or not. I would not like to say, because I know plenty of trades which, without them, have increased their wages fully as much or more.

Q.—In Toronto? A.—No. Take London, England; there is a great centre for Trades Unions; I belonged to them there myself. I was under the impression that they might be the means of keeping wages up, but then again, looking at other places at home where they have had no Union they have advanced journeymen's wages from ten shillings, which was the rate in my time, until now they get thirty shillings. In London we had five shillings a day, or thirty shillings a week, and perhaps now they don't get more than two pounds. There is an instance of the two places, and we have different trades the same way.

Q.—Have you any sick benefit or anything like an insurance fund in your Union? A.—I don't belong to any Carpenters' Union; I belong to an independent Union which has perhaps 250 or 300 members that do not believe in strikes. We are called the Independent Labor Union.

Q.—Do you work amicably with the men who do belong to the Union? A.—Yes. We want if possible all to come into line together and live in a brotherly way; that is our meaning.

Q.—Do you know if the Carpenters' Union has any sick benefit fund or an insurance fund of any kind? A.—I believe they have; they use to have, but of course I do not know now.

Q.—You spoke of being engaged in several strikes; how many were you engaged in? A.—Take the first one in London, England; I had fourteen months of it; that should have been enough to tame me, but I have been in every strike that has come in my way since.

Q.—Well, take Toronto? A.—I have been in three strikes, besides different agitations we have had that have not been strikes. Of late there is an agitation comes as sure as summer comes.

Q.—What has been the cause of these strikes? A.—Well I could hardly explain my own sentiments on them.

Q.—Have you struck for advances of wages? A.—Well, we struck for advances and likewise for shorter hours; both come together very often. In fact in the strikes I have been in in Toronto like many others I have hardly known what they were for.

Q.—When these strikes have taken place have they been voted by the whole of the men in session? A.—Not by the whole, because we never could get the whole or half of them together in the carpenters' trade.

Q.—Have they been the general sentiment of the carpenters? A.—Yes, I