

this reasoning admits of very serious doubts. That a sadly large share of the wages received by our working classes finds its way to the saloon, and is squandered on Saturday, unfortunately admits of no doubt—'tis true, a pity 'tis, 'tis true—but it is more than questionable whether the man addicted to dissipated and dissolute habits will be reformed by so flimsy an expedient. The indulgence would go on just the same, only instead of its terminating with the Saturday night or Sunday, in all probability it would be continued into the working week, with results even more disastrous. As it is, innumerable improvident workmen forestall their wages, and run up a "score" against Saturday night, and what is to hinder them from doing this to an even still greater extent?

It is not easy to see then that any social revolution would be effected in the interests of the employed, and we believe the proposed system, if adopted, would very materially affect the comfort of the industrious and respectable workman. We doubt much whether it would be justifiable to introduce, at such an expense, a radical change merely to protect a weak workman against himself,—even supposing that there was a possibility of the plan proposed being successful—because if it affected wrongful expense, it would also affect rightful expense. But in point of fact, to benefit men of this stamp, reform must begin with the man, and not with his wages. While he is what he is, surrounded by the same temptations, and suffering from the same want of moral stamina, the weak brother will continue to go to the wall. Fancy expedients like Monday wages will not save him. He must be raised to a vastly higher state of intellectual being; he must be taught a nobler conception of manhood. The potent agency of education must be brought to bear upon him; what he is, what he might be, and what he should be, must be forcibly impressed upon him. Life must present itself to him, both at home and in his social relations, in an aspect less calculated to produce either discontent or recklessness. While life is a blank to him—either of his own or another's making—and while his motto practically is "Let us eat, drink and be merry, for to-morrow we die,"—the case is desperate, but not hopeless. The reform may be wrought, but not by the mere changing of a pay-day. The means of accomplishment, we believe, may be found in the reduction of the hours of labor, advancing remuneration, the diffusion of knowledge, and the establishment of reading rooms and libraries for the especial use of working-men.

But the *Coopers' Journal*, treating on this subject, gives us another phase of the question which may perhaps, after all, be more nearly the true object of those who are endeavoring to bring about the change of pay day, than the ostensible one advanced, and we close the present article with the following extract:—

*Cui bono.* Should this change take place, who will be benefited? It is a well known fact, at least in business and monetary circles, that money is invariably "tight" on Saturdays, while it is much "easier" on Mondays. Banks which are quite willing to "accommodate" their patrons on Monday, would be apt to discount them, or even refuse them, on Saturday. Large corporations, or employers, whose pay roll foots up among the thousands, appreciate the value of an "accommodation" while they shudder at the sound of discount.

"It has been noticed that the burnt district of the city formed exactly the area of wholesale business where the half-holiday on Saturday had not been conceded by employers. The fire broke out on a Saturday."

The above paragraph we clip from the *Boston Trade Journal*. What it means we cannot readily perceive. The paragraph is open to two constructions. One is, that the Boston fire must be regarded, not as a calamity, but as a judgment, because the Saturday half-holiday had not been conceded by the employers; and the other is an indirect insinuation that the fire was the work of the employees. Which construction

is to be accepted? The latter will be most readily accepted by a large portion of the community; and we should hardly think the men who are thus, indirectly accused of committing a most foul and horrible crime, would quietly submit to such insinuation, but would demand a clear explanation of the paragraph from the editor of the *Boston Trades' Journal*.

Among the many necessary reforms there is one standing prominently forth which should command the attention of every workingman. We refer to Labor Reform. This is a reform which touches us all very nearly, and demands the earnest consideration of all those who earn their bread by their labor. The rich getting richer, the poor growing poorer, is now the social order, and as the poor grow poorer so does their servility to the rich increase. These remarks were caused by reading a paragraph in a New York Magazine as follows:

“The New York Association for Improving the Condition of the Poor has for its object the relief of the worthy poor who require temporary help to recover, themselves and save themselves from the loss of self-respect and the permanent debasement of pauperism. The organization includes the entire city and county, which is divided into districts, and the districts sub-divided into sections, to each of which a visitor is appointed. Assistance is not given until the visitor ascertains personally the condition of the applicant. There are thousands of cases in a great city like this where counsel, sympathy and timely aid will save the wretched from sinking into despair and vicious modes of life. During the winter months there is special suffering among the poor, of course, which this Association strives to relieve as far as its funds will permit.”

So far from finding fault with the above-named association, we think its objects laudable, but we do most certainly find fault with a social system that calls, aye, urgently calls, for such an institution. When will men open their eyes to the facts which surround them? Here we have an acknowledgement of the deepest poverty, "thousands of cases," and we naturally enquire the reason why these "worthy poor" require temporary help. Is it because there is not sufficient food or clothing in the country? Are the granaries and the dry goods houses empty? No, but the laws of distribution have concentrated these into the hands of a few rich men. Is it because there is too much work to do? No; or why are the "worthy poor" sinking into despair? Is it because there is not enough work to keep these "thousands" in employment? Surely not, for New York has just passed through a mighty struggle for a reduction in the hours of labor, so that all might have work who wished, and so avoid distress among the "worthy poor." The reason is that the many are slaves to the few, and the few are heaping up wealth while a portion of the many lack the necessary food and clothing. Workingmen, arouse yourselves from all apathy. Let each workman not now connected with a union join his trade organization, and meet in their halls to discuss these matters. Educate yourselves in the principles of trade co-operation, and establish a reform under which no "worthy poor" can sink into the permanent debasement of pauperism.

Mr. David A. Wasson, a scholar of good repute, a man of travel, experience and liberal views, writes a letter to a workingman from Hanover, in Germany, which appears in a recent number of the *Golden Age*.

We have read this letter carefully, and our candid opinion is that we rightly designate its character in the title of this article. It is a series of fallacies in the interest of capital. From the beginning to the end the burden of its song is this: Capital has possession, the nine points of the law, and labor may get the remaining tenth part of the contest if it can.

Now the only right decision of this controlling labor question is this: Labor and capital are on a perfect equality. If there be any superiority on either side, it is on the side of labor. It is an eternal law as fixed and u-

changeable as any law of the universe; that every honest man and woman should earn their own living. Some must earn it one way, some in another; but the whole family of man, without an exception, is under the law that makes honest labor of some kind an invariable duty. The whole universe is one great hive of labor. They who do not work with industry are drones. Under whatever names they appear, in whatever quarter of the world they drone away their lives, they are the burdens, and, in many cases, the pests of the rest of the human family.

It is labor that produces everything. The sun, moon and stars are all laborers. Living-water is a laborer. The moment it ceases to labor it stagnates and become a curse. When the grass of the field stops to labor it stops its growth, and can no longer produce food for man, or beast, or bird. The mind of the Deity is the greatest laborer of the universe. The mind of man is cast in the same mould. Labor is its law, idleness is its curse.

By this incontestible argument we see the innate superiority of labor over capital. Labor is the producer; capital is the instrument of production. Idle capital is useless. It is only useful when wielded by labor. The question, therefore, naturally arises, and demands a fair answer: Shall the less always control the greater? This question is immediately followed by another, equally important, and equally worthy of an answer: Shall the creator be forever controlled by the thing created? Which, thou, shall rule—capital or labor? Or, rather, shall not capital and labor both rule together?

It is assumed by Mr. Wasson that capital has the supreme power of the world, and that all labor has to do is to make the best terms it can. We deny the assumption, and demand the proof. Labor does not ask any favors of capital. It demands its rights. Labor does not come cringing to the feet of capital, as a slave. It asserts and will maintain the dignity of an equal. Labor has as much right to say that it will work but eight hours a day, as capital has to say it shall work ten. The labor of the workingmen and women of the world is as much their capital as money is that of the capitalist. Labor is as fair an article or commodity, in the markets of the world, as anything else. The laborer, therefore, has a right to get the most he honestly can for his labor, and to make what use of his earnings he thinks best.—*Shopmate.*

St. John's Encampment, No. 74, G.R.S., Royal Black Knights of Malta, held its first annual ball in the Music Hall, on Monday evening last. The hall was tastefully decorated on the occasion with banners, bunting, etc. From the chandelier hung suspended the helmets, shields, etc., of the Sir Knight Companions. The scene presented was very beautiful, the dark, rich regalia of the members of the order making a fine contrast with the bright and handsome toilets of the fair ladies. The magnificent band of the 10th Royals supplied the music, and the efforts of Mr. McMillan to cater to the appetites of the guests were successful in the extreme. The company consisted of upwards of seventy couples, and all expressed themselves highly delighted with the entire proceedings. The committee were most assiduous in their efforts to please, and the pleasure and interest of the guests were heightened by the careful attention with which their every wish was attended to. Those who were present will long have pleasant recollections of the first annual ball of St. John's Encampment.

Stokes, the murderer of Fisk, was sentenced on Monday to be hanged on Friday, the 28th February next. Efforts are being made to obtain another trial.

**PRESENTATION.**—On Thursday evening, at his residence, Mercer street, Mr. J. McMichael, manager of the Dominion Saw Works, was presented with a handsome silver-mounted meerschau pipe and all its appendages. It was presented on behalf of the employes by the foreman, Mr. Thorndell, who made a very appropriate speech. Mr. McMichael returned his sincere thanks for the very handsome present that had been made to him.

We are much pleased to notice that at a recent meeting of the Ottawa Typographical Union, it was announced that the recent demand for an increase of wages had been acceded to by the master printers of the city. The scale of wages in future will be \$10 a week for 58 hours for day hands, and 25 cents an hour overtime; piecework, 33½ cents per thousand for compositors on morning papers; 30 cents per thousand on evening papers; and 40 cents an hour for Sunday work.

Yesterday the Ontario House of Legislature was opened with the usual ceremonies. We have not space in this issue to produce the Lieutenant Governor's speech.

CONVICT-LABOR.

(To the Editor of the Ontario Workman.)

SIR,—In your issue of December 18th, ult., I promised to continue the subject of Convict Labor, by showing how myself and many others of the working men of this city would like to see convicts employed. That promise I have been unable to fulfill up to the present; but I shall endeavor now to redeem it. I have spoken of two features that are to be incorporated with this institution, namely, the contract system, and the monopoly of certain callings, with the evils that it is believed will flow from them; and now I must handle the question of how those "damaged goods," as the *Globe* puts it, are to be employed, and how to avoid the evils before named. I have, said, in my previous letter, that I believed it was a sad thing that such expensive institutions were needed for such a purpose; but nevertheless, such is the case; and the artificial, unnatural, and therefore unnecessary usages of society contributed in a measure to render them a continued necessity, that man, at present, intellectually is unable to comprehend the enormity of; so, therefore, until he is enabled to comprehend the cause, and remove it, we must content ourselves with managing the effect in the best manner we can; and the world has made some progress in the management of the "damaged goods" of society since the days of Howard. But to come home to what concerns our immediate selves, we are told by those who control the destinies of this province for the time being, and into whose hands has fallen the construction of an institution for the safe keeping of these "damaged goods," until that happy time shall come when it shall be needed no more for that purpose, that they dispatched an interested party to the neighboring republic,—no less a personage than the manager of the Canada Steel and Iron Company, a person, who wanted the labor of the convicts of the Province for a specific purpose, and therefore could be depended upon to bring a disinterested report for our legislators to act upon.

I wonder did our very limited and disinterested committee visit New York, and if so did the beautiful location of the institutions on Blackwell's Island call forth his admiration; and then did his mind's eye revert back to the Queen City of the West and draw a similitude between our own desert Island and that rocky spot of land in the East River which is so well and usefully adorned? Now what I am driving at is this, that the Island was the proper location for the Central Prison, and probably would have been, had reason and the public weal ruled instead of private vested interests. What a thing it is to be influential! Why, a government will appoint the manager of an influential company, who wants to dispose of their business, as a committee of one, and receive his disinterested report (of course) in such a manner that the public never hear anything about it until everything is cut and dried. With the institution on the Island, that piece of land, the beautifying and preservation of which ought to be the object and pride of every patriotic citizen of Toronto and Ontario, would take the shape of something practical; and instead of having it a desert waste, with its outskirts the prey of every storm, threatening soon to block the entrance to our harbor, it might be, with the outlay of the uselessness still retained by those "damaged goods," be secured in time against the ravages of the storm, made a thing of beauty,—and therefore a joy forever. In short, labor, who pays the piper, dance who will, claims that prisoners be made as useful as possible by producing; that labor be made a fact with them by having them redeem from the waters, secure against the ravages of the tide, beautify and make productive Mother Earth. Let them wrest from the womb of Nature the minerals; but give the honest artisan the privilege of shaping them. Production for the convict; reproduction for honest labor. Yours, in the cause of justice,

Toronto, Jan.                      JOHN HEWITT.  
6th, 1873.