

# THE ONTARIO WORKMAN.

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

VOL. I.

TORONTO, THURSDAY, APRIL 25, 1872.

NO. 2.

## THE NINE-HOURS MOVEMENT.

### MASS MEETING.

#### THE VOICE OF THE PEOPLE.

Another largely-attended Mass Meeting was held in the East Market Square last evening, for the purpose of still further agitating the Nine Hour Movement, and also of giving expression of opinion respecting the action of those "Masters" who are resorting to such base and contemptible means in attempting to crush out the present agitation for social improvement; and certainly the indignation felt by the assembled thousands was expressed in no unmistakable terms. There were some 4,000 persons present, who listened with earnest attention to the remarks of the different speakers, who were kindly allowed the use of the balcony of the Albion Hotel from which to address the people.

Mr. J. S. Williams, President of the Toronto Trades Assembly, presided over the meeting. He alluded to the meeting held in the Market Square on Tuesday of last week as being a spontaneous outburst of the indignation felt by all true men on account of the harsh and tyrannical means made use of by the employers in endeavouring to crush out the movement among the operative classes, and while that meeting—called at almost a moment's notice—gave evidences of their indignation and disapproval, yet it had been deemed advisable to still further supplement that by another mass meeting, at which suitable resolutions could be put forward, expressive of the sentiments of the masses in this matter. The speaker briefly reviewed the successes that had already attended the movement in many places, stating that everything had transpired to give them encouragement to persevere in their efforts. After some further remarks, he introduced as the mover of the first resolution Mr. Richard Nye.

Mr. Richard Nye, who, on coming forward, was greeted with loud cheers, said it afforded him much pleasure in again taking up the post of duty, and from which he did not nor would not flinch; but that England expected that every man would do his duty, and as he (the speaker) was from the shores of Old Albion he was highly gratified to be able from the balcony of the Albion Hotel, to advocate the rights and claims of his fellow-workmen, whom, he was pleased to see, had met so numerously for such a noble purpose as for their own advancement, and to vindicate liberty and justice, and to which they, as British subjects owing allegiance to Her Majesty the Queen and the good old Union Jack, were rightly entitled to. (Applause.) The resolution he held in hand he was sure would meet with their approval, which it well merited:—"That this meeting, considering the nature of the opposition offered to the nine-hour movement, to be of the most contemptible, ignominious and inhuman character, and altogether without a parallel in the history of trades disputes in any country, resolves to continue in the same determined course as has hitherto been adopted, and pledges itself to leave nothing undone that is calculated to bring the present unhappy contest to a successful issue." (Cheers.) The speaker then said he would make a few sorry remarks upon the progress of the movement so successfully inaugurated in Dominion of Canada, and that derived origin from England, our Mother Country, and not from the United States, who are actively agitating the eight and the nine hours movement. (Hear, hear.) Belonging, as we do, to the great Anglo-Saxon race, we should be untrue to ourselves and the interest which we represent if we did not endeavour to put our own on an equality with our brethren at home, and it would be unfair for us to work when they are only working nine hours, that would give an undue advantage to the employers of this country in the

competition of their various articles of manufacture. They meet our reasonable demands with the unreasonable plea that it is a young, struggling country, and therefore cannot afford to lessen the hours of labour; but is not the condition of this young country better able to afford it than the old one? Competition is much keener there having more to contend with from foreign competition, also the crowded state of the labour market and many other things rendered the nine-hours system much more difficult to obtain than what it is in this flourishing country. Again, look at the other young British Colonies, do they say they are too young that they cannot afford to work less than ten hours per day? No, eight hours is their system! They are not so selfish in their policy. Then, why should Canada be behind? The good time is coming. The Great Western and the Grand Trunk Railways, and several of the principal printing firms of this city have conceded the nine hours. So let us take hope for the future. All trades must eventually obtain the same boon. By your presence here to-night, and by your manifestations, I can see you are in eager expectation of receiving it, and I know that you will all make a good use of it, and show the world that you are not the lazy, venal and corrupt class many depict you, but I advise those that rail at workmen to look more to themselves, and not so much at other people. Those that live in glass houses should never throw stones. At a meeting of the masters the other night they tried to concoct all kinds of schemes, something like the fable of the mice, who held a meeting to devise means to give them notice of the approach of the dreaded cat. One mouse said, put a bell round the cat's neck, but the question arose, who was to do it. And so with this important meeting of the masters of the city. One worthy speaker said, the best plan would be to get men from the old country, but some one in reply said that they were worse than the Canadians; they want what they enjoy at home, when they come out here, and make others dissatisfied with their position; the best thing we can do is to drive them out of the country, especially the best men in their ranks; discharge them from our employ—which practice he (Mr. Nye) had experienced, but he was still here, and did not intend going away, not even to Manitoba, which was highly recommended to him by one of his late worthy employers. They have made a mistake in thinking by such means they could crush this grand movement out; and as regards bringing more mechanics out, it matters little, for Englishmen are all filled with the same brush—very fond of liberty and freedom—and never will stand against the wish of any one striving for more leisure from the toils of everyday life; and the emigrants of Great Britain on their arrival here look upon Canada as their home, and Canadians as brothers and sisters; and although the Atlantic rolls its mighty billows between us and the land of our birth, we can feel no distinction; we all have a hearty welcome in your midst, and which we are proud to reciprocate; and by doing our duty, obeying the laws of the country, and acting honestly to all men, we have no fear but what we shall retain your good will. Never mind the "masters" of Canada. I know that you—the people—will not drive us out of your glorious country. (Cheers, and cries of "No, no!") I may safely assert that the same cordial spirit prevails on the other side, among all classes, towards their Canadian brethren. Last July I was encamped as a volunteer on Wimbledon Common in England; and I felt proud, and so you all would have done if you had witnessed the arrival of the Canadian Volunteers as they marched upon the ground, and to hear the ringing British cheers with which they were greeted; and also the prizes they received for their skill as marksmen, and the praises bestowed upon them for their soldier-like bearing during their short stay, proves that England is proud of her Canadian sons; and well she may be all the while you continue to loyal to her, your Mother country. The speaker then referred to the un-English and unjust oppression in the arrest of peaceful and respectable citizens, members of the Typographical Union, on the charge of conspiracy. All they had conspired to do was to better their and our positions; and he (the speaker) characterized it as degrading and dishonourable of those that instigated such an unheard of proceeding. A certain person that used to be termed an honorable, strung his bow too much, and has over-shot the mark, and stands defenceless upon the *Globe* forsaken. Yes, it is deeds, not words—by them we know who is our real friend; and we have discovered an enemy in disguise in the once big and mighty Champion of Reform, but let him not trespass upon our too-confiding nature any more. We thought him honourable, but his actions have not proved so. In conclusion, as Secretary of the Cabinet Makers' Society, I will briefly state that we are doing well. Oshawa, Bowmanville, and other places are acting on the determination to have the nine hours, and that in event of a strike on the 1st June, in the factory in this city, we have nearly a hundred benches for men to go to at that time in the United States, and the rest we can keep going on strike, so it remains with employers whether they will give the request or lose their best workmen—for go they will, as the pay is better there; and of course men will study their best interests. But I should be sorry to see any one go when it can be so easily avoided by giving to the men at first what most come at last. (Loud cheers.) He had great pleasure in moving the resolution he had read.

Mr. Wiggins, of the Iron Moulders Union, with a few remarks seconded the resolution, which was carried unanimously.

The Chairman then introduced Mr. Matthew Ryan, advocate of Montreal, who referred to the lecture he was about to deliver on "capital, labor and laborers," which lecture he said had been delivered in Montreal long before the present excitement arose in Canada, and that it was written in view of the movement which was then going on in Europe. It would therefore be seen that it was not to pander to any class feeling that he proposed to re-deliver it in Toronto, but because he thought the ideas then set down appropriate to the present condition of things in the city. He was there to advise them to proceed in the manly course they had taken in defence of their rights. Without labor and laborers society would perish, therefore it was to the common interest to see that the laborer was not over-worked, as the seventh day of rest had been tested by experience to be requisite for existence—the French having tried wickedly, and in vain, to do with every tenth—so it had been amply shown that nine or ten hours was the limit of a man's capacity for daily work. England had sanctioned the limitation of the hours of labor by passing her ten hours' Bill. Since that she had instituted enquiries into the condition of the agricultural laborer, and had pronounced that that class was over work, and legislation would no doubt follow upon it. He was not there to find fault with England; he could urge complaints as to the past, but on the whole, he believed in the wisdom and fairness of her present views. He then proceeded to speak of Joseph Arch, the leader of the movement among the agricultural laborers in South Warwickshire, and wished him success in his efforts for the amelioration of that class. (Cheers.) He went on to say that the laborer had the right to cease to work for any set of masters when he chose, and to confer and consult for the bettering of his condition. He defied even lawyers to say that they had not this right to a certain extent, even under the present law, and it was but a natural right of men after all. (Applause.) If any law, common or statutory, opposed such a right, they had it in their power to have it altered, and some steps had been already taken in that direction at Ottawa. He had observed the present movement to be peaceable, orderly, and intelligent; and he advised them to continue so, and victory would be sure to follow. He suggested that they should cultivate in their heart of hearts a spirit of compromise. Let them not be exacting; capital and labor should not be hostile the one to the other; to be useful they should combine, and therefore all fair means, such as conference and consultation should be first tried. He was glad to see such good order and good feeling prevail among the workmen, and had learned with pleasure that reconciliation between them and the employers had commenced. He wished success to the honest claims of the laborer, and would speak at length on those claims in his lecture to-morrow night.

The Chairman, referring to the latter part of Mr. Ryan's remarks, said that the Typographical Union had tried again and again to bring about a conference with the masters in reference to the present question, but their advances had been most uncourteously thrust aside on every occasion, and that therefore they (the employers) must be held responsible for forcing the matter to the issue it had taken.

The resolution was then put, and carried unanimously, amidst the greatest enthusiasm. Mr. Hewitt, of the Cooper's Union, then proposed the following resolution:—"That this meeting, witnessing the action taken against a number of respectable tradesmen engaged in the present strike, does unhesitatingly condemn such a procedure as unwise, uncalled for, and greatly calculated to mar the peace and harmony that has so long prevailed in our midst." In speaking to this resolution, Mr. Hewitt spoke of the rapid progress which the world had made during the seven decades of the present century. He reminded them that such a meeting as the present would not have been tolerated seventy years ago. There were, at present, men out of work and suffering privation on account of standing up for their principles, but they were to remember that all the progress he had spoken of had been made through suffering. Trades' Unions were a product of the age, and the workmen had found it necessary to combine in defence of their rights against capital. In Great Britain alone there were 1,500,000 of working men organized in Trades' Unions. There were men on the platform with him who were connected with organizations which counted their tens of thousands. There was a cosmopolitan feeling abroad among working men; they were losing that local and sectional feeling which used to characterize them, and so workmen throughout the whole world were becoming connected. In Toronto, he said, there were a few men under the command of a Grit leader trying to trample Trades' Unionism out of existence

here, but they might as well try to stem Niagara. (Cheers.) What the combined efforts of capital throughout the civilized world would have failed to do, George Brown and his satellites have undertaken. (Laughter and cheers.) So long as capitalists try to take advantage of labor, so long will the need of such organization exist, and never in the history of Toronto has the organization of the masses been on so firm a basis. He heartily sympathized with the motion which he had just read, and while he was grieved at the present breach, for which the masters were alone to blame, yet it was a question, they felt themselves entitled to what they asked, and they must go through with it. (Cheers and applause.)

Mr. Levesley, of the Machinists and Blacksmiths' Union, was then introduced by the chairman for the purpose of seconding the motion. He said that when the ancient Romans prepared for war, they raised their courage by extolling the valour of their opponents. The opponents of the nine hours' movement were doing all they could to belittle the movement. They were asserting that one-twentieth of the population were asking it; but the large mass meetings which had gathered together on so many occasions positively contradicted that. He then went on to speak of the necessity of union, and of working in unison and all in the same direction. He said that those men who make a great cry of Reform, were the very men who had put detectives on the track. (Yells and hooting.) He concluded by advising them to be firm, and much cheering was elicited when he said that the law had been degraded in making it responsible for the late incarcerations.

Mr. E. Parsons Roden, of the editorial staff of the *Leader*, on being called forward to support the resolution, did so in a humorous speech. He said that he was pleased to observe that the intelligent countenances which he saw beaming before him lit up the darkness of the night. He reminded those present that they had gained a great deal of what they were striving for, but that they must continue to support their friends, the printers and bookbinders, as the former especially were persecuted as well as prosecuted. He charged them to continue their vigilance, as their persecutors might be again down upon them at any time with some other obsolete English law. He thanked them for the sums of money now being subscribed for the purpose of enabling the printers, who were on bail, to get the best possible legal advice, mentioning the fact that a friend had called upon him the other evening with \$42 as a subscription from a few friendly mechanics, and that another had handed in \$10 a few minutes before he came to the meeting. Speaking of the English Common Law, under which the printers were charged with conspiracy, he said that the grandfathers of the men who were now prosecuting the printers upon that law, had also enacted that a man should not kiss his own wife on a holiday under a penalty of fourpence. (Cheers and laughter.) A great attempt had been made to stamp out the present movement, but it needed more than all the big feet—(Here the speaker was interrupted by laughter and cheers, among which a voice was heard to cry, "O, Geordie!") There were more managing directors than one in the world, and the Managing Directors of the Grand Trunk and Great Western railways had readily acceded to the request of their employers for the reduction of the hours of labor. The Grand Trunk had come in "on time" on this question. (Cheers.) Mr. Brydges was a gentleman every inch, but his action in this respect would no doubt fail to be appreciated by those men who had been keeping tally of the Grand Trunk time-table for years past. (Cheers, and cries of "That's a fact.") He reminded the meeting of the alliance that had been formed against the printers, and asked them to note the result. Several newspaper proprietors had united their forces for the purpose of defeating the printers, and their papers presented the appearance of having had a violent attack of small-pox. (Cheers and laughter.) This close alliance had almost crushed the life out of certain journals. Their appearance reminded one of the fruit that—"went in a lemon and came out squeezed,"—there being little left but the useless rind. (Cheers and laughter.) He urged upon the meeting to allow nothing to prevent the closest union among the trades' associations, and to consider the present victories as an omen of future gratifying success. (Cheers.)

The Chairman then put the resolution, which was carried unanimously.

Mr. Andrew Scott, of the Amalgamated Engineers, who on coming forward was warmly received, said:—"Mr. Chairman and fellow workmen, there are times in the history of nations when the people are called upon to lift up their voices in the vindication of their rights and freedom. It seemed from the large assemblage which he saw beneath him, as though the citizens of Toronto had arrived at that time. The resolution which he held in his hand seemed a somewhat strange one, but it was one which he believed would be fully borne

out by those to whom he would read it:—"That, inasmuch as the Police Magistrate has frequently exhibited a spirit of impartiality in discharging the important and responsible duties incumbent upon his office, this meeting heartily disapproved of such a dishonourable and unmanly character and agrees to bring all possible influence to bear upon the Government to secure a fair and equitable administration of justice upon all classes of the community." (Hear hear and cheers.) This was a resolution which he believed well calculated to call forth the expressions of a people, who for a long time had been subjected to an improper unjust and partial administration of justice. There had been cases before the Police Court which had been most unjustly and improperly dealt with by the person who held the office of Police Magistrate. The speaker would however, not enter into details of these cases, but would confine himself to the point at issue. There was involved in this issue matters of great importance to the working community at large; matters which were well worthy of the consideration of every considerate individual. The people of Toronto and throughout the Dominion were now lifting up their voices in claiming a great moral reform. The reason why they should have and were entitled to this reform had been spread through the press, and he was proud to say that they had not met with any fair or just opposition. There were men who, with all the unfair means which they could muster, had tried to make the people of the country believe that theirs was a good condition. What the people wanted was better government, men that would not be governed by any party. They wanted men who were prepared to stand by those who stood by them. The working classes were energetically pushing on in a great moral reform. The Typographical and Bookbinders' Unions had taken the lead, and they must not forget to render them their support. They had no intention of making interference with the internal working of any workshop, but it had been admitted on all sides that the workman had a right to dispose of his labour to the best advantage. (Cheers.) It behoved them, now that the movement was already commencing to prove successful, to continue on in the course they were pursuing, and see that the movement was carried to a successful issue. But he was sorry to say there were men amongst them who had acted with treachery to the cause and had turned away from the road which was sure eventually to lead to success. He concluded by exhorting them to press onward to secure a system of labour that should redound with honor on their heads and to the benefit of future generations. (Cheers.)

Mr. Gibson, of the Iron Moulders' Union, in seconding the resolution, merely remarked that it was not often that he broke the law, but when he did so, he wanted some one who would administer justice in a fair and impartial manner. (Hear, hear.)

Mr. Williams then put the resolution, which was carried unanimously. He said the time was close at hand when they would be called upon to give a practical illustration of the vote which they had just recorded. He reminded them that Mr. Ryan, of Montreal, was to deliver a lecture in the Agricultural Hall this (Thursday) evening, on "Capital, Labour and Labourers." Also that copies of the ONTARIO WORKMAN could be obtained at any of the news stores this afternoon.

Three cheers were then given for "the Queen," "the movement and those engaged in it." Three cheers were also given for *The Leader*, and groans for the *Globe* and McNabb.

The meeting, which had been most orderly throughout, then quietly dispersed.

Children are getting positively dangerous to society, they are so high-spirited and belligerent. Duels, suicides and murders are no longer occupations only of the mature and highly developed, but these noble functions are being usurped by very babes and sucklings as we have had frequent occasion to note of late. Only last Monday two lads of 13, at New Haven, in the land famous for the steady habits of its people, ended their play with a quarrel in which one gave the other a fatal stab in the abdomen with a pocket knife. It is to be hoped that such proceedings are not becoming a steady habit in Connecticut.—*Exchange*

The difference in the price of meat at various places is worth notice. In Australia, five cents per pound is considered a high price for the best mutton, (Southdown and Leicester cross breeds,) while the price in London is sixteen to eighteen cents the pound. In Manchester, first-class beef is offered at three cents; mutton at sixteen, and pork at twelve cents per pound. In the large American cities, prices to housekeepers average 100 per cent above these quotations. Nevertheless, all our cattle markets, prices range lower than are obtained in the English markets. The profits to our retail dealers must be very great.