

Ontario Workman.

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

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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."

JOSEPH ARCH,
PRESIDENT, NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL
LABORERS' UNION.

"When Adam delved and Eve span,
Who was then the gentleman?"

There has been wonderful progress since the time hinted at in these old lines. We have no difficulty now in saying who is the gentleman and who is not, because we see on all hands very clearly marked lines and obvious conditions not to be misunderstood, which leave no room for doubt on this head.

The gentleman is born in a mansion, surrounded by luxury. He is waited on from childhood by servants who minister to his most frivolous desires. Teachers attend on him that he may be made acquainted with all that time has accumulated as knowledge, and that he may be adorned with whatever society has decided to consider refined. At manhood the gentleman enters the great world, with all doors open before him, with smiles to welcome him wherever he goes. He is eligible to all offices, to all emoluments, all honors;—earth, air, water, and all they can yield of abundance or pleasure are his. The doctor attends him with his best skill, and the parson, sympathizing with a soul so gentlemanly, puts out his whole strength that the next world may not be wanting to him in the bestowal of its favors; and when he dies, sermons, not all truths, epitaphs for the most part lies, and ornamental monuments close his account with a world for which he himself always had a notion he was too good.

The man who is not a gentleman in the country village is easily known. He is born of a poor mother in a squalid hut. All the love and service he receives come from the suffering father and mother, to whom, however much beloved, he is a burden. He hungers through his childhood, and scrambles up to manhood, with less education than the young dog or the colt belonging to his master. He marries and begets a family, the feeding of which is to him a daily mystery of the most painful kind. He is of no use to the doctor to either kill or cure. To the parson he is a fine subject for pious remonstrance and moral reproof. He is a nuisance to everybody; particularly to the guardians of the poor; and when he dies it is a relief to all and everyone on whom he has a claim of any kind, whether through love or through law, when he is put without stone or epitaph under the sod. That the labourer should be sometimes discontented is not, perhaps, on the whole, much to be wondered at. Hunger and hard work are trials, when they last through a long life, too much for the temper of the meekest, as in the grand abundance of God's earth, and in the hopes which the all-wise Maker has put into men's hearts promptings will sometimes arise, to question the wisdom of such a state of things as condemns the majority of men to a life of ignorance, privation, and pain.

Joseph Arch is one of the lowly born. He first saw the light at the village of Barford in Warwickshire in the year 1826. His father slaved and died as most fathers do without much hope or comfort in this world, but his mother, who felt and thought silently over the miseries of a poor man's home, and who, perhaps, had concluded that ignorance lay at the root of social misery, sent her son Joseph to school at the age of six, and kept him there till between eight and nine, and thus found him the key by which he afterwards succeeded in getting at some slight knowledge of the world beyond the bounds of the village in which he lived; and of seeing, in a dim way, those struggles of men in history which explain man's connection with his fellows in humanity, not only by the past history of life, but by the wonderful incitement of hope which carry forward the struggle in the direction of right, freedom, and justice.

When taken from school Joseph Arch was sent into the fields to scare birds at 4d. a day. To get something to eat himself, it was his duty to prevent the birds from eating. From this miserable kind of labour he got elevated to other kinds of agricultural work—the cart, the plough, &c. He married early in life the daughter of a mechanic, his wages being nine shillings a week, and this was his income when there were four mouths to feed—himself, his wife, and two children—to say nothing of the poor father, whose claim on the scant meal never was denied. No word need be said in proof of the squalor and misery necessarily implied by such wages; and what was the condition of things in the home of Joseph Arch, making life a torture, was in the homes of hundreds of thousands of England's labourers doing the same painful work. The wife of Joseph Arch, however, in a sense of womanly affection, revolted against this, and told her husband that both of them must face the world and try it, by other labour—by anything, in fact, that might turn up—such misery as they and theirs had to suffer, could be prevented. This determination was carried out by the husband, and Joseph Arch travelled and worked that the brood at home might be better fed. From one thing to another Arch got on, but not by any means to affluence. He read and studied, and respected his fellows too much to rise in the world by pressing them down. He read the newspapers and knew what was going on amongst the mechanics of the towns. The wrongs and the rights of labour are the same in kind all over England; they only differ in degree. The penny newspapers brought such lessons, in fact, lessons in logic, lessons in hope. Being a religious man, he became a preacher amongst the Methodists, and when a man of his class opens his mouth, if he has anything of true manhood really in him, he must soon make himself felt, not simply as a preacher in the pulpit, but an utterer of truths that touch life on its practical side, and raise questions that involve, not God's justice only, but man's justice to man in the most ordinary concerns of the world.

In this way, no doubt, Mr. Arch became an agitator, and incurred all the odium belonging to a position so detested and condemned by people who, being satisfied with things as they are, always seem in a state of alarm lest, if touched, they should be altered for the worse, so far as they are concerned. As a rule, our young nobles and the sons of our rich gentry find other employment for their energies than the work of agitation. The dignitaries of the Church and the professions generally are not agitators. So much the better for them. Other duties than eating and sleeping and continuing the race, however, belong to some of those brought up on the knees of suffering, poverty-stricken mothers, and over-worked, under-fed, prematurely-killed fathers. Young men of the working-classes with all this pain felt by those dear to them, and constantly before their eyes, must cry out if the thoughts of the brain are called up by the lacerations of the heart. In this way has Joseph Arch and many others been goaded to the front, and from the words spoken by such men has come more good to the world than from generations of accredited preachers and speech-makers, whose aim and object has been to make men contented with miseries against which it is their most sacred duty to protest. Already Joseph Arch and those who work with him have increased the comfort in poor men's homes. More wages means more bread; more warmth in bed on winter nights; more happiness of heart; and this is but a small part of the many blessings which must flow from the spirit of independence which a sound agitation in the rural districts will put into the hearts of the workers in our fields. It would be hazardous to predict the full results of the movement set on foot principally by Joseph Arch. Already there has been improved wages; already the falsehoods which covered the awful degradation

of our rural population have been swept away like a foul fog before the freshening breeze; already the political claims of the working men in our counties have been admitted by some of our leading statesmen, and with the stout help of the workers in our towns these claims will ere long be established.

There is an absorption of field-workers into our large towns, and this drain will continue. Already the stream of emigration has begun to flow steadily towards the United States of America. Time only is needed to swell this to a mighty torrent. Mr. Arch is on the eve of departure himself to make the way easier out of England for those who may decide to make their home in the new world or elsewhere. The stone has only begun rolling; where or when it will stop remains still to be seen. The agitators are at work, and as they move through the country and speak to their fellows the old sleep is broken, new thoughts take life, new vigour animates the numbed and stiffened limbs. Bishops, statesmen, lords, squires, and shoals of respectable people are wonder-struck. They know not yet whether they should laugh or cry out in fear. They try to console themselves with the thought that in a little time things will return to their old state. The new influences, they imagine, are only powerful by their novelty. In a little time they will find out how greatly mistaken they are in this, and in the meantime there will be the usual stupid and brutal opposition, full abuse of agitators and agitation, and finally, after much struggling, better and more humane treatment for the labourers, or a clearing out of our agricultural population which will leave England to the very rich and the very poor, and such settlement of their differences as they will be enabled to make out of their mutual distrusts and hatreds. In the meantime, we wish most heartily good speed to Joseph Arch.—*The Beehive.*

A WORTHY EMPLOYER.

Our respected townsman, Mr. Joseph Metcalfe, was presented on Monday evening last, by his employees, with a complimentary address and a massive gold Albert chain and seal (from the jewellery establishment of Messrs. Radford and Goyer.) The address and Mr. Metcalfe's reply, which we here give speak of themselves, and such a pleasant state of feeling between employer and employees is highly commendable.

Testimonial to Joseph Metcalfe, Esq.—Dear Sir,—We, the employees of your tailoring department, having seen and felt your kindness for some time past, beg to tender our sincere thanks for the same.

We also wish your acceptance of this small token of esteem, not for its intrinsic value, but for the kind feelings and affection we hold towards you.

Hoping yourself, Mrs. Metcalfe and family may long be spared to enjoy all the comforts and blessings of this life, and finally, when the Grand Author of all Trades shall call you from hence, we trust we may all meet in that grand Celestial place, "not made with hands, but eternal in the Heavens." Signed on behalf of the employees.—F. WALTON, Foreman Cutter. Ottawa, Sept. 1st, 1873.

Mr. Metcalfe replied as follows:—In replying to your kind testimonial, I feel at a loss for language to express myself. I can scarcely venture, on the spur of the moment, to give utterance to my feelings. It comes upon me so unexpectedly and unlooked for, I cannot see how I deserve such an expression of friendliness. I have never done for any of you more than my duty, and it has been a question in my mind if to the letter I have always observed the golden rule. And, then, with reference to the very massive and handsome gold chain which, in connection with the above testimonial, you present me with (if it were possible) as a still stronger expression of the kindly feelings existing towards me, I know not what to say, but I trust at all times when I look upon it, the feelings of my heart shall be, so long as we sustain the position we do to each other, that friendship which unites us like the links of a chain may be strengthened. I assure you, you have waked up in my heart a feeling which I trust shall strengthen with every returning day; that in the future I may be enabled to study your comfort, and look upon our interests as identical.

I thank you for your kind prayer for Mrs. Metcalfe and our little family, for our present and future welfare.

In conclusion, I would say, you may rest assured I shall never forget this outburst of kindness while memory holds its seat. I again thank you for this token, and pray that we together may be led to cultivate those heaven-born feelings which in some degree unite us to angels and to God, and that at last it may find its consummation before the eternal throne.—J. METCALFE.—*Ottawa Exchange.*

FOREIGN LABOR NOTES.

We have received several more reports concerning the general condition of co-operation in France. For instance, the co-operative stores of the 18th arrondissement of Paris convoked a general meeting of all its members where it was proved that during the last three months the sale of goods had exceeded £1,600, the purchases £1,400, the working expenses £87, and the net profits £171 odd. On the 30th of June, 1873, there were 473 members, of which 258 only were habitual purchasers, and the average purchase of each member amounted to £6 8s. per month. While the members enjoy the advantage of purchasing superior goods at much cheaper prices than that demanded in ordinary shops, they were able to realize a bonus of eight and one-third per cent. *pro rata* on their purchases. Moved by the example of success of this nature, M. Riviere, manufacturer of braces at Rouen, who employs some 1,800 to 2,000 workmen, has determined to start a co-operative store—bakery, butcher's and grocery—for the workmen engaged on his establishment. From M. Marceau, president of the co-operative stores of Tours, we receive an interesting sketch of the prosperity of that establishment. It was started with the modest capital of £33, which has now been increased by the accumulation of benefits to £273. The shares are nominally £4, of which sixteen shillings only have to be paid within the space of ten months! The remaining £34s. to complete the value of the share is taken from the benefits which of course belong to all the members. Thus the members have become shareholders of a society sufficiently important and wealthy to obtain the full sanction of the law, for an outlay not exceeding tenpence per month during ten months. These successes do not, however, equal the rapid progress of a German co-operative society started in the Bourg, near Magdebourg. This society, to obtain coal at the cheapest possible rate, have actually purchased and equipped a ship to transport the fuel required by the members of the society.

The bakers of the French colony, the Martinique Islands, have struck work, as their employers refused an augmentation of fivepence wages on each oven full of bread produced. In the meanwhile the bakers of Paris are bent on organizing themselves as strongly as circumstances will permit. In 1869 they had started a Syndical Union, but the war interrupted these plans, and now a fresh attempt has been made. Temporary offices have been selected, 12, Rue Bonchardon, and M. A. D. Depland appointed secretary. The hair cutters of Paris have issued an eloquent appeal to their fellow workers. We have already related their efforts to form a union, and we have now before us a manifesto drawn up by the Syndicals elected on the 16th May last. They appeal for subscriptions, but indignantly deny that the capital they hope to raise will be expended in fomenting strikes. Nor will they waste money in carrying before the law courts matters of dispute that may arise between them and their employers. They will devote their capital to the more useful work of creating corporative and co-operative hairdressing establishments. Certainly we are not accustomed to look to hairdressers for leaders in working class movements; yet the circular issued by this body is a truly remarkable document. It concludes by declaring that the hairdressers will always use their best endeavors to maintain friendly relations with their employers.—*The Bee-Hive.*

THE TRADES' UNIONISTS AND THE HOME SECRETARY.

The ordinary monthly meeting of the delegates of the trades' societies forming the London Trades' Council was held last evening at the Bell Tavern, Old Bailey, Mr. Harris in the chair. There was a full attendance. Mr. Shipton, the secretary, reported that in accordance with the instructions of the last meeting he had written to the then Home Secretary (Mr. Bruce), calling his attention to the severity of the sentence passed by Baron Pigott at the Central Criminal Court upon three respectable young men, carpenters, for an assault upon a fellow-workman, and which had been placed before the court as a Trades' Union assault, and asking him to receive a deputation who would be able to lay such facts before him as in their opinion would induce him to mitigate the sentence. To this letter a reply had been received from Mr. Bruce, stating that the matter referred to should receive his immediate attention. In the meantime Mr. Bruce, left the Home-office and Mr. Lowe was appointed Home Secretary, and from that gentleman the following reply (upon an officially printed form) had been received a few days since:

"Sir,—Mr. Secretary Lowe having carefully considered your application on behalf of John Walker, Reuben Tamblin, and William Pyle, I am directed to express to you my regret that there is no sufficient ground to justify him, consistently with his public duty, in advising her Majesty to comply with the prayer thereof.—A. F. O. LIDDELL."

Considerable discussion ensued, and great dissatisfaction was expressed at Mr. Lowe's reply, the former letter of Mr. Bruce having induced the belief that the matter would have been favourably considered. After some strong remarks on the manner in which the working classes have been treated by the present Government the following resolution was unanimously adopted:—
"That, in the opinion of this council, representing the Trades Societies of the metropolis, the answer of the Home Secretary, Mr. Lowe, to the application from the council regarding the cruel and unjust sentence passed by Baron Pigott on Messrs. Walker, Tamblin, and Pyle, is in harmony with his general conduct on all questions affecting the liberties, rights, and claims of labour; and the council views with deep regret his appointment to the Home Secretaryship, as calculated to carry out a haughty, heartless, and vindictive policy towards the working classes, which their conduct does not merit, and can add no dignity to his office."

The council then appointed a committee to arrange the details connected with the forthcoming conference of delegates from the Agricultural Labourers' Unions. The proposal for a federation of all the trades' councils in the United Kingdom, as contained in a letter from the Sheffield Trades' Council, was then considered, and ordered to stand over for further discussion.

The wages of stone-cutters in Chicago, average from \$4 to \$4.50 per day; a rumored intention to strike for an advance, is authoritatively denied.

The strike at the Chicago North Side Rolling Mills still continues; one thousand men are idle on account of it. Cause; a breach of faith on the part of the employers.

The Huddersfield, Eng., cabowners having threatened to withdraw their cabs unless the by-laws were altered, the Town Council have modified the by-laws and increased the fares from 10 to 25 per cent.

Mr. Daniel Guile has been re-elected secretary of the Iron-founders' Society for the next five years by an overwhelming majority. The same body has voted a levy of one shilling a head for assisting Mr. Phillips's movement.

A combination of the boot and shoe manufacturers of New York, Massachusetts, and New Jersey, contemplates bringing about five thousand workmen from Switzerland to assist them in crushing the Grispin organization. Is there any tariff on Swiss workmen?