## THE ECHO, MONTREAL.

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DAVID TAYLOR, . . . MANAGER.

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MONTREAL, December 6, 1800.

THE ECHO is mailed to subscribers at a distance every Friday evening, and delivered in the city early on Saturday. Parties not receiving their paper regularly should communicate with the office.

#### THE WATER TAX.

The judgment rendered in the Superior Court on Monday last by Mr. Justice Wurtele in the cases of Lafontaine and Lepine are disappointing to many who believed in the just tice and equity of the plea submitted by the counsel for the petitioners. In the case of Lafontaine the first contention was that a differential rate was imposed which bore unjustly on the very poor class of our citizens, and, according to the judgment, the City Council are acting within their power in thus doing. The second and third pleas dealt with the discount and cutting off the water within thirty days after the tax became due. This was deemed by the petitioner as unduly favoring the wealthier classes and acting oppressively towards the poor. The fourth and principal plea of the petitioner, that the City Council were acting illegally in making a profit out of the water supply, was also thrown out. In the judgment we read that: "The act under the authority of which ports into Canada within recent years, the tariff of rates now complained of was established contains no limitation either as to the amount of the rates or as to the total to be levied." Under this reading of the act the legitimate conclusion to be arrived at is that the City Council has full power to levy all the money it requires, for , whatever purpose, under the name of water tax This will be surprising news to the general body of taxpayers, and if the learned judge is right in his reading of the act, steps should at once be taken to have it repealed and the rates placed on a more equitable basis. We should think it would be patent to ordinary minds that there is a gross injustice in compelling a man to use a certain commodity and charging whatever price you like for it under the penalty of having his household chattels distrained in case of non-payment. Although the Trades Council have received a repulse in this instance they are by no means disheartened. and the case will be carried-to a higher court, when they hope to have the judgment reversed. To carry out the legal programme funds are necessary, and the Council trust that their appeal now in circulation will be liberally responded to by the public, in whose interest the proceedings in the courts are being pushed.

the City Hall), to the Lepine and Lafontaine cases. The Council claim that the Corporation has no legal right to his failure to pay the water tax.

# OUEBEC SHIP LABORERS.

Such an outrageous proposition that recently made by certain, mer chants of Quebec to the Local Government has scarcely ever been heard of in what presumably is a free country, and makes us pause and ask ourselves the question whether the years have receded and we are not serfs under the bond of some despotic ruler. The proposition referred to is contained in a petition to deprive the Quebec Ship Laborors' Benevolent Society of their charter, in short to prevent those engaged in this industry

from uniting for mutual support and protection, to deprive them of the means of assisting a distressed fellowworkman and to enable the shippers to compel men to work for starvation wages. The shippers know that with the disruption of the society they could easily deal with the men single handed. but united as they are under the protection of the law they can do nothing. Why are they so desperately anxious that one particular class of men, working at a precarious and harassing business, and whose occupation only lasts a short season of the year, should be compelled, under threat of absolute starvation or forced emigration, to work cheaply! The petition assigns as a reason that the society has driven commerce from the port. If this is true, would not the laboring man be the first to suffer and be the first himself to see it? But we a e sausfied that there are other and more importint fac ors than this bugaboo of the Ship Laborers' Benevolent Society engaged in depriving Quebec of its one time supremity as a shipping port. With the decline of the carrying trade across the Atlantic by sailing vessels and the multiplying of steamships and the improvement of the river passage between Quebec and Montreal, it is only natural that the latter class of vessels should seek the furthest limit of navigation and a more central distributing point. This is one reason

ter, until he allies himself with a society which is not recognized by any labor body in Canada or the United deprive a man of his vote because of States, and which was originated by the outcasts from the ranks of Unionism. It is well that workingmen everywhere should know this, that the Herald is opposed to Union labor, and in order to gain its ends, went to considerable expense in importing from the States and elsewhere unfair workmen at a time when skilled workmen were plentiful in this city. How far its own conduct is reconcilable with its sympathetic head line "Is this Russia or Canada ?" the public will be able to judge from knowing these facts.

### NOTES OF THE WEEK.

Apropos of the correspondence on Woman in the Workshop," which has been running in our columns for the past two or three weeks, we find the New Zealand Herall lifting up its voice in lamentation on the subject of female labor, from which it would appear that this go-ahead colony looks with some concern upon the raid of women int, the domain of men. It 88.V8 :

In several businesses women are supplanting men; that is, young women are supplanting young men. I hold that for a young woman to work in an unwholesome workroom at a tedious and fatiguing occu. pation, is utterly to spoil her for the duties of a wife and a mother. Then, if she takes the place of a young man, what is the result? That young man is compelled to leave the conntry, or walk about the streets idle. Nowadays, if a young man wants to go to the theatre, he has to get a girl, who is doing less than a man's work at much less than a man's wages, to pay for his ticket. And these employments are taking women out of their sphere. What is to become of posterity if women are to spend the years when they should be strengthen ing their frames by household work, which is congenial to their systems, in hurtful labor? Why, posterity would not be worth troubling about if it depended upon them. Besides, by taking up men's occupations, young women are driving out of the colony the young men who ought to be their hus bands. They are condemning themselves by their own act to the miserable fate of spinsterhood.

Just so. If woman is going take the place of man and drive him out of the country by taking his job from him then the population will dwindle away till nothing remains but the grim why Quebec has fallen behind. Then spectacle of a gaunt old maid, with a again there is the large decline of imshrill voice and a cat, laboring in a tough and ancient fashion for four or woman has taken it at half the wages, it is evitent he can't marry till the girl has saved enough to keep him, and with her humole income and the responsibility resting on her shoulders of keeping her aged mother, the probabilities are that she will be a bony harridan of 53 before that joyous result is arrived at, and then the man will rise up and state that he doesn't care to waste his bright affections on a venerable relic with her head and both feet in the grave, and the romance of love's glittering dream will fall to pieces. Consequently, where a happy household ought to be, there will be only a sour and wheezy old spinster swilling tea by a lonely hearth, while a hoary paralytic from the workhouse will call round occasionally in a perambulator to tell ner what might have been had she not euchred him out of his situation and left him in the cold when he was in the prime of his youth and beauty.

-namely, at 27 instead of 55. During periods of strike or distress the death rate ac tually fell below what was normal, although the workpeople were exposed to semi-starvation ; and it was the majority who at the present time were being slave driven and injured for the benefit of a comparative few. If that was so the Legislature was bound to interfere. In every industry in the country the power of each workman to produce wealth had been multiplied a hundredfold in the last 50 years. Why was it that the workers alone should reap no benefits from the change?

It is a pity that the world cannot muster a congress of its hoary veterans in order to verify this statement. The House of Lords could send along a noble contingent of octogenarian peers, and successfully explain the absence of many more who married shady actresses in their old age and were prematurely bored to death in conse. quence. Such a gathering would prove conclusively that a man who has no work to perform can successfully bear up against nearly ninety years of high living, and Chauncey M. Depew could attend to testify that politics are healthier, more fattening and a better paying occupation than that of switchman or car coupler; and Jay Gould could be there too to corroborate his statements. As for the men of toil, the bulk of them are mostly pretty old at 45, and rneumatic and venerable at 50, while at 60 they are only a hazy memory and a tombstone, for which reasons they would probably be unable to attend.

A recent strike on the Wear (Eng.) against shipping with non-union men had no effect in delaying the vessel, and the unions affected held a private conference and formed an offensive and defensive alliance. This step, it is believed, must speedily lead to a trial of strength with the Shipping Federation, as the dockers, sailors, firemen and watermen have all resolved to join issue at command. The Newcastle on-Tyne branch of the Federation claim to have upon their books the names of over three hundred "free labor" seamen.

An explanation is given of the para graph stating that judgment for a large sum had been obtained in the American courts against the Duchess of Mariborough. Her Grace is possessed of a life interest in property realising at least £40,000 a year in America, but the American courts do not allow life

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22

CENTRAL

DINNER

CHAMBER "

or to exchange.

YARDS:

TEA

Another case has been entered in court, that of St. Pierre vs. the city. which, if successful; will secure to every householder his vote whether he has paid the water tax or not. The case has no similarity whatever (as

and the consequent loss to the shipping five dollars per week. For if the male trade both going and coming, and in citizen can't get a situation because a this respect Montreal has suffered in proportion equally with her sister city. Then how in the name of all that is reasonable can the blame be laid at the doors of the Benevolent Society of Ship Laborers? We would advise the merchants to look around for new avenues of commercial enterprise instead of trying to destroy a society which seeks alone the welfare of its own members, and by so doing they would help to re-establish the prosperity of their city. We cannot for a moment believe that the Législature will listen to the proposition, as to accede to such a request would be initiating a class legistation dangerous to the peace and well-being of the country, and subversive of the liberty of the subject. In this connection we might notice the transparent and shamefaced hypocrisy of the Herald, of this city. In its heading to its Quebec correspondence relating the presentation of the petition, in order to gain the sympathy of workingmen who do not know its

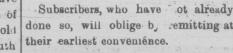
own hostile attitude towards Union labor, it pertinently asks ' Is this Russia or Canada ?" For months past have endeavored, by every means in their power to disrupt the Typographical Union of this city, and continue to hold the terrors of, the law over the heads of some of its members who

The English Socialist, Mr. Hyndman, throws a side light on the advantages of labor which affords ground the proprietors of the Montreal Herald for reflection to intelligent readers. He 88.78 :

No industry which was carried on under conditions which meant degradation to those who produced that industry was profitable. At the present moment health was being sapped in every way and in every dared to stand upon their rights. Not trade. Physiologists said that eight hours' only this, but it is an open secret hard work a day was too much. A horse among the printing fraternity here that could not be worked more than three or Union compositor can work on the four hours a day. The effect of overwork

interests to be charged. A large sum was therefore raised by the Duchess in this country for expenditure on Blen heim and for the purpose of a London mansion. She insured her life heavily, and to complete the lender's security allowed judgment to be taken in the United States for the amount advanced. Hence the recent gossip concerning her grace's financial position. \* \* \*

Lady doctors are rapidly increasing in England. Quite recently, of nine ladies who went in for the London de gree of M. B. all of them passed the examinations. As up to this time there were only nine women in all possessed of this degree this last result doubles the number at a stroke and shows how much more popular, the study of medicine is becoming.



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IMPERI

P. J. DALTON, Recording Secretary.

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