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LABOR ADVOCATE

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TORONTO, CANADA, JANUARY 23, 1891.

SUNDAY STREET CARS.

THE new Council have decided by a large majority to submit the question of Sunday street cars to the popular vote. Fortunately there is not much chance of the proposal being carried. A great many who are opposed to Sunday cars have favored the referendum on principle and as a rebuke to the unnecessarily arrogant and overbearing spirit displayed by some of the aldermen. This has given the movement a deceptive show of strength which will quickly vanish as soon as the question is stripped of these extraneous issues.

The proposal to run the street cars on Sunday was not made in good faith or by men who care a straw about the convenience or welfare of the working people. It was sprung upon the public, at the instigation doubtless of the monopolists now or prospectively interested in the street railway, with the object of distracting attention from the vastly more important issue of whether the road shall be retained and managed by the city or sold to a corporation. The design was a cunning one and has had a large measure of success. The workingmen have many of them been fooled by the monopolists and their hired organs, into a profitless agitation for Sunday cars, forgetful alike of the danger to the rights of the street railway employees involved by the proposal and the paramount, essential object to which all their energies should have been devoted, permanent civic control of the line. However it is not the first time that honest and well meaning, but short-sighted wage-earners have unwittingly been made the dupes and tools of the moneyed interests and we suppose it won't be the last.

The proposal to run the street cars on Sunday in its present shape must be voted down. It is a dangerous and insidious attempt to deprive the worker of his day of rest. As we have repeatedly pointed out should such a measure pass there is no sort of guarantee that the road will not immediately afterwards be let to Frank Smith or some other equally brutal and merciless capitalist without conditions as to hours or wages. At present the men have at least the safeguard of the law against Sunday work. To destroy this while leaving them unprotected against the rapacity of the corporation would be an iniquitous act on the part of any one identified with the cause of labor.

We have no sort of sympathy with the abbatarian objections raised to Sunday cars or to the opening of libraries or the running of steamers on Sunday. But what we do say is that the majority have no right for their comfort or pleasure or convenience to demand that the minority shall give up the one day's rest in every week they now enjoy. If the people want Sunday cars, Labor Reformers at least are bound to insist that they shall at the outset make it absolutely certain that a day's rest in every week shall be legally secured to all whose hours of labor would be affected by the change. This has not been done in the present case and the people who are bellowing for Sunday cars do not show the least disposition to do it. This being the case it is the imperative duty of every consistent Labor Reformer to vote down Sunday cars while present conditions continue.

HE WON'T WORSHIP VICTORIA.

REV. C. O. JOHNSTONE, a Napanee minister, recently scandalized his congregation by repeating from his pulpit the well-known fact that Queen Victoria is decidedly stingy and given to hoarding up without any conceivable purpose immense sums of money with which she might, if generously inclined, accomplish much good.

This somewhat commonplace assertion—which nobody in England would, for a moment dream of disputing—has brought a hornet's nest about the reverend gentleman who is accused of rank disloyalty. By this time Mr. Johnstone probably realizes how dangerous a thing it is for a preacher to undertake to tell the truth in his discourses. When a minister once begins to expose social shams and to defy conventional opinions there is no telling where he will bring up. Either Mr. Johnstone will talk himself outside of his pulpit and his church inside of a few months, or else he will allow himself to be whipped back into the traces—like a certain distinguished divine of this city, who once made a sensation by his doubts as to hell—and never dare to utter his independent convictions again. We hope Mr. Johnstone will have the manliness to stick to his original position rather than pander by a palpable lie to the fools who insist on investing Victoria with enough celestial attributes to fit out half a dozen ordinary saints, and vilify everybody who is not ready to admit that this somewhat obese and pragmatical old lady is the embodiment of physical, mental and intellectual perfection.

AN ELECTION FORECAST.

RUMORS of a speedy dissolution of the Dominion Parliament have lately been in circulation. In any event the election cannot be very long delayed and both parties will soon be making active preparations for the contest. The LABOR ADVOCATE does not care two straws as to the result, regarding both parties as utterly corrupt and bent only on the retention or acquirement of power. If the Tories appear more corrupt than the Grits it is only because their opportunities for successful rascality have been greater. Both are the enemies of Labor Reform while hypocritically professing to be its friends.

This being the case the triumph or defeat of either of the existing parties is to us a matter of complete indifference excepting from a purely spectacular standpoint. But an onlooker unidentified with either faction can perhaps see some phases of the conflict more clearly than combatants whose judgments are clouded by party prejudice. It must by this time appear tolerably clear to any unbiased observer judging from present indications, that if the struggle is fought to a finish on the present lines the Grits are going to be soundly beaten. The policy of unrestricted reciprocity from which such great things were expected does not seem to catch on. The response of the farmers to a proposal which was considered specially likely to appeal to the acquisitive instincts of the hardest worked and closest living class of men in the country, has not been anything like as enthusiastic as was their reception of the N. P. with its promise of better times and higher prices. Why this should be it is difficult to say. Perhaps the advocates of reciprocity are less adept in presenting rose-colored visions of the future than the protectionist orators—or perhaps the failure of these promised blessings to materialize has made the honest ruralist sceptical of all such appeals to the imagination. The tradition of loyalty, though not nearly as strong as generally supposed still counts for something, especially in out-of-the-way nooks and corners where modern ideas penetrate but slowly. Whatever the reason, the farmers who undoubtedly would greatly benefit by reciprocity, have not grasped at the idea with the avidity that was expected. If things go as they are going at present, the vote will be cast on the strict party lines, except in localities where the judicious promise of a railway bonus or some other form of wholesale bribery tells to the advantage of the Government, with the result that Sir John will go back to power with as large a majority as ever. The Grits will of course shout "corruption" as they have been doing all along—but to no effect. Everyone by this time knows that the Dominion Government is corrupt—and nobody particularly cares. The fact is that public sentiment is corrupt, and the average elector sees nothing out of the way in government by bribery. In appealing to the moral consciousness of the voters on the subject the Grits are appealing to a principle which, if it exists at all, is completely subordinated to the stronger feeling of party prejudice.

It was a mistake for the Grits to take up unrestricted reciprocity for several reasons. In the first place it completely upsets the line of argument they have been using against Protection ever since the controversy began. They have contended that a protective tariff was bad and injurious in itself to the country imposing it. Now, the principle involved in reciprocity is that before Canada throws down her tariff wall—and according to orthodox Liberal teaching removes a burden from the shoulders of her people there by—we must make absolutely sure that the Americans will do the same. Is not this giving away the whole case as against Protection? If, as the *Globe* has contended in thousands of articles, a protective tariff is sheer robbery of the consumer, how utterly illogical it is to make its abolition depend upon the action of any other government. Again, on the reciprocity principle how can the Grits justify the maintenance of the duty on British goods? England allows our exports to enter her ports free. Yet because she has not put a tax on Canadian products we are to continue to tax her goods—while the United States having closed her ports against us is to have free access to our markets as the reward for having legislated in a spirit of hostility towards us.

The trouble with the Grits is that their leaders are cowards and trimmers. The question they always ask themselves is not "how large and sweeping a reform can we carry?" but "how small a reform will satisfy the people?" They cast wildly about for a policy, and when they get hold of an idea which in the hands of a clear-headed and courageous leader might carry the country, they become afraid of their own shadows, and at the first breath of opposition begin to minimize and whittle it down and assure the public that it won't really make so very much difference after all.

The reciprocity notion is a characteristic Grit attempt at a compromise between Free Trade and Protection. It is just disturbing and disquieting enough to excite hostility, without being sufficient of a radical upheaval to justify a crusade or create strong feeling in its favor. And therefore it will fail.

A party in the position of the Grits who, as things stand, have nothing to lose can afford to be bold even to audacity. If they lose they are no worse off—and they certainly cannot win by a repetition of the trimming, vacillating course they have pursued so long. If they must make an issue on the everlasting tariff question, why do they not take their stand on the platform of absolute, unconditional, immediate Free Trade with all the world and direct taxation? That would at least be a bold, clear-cut and consistent line of policy, something definite and tangible to fight for, and in harmony with the principles they profess. If they don't mean this and nothing less they ought to quit using Free Trade arguments and prating about the injustice and robbery of a tariff system they are not willing to abolish.

THE city gas works of Berlin brought $1,750,000 clear profit into the treasury during the last financial year, despite the unusually heavy expenditures for new gas houses and conductors.

THE ROCHESTER SHOE MAKERS' LOCK OUT.

THE statement which has been telegraphed all over the country, that the lock out of the Rochester shoe makers is at an end is wholly unfounded—set afloat no doubt with the intention of prejudicing the cause of the men. The latest information from Rochester is to the effect that the operatives are as firm as ever in their adherence to union principles. The cause of the difficulty is the adoption by nineteen out of the forty-five shoe manufacturing firms, of shop rules of a most obnoxious and arbitrary character. The regulation to which the principal exception is taken provides that employers and employees must not discriminate for or against any individual on the ground that he is or is not a member of a union, "except that the employer reserves the right to refuse employment to any member of the Boot and Shoe Workers' International Union"—this being the organization to which the locked out employees belong. The Federation of Labor has come liberally to the aid of the operatives, and there is no disposition on their part to surrender. To go back under such regulations as those which the employers are trying to enforce would be an abject surrender of their rights as citizens. While the shoe operatives of Rochester maintain their present attitude, we hope they will receive the liberal support of Canadian labor organizations. The crushing out of Unionism in the Rochester shoe factories would certainly react upon the interests of the trade here, and inspire employers everywhere with the idea of following up their advantage.

THE way in which working women have been overlooked in the appointment of a board of "lady managers" in connection with the Chicago "World's Fair" is vigorously shown up by Mrs. Charlotte Smith, of the Washington *Working Woman*. As president of the Woman's National Industrial League of America, which was principally instrumental in getting women recognized in the management of the Fair, Mrs. Smith, "in the name of five million industrial women of the United States," protests against the class of appointments made. She states that the representative working women of the country have been entirely ignored in favor of those having social position or political influence. Mrs. Smith has a right to be indignant but she need not be surprised. Such has always been the lot of labor where capitalism is in the ascendancy.

PRINCIPAL GRANT said, in his lecture against the Single Tax last Saturday: "Mr. George had advocated the Canadian system of ballot, but called it the Australian ballot, and so had avoided wounding American prejudice." Was the Principal, knowingly, indulging a piece of claptrap to tickle the national self conceit of his auditors, or is he so ignorant as not to know that the reason why the secret ballot is called—everywhere outside of Canada—the Australian ballot is because it was adopted in Australia years before it was in operation elsewhere? Not until it had been imported into England did the Canadian Government venture to follow timidly at a distance the example of the Mother Country. Canadian politicians are too cowardly and unprogressive to try any bold experiments in legislation as they do at the Antipodes.

WHAT has THE LABOR ADVOCATE to say in favor of the public libraries being open to the working classes on Sundays, seeing that it is impossible for a working man to frequent the public libraries during the week days? It may be said that the proper place for a working man on Sunday is at church, or at home with his family. But all working men are not married, and there is no church on Sunday afternoons.—*Hamilton Herald.*

THE LABOR ADVOCATE is decidedly in favor of the opening of public libraries, museums and picture galleries on Sundays. These institutions are not in the hands of money making monopolists, so that it is not at all a parallel case to the running of street cars. Were the libraries, etc., thrown open, it would have a beneficial effect, morally and intellectually, upon a large class who now spend their Sundays aimlessly lounging about the street corners for want of some more attractive resort than a cheap boarding house.

THE profundity of Principal Grant's studies on the land question may be estimated by the argument put forth in his last Saturday's lecture, to the effect that the result of the Single Tax would be to huddle the masses into tenements to a greater degree than at present. The erudite Principal did not undertake to explain why a tax paid to the State or city for the use of land should weigh so much more heavily on the occupant than a tax of similar amount paid to individual landlords. Nobody proposes that the community shall charge the occupant more than the yearly value of the land, less improvements. How then could the Single Tax encourage tenement building? The absurdity of Principal Grant's attempt at reasoning on the question indicates either a very superficial acquaintance with the subject, or a labored endeavor to argue against his own convictions in order to retain the confidence of the conservative element.

MR. CHARLES WATTS, the Secularist lecturer, is one of the last men we should think of calling a fool, but, nevertheless, he sometimes talks like one. In speaking of the question of Sunday street cars last Sunday evening, Mr. Watts made what every Labor Reformer in Toronto knows to be an absurd and untrue statement in saying that the workingmen were themselves powerful enough to see that their rights were not trampled on in the matter of obtaining one day's rest in seven. This is utter nonsense, in view of the fact that, when the Street Railway employees claimed the right to organize a few years ago and were unanimously supported by the organized wage-earners of the city, they sustained a crushing defeat. The trouble with Mr. Watts is that, as a Secularist, he cares a great deal more about scoring a point against his clerical antagonists than he does about the labor question. Such men, whether they are on the theological or anti theological side, are unsafe guides on social matters, in which their own hobby is involved.

THE advocates of the Single Tax have a right to congratulate themselves on the marked progress made by their cause in the city as evidenced by the splendid reception given to Father Huntington at the Auditorium on Tuesday night. The outbursts of applause which greeted the lecturer and the close attention with which he was heard for two hours and a half sufficiently attest the hold which the movement has obtained. The cold wave which seemed to run through the audience, momentarily interrupting the flow of sympathy between the lecturer and his hearers, when he stated that he was opposed to Nationalism was very noticeable, and indicated that a large element is prepared for some thing more radical than Single Taxism.

CIVILIZING THE DARK CONTINENT.

THE *Bombay Guardian* publishes the following list of spirituous liquors contained in the cargoes of ships touching at Madeira, in a single week, en route to Southern and Western Africa:

900,000 cases of Gin.	£240,000
24,000 butts of Rum.	240,000
30,000 cases of Brandy.	90,000
28,000 cases of Irish Whisky	56,000
900,000 demijohns of Rum.	240,000
50,000 barrels of Rum	75,000
30,000 cases of Old Tom.	60,000
15,000 barrels of Absinthe.	15,000
40,000 cases of Vermouth.	3,000

How many missionaries will it take to counteract the effect of this assortment of drinks? Did Livingstone live and die in vain? If we could restore the slave trade in Africa, said Sir Richard Burton sometime since, and take away the rum and gunpowder with which Africa has been deluged, Africa would actually be a gainer by the exchange. In a recent address Archdeacon Farrar said:

"In Mahomedan countries when the natives see a man drunk, they say, 'He has deserted Mahomet and gone to Jesus.'"

MISS FOLSHAM, a well-known English bicycle rider, has ridden a safety wheel 1,900 miles at the rate of seventy-six miles a day, and hopes to cover 2,000 miles before the season closes.