

The Echo

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THE ECHO has received the endorsement of the Dominion Trades and Labor Congress and the Central Trades and Labor Council of Montreal.

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MONTREAL, October 4, 1890.

TO A GENEROUS PUBLIC.

In launching this, our first number of THE ECHO, upon the sea of journalism, we venture to ask the indulgence of our readers and the kindly criticism of our conferees. Aware of its many defects, we will endeavor as time progresses to remedy these, resting not satisfied until we attain the object of our ambition, namely, a first-class, general newspaper, fearless in its denunciation of wrong, by whomsoever perpetrated, and thoroughly independent in its character. The publishers of THE ECHO belong to the class to whom they especially appeal for support—the workingmen. They know what their class have to contend against; they know that too many of them are down-trodden and crushed, despairing of help in their daily struggle for a bare existence and dragging out life in a hopeless kind of misery; wretchedly under-paid and, therefore, without the means of obtaining even a small portion of the comforts of life; toiling on from day to day, exhausting brain and body in the vain effort under existing conditions, of rising to a higher level. To those we extend our sympathy and offer our assistance in procuring for them a share of what properly belongs to the whole of God's creatures, and not to a select few. Knowing many wrongs under which our working population suffer, we shall be able to hold them up to public view and demand redress, nor rest satisfied till this is accomplished. We offer no apology for our appearance in the field of journalism. There is ample room for a paper such as we purpose issuing. The working classes of this city are not represented by any existing journal in the city of Montreal, although a portion of the press, knowing the voting power of our workers, seek to gain their ear about election time. This period passed, they have no further use for them, and when any labor trouble arises, however much in the right the workers may be, there is a complete back down or the difficulty is quietly ignored altogether.

Believing that the material prosperity of the workingmen of Canada lies in closer unity and combination of action, every effort will be made by THE ECHO to increase and develop good-will and fraternal feeling amongst the masses, and, while it is our special mission to advocate all measures having for their object the advancement and elevation of the working classes, we will endeavor to treat in an honest and intelligent manner all questions of public interest.

Having received the endorsement of the Dominion Trades and Labor Congress and of the Central Trades and Labor Council of Montreal, THE ECHO may be regarded as the exponent and advocate of these bodies on all public questions.

We shall endeavor to secure, week by week, reliable information regarding the state of trade in the large business centres throughout Canada and

the neighboring States, and to assist us in this we have been fortunate in securing the services of several gentlemen well posted in trade matters. We gladly invite correspondence on all social and political questions, and while we do not hold ourselves responsible for the opinions of correspondents, we shall endeavor to eliminate all objectionable or purely personal matter from our columns. THE ECHO cannot be made the vehicle for the circulation of slander, nor to gratify the private malice of any one. We ourselves intend to speak our mind freely on all subjects, with due regard to facts and conditions as we find them, and shall welcome the same trait in our correspondents. It is the duty of everyone when he has found the truth to proclaim it, so the conscientious reformer's first duty is to strain every nerve to eradicate an evil when and where he finds it.

In returning our thanks for the support and encouragement we have thus far received, we leave with every confidence our initial number in the hands of our readers, trusting to their good-will for its favorable reception. Those who intend to subscribe should do so immediately, as by so doing they will greatly assist us in our enterprise.

WHO IS TO BLAME?

The history of organized labor in this city affords a painful illustration of the indifference and neglect of the working-classes to exercise the power vested in them under constitutional government. The Statute Labor Tax in times past afforded an excuse, however flimsy, to many to refrain from casting their votes at municipal elections and it was felt by all earnest labor reformers that this obstacle on the road to progress would have to be removed before they could conscientiously appeal to the great mass of the people whose best interests they represented.

Accordingly, the labor organizations, convinced of the illegality of the tax, and despairing of ever electing a majority of the City Council under then existing conditions, at great expense, fought and won their case in the civil courts, thereby enfranchising many thousand citizens. It was predicted at that time that this would speedily change the complexion of the City Council. Years have gone since then, yet our aldermen of to-day are as indifferent to the interests of labor, as prejudiced and antagonistic against any measure affecting the welfare of the working classes, as ever their predecessors were, who, for very spite, and with the people's money, fought in an unjust cause and aggravating manner to a most humiliating finish. Since the abolition of the Statute Labor Tax, candidates friendly to labor have been placed in the field again and again only to suffer defeat through want of support from the very men who never would have had a vote if organized labor had not at its own expense presented them with one.

It is all very well to make a noise about the mal-administration of civic affairs and the unjust way in which the water tax is levied, but if those on whom this tax bears heaviest had only voted in their own interest half as fast in the past as what they growl at present, that tax, along with many other abuses, would long since have disappeared. The workingmen of this city are in the majority and can if they choose, in two years, elect a Council favorable to their interests; that they have not done so, that it is again left to organized labor to seek the aid of the civil courts to redress a legislative wrong enacted and perpetuated by men of their own choosing, is a disgrace to every man in Montreal who works for wages.

If our legislators fail to administer public affairs for the benefit of the whole people, then it becomes the duty of the electorate to replace them by men who have a higher conception

of the duties they owe their constituents, and until this is done the responsibility for the existence of the wrongs and abuses complained of must be placed on the shoulders of the electors themselves. It is far more reprehensible for a constituency to continue a man in office who has been tried and found wanting than it is for him to abuse the trust confided to him, for his re-election is virtually an endorsement of his past actions and an intimation to continue the same course in the future. Still, a large portion of our public men owe their re-election to office not to any honorable record of their own, but simply to their ability to spend more money in debauching the electors than their opponents, and as public offices yield but a comparatively small return financially to a strictly honest man, this class has largely retired from politics with disgust and left the field to the professional politician, where often in a choice between two evils the people prefer the "devil they know to the one they don't know." For this condition of things, however, the people alone are to blame; the evils from which they suffer have come through their own moral and mental weakness; the remedy must come through their own moral and mental strength.

NOTES OF THE WEEK.

A FIRM of provision manufacturers and fruit preservers in Aberdeen, Scotland, were lately fined \$25, besides being mulcted in costs, for causing girls in their employment to work over-time although they had been paid for it in excess of their regular wages. To the non-payment of the fine and costs was attached a penalty of thirty days' imprisonment. The firm pleaded that a consignment of fruit had arrived late and, from its perishable nature, could not be held over. The factory inspector who conducted the prosecution said the Act of Parliament limited the hours of employment in all trades and asked for a substantial penalty, because the length of time worked beyond the legal amount was considerable. The Quebec Factory Act provides that "no child, young girl or woman shall be employed for more than ten hours in one day, nor more than sixty hours in any one week," although a different apportionment of the hours of labor may be made for the purpose of giving a half-holiday on Saturday. Yet how often is this provision of the act evaded? How often, in this city for instance, are young girls and women in factories worked over-time, aye, and that, too, without receiving extra compensation, and never any notice taken? There are many such cases, we maintain, occurring daily in this city, and the seeker after knowledge need not travel far to find them. Not long ago the manager of a cotton company petitioned the Local Government to have the Factory Act so amended as to allow of the employment of young children as half-timers, and we noticed with some surprise that the Hon. J.K. Ward appeared as one of the speakers in favor of the proposition. From that gentleman's previous attitude on the labor question we expected something different. The argument advanced, of course, was the usual stock quasi-philanthropic one of how welcome the small—very small, may well be said—earnings of the children would be in a family. The injustice of allowing a selfish parent to thus impose on a child and rob him or her of mental food, and the injurious effects of this early toil on the small wage-earner's health and prospects in life were carefully kept in the background. What we want in Canada is a more stringent clause in the act in regard to the employment of young children and greater responsibility placed upon the shoulders of employing corporations for injuries received by their work people through defective or unguarded machinery. We

congratulate the Government on their refusal to accede to the proposition to destroy this beneficial clause in the Factory Act.

UNLESS the Irish reporters are making game of the old nobility in revenge for their country's wrongs, the Duke of Manchester has been acting as timekeeper while a couple of pugilists punched the heads of each other. They skirmished around the ring and took a good deal of mutual punishment until one of the bruisers refused to respond to the call of "time," which the Duke diligently called. Born to a lofty station, and presumably never without a shilling in his pocket, this distinguished personage yet appears to be at a loss for a respectable calling. The position of timekeeper to a brace of pugilists is not a dignified occupation, and the only thing that saves us from blushing for our mother country is that, but for the prize ring, the Duke might be occupied in making laws for the nation. Happily for us the prize ring is still an institution, and as a timekeeper he maintains the traditions of his ancestry and is in very truth a peer. It is perhaps a mere coincidence that this lordly patron of pugilists is also patron of six livings in the Church of England.

THE Montreal Street Railway Company's service is a snare and a delusion, according to a correspondent, who addresses us on this subject. He relates that on Sunday afternoon last he boarded a car at the junction of Craig and St. Antoine streets going west. On arriving at the St. Margaret street switch he saw ahead, standing on the switch at Aqueduct street, a car which should evidently have been going in the same direction. Knowing from this there would be a little wait, he looked at his watch and found the time to be nine minutes past one. The car stuck there for fully five minutes, and when it did get under way there was another wait at Aqueduct street. What with one thing or another it was 1.26 o'clock when the car arrived at the terminus at Dominion street, thus taking seventeen minutes for that short distance. Our correspondent concludes by stating that the day previous, at the championship meeting, he saw two men walk a distance of three miles in a few seconds over twenty-two minutes and fell to contrasting the difference in the rate of locomotion. We advise our correspondent not to take this incident too much to heart or conclude that he was a Jonah on the car, else there must be many more like him. This rapid transit is an every-day occurrence on the St. Antoine street route, and it does not take a pedestrian to be in championship form to give the cars a large handicap and still discount them.

LADY DILKE is well-known to be a brave, sensible and outspoken little woman. Lately she has been speaking to working girls and giving them good counsel, not the least important part of which was her advising them to make it a condition of matrimonial engagement that the young man should belong to an organized labor society. And she was right. The man who believes in organization as a means to benefit himself and his fellow-workers is the more likely to look to the organization of home comforts. Besides, what young woman is there under the sun who would care to ally herself with one who is unfair and untrue to his fellows. Such a man—if by such a name he may be called—is a bane to the craft he follows, and a drag on the material prosperity of his fellows.

MORE trouble is in store for the City Council. The city is now threatened with an action for damages for alleged incivility and roughness towards a citizen on the part of two of the officers of the police force. Inci-

vility and roughness are qualities so frequently met with in the force that had it been an ordinary citizen it is probable the general public would have heard very little of the affair as it is reported to have happened, but this time they hit up against the wrong man—a lawyer, and a Queen's Counsellor to boot. Though the latter fact was gravely impressed upon the blue-coated gentlemen it seems to have made little impression—not so much certainly as it ought to—as the legal party, Queen's Counsellor and all, was forcibly ejected from the place! "Ma conscience! daur to pit hands on a Queen's Counsellor!" was no doubt the mental reflection of the injured party when he found himself on the wrong side of the door. The outcome of the little fracas will be looked for with anxiety by the public, who feel that the dignity of a Q.C. is imperilled.

ACCORDING to The Rights of Labor there are French Canadians working in Quebec as domestics for \$3 to \$6 per month, while some grades of laborers only earn from 25 to 40 cents per day! How they manage to exist upon such a pittance is a mystery. Evidently there is need of organization there. Who among the labor leaders of the Ancient Capital will be the first to lend a hand in uniting them together? It is their only way of deliverance from the bondage, darker than that of the Egyptian, under which they now labor.

JOHN MURPHY & CO.'S

ADVERTISEMENT.

SAURDAY, OCTOBER 4TH.

The increase in our business this Fall is away ahead of all expectations, and this is a month that will be hard to beat, we have put our shoulders to the wheel with a determination to show the same increase in business as we had during September, therefore, to enable us to do this extra business we will give exceptionally good value in all departments.

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MANTLES.

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Meets in the Ville-Marie Hall, 1623 Notre Dame street, the first and third Thursdays of the month. Communications to be addressed to P. J. RYAN, 26 St. Philippe street.