

OUR BOARDING HOUSE

Reflections on Current Events by the Boarders.

"There is quite a difference in the pay and treatment of jurymen now and what it used to be the last time that I was on a jury," said Sinnett. "Formerly we used to get fifty cents a day, and if ever we were locked up for the night it used to be a night of misery; the beds and blankets of them days looked as though they had done service on some old packet ship and couldn't be trusted; the grub was bad and badly served, and to be 'locked up for a night' was something to be dreaded. Now, however, the thing is different; instead of fifty cents you get a dollar; you have good grub, good quarters and obliging attendants, and if you can't agree and are locked up for the night you sleep between sheets as clean as any in Montreal. The whole thing is a great improvement fully appreciated by those who find themselves on a petit jury."

"I am glad to hear you say so," said Brown. "Since I am living in this ranche, if I asked you once, I asked you a dozen times to join some labor organization or other and to take a man's part in the affairs of men, but all to no purpose. They were no good, and any money paid into them was simply so much money thrown away, yet if your grub, your pay and your accommodation as a jurymen is better to-day than it used to be, you can thank these self-same labor organizations, and no one else for it. If there was a spark of honest manhood in you, you would refuse to reap where others have sown; you would refuse to benefit by the exertions of men whom you have regarded as fools and whom you have abused and vilified whenever and wherever you got a chance. As you have never yet contributed a single cent towards the maintenance and support of any labor organization, and as this particular reform by which you have benefited so much was obtained wholly and solely by the united effort of organized labor, the least that you can do under the circumstances is to either join an organization now and help them all you can, or else pay over the extra fifty cents a day which you received as jurymen into the treasury of the Trades and Labor Council or else to the Widow Flynn Fund, in either of which cases the money will be spent in securing reforms which will benefit other people as much and more than this reform has benefited you. You have never been guilty of a generous action and I don't appeal to your generosity; all that I ask on behalf of organized labor at your hands is evenhanded justice, and no more."

"And that's something that you won't get from Sinnett or others like him," said Phil. "He belongs to a class of workmen who travel as 'dead heads' throughout this world. They pay no dues and devote none of their time or thought to advance the interests of labor; the man who used a wart on the back as a collar button was a mean cuss, but he was not near as mean as the feller who is contented to share the benefits accruing to workmen through the efforts of organized labor without joining a labor organization himself."

"And this refers," said Brown, "not merely to Sinnett and the reform in our jury system, but it refers to every man in this city who now has a vote in municipal elections without having to pay Statute Labor Tax money; it refers to every man who finds his water rate reduced; it refers to every man throughout this Province who enjoys the benefits of a free night school; it refers to every man who has benefited by the introduction of factory acts, and very few who work for wages have not benefited by them; it refers to every man finding himself in the hands of greedy and unfeeling creditors still retaining sufficient household effects to maintain at least a semblance of a

home; it refers to every wage-worker who finds seventy-five per cent. of his wages absolutely free from seizure; and finally, it refers to every man of whatever trade or calling whose wages have not only been prevented from decreasing through fear of organized labor, but who has found his pay increasing through the direct or indirect influence of Unionism. I claim for organized labor the credit, the whole credit, of securing these material benefits to those who work for wages, and as a workingman and Unionist call upon those of my fellows who do not belong to any labor organization to place themselves right with their fellow-men and join me at once."

BILL BLADES.

POVERTY THE DESTRUCTION OF THE POOR.

An interesting writer for the New York Times has been visiting in the regions of the working poor in New York City trying to learn what it costs them to live. Entering a typical store in Hester street, he gave the woman who kept it a dollar, to answer his questions, and from her he learned that such stores do a strictly cash business, that competition is at times and by spurts very keen, and that the customers pay more for what they buy than does the well-to-do householder.

He discovered that these people pay more for their common kindling wood than the millionaire does for the hard hickory logs that he sits and watches spurring on his open hearth, and that they pay as much again for their coal as does that same millionaire.

The wife of a workman would come with only 30 or 40 cents with which to purchase her supplies for the day. With that amount she would buy meat, vegetables, flour or bread, a hod of coal and a bundle of wood. It was 2 and 3 cents' worth of this and 5 cents' worth of that. Stuff usually sold by the pound was sold by the ounce, and coal and wood, instead of being bought by the ton and by the wagon load were bought here by the basket and the bundle. The prices, therefore had to be high, for the tenement house stores, selling in such small quantities, had to purchase in small quantities. Their wholesale price, owing to this fact, was almost as high as the usual retail price. In fact, they were really middlemen between the regular retailers and the people of the tenement houses whose small means did not enable them to purchase the quantities usually sold by the retailers. They did not want a pound of butter, for they had no ice to keep it on. They do not want to buy a twenty-five pound bag of flour, for they want something else besides bread to eat, and if they bought flour in that way it would take all the available funds.

How did prices run? Well, customers paid 5 cents a pound for flour. So that by the time the patrons of these tenement house stores had purchased 200 pounds they would have invested \$10 for what would have cost the millionaire \$5 at his grocery store. For a quarter of a pound of butter they paid 8 to 10 cents, or 32 to 40 cents a pound for stuff that can be purchased at any first-class store for from 25 to 30 cents a pound, and very much less by the tub. They paid 1 cent an ounce for washing soda. First-class grocers are glad to deliver it at your door for 3 cents a pound. For a cup of sugar, holding less than one-half a pound, they pay 3 cents. In a first-class store they could buy a pound for 4 cents. They paid 5 cents for half a bar of seven-cent soap, and at the rate of 40 cents a pound for a cheap tea, and 30 cents a pound for a very inferior coffee.

But the coal and wood end of the business presented an even more striking illustration of the extravagance of the poor. Nearly everybody living in the tenement houses bought their coal and wood each day. If they had money to buy coal and wood in the quantities it is ordinarily purchased, they would

not know what to do with it. They certainly could not keep it in the stuffy little rooms where they live. There is usually a cellar in each tenement house with a little place partitioned off for each family, but if they put coal and wood there it would not stay long.

Therefore these tenement house storekeepers had established the coal and wood bins for the poor. They drew their daily supplies from them, and they paid well for doing it. The storekeepers usually only kept two or three tons of coal on hand at a time. It was a light, bulky coal, yielding 100 baskets or pailsful to the ton. It cost the tenement house storekeepers \$5 a ton delivered. They sold it at 14 cents a pail, or \$14 a ton. What a wail would go up from the rich and well-to-do people of New York if they were called upon to pay any such price as that for coal.

For wood people, in the tenement houses paid 2 cents for a little bundle of soft pine, about a dozen sticks four inches long, and averaging about an inch and a half in thickness. It is the poorest kind of fuel, and in fact is fit for nothing but kindling. The man who buys his wood by the wagon-load or the cord would get more fire out of a half cent's worth of his supply than the people of the tenement houses get out of one of these two cent bundles.

About one hundred men, representing labor organizations in various parts of the State, met in Philadelphia lately and adopted resolutions denunciatory of General Master Workman Powderly, Meers, Wright and Butler, of the Knights of Labor, and the Republican leaders in the State, because of an alleged corrupt bargain between the leaders of the Knights of Labor and the Republican party. Mr. Powderly's course in accepting a Republican nomination for membership in the coming State Constitutional convention has been much criticised, and this expression seems to be directed against his conduct.

DISAPPEARED.

Messrs. O. E. Murphy and Robert McGreevy Missing.

QUEBEC, Oct. 23.—There was great excitement in Lower Town this morning when it became known that the defendants McGreevy and Murphy had failed to put in an appearance at the Criminal Court, and up to the hour of adjournment at one o'clock nothing had been heard of them. The general impression is that they went by the Quebec Central and Grand Trunk trains which left Levis last night. At the last term of the Criminal Court McGreevy's bail was not renewed, but Murphy's bondsman is J. I. Tarte, and the amount of bail is only four hundred dollars.

When Judge Bosse took his seat this morning in the Criminal Court the names of Robert H. McGreevy and Owen E. Murphy, the defendants in the conspiracy case, were called out by the crier. When they did not answer the Sheriff was instructed to bring them before the court. After a short time the Sheriff returned and declared to the court that they could not be found. Judge Bosse then declared their bonds forfeited and Mr. Lemieux, M. P. P., then addressed jury for the defendant, McGreevy.

MONTREAL NEWS.

Pioneer Temple of Honor has changed its night of meeting to Tuesday in each week in their new hall, 323 Notre Dame street.

Counterfeit fifty cent pieces are in circulation in the city and a number of storekeepers have already been taken in by them. The counterfeit is said to be a very good one, bearing the date of 1876, and it gives a good ring.

The members of D. A. 18, K. of L., will discuss the question of compulsory voting on Sunday afternoon at 3.30 in their hall, 21 Chaboulez street. The public are cordially invited to attend and take part in the discussion.

Mr. H. A. Madley, printer, of this city, has been appointed District Deputy High Chief Ranger of the Canadian Order of Forersters in and for the District of Montreal. The appointment is one which will give general satisfaction to the members, and we are sure that under Mr. Madley's genial supervision the Order will ere long show increased vitality and membership.

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