

## REMINISCENCES.

(Written for the Ontario Workman by W. J.)

## DRIVING ON THE ERIE CANAL.

Comparatively few readers of the WORKMAN will understand the meaning of the word "drive" as used in this instance. Suffer me, kind reader, to enlighten your benighted understanding. I have a vivid recollection of what it means. Should any one feel incredulous of what I am about to narrate, let him make a trip from Buffalo to Troy or Albany as a driver on a canal boat, especially at this season of the year, and if there is not a keen remembrance of the trip left in his mind, then, indeed, his experiences as a "driver" will have been vastly different from mine.

In the fall of 1861, when the great internecine strife in the neighboring republic was first making itself felt along the northern frontier, and when the price of labor was beginning to rise with the demand for men to fill the armies of either side, the idea entered my head that the proper thing for me to do was to go to Buffalo. My knowledge of the world at that time was somewhat more circumscribed than at present, though I fancied I knew pretty much all that was worth knowing. Still I both thought me it was necessary to spread my wings for a further flight than I had hitherto attempted, seeing that I had sailed a couple of summers on Lake Ontario, on a small schooner, and the respect of my chums was to be retained. A favorable opportunity occurring, that determination was put into execution.

Now be it known that in the small parts on the northern shore of Lake Ontario, at that time a trip to Buffalo was spoken of among the embryo sailors as one would speak of a pilgrimage to the Holy City. To go to Buffalo was to achieve distinction of no mean order, and a guarantee that for a season at least you would be looked upon as one whose opinion on nautical matters must be consulted. Still, I went to Buffalo to "ship" or, in other words, to engage as a hand before the mast on any vessel that might be about to sail. Having a little in my possession, it naturally occurred to me that I should see the lions, which idea was quickly put into execution. I have no intention to inflict upon my readers an account of what I saw or did on that occasion. Suffice it to say here, that I did see the sights—Five Points included. My twenty-five dollars—the size of my pile—just lasted me about three days. But what of that? My reputation depended upon "cutting it fat," an operation which was performed to my entire satisfaction. On the fourth morning I got up and felt my pockets. Alas! like the last rose of summer, my dollars had faded and gone; and then it occurred to me that I had better be gone to. No doubt my visage presented a woe-begone appearance, but I thought me, things had not gone so far but redemption was possible. A ship! a ship! I started for the docks, I had paid them but one visit previously, sauntering down carelessly, with all the airs imaginable, as though there were at least a thousand dollars in my pocket, and looking at each vessel with a critical eye, as though I might possibly become the purchaser of one. Now, however, vastly different feelings pervaded my breast, especially when hardly a dozen masts could be seen, when a day or two before, there were hundreds. The fact was an easterly wind had been taken advantage of by the skippers, many of whom had their vessels loaded, and waiting for just what had come—a fair wind. Anyway they had gone, vanished, and there I was, without money or ship, and of course without credit. What was to be done I knew not. I went back to my boarding-house and tried to look cheerful, but am afraid it was a poor attempt, as there was a decided cooling off in the manner of the landlord that afternoon—that good publican knowing by intuition that my funds are played out. Feeling that something must be done, and that quickly, I picked up my hat in desperation and started forth, not knowing or caring whither, so that I got work. Finding myself on a canal bridge, I stood there for some minutes watching the countless multitude of boats passing up and down, my thoughts being anything but comforting; when, suddenly, out of the babel of sounds around me there came to my ears a loud, sharp "Hello!" I paid but little attention to the circumstance at first, having no idea that the owner of the voice could feel an interest in me, a stranger, lounging on a canal bridge.

"Hello, there, you young fellow on the bridge."

No mistake this time. He did want me after all. Looking round I saw a heavily loaded canal boat coming slowly down toward the bridge, its motive power being furnished by a team of horses on the tow-path, accompanied by their driver, the only person on board being the "captain" who also acted in the capacity of steersman. It was the former who had hailed me, and who, when he had succeeded in securing my attention, continued:—

"We want a driver. Will you come along?"

By this time I was down on the tow-path, and explained that driving was not exactly my forte, never having driven a horse in my life, to say nothing of taking charge of a team. This did not discourage the quondam "driver," who, as I afterwards ascertained, was part owner of the boat, his brother, the "captain" being the other partner in the firm. However, the result was that I hired

as driver at twenty dollars per month. The boat was stopped, I ran up to the boarding-house, got my dunnage on my shoulder, and with a light heart and purse made my way down to the boat, having little thought of the troubles in store for me. My things were soon on board, and myself on the tow-path. Having received instructions with regard to passing boats, etc., I was left to myself. The weather was beautiful, and meeting but few boats, I was getting along splendid. Here let me describe some of the routine of a "driver" on the Erie canal. The boats being continually on the move, require a relay of horses, one team doing duty on the tow-path, while the other is resting in the stable, in the bow of the boat. They take alternate six hours of work, or in canal talk "six hours on and six off." This plan enables the boat to go ahead night and day, week-day and Sunday, if Sunday there is along the canal, I never saw any observance of the Sabbath, either on the boats or ashore. One may say that six hours work and six hours rest are not so bad. Oh, no! the theory is a good one, but the practice is altogether different. After the driver has performed the required six hours towing, the boat is stopped, a bridge from the stable to the tow-path is thrown out, the fresh horses and driver come ashore, the old ones go aboard, and the boat goes ahead again. The stabled horses must be well rubbed down, cooled, watered and fed, the driver gets something to eat, and can then take some rest, but all this has used up at least an hour. He is called an hour before time to feed and water his horses, clean out the stable, and be ready for his "trick" on the tow-path again. So one will see: there is not much time to spare.

I mentioned that the boat was deep loaded, so deep in fact that she dragged the bottom the greater part of the way, almost every boat passing us. In a day or two I had learned to harness and unharness the horses, and began to think myself *au fait* in the business. We had got down to Lockport I think, when my first mishap occurred. A boat bound up had stopped at the landing for groceries or whiskey, or both, and the horses were standing a little way up from the edge of the canal, which was here built up like a dock, straight up and down, while the driver was up in the tavern getting his "red-eye." Instead of driving my team between the other horses and the canal, I drove between them and the tavern, and as they were standing with their backs to the water my tow-line kept forcing them backwards as we went ahead. I was going along whistling merrily, when I heard a shout, and looking round saw the team we had just passed backing up till their hind feet were almost on the edge of the dock. At the same instant the driver, a seasoned-looking individual of whose head perhaps forty summers had passed, dropped his whiskey and ran for his horses.

He said not a word until he had rescued them from their perilous position, and then gave full vent to the most terrific volley of oaths it was ever my fortune to hear, and what made me pay special attention to him was the fact that I furnished the subject matter for the profanity. No sooner was the team placed on safe ground, than he "went for me," whip in hand, and I "went for" a railroad bridge about three miles ahead. Just then the good old text rose vividly to my mind, "Flee from the wrath to come," and several other pacific injunctions; though I cannot say that the recommendation to offer the check to be smitten presented itself to me in a very favorable light at that particular moment. It was a fair, square race; Young Canada v. s. Old Yank, and the hearty cheers of the onlookers, amid cries of "Go it, young fellow," "After him, old Canastota," which latter place my pursuer hailed from. Need I say my pursuer was distanced, and had to return to his boat wind-blown and crestfallen. However, judging discretion to be the better part of valor, I waited till my boat came up, and after receiving an admonition from the "Captain," took hold of the lines once more.

A few days broke the charm of novelty, particularly as bad weather came on, and we had two days' rain. Oh, it was so nice to go ploughing along in the mud on a cold, wet night. Of course it was—I used to have very kindly thoughts of home about that time, as I wiped the mud out of my eyes and looked for the north star and Canada. The drivers are on no account allowed to get on their horses, but this rule is often broken, especially on a dark night. I remember one dark rainy night, we met a boat coming up whose driver was fast asleep on the back of one of the horses. I was out of temper with everything, and from pure malice drove up my horses, when I should have stopped them—the consequence was that my friend the driver of the other team was thrown from his berth by the stumbling of the horses against our tight tow-line. There was a splash and a spluttering, and a muttered oath or two, as he scrambled out of the water, but as I knew he dare not raise a row about it, I went ahead, happy.

Down below Syracuse, the boat—which had been catching the bottom every now and then—stuck fast, and at first I was glad, for I thought to have a rest. Vain hope! The horses had to be taken to pull astern, ahead, abreast, till after about five hours' vexation, the captain got mad and swore at me. I got mad and whipped the horses, the horses got mad and broke the tow-line; they became un-

hitched and ran away, one going up, the other going down the canal. They were recaptured after a four-mile chase, and the boat was happily got off. Below Utica there was a "jam" of boats, and I had a rest of twelve hours, but after that until we arrived in Albany it was a "hard row to hoe," and one I will keep shy of in the future. Once behind a steamer towing down the Hudson it was all serene. I enjoyed everything hugely—the beautiful scenery on North River, New York city, Brooklyn, etc. Although I have seen them since, they fail to inspire the sense of delight I experienced when as a boy they first met my gaze.

There was nothing for it, but to come back with my boat, at least to Syracuse, which I did. There I bade adieu to the Erie Canal, came to Oswego, and finished the season on Lake Ontario. My reputation with the "boys" was greatly enhanced by the trip, and though I would not like to go through the same again, still I suffered no great harm by my "Driving on the Erie Canal."

## THE LABOR CONGRESS.

The Toronto correspondent of the Boston Pilot, after alluding to the recent Labor Congress held in this city, and giving an outline of the proceedings says:

Altogether the proceedings of the Congress were characterized by broad, liberal sentiments, and if a similar course is followed in the Conventions to come to that inaugurated by this Convention, much good is to be expected from the representatives of labor coming together from all sections of the country and consulting over their proper interests.

## Communication.

## ST. CATHARINES.

(From our own Correspondent.)

## ANNUAL FAIR.

The annual fair of the county of Lincoln, was held last week, and was undoubtedly a great success. The entries in the various sections were numerous, and the attendance of visitors very large. We are glad to say that a considerable number of the prize poultry were sold to an American gentleman at quite a high figure. The want of space forbids us going into particulars, but we cannot omit stating that the new stove factory of this town exhibited quite a number of kitchen and parlor stoves which were greatly admired, and secured several prizes, the firm of McIntyre & Son, made a fine display of beautifully got up furniture, and also obtained several prizes. The band of St. Patrick's Society discoursed some fine music during the day, to the great satisfaction and pleasure of the visitors.

## THE LATE LABOR CONFERENCE IN TORONTO.

The workmen of this town are much pleased with the results of the late Labor Conference, and yet, although, we as working men have much reason to feel proud on what we have already attained. It must be obvious to every thinking mind that several subjects were omitted that well deserved a calm and thoughtful discussion; such as Co-operation, Temperance, etc. The first subject is one that, sooner or later, must be taken up by the working men. It has done immense good in the Old Country, and why should it not do so in Canada. The second is, if anything, still more important, the man that can spend, as some working men do, nearly one hundred dollars a year on drink, knowing what will ultimately be his end, is a man for whom one can have little sympathy. Let the working men be temperate, and along with union principles, all will go well.

## AMALGAMATED CARPENTERS AND JOINERS.

We have much pleasure in stating that there is every probability of a branch of the above society being established in this town during the coming winter. There are at present several intelligent union men in connection with the trade in town, who are doing all they can to set the matter afloat. We wish it every success, and fully trust that they will be represented by a delegate at the next Labor Conference.

## HAMIL'S SERENADERS.

This troupe visited St. Catharines, last week, and gave two or three entertainments in the Town Hall, to excellent houses, the hall being filled every night. The entertainment, as a whole, was of a very pleasing nature, and was thoroughly enjoyed by all who had the good fortune to be present.

## STATE OF TRADE.

Trade generally speaking, is in a flourishing condition, nearly every branch of industry having as much as they can get through, this state of matters is much needed, as wood and coal are at present very high. We would strongly advise the "Saints" to organize a coal and wood society, similar to the one in Montreal, which we believe has been a great benefit to the working classes generally.

ST. CATHARINES.

Oct. 13th, 1873.

## NECESSARY ORGANIZATION.

(To the Editor of the Ontario Workman.)

Sir.—I see by your issue of the 2nd inst., that the Trades' Unionists of the Dominion have made the first great step towards bringing together the various organizations of Labor, so that there may be in the future periodical meetings to discuss any questions that may arise, either social or political. But before we can expect much from the Canadian Labor Union, its component parts, or the various trades which compose such Union, ought to become united throughout Canada. As the different trades are situated at present, the greater part have Local Unions in the different cities that are independent of each other. I may, just for illustrations of my meaning, cite the Stonecutters. There are two or three different Unions of Stonecutters in Montreal. I see by the WORKMAN, that there are two distinct societies in Ottawa, one being Freestone and the other Limestone cutters, (I see that they have entered fully into the spirit of the Congress by sending delegates); while I myself, am a member of one in Toronto, although I do not see their Union has been represented by delegates at the Congress. Now, Mr. Editor, it must be evident to you, before any great results can arise from a Labor Congress, the individual trades ought to be united first. The first starting of Trade Unions in the Old Country, was done in a local manner, but it soon became evident that for any trade to attempt to raise themselves in one society without assistance from other places was useless, so it led to the uniting of the different towns and cities together, so that they could be governed by one executive. And now look at the result. Those Unions, which number their members by tens of thousands, have virtually become a power in the State; notwithstanding the persecution that they have had to undergo from time to time, and from such Acts of Parliament as the Criminal Law Amendment Act. Now, fellow-unionists, do you expect to do in Canada what they could not do at home? Why not gain by the experience of former years, and let each trade that is in Canada be as one body, not split up into different societies? The feudal days are past, workmen now-a-days go from one place to another, and think very little about it, but it does not benefit Unions for a workman to be continually paying fresh entrance money to be admitted a member of the society belonging to his trade. Under the present system amongst the stonecutters in the Dominion, it has a tendency to check the spread of Unionism; whereas, if they had only one organization, there would soon be some Lodges opened wherever trade would demand it; as there they would only have to apply to open a lodge, whereas, now, they have to start a new society. I hope that between this and the next meeting of the Congress, that this state of things will be altered. If unity is to be strength, let each trade be united in itself, and then they will be able to act in concert on all great matters affecting their interests, and also to do battle, if necessary, for the great movement—less hours; for the nine hour movement must long be universal before we can reasonably expect eight. Hoping the Congress will meet with future success, is the wish of

Yours, &c.,  
H. GIBBON.

Detroit, Mich., Oct. 8, 1873.

Don't fail to call and see Eaton's magnificent stock of shawls.

## New Advertisements.

## VICTORIA WOOD YARD

VICTORIA ST., NEAR RICHMOND.

MESSRS. J. & A. MCINTYRE still continue to supply the public with all kinds of Coal and Wood, at the lowest possible rates.

All sizes Hard Coal nicely screened. All kinds of Soft Coal, in any quantity.  
Narrow Gauge Wood by the carload. Wood cut and split to order, and promptly delivered by  
J. & A. MCINTYRE,  
23 and 25 Victoria Street.  
74 hr

## NOTICE TO TAILORS.

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN, that the Operative Tailors of the city of Toronto are now on Strike, and members of the trade are requested to govern themselves accordingly.

All communications in reference to the above to be addressed to Mr. MAIR, Secretary, No. 8 Bond Street, Toronto, Sept. 29, 1873. 77-12



## RED RIVER ROUTE.

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN, that the Department of Public Works will cause to forward Passengers and Freight over this Route from and after the 10th October next.

By order,

F. BRAUN,

Department Public Works,  
Ottawa, 14th September, 1873. 77-6

## JAMES BANKS,

AUCTIONEER AND APPRAISER.

45 Jarvis, Corner of King Street East.

Mechanics can find useful Household Furniture of every description at the above salerooms, cheaper than any other house. Cooking and Parlor Stoves in great variety.

## SALEROMS:

45 and 46 Jarvis, Corner of King St. East

Furniture Bought, Sold, or Exchanged.

## EATON'S

## NEW

## SHAWLS.

600 Shawls to choose from, pretty, new, cheap.

## COME AND SEE THEM TO-DAY.

CORNER YONGE &amp; QUEEN STREETS,

## City Directory.

Our readers will find it to their advantage to patronize the following firms.

## Auctioneers.

JAMES BANKS, AUCTIONEER, AND APPRAISER. Salerooms, 45 Jarvis Street, corner of King Street East. Second-hand Furniture bought and sold. 60-6h

## Barristers, &amp;c.

REEVE & PLATT, BARRISTERS, AT-LAW. TORONTO, Solicitors, &c. Office—18 King St. East, Toronto. J. McPHERSON REVE, SAMUEL PLATT. 42-hr

LAUDER & PROCTOR, BARRISTERS, AT-LAW. Solicitors in Chancery, &c. Office—Masonic Hall, 20 Toronto Street. 33-hr

HARRY E. CASTON, ATTORNEY-AT-LAW, Solicitor in Chancery, Conveyancer, Notary Public, &c. Office—48 Adelaide Street, opposite the Court House, Toronto. 34-hr

HENRY O'BRIEN, BARRISTER, Attorney and Solicitor, &c., Notary Public, &c. Office—68 Church Street. 34-hr

## Dentists.

M. EDWARD SNIDER, SURGEON DENTIST, Office and Residence—84 Bay Street, a few doors below King Street, Toronto. 4-hr

G. W. HALE, DENTIST, No. 6 TEMPERANCE STREET, first house off Yonge Street, north side. 34-hr

DR. J. BRANSTON WILMOTT, DENTIST, Graduate of the Philadelphia Dental College. Office—Corner of King and Church streets, Toronto. 27-hr

F. G. CALLENDER, DENTIST, Office—Corner of King and Jordan streets, Toronto. 27-hr

W. C. ADAMS, DENTIST, 95 KING STREET East, Toronto, has given attention to his profession in all its parts. 28-hr

J. A. TROUTMAN, D.D.S., DENTIST, Office and Residence—127 Church Street, Toronto, opposite Metropolitan Church. Makes the preservation of the natural teeth a specialty. 26-hr

R. G. TROTTER, DENTIST, 53 King Street East, Toronto, opposite Toronto Street, Residence—172 Jarvis Street. 28-hr

## Groceries.

CHARLES HUNTER, DEALER IN GROCERIES AND PROVISIONS, WINES AND LIQUORS, 68 Queen Street West, corner Terauley Street, Toronto, Ont. 58-hr

## Physicians.

N. AGNEW, M.D., (SUCCESSOR) to his brother, the late Dr. Agnew, corner of Bay and Richmond Streets, Toronto. 28-hr

## Shoe Dealers.

S. McCABE, FASHIONABLE AND Cheap Boot and Shoe Emporium, 59 Queen Street West, sign of "THE BIG BLUE BOOT." 54-hr

R. MERRYFIELD, BOOT AND SHOE MAKER, 190 Yonge Street. A large and well-assorted stock always on hand. 50-hr

P. MCGINNIS, 129 YORK STREET.—All who wish to have good, neat, and comfortable BOOTS and SHOES, call at the WORKMAN'S SHOE DEPOT. 77-hr

## Tinware, &amp;c.

J. & T. IREDALE, MANUFACTURERS of Tin, Sheet Iron and Copperware, dealers in Baths, Water Coolers, Refrigerators, &c. No. 57 Queen Street West, first door West of Bay Street, Toronto, Ont. 54-hr

## STEAM DYE WORKS

Clothes Cleaning Establishment, 363 AND 363 1/2 YONGE ST., TORONTO, (Between Gould and Gerrard Sts.)

THOMAS SQUIRE, Proprietor.

Kid Gloves Cleaned with superiority and despatch. Gentlemen's Clothes Cleaned, Dyed, and Repaired on the shortest possible notice. 50-hr

## G. ELLIS, WHOLESALE

dealer in HAIR and JUTE SWITCHES, Curls, Chignons, and Nets. 77-hr

The imitation goods are very fine, as cannot be detected from real hair. I have collected a large assortment of Hair Nets. All orders left at King street must be called for at 179 Yonge street, four doors above Queen street, east side. 42-hr