

jects, were arrested as if they had committed a great crime for simply doing what the Parliament of England two years ago, by a unanimous vote, declared it was the right of every man to do. (Great cheering.) It seemed to me that such a persecution and uncalled for proceeding required prompt action; and that the evil, which arose from the existence, the too long existence, of old and obsolete statutes passed in days of semi-barbarism, when the laws of freedom were perhaps not so fully demanded and understood as now—when there was too, an unwholesome fear of the action of the working-classes—it appears to me, I say, that the fact of the continuance of these laws on the statute books was an evil which required prompt and decided action. (Cheers.) My attention was called to this subject more particularly by the opinion of my learned friend Mr. R. A. Harrison. That opinion was too well founded. It declared what was the disgraceful state of our law in Canada in regard to labor, and it showed to the world that here in a new country, where we ought to be as free as air and entirely liberated from the shackles that exist in older communities, this disgraceful state of the law should no longer continue. Mr. Harrison's opinion then called the evil to my attention first; and then when we were informed that these old and obsolete laws were put in force with so much harshness, the exigency, in my opinion called for prompt action. You have seen that Parliament responded as promptly to the call that I made upon it. Some objection was taken to the Acts that I introduced by some of the members from Lower Canada. They, however, denied one and all of them that they had any distrust of the workingmen. Not one of those gentlemen who opposed these measures on their passage through Parliament had any desire to continue in operation the obsolete laws, or any desire to bear harshly and unduly upon the workingman; but they informed me that Trades' Unions meant something like the Communes of France, those political and turbulent organizations that caused strife in that and other countries on the continent of Europe. I was obliged in my place in Parliament, and on your behalf—and the obligation was one which I cheerfully discharged—to abjure, deny and repudiate in whole and in part the assertion that in uniting together to protect the rights of labor you had any political object in view, any desire to subvert the institutions of the State, any desire to introduce into this country new principles of government and new modes of political action—and I pointed out that your aim was to form combinations which you believed to be legal, and knew to be right and equitable, for the purpose of protecting the workingman. (Great cheering.) I pointed out also, that these laws which I proposed to Parliament could not by any possibility be considered to be an infringement upon the rights of capital. I called attention to the fact that bills similar to these had, two years ago received the unanimous assent of both branches of Parliament in England, and that not one single vote was given, not one single division taken, against them—that although some remarks were made upon the measures during their progress through Parliament, yet they were passed without one dissenting voice. (Cheers.) I said, Here, these measures have passed the House of Lords, the feudal House of the Imperial Parliament, composed principally of members of the feudal aristocracy, of men of wealth, of great landed proprietors, of employers of labor, not a single direct representative of the working-classes having a seat among them; and they have also passed the House of Commons, where there are congregated the great manufacturers of the country, influential landed proprietors, great bankers, leading and powerful contractors who are large employers of labor, and great capitalists, with not a single workingman as yet, though I hope it will not be long before that is altered and the House contains a fair representation of workingmen. How is it possible, I added, that in these two Houses of Parliament, where the vast majority, if not all of them, are employers of labor and great capitalists, measures could receive sanction that would in any way be an infringement upon the rights of capital, and the rights of the employer? (Cheers.) These measures are happily now law, but the discharge of my duty with respect to them and my labor in the preparation of them are very humble services indeed. My task was simply to adapt the provisions of the English statute of 1871 to the circumstances of this country. These laws are now in England—they are still on their trial. They are, I believe, very imperfect. While they cleared the ground by sweeping away all the old, barbarous and obsolete statutes that previously existed on the subject, they will in all probability require to be improved and amended before they can effect all that was desired by their

passage, before the workingman can get all his rights under the law and acquire that status in our social system that he ought to have. (Loud cheers.) But a great thing is accomplished when we commence the reform of old, unnecessary and unsuitable laws. Let us not advance too hastily. Let us move with caution, because if you move with caution you may be sure that measures introduced and carried through Parliament after full and mature consideration will last. These Acts swept away the old statutes which prevented combination between man and man for the promotion and protection of their mutual interests. That was one important step gained. These Acts gave Trades' Unions in this country certain specific rights—gave their members a full and complete right to combine together for the accomplishment of certain lawful purposes, and gave recognition to these corporations as legal or quasi corporations. (Cheers.) The supplementary law was in vindication of the same liberty of action. The Act protected the workingman in the right to combine for a lawful purpose, the other protecting him in the right of non-combination, if he chose to act alone for himself. I am aware that objections have been raised in England to several features of the measure of which the one introduced is a counterpart. It was objected that the machinery of registration was too cumbersome and expensive; but that will be accurately developed as the bill comes more into practical use. Registration was absolutely necessary, for without it a Trades' Union would have no legal status in a court of law. (Hear, hear.) Circumstances might arise which would render it necessary for a legal status to be proven, and without registration that could not possibly be done. It is registration that distinguished a Trades' Union from a voluntary society like that of St. George or St. Patrick or St. Andrew, just as banks are distinguished by their charters and joint stock companies by their articles of co-partnership. (Hear, hear.) I am satisfied that the present measure can be simplified and made more perfect, but it will be well to leave that for the present in the hands of the English workingmen, so that we can be guided and may profit by their experience. (Hear, hear.) I am glad to see that the friends of labor in the mother country are making strenuous efforts to improve the workingman's lot and elevate his standing in society; and from the attention that will be paid to the Trades' Union Act either by the British Government or by some friend of the workingman such as Mr. Thomas Hughes, I do not doubt but that improvements will soon be introduced, which may, with propriety, be copied in this country. (Cheers.) I can only say that as it is my duty it will also be my pleasure to watch the course of legislation in England, and as improvements are carried into practice and embodied in the law of England, I hope, if I continue to occupy a seat in Parliament and a place in the Government of Canada, I shall exercise the same promptitude as before in grafting these improvements and amendments upon the law of this country. (Loud cheers.) I will say more, that while as a Conservative and a British subject I have a great respect for English precedent and English practice, and am well satisfied to follow at a humble distance the course of legislation in England, yet I will not pledge myself to wait an unreasonable time if there is no action in regard to this matter in the mother country. (Cheers.) We know that in an old country like England, where everything runs in well-settled grooves, where people are much more conservative and adverse to change than in this new world, there is greater difficulty experienced in carrying into effect important improvements in the law than in this country, where we are at all times free to approach the consideration of any subject upon its merits, without having to weigh and consider difficulties in advance as in England; and I will say this, that I would invite, at any time you are disposed to make them, communications and suggestions from the Trades' Assemblies of Canada as to any amendment, any extension, any enlargement, any improvement in the present law that you may think desirable or necessary. (Loud and prolonged cheering.) Of course, as the responsibility of introducing a law would rest upon me, and the responsibility of carrying it through and adopting it would rest upon members of Parliament, we must exercise our own judgment upon any measure that I may propose and they may be asked to carry; but I will promise to you here that every suggestion made by the workingmen or their representatives in Canada will receive from me most respectful and prompt attention, and, if possible, will be carried into early and practical effect. (Great cheering.) It is a happy time, sir, that at last, after years and years of blindness, and years and years of suspicion, the relations between labor and capital are slowly but certainly assuming their just

position. Labor and capital should meet precisely upon equal terms, and any law which prevents the employer and the employed from acting in a similar way, or from combining in the same degree and in the same manner, or from standing exactly upon the same footing, occupying the same status and the same platform, is unjust, improper, and should be amended. (Cheers.) Why, sir, the capital involved and possessed by every workingman in the use of his own hands is as valuable and is as much to be appreciated as real working and productive capital as are the fruits of the same labor that are hoarded up in the chests of the capitalist; and unless it is clearly understood that the employer and the employed meet on the same terms of equality, there can be no substantial prosperity, no real happiness, in the country. (Loud cheers.) Now, when it is understood that capitalists can meet and combine in order, if possible, to fix the prices of labor or the period in which labor shall be carried on; when it is equally understood that the workingmen can say, "We demand such a price for our labor, and will work so many hours and no more"—that they can, if they wish, combine together in order to strengthen that demand; and when it is understood that the relations of capital and labor are finally settled upon that basis, then I believe and know that with many reasonable men the chief difficulty that has existed between capital and labor will be solved. Then will come the question of arbitration for the adjustment of disputes, then will come concession, and then will come that real friendly spirit and unity of action between employer and employed without which the industry of no country can be permanently prosperous. (Cheers.) I shall not trouble you longer with my imperfect remarks upon the subject. Again I thank you on behalf of Lady Macdonald for all your kindness to her. Again I thank you for your complimentary language to myself; and I will say to you in conclusion that I ought to have a special interest in this subject, because I am a workingman myself. (Cheers.) I know that I work more than nine hours every day myself, and then I think I am a practical mechanic. (Laughter.) If you look at the Confederation Act, in the framing of which I had some hand, you will admit that I am a pretty good joiner; and as for cabinet-making, I have had as much experience as Jacques & Hay themselves. [At this point, roused by the merriment caused by the Premier's *jeu d'esprit*, a dog that had got amongst the audience barked furiously for some moments.] I should like to find out, (continued Sir John), as a mere matter of curiosity, whether the discontented voice that I heard just now is that of one of the employees of the *Globe*. (Great laughter.) If it be, I can only say that, in my opinion, like his master, his bark is a good deal worse than his bite. (Roars of laughter.) With the remarks I have made, sir, I beg again to return you, on behalf of Lady Macdonald and for myself, our very sincere thanks. (The honorable gentleman resumed his seat amid wild demonstrations of applause, in which the ladies joined by waving their handkerchiefs.)

Three cheers were then called for by the Chairman for Lady Macdonald, and responded to with great enthusiasm.

The Chairman said it had been thought desirable that one of the delegates should make some remarks on the Trades' Union Act. He then introduced Mr. A. Scott, who was loudly cheered.

Mr. Andrew Scott, of the Amalgamated Engineers, was then called upon to pass a few observations on the Trades' Union Bill. He received a very warm reception, and spoke to the following effect:—The significance of the present auspicious occasion is, methinks, admirably fitted to constitute a theme well worthy of our consideration and careful attention. That so great a multitude should assemble together at the close of the exhaustive labours of a hot summer day, to participate in a universal acknowledgment of gratitude to those whose late public deliberations have well merited such an acknowledgment, is full of the greatest significance. It proclaims to all the glorious fact that the industrial classes of this country are fast becoming conscious of their own destinies, and that while they are at all times ready to protest against an injury done, they are ever ready to acknowledge a benefit conferred upon them—(applause)—from whatever source it may be forthcoming. This meeting exhibits a healthy feeling amongst the classes of society that are here represented; and perhaps the rarest, but most important, pleasing, and elevating feature of the present gathering is the happy introduction of the female element. (Cheers.) We hail with no ordinary feelings of satisfaction and delight the presence of those cheerful beaming countenances of our fair companions, and while grateful for their manifestations of sympathy, he would hope that the day is not far distant when they too shall follow the example of their sex on the other side of the ocean, by lifting up their voices on behalf of their social and political claims—(great applause)—and so make their influence to tell upon the mind of

this great country. The subject matter that is more particularly brought under our notice to-night, as has just been intimated by our chairman, is the existence and operations of trades' combinations. The circumstance that originated that inquiry must be fresh on the minds of all present, and on the minds of many will continue fresh and vivid for months and years to come. It would be difficult to find a parallel to the selfish and tyrannical outrage that was lately committed upon a peaceable and intelligent association of workmen, a detailed account of which has already been given by our chairman—at a time when the trades' unions of Canada were resting in what they considered to be perfect security—a security which latterly turned out to be only imaginary, for we found that a sufficiently well known class of unscrupulous employers, headed by a notorious newspaper editor, combined for the purpose of splitting up and totally annihilating the existence of those institutions, upon the successful building up of which to a great extent depends the future prosperity and stability of our young country. We rejoice to know, however, that in their unhalloved efforts they have been entirely defeated, and we are here to-night to present a small tribute of gratitude to Canada's greatest statesmen. (Applause.) The remarks that fell from Sir John in reference to his willingness to follow in the wake of the Reform Legislatures of the mother country are very acceptable. Would that our employers had adopted the same principle in connection with the reduction of the hours of labour. (Applause.) We would have had a happier and more contented people. (Applause.) While fully appreciating the advantages that are likely to flow from the operations of this law, advantages that would be still further increased by the introduction of some modifications which may be considered advisable. We are willing, however, to accept the invitation of Sir John, and consult him upon those matters on a more suitable occasion. It might, however, be stated that the Bill known as the Criminal Law Amendment Act could never meet the unanimous approval of the workingmen, the passing of which has excited universal dissatisfaction among the artisans of both the old country and this. And we would impress upon our future Government the propriety of repealing that law in its entirety, and so render the invidious and irritating distinctions between one class and others of Canadian subjects unnecessary. We have great reason to feel satisfied that when the coming elections are over and the same great statesmen returned to their seats upon the Ministerial benches, we shall experience little difficulty in obtaining a full and impartial consideration (applause,) and that is what we want. I do not profess to belong to one political party more than another, and I believe in this assertion. I only echo the sentiments of the Trades' Assembly and hundreds of workingmen besides. (Great applause.) But if we were to be ruled by our experience in the past, we cannot help supporting those men who have proved to be our friends in practice and not in profession merely. I feel it to be a duty incumbent upon that class with which I am identified to render a return to those who confer benefits upon us, and to use every possible exertion to prevent those men who are the antagonists to our best interests, from getting into power. (Cheers.) It is one of the first principles of trades associations, to promote the social advancement and intellectual elevation of our human brotherhood, (applause,) and if we can combine for the furtherance of these objects we shall have done something for the progress of humanity. (Cheers.) It is only fair to recognize in simple, but feeling language the noble and independent attitude assumed by one of our city newspaper proprietors. (Loud and prolonged cheering.) We all know that when we had no organ of our own, and every newspaper in the city was closed against us, how frankly and freely he opened his columns to the discussion of one of the most important social questions that ever attracted the attention of any country. (Applause.) Need I say that I refer to our friend Mr. Beaty, (great cheering.)

"Who proved to be our friend when other friend was none,
Our champion when we had but one."

(Cheers.) With these few rambling remarks I will now give place to other abler and more interesting speakers. (Great and prolonged applause.)

The Chairman then stated that he had another pleasing duty to perform; and that was to call upon the Corresponding Secretary to read a complimentary address to Mr. Beaty, M. P., the member for East Toronto. (Cheers.) This address would be presented to Mr. Beaty in recognition of the recent expression of his manly independence—at a time too when the workingmen needed a friend. (Cheers.)

Mr. Hewitt then stepped forward to read the address to Mr. Beaty amid loud cheering. He said he was very much pleased to observe the success and unanimity which had characterized the meeting up to that moment. (Cheers.) This had been accomplished despite all the mean, contemptible opposition shown by the *Globe* for the purpose of sowing the seeds of discord in the ranks of the workingmen. (Cheers.) The success of the meeting had proved that these attempts were abortive. The audience had met there that night not as classes but as workingmen, co-

mingled together without tearing each others' throats, and it was evident the class cry only existed in the deranged brain of the writer in the *Globe*. (Cheers.) They were there not as politicians, for the workingmen cared nothing for the success of the Conservative or the Reform party—as mere parties. It was measures they wanted; and measures they would have. (Loud cheers.) So the party cry had no existence outside the sanctum of the *Globe* office. (Hear, hear.) There was yet one thing Brown and his party might do to endeavor to belittle the grand, unanimous, and spontaneous outburst of feeling on the part of the working classes, and that was by buying up a few more Terence O'Toole's and with a force of "rats" in the *Globe* office hold an indignation meeting that would shake the Queen City of the West, from centre to circumference, for the purpose of denouncing the course pursued by the Trades Assembly upon that occasion. (Cheers.) Mr. Hewitt then read the address, as follows:—

To JAMES BEATY, Esq., M. P.

SIR,—As an evidence of the esteem which the noble attitude assumed by you during the recent Labor agitation, has won for you among the workingmen of Canada, the Toronto Trades' Assembly would seek, in a simple form, to present you with a sincere acknowledgment of the friendly interest you have shown towards the comfort and well-being of Canada's hardy sons of toil. And while expressing our admiration of the manly independence which has long formed a prominent characteristic in your transactions as a member of Parliament, a newspaper proprietor, an employer of labor, and a useful active citizen of Toronto, we would fain hope that the day of separation may be far distant, and that the residue of your life may be spent in peaceful felicity and unbroken, harmony among that class of society in whose social elevation you have manifested an unfeigned interest.

Feeling persuaded that few gentlemen of public distinction in Canada have ever enjoyed so large a share of working-class esteem as that now enjoyed by you, we venture to believe that you will continue to show yourself to be one of the truest and most faithful friends that the industrial community have ever possessed, and to make yourself a name that shall entitle you to distinctive remembrance.

Signed on behalf of the Toronto Trades Assembly.

ANDREW MCCORMACK, President.
JOHN HEWITT, Secretary.

Mr. Beaty, in response, said he felt embarrassed at the mark of confidence that had been bestowed upon him by the workingmen whom he had the honour to represent in Parliament. He referred to the condition of the labouring class in the country; and the fact that it was through human industry that mankind had been raised to its present elevation. The capitalists desired to give as little as they could for the labour by which they profited, and this disposition had to be counteracted by such combinations as Trades Unions. (Cheers.) He said that during recent contests between capital and labour the latter had evinced such a spirit as could only have emanated from good sense and consciousness of moral obligation; and the ability in speaking and writing shown by the representatives of labour spoke highly of their studious habits. He argued that just as commercial stock-in-trade fluctuated in accordance with the laws of demand and supply and so there was no reason why the price of labour should not be governed by the same laws. (Loud cheers.) As long as they continued to act on the principal of doing unto others as they would that others should do to them, their cause was bound to prosper. He remarked that it would probably be said on the morrow that he came there from a political motive; but, whilst being conscious that such was not his motive, the address which they had so kindly presented to him would bear him through all that might be said, particularly that journal which delighted in malicious misrepresentation. (Disapprobation.) In conclusion he referred to that greatest of men, save one, who, though called directly by Jehovah to go forth to evangelize the world, did not disdain to earn his living as a tent-maker, and he cited him as a great example to them, and as one of whom, as a fellow workman, they might be justly proud. He concluded by thanking them for the honour they had done him. Mr. Beaty sat down amid great applause.

At the conclusion of Mr. Beaty's speech Mr. McCormack was called to the chair, and a unanimous vote of thanks was accorded to Mr. Williams for his conduct in presiding over the meeting.

Mr. Williams in acknowledging the compliment said he felt honoured in presiding over a meeting of such an intellectual character. He had accepted the position, though somewhat physically disqualified for such an onerous post, to avoid anything like misrepresentation in a journal which was only too ready to misrepresent.

Before the assembly separated three cheers were given for the Queen and the Guests.

Outside the hall a torch-light procession was formed, headed by the band, and the horses were taken from the carriage in which rode Sir John and Lady Macdonald, Mr. Beaty and Mr. McCormack, and it was drawn by a number of members of the Trades Assembly.

The procession passed down Church street to King, up King to York, down York to Front, and along Front to the Queen's Hotel. In front of the hotel an immense crowd was assembled, and in response to repeated calls Sir John Macdonald appeared and made a few remarks. He was followed by Mr. J. E. Dodds and Mr. James Beaty. After giving cheers for the Queen, Sir John and Lady Macdonald, and Mr. Beaty, the assembly dispersed.