Ontario Workman.

THE EQUALIZATION OF ALL ELEMENTS OF SOCIETY IN THE SOCIAL SCALE SHOULD BE THE TRUE AIM OF CIVILIZATION.

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FROM TORONTO TO VIENNA.

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I was not sorry when my duties enabled me to turn my back upon Vienna, with its exhibition, its depressing atmosphere, bad smells and strange customs. The opinion is generally held that as a magnificent spectacle,—evidencing the ingenuity and laboriousness of skilled labor in producing the vast array of articles, useful and ornamental—the undertaking organized by Baron Swartz, is the most important, as it certainly is the most colossal, that civilization has yet beheld. It is therefore the more to be regretted that the same success which as so signally distinguished it as an exposition, has not attended it in a financial point of view. I am almost afraid to say how much it is generally reported the Austrian Government will come short of the expenses connected with the undertaking,—the amount is very large, the lowest estimate I have heard, going up into the millions of guilders or florins. Almost from the very start circumstances have been against it; for a tremendous financial crisis which came nearly at the outset, comprising a panic, a smash, and a period of prostration had barely been recovered from, when there followed the wide-spread rumors of the prevalence of cholera in the city. There is no doubt, too, that the exorbitant prices charged at first by the hotel and store keepers had some effect in deterring many from visiting the city; but the latter evil soon corrected itself, because it speedily became apparent, even to the people of Vienna themselves, that by a continuance in such a course, they were but killing the goose that laid the golden eggs. All these circumstances combined have, of course, seriously militated against the financial prospects; but even yet there may come a brighter and more satisfactory ending than is generally prognosticated. The financial crisis has been successfully tided over, the rumors of cholera are but seldom heard, the hotel charges, etc., are quite moderate, and the season is not yet near over; so that, after all, before the evil comes, matters may wonderfully improve, and it may yet turn out that all the rumors about "financial failure," etc., may prove to have been but "much ado about nothing." Certainly all those who appreciate the importance of these "world exhibitions" will join in the exclamation, "So mote it be."

Leaving Vienna, with our faces homeward, we reached Munich, and remained a few hours. It is a quaint old place, most of its streets very narrow and crooked, and very dirty.

This city boasts of the largest and most elaborate bronze statue in the world. It is a stature typical of Bavaria,—a female figure, having in her left hand a wreath of glory, and in her right a sword adorned with circling laurels, prepared to crown all those found worthy of such distinction. At her side stands the Bavarian lion of colossal size. The statue stands upon a granite pedestal 30 feet high, and the figure itself is sixty-six feet high. Notwithstanding this immense size, the proportions are most perfect, and the attitude is exceedingly fine. It is said that seventy-eight tons of metal were used in the casting, mostly comprised of the cannon taken from the different nations.

After visiting some other of the monuments and churches, we took the cars for Zurich. As you pass into Switzerland, the change is very noticeable. There is more an appearance of thrift and comfort than is apparent on the Austrian farms. In the vicinity of the cottage, could invariably be seen the well-kept vegetable plots, and in many ways the spirit of the proprietor is not to be mistaken in all one sees in Switzerland.

The social position of the women appears to be much better than that of their sisters in Austria,—while they have their farm work to perform, the heavy work is done by the men. On our way, we crossed Lake Constance,—a beautiful sheet of water, almost surrounded by high hills. It is the largest of the German lakes; but in point of size is nothing compared with our lakes, which are—

"Like oceans in storm or at rest."

Zurich is a very fine old city of some 25,000 inhabitants, and is situated at the northern extremity of the lake bearing the same name. It has many historical associations,—being in the near vicinity of hotly-contested battle-grounds. It was here where the reformation first broke out in Switzerland. The ramparts which formerly surrounded the city, have been changed into delightful promenades, from which the sunset scene I witnessed was beautiful in the extreme, the rippling water like silver sheen, the hills on every hand green to the summit, dotted here and there with villages and charming chateaus, while the bold forms of the Swiss Alps fill up the distants view,—making a brilliant and delightful picture. From this city we went on to Berne, the capital of the Canton, and the seat of the Swiss Government. The scenery through the Canton was very picturesque, but I was not a little surprised at finding such vast extents of arrable land. It was evidently tilled with great care, and generally up the slopes to the summits of the mountains. While finding in the city plenty to attract and amuse, yet it contains very little worthy of notice, compared with other cities. The most conspicuous thing was the figure of the bear, it is seen everywhere—in the fountains, houses, and signs of the capital. It is said that in the days of old, the people held bears as sacred as the natives of Constantinople do pigeons, or the Egyptians did cats.

From Berne I made a detour in order to witness some of the mountain scenery of Switzerland, that I had hitherto seen had been in the distance. I made my way for Interlacken, to reach which I crossed lake Thun, a beautiful lake, some 12 miles long, and about three wide. Near Thun the banks are dotted with pretty villas and gardens, but as the boat approached its destination, they became steep and bluff. All up the side of the rugged cliffs were the cottages of the peasants, and here and there on a slope clustered a village. One feels curious to know how, perched so high on the sides of the mountains, the people make their living.

Interlacken is a small village, prettily situated, famous not so much for itself, as for its lovely surroundings. The scenes here, for grandeur and beauty, comes next to the famous Valley of Chamouni, with its full view of the "Monarch of all the Mountains." Here, on every hand, are mountain peaks rising one above the other, but the chief and most prominent are the celebrated Jungfrau, 12,827 feet high, and the Monk, 12,609 feet. As the last rays of the setting sun lit up the snow-capped peaks, the glaciers, and brought out more fully the mass of mountains on every hand, the view was imposing beyond description. This spot must remain for all time a favorite resort, so long as the beautiful "Jungfrau stands and thunders, confessing to the Monk who eternally waits by her side."

Getting back to Berne, we took our way for Geneva. We stayed for a few hours at Freyburg, and had an opportunity of hearing the world-renowned organ in the cathedral church of St. Nicholas. The principal portal of the church is ornamented with some curious bas-reliefs, representing the Last Judgment. In the centre is a figure of the patron saint, to its right is an angel weighing humanity in a balance, and below it is St. Peter, with his key, introducing the just into paradise, while on the other hand, is a figure with a hideous head, dragging in chains a group of condemed ones; on his back he carries a basket filled with those who have been weighed in the balance and found wanting, and these are to be precipitated into a boiling caldron, and in a far corner Hell is represented by a monster filled to overflowing with the condemned. While above, Satan sits triumphant on his throne. The organ, the finest in Europe, is stated to have 63 stops and 1800 pipes, some of which are 32 feet long. The music produced from such an instrument, presided over by a master spirit, is indescribable,—at one time filling the edifice with thunder tones, and subsiding in the softest and most exquisite sounds. During one of the tremendous *forte* passages, some of the audience, who had been conversing, and who had to "whisper loud," to be heard, were suddenly betrayed by a staccatto movement; though not so ludicriously as it is stated was the case at a concert in New York, where two ladies, who had been talking of domestic matters during a fortissimo passage, and the music, quickly passing to a piano movement, the audience were electrified by hearing a voice exclaim, "We fried ours in butter!"

From Freyburg we went to Lousanne the capital of the Vaud Canton. From the Terrace, we had a beautiful view of the town, the lake, and in the distance the Alps of Savoy. At Lousanne, we took the boat, and crossed the Lake to Geneva. This lake is the most beautiful I think I have ever seen. In paintings of the many lovely scenes which the lake presents, I had often remarked the beautiful blue of the water, and had supposed that it was fancy coloring,—the artist drawing upon the imagination for effect, but I found in reality "the half had not been told." Notwithstanding that a slight rain was falling, and the sky wore sombre-hued clouds, the water was bright, clear and blue as indigo. Leaving Geneva, the natural scenery through the pass of the Jura Mountains, through which the line winds, was wild and grand in the extreme, the over-hanging and towering rocks appearing as if ready to come thundering down the mountain sides with the vibration of the passing train. The balance of the journey to Paris was uninteresting, after the scenery through which we had passed.

Paris still bears the marks of the terrible ordeal through which she has passed, but the work of restoring the buildings destroyed during the reign of the commune, is being rapidly pushed on, and in a short time the blackened walls of the magnificent edifices that were, will shine again fair and beautiful, and the events of the past become "as a tale that is told."

We arrived in London after a very unpleasant run across the channel from Dieppe to Newhaven. The day was raw and cold, and a drizzling rain prevailed nearly all the time. There was no protection from the rain on the boat but the cabins, and there, from circumstances easy to imagine, confinement was worse than the rain, and so those who kept their sea legs, huddled together in the least exposed places,—and a sickly lot of humanity it was that made their way from the pier to the cars. An hour's rest, and some "resturation," however, speedily put things right, and it seemed hard to conceive that so many now smiling faces, but so recently wore the helpless and pitiable expression caused by the nausea of sea-sickness.

If the fates are favorable, another week will find me "on the raging main," homeward bound, with deep pleasure that it will be so, and the sentiment more firmly impressed than ever, that "be it ever so humble, there's no place like home."

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THE DUTIES OF YOUTH.

The first years of man must make provisions for the last. He who never thinks can never be wise. Perpetual levity ends in iguorance; and intemperance, though it may fire the spirits for an hour, will make life short and miserable. Let us consider that youth is of no long duration, and that in mature age, when the enchantments of fancy shall cease, and phantoms of delight dance no more about us, we shall have no comforts but the esteem of wise men, and the means of doing good; let us therefore stop, while to stop is in our power; let us live as men who are sometime to grow old, and to whom it will be the most dreadful of all to count their past years by follies, and to be reminded of the former luxuriance of health only by the maladies which riot has produced.

LABOR PORTRAITS.

"Men who, in advance of law and in opposition to prevailing opinion, have forced into national recognition the hitherto disregarded rights of labor."

GEORGE POTTER.

Although human nature in a physical point of view is so much alike all the world over, and human life so short; yet we find wonderful variety in character and moral attributes shown in every human career.

Those who are born to greatness, prominent positions, and easy opportunities of gaining experience in the conduct of great affairs upon elevated stages, and before crowds of spectators, exemplify every phase of human moral attributes, with the humblest of the people—those of them who have emerged into social daylight, from the common lot of their native associates—such as these must at least possess honest diligence and manly self-reliance. A biographical list of the men, who, whatever their native condition or subsequent circumstances, were born in villages, but reached maturity in cities, and became honourably known to thousands of their fellow-men, would give remarkable and diversified proof of the moral productiveness of rural soils. These examples, if allowed to have their due influence, should lead others still higher up in the same ascending path.

The individual whose name is at the head of these sentences, was born in Kenilworth, a villager of no mean village. Kenilworth Castle was the scene of a tradition, immortalised by Walter Scott, which represents Raleigh as writing on some surface in its precincts, "Fain would I climb but that I fear to fall," and Queen Elizabeth as writing underneath, "If thine heart fail thee, climb not thou at all." No such stirrings of ambition agitated the youthful breast of George Potter. Although the handsome and brilliant courtier of the Maiden Queen, was born in a village more obscure, and received his early education in a lonelier house, he was of genteel parentage, and the road to advancement lay open before him. The subject of this sketch, on the contrary, was the child of a lowly rustic couple. Edmund William and Anne Potter, his father and mother were born and brought up at Bloxham, which gives its name to one of the Hundreds of Oxfordshire, and is not far from Chipping Norton, made notorous by magisteria persecution of unoffending women. Whenever the Potters went to worship in its handsome church, crowned with elegant tower and lofty spire, the curious carving over the western door, representing, like one of our metropolitan church gateways, the Day of Judgment taught them to look forward to a tribunal at which all the wrongs of time and earth would be redressed.

About the year 1819, the worthy couple migrated into an adjoining county, and settled at Kenilworth. There Edmund Potter pursued his trade as a carpenter, working at Stoneleigh Abbey till 1840. Thus, for nearly twenty years, the industrious toiler walked every day, Sundays excepted, three miles there and back, besides doing a hard and long day's work, for the small wages of three shillings a day. As he and his wife were blessed with seven children, from this scanty pittance nine months had to be fed, nine bodies clad, and nine inmates housed.

George Potter was born in 1832, the year of the first Reform Act. Little was it dreamed that the child which then first saw the light, would live to see the elective franchise given to workingmen in cities and boroughs, and promised to field-laborers in counties. All the education he received began at one of the five dame schools then in the parish, and ended at "Aldridge's Charity," an endowed school on Abbey Hill, of which some three-score boys shared the advantages. There, at least, he learned to read and write. What more might have been gained by a longer stay, it would be hazardous to pronounce; for, at that day, but little attention was bestowed upon turning such institutions to the best account. The circumstances of the family, however, made it necessary that young George should go early to work, and earn what he could towards his own living. He began as a ploughboy; but he was taken out of that furrow, and hired by a neigbouring gentlemen as errand boy, at the remunerative rate of sixpence a day. This was his occupation, and this his reward, till he was sixteen years old. With the teens comes that mysterious change in boyish natures which effects the moral not less than the physical constitution. There consequently came over the mind of young Potter a sense of ingenuous shame at the thought of giving up his time for so miserable a recompense.

Stung by this feeling, the indignant strand boy marched off to Coventry, where, in a little while, he persuaded a master cabinent maker and joiner in a small way to take him as an apprentice. According to mutual agreement, he was to work the first year for nothing; the second, at four shillings a week; the third, at five; and the fourth and last, at six. The period of apprenticeship was shorter by three years than was usual; but it may be readily imagined that the bound party had a hard enough time of it, and was the reverse of sorry when it came to and end. His father was unable to do more than find him in clothes. Making all possible allowance, therefore, for the difference of prices then and now, it baffles ingenuity to comprehend how board and lodging could be provided for out of resources, which, taking the four years together, did not average so much as four shillings a week. During no other four years of a man's life, does nature require so plentiful a supply of proper nutriment as from the age of sixteen to twenty, especially when the youth is one, compelled as Potter was, to work hard for sixteen hours a day the whole year round.

If, however, the articled youth was rather slim than stout on regaining his freedom, dilligence and attention were rewarded by his becoming a workman that needed not to be ashamed; while patient endurance, no doubt, had the compensating effect of forming and fortifying his character. His first engagement as a journeyman was to Mr. Colledge, a master builder at Rugby, where he worked for a twelvemonth. Then, returning to Coventry, he connected himself with Mr. George Taylor, who was building some excellent modern villas in one of the shrubs of that ancient city. These occupations brought the young man to the year 1853.

Like most young fellows of any spirit and pluck, he grew more and more anxious to improve his condition; and, with this view among other motives, conceived a strong desire to see the Great Metropolis, of which he had read and heard so much about. Bidding fairwell to Warwickshire, in 1853 he came to London. He reached the most costly city in the world with but little to meet absolute necessities, with nothing like substance to waste upon riotous living. Not knowing a single individual of the millions among whom he for the first time set foot, he had no time to lose. Arriving on a Saturday afternoon, he waited till Monday morning; when, before the sun went down, he had engaged himself to Mr. George Myers, of Belvidere-road. With this employer he remained for a term of years as long as his apprenticeship at Coventry. From Lambeth, he went to Stangate, where, while working for Messrs. Baker and Son, he lost all his tools through a fire which entirely consumed their workshops. After that, he worked successively for Messrs. Lawrence and Sons, of Pitfield Wharf, at the Houses of Parliament, and at the new brewery of Messrs. Elliott and Watney.

From the last of these engagements, George Potter was called away to conduct an important movement, which had the effect of bringing him before the industrial world in the capacity of a public man. He had not been long in London, indeed, before enrolling himself as a member of the "Progressive Society of Carpenters and Joiners." Much of his spare time was devoted to its affairs; and he held in it, one after another, the responsible offices of Corresponding Secretary, Financial Secretary, and Chairman. In 1857, the operative classes in the Building Trades began an agitation for a reduction in the hours of work; on which occasion, he served as a delegate from his own Society. His powers of speech were now put to a severe trial. He was fortunate enough, however, to exert them with a force of argument and a practicality of spirit that favourably impressed his colleagues and associates, who subsequent by elected him as Secretary to the movement.

An agitation of two years' duration, ended, in 1859, with a lock-out of the men in the building trades. George Potter was now summoned away from his own trade, to conduct the ensuing struggle on behalf of his fellow-workmen. The contest lasted seven-and twenty weeks; during which, he gave much satisfaction to the men by the judgment and the tact which he displayed, and the triumphant manner in which he brought about the withdrawal of the obnoxious "Document" by the yielding employers. This arduous but

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