LABOR'S LEGISLATURE.

MEETING OF THE TORONTO TRADES AND LABOR COUNCIL LAST FRIDAY

Reports of the Various Committees The Immigration Question The Street Railway—Civic Reforms Etc

The first meeting for May of the Trades and Labor Council was held on the evening of Friday 1st inst , vice-president G Bradley in the chair. In the absence of the Secretary, Mr G Dower was appointed secretary *pro tem.*

Delegate O'Donoghue then presented the report of the Legislative Committee as follows

LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE'S REPORT.

Your Legislative Committee in this their first report for May, 1891, beg leave to present, that

In accordance with the resolution and instruction of your body at its last meeting,

Your Committee next day waited on the United States Consul at the port of Toronto in reference to the action of a person who was advertising for masons, bricklayers, and others to engage to go to Chicago to work, and one of the conditions, by way of inducement, being the granting of free passages. Besides this, definite wages, varying according to the character of the work, was offered, all indicating a violation of the United States Alien Contract Labor law.

Your Committee did not find the Consul in his office when they called, but were fortunate in meeting the Vice Consul, Mr Herschfelder After hearing the facts, and considering the situation generally, this official expressed his willingness to do all he could to thwart the intention of this agent, who had openly admitted that trouble was anticipated between the employers and employes in the building trades in Chicago, and that those he would engage were to take the places of other workingmen in the event of either a lock-out or strike. Independently of this, and having watched the outgoing trains for Chicago for some days, your Committee placed itself in prompt communications with other United States officials in various parts of that country, with a result clearly indicated in the letters of reply submitted herewith Your Committee are much pleased in announcing as a result of their efforts, that the agent referred to deemed discretion the better part of valor, and removed his advertisements on Saturday morning, and could not be found afterwards although diligently sought after by those who had agreed with him and had anticipated a free trip to Chicago.

Occasions like this illustrate in a very forcible manner the necessity of the existence of trade and labor councils in large centres of population, and where they should ever be found equal to an emergency.

Your Committee desire to acknowledge the courtesy of the chief secretary of the Emigrants' Information Office, London, England, in forwarding for the use of your body a copy of the circulars for Canada, dated 1st April, 1891. Your Committee cannot find language within the range of propriety strong enough in condemnation and contradiction of the statements in this circular as to the wages prevailing in some instances, the chances of securing employment, and the demand for mechanics and laborers in Canada, and more especially in Ontario. For instance, although, as all admit, there are thousands in our midst unable to secure employment at the present time, this circular, dated April 1st, inst , very coolly tells the working-people of Great Britain that "this is the best month in the year for mechanics to emigrate, as winter is now over. * * * The mechanics from whom the demand is *now* most general are bricklayers, masons, joiners, carpenters, painters, glaziers and plasterers." This statement is simply untrue and there can be no excuse for its publication, unless it be that the statement was intended to deceive There is no demand, beyond that usual in spring-time for any of the tradesmen named, and that demand this spring is much less than in like season of past years. Large numbers of bricklayers, masons, joiners, carpenters, painters, and glaziers are idle because of lack of demand and work, while the stagnation in the plasterers' trade is especially notable. Again, in speaking of the demand for and wages paid female servants we read that " wages in Ontario average *$6 a week*." As a matter of fact *$8 per month* will be found a high average wages for female servants in Ontario

Your Committee recommend, in view of the continued reiteration of such utterances as just quoted in the quarterly and other circulars respecting Canada's labor market, rates of wages, etc. and published at the instance of Canada's High Commissioner in London, that your body instruct your Committee to take steps to bring the subject under the official notice His Excellency the Governor-General and the Dominion Government, as well as to the attention of the Imperial Government of Great Britain through the offices of the Hon the Secretary of State for the Colonies, and the Hon the President of the Board of Trade and such further steps as may be deemed expedient in bringing the actual condition of our labor market to the more general notice of the working-people abroad

Your Committee are much pleased in noting that despite the immense sums of public money placed at the disposal of the Canadian Immigration Department for the dissemination of such *reliable* information as that quoted above, the Canadian High Commissioner felt constrained to compliment your body for the energy with which it has propagated its views on the subject throughout England. Sir Charles Tupper, in his annual report to the Canadian Government, dated Dec 31 1890 feels constrained to say that

"In 1888 and 1889 Canada in common with most other countries experienced rather unfavorable seasons, although the effects in the Dominion were not so serious as those experienced in many parts of the world There is no doubt that during those years the letters sent by the settlers in Canada to their friends at home were not so encouraging as those which are usually written in a good season, and this must have had some effect in keeping people back Then again, in certain quarters in Canada there is a disposition to discourage immigration and owing to the energy with which these ideas have been propagated, a feeling of distrust has been caused in the minds of many intending emigrants, who as a class, are most susceptible to any discouraging remarks that may come to them and do not give the matter that serious investigation which would in many cases show their fears to be groundless. Then, again, statements of a disparaging nature now and again appear in the press in the form of letters, or in other ways made possibly with no intention of their being repeated abroad Such statements, however, are often seized upon by our competitors and by persons who prefer to look upon the black side of things, and their circulation tends for a time to retard the work your agents are doing in reliable information as to the undoubted advantages which Canada offers to settlers of the classes in demand * * * It is admitted on all sides that the class of emigrants who have been going out to Canada is superior in every way (this year) and that they are calculated to make good settlers."

Your Committee readily admit that the Canadian High Commissioner can well afford to look on the bright side of the immigration question while he practically controls the application and expenditure of the greater part of some $250,000, even though, as already stated, hundreds of mechanics and laborers in this country fail in finding employment either of a temporary or permanent character. If telling the truth as so the actual condition of our labor market has caused distrust in the minds of the working people of England, the admission on the part of Hon. Sir Charles Tupper must be a source of satisfaction to your body.

Your Committee desire to remark also that as all the reports of immigrants in each year, for many years past, always declared that the immigrants for each year was so much "superior" to those of that preceding, the superlative as to the character and quality of immigrants has at last been reached. But the statement is only a conventional and stereotyped one, and is in keeping with the other "reliable" information emanating from the Immigration Department, manipulated by Mr. John Lowe, the Deputy head thereof.

The report concluded by drawing attention to the report of the annual meeting of the Trustees and Managers of the House of Industry showing that the number of families relieved during the last twelve months had been 2,035 as compared with 1,459 for the corresponding period of 1889-90 and 1,280 in 1888 89. The actual number receiving assistance during the year reached the total of 9,453 or about one-twentieth of the entire population. At that meeting a resolution was adopted urging upon the City Council the necessity of devising some plan for giving employment to able bodied resident citizens who are out of work.

Your Committee in concluding, and in view of the fact that the present session of the Provincial Legislature is within a day or two of its close, desire to say that while every possible attention was paid to such measures as were of special interest to wage earners, it is deemed advisable to make only a progress at this stage

All respectfully submitted.

W. H. PARR, *Chairman*

TORONTO, *May 12, 1891.*

Delegate J. Armstrong regretted that no reference had been made to one or two subjects to which he had previously drawn attention. He desired to know if it was true that the Secretary of the Committee had appeared before the Private Bills Committee of the Provincial Legislature and in the name of the Trades Council opposed the Bill respecting the city of Toronto, and if so on what authority of the Trades and Labor Council?

Delegate Park, as chairman of the Committee, satisfactorily replied as to the first points raised.

Delegate O'Donoghue, secretary, said that he had been before the Private Bills committee, and was glad in being able to announce that his efforts contributed in some degree in throwing out the most objectable parts of that Bill, in accordance with a resolution of the Trades and Labor Council, which declared that any measure of civic reform not including the payment of aldermen, cumulative vote, and doing away with the property qualifications of aldermen would be unsatisfactory. As the city Bill had contained neither of these stipulations he had no hesitation as to his action in the premises. He asked Delegate Armstrong how he, not being authorized or requested, took upon himself the liberty of going before the same House Committee some time before, and approving of the said Bill in the name of the Trades and Labor Council, while he (O'Donoghue) as a member of the Legislative Committee, and by its instruction was combating the objectionable features of the Undertakers' Bill, in another part of the House Delegate Armstrong did not reply, and the report was adopted as read.

Messrs. John S Warr, Geo Dibbs and Fred Pannal were received as duly accredited delegates from L.A 5650 Knights of Labor

Delegate J. Armstrong read the report of the Municipal Committee as follows —

MUNICIPAL COMMITTEE REPORT

Your committee beg leave to submit the following report :—

Last Monday night's meeting of the City Council witnessed a sad havoc of the people's rights and interests. It was unparalleled in the history of civic legislation in Toronto for a wonton disregard of the sacred obligation of an alderman The wire puller, the schemer, the big and little monopolist—all had their innings Not a slip was made in the preconcerted deals from the gigantic undertaking of reclaiming Ashbridge's Bay to the exclusive right of running a refreshment booth at Island Park With a few creditable exceptions all the aldermen had been well button holed into line for the occasion It must have taken months of time and patience to perfect such discipline as was shown last Monday night, as each alderman having his big or little axe to grind was on time, and knew well where his place was, those who got through their scheme first went to the assistance of their less fortunate brother, and gave a helping hand No matter how strong were the protests put forward by the few who remained faithful to the people's rights, it was all in vain. Each scheming alderman went there to perform his little task at the crack of the monopolistic whip, and to their credit (or rather discredit), be it said, come weal or woe in the future, each carried his part through to a successful issue The Smalls, Leslies and Hewitts champion the giving away of Ashbridge's Bay for forty-five years, to some nameless company, under the plea of reclaiming the marsh lands of said Bay No consideration was given to the important question as to who should pay for the 125 foot roadway contemplated to run east and west immediately north of the proposed channel and south of the mainland. No doubt these worthy representatives of the people forsooth desire another "Don Improvement muddle" along the new water front. When Ald. Small rose up to deliver his little premeditated-impromptu speech in behalf of Beavis & Redway's allegorical company getting the job the worthy alderman was received with applause from a gallery of east-end property owners. This caused the speaker to grow eloquent and proud of himself. But the climax came when the worthy alderman suggested in a high-pitched voice a reduction in the amount of security from $250,000 to $50,000 , but instead of giving security, he said the corporation should bonus the company with $150,000. At these remarks the applause from "the free and independent" in the aforesaid gallery, was like the shrill screech of the water hens which inhabit Ashbridge's marsh, and the representative of St. Lawrence Ward sat down wrapped up in the belief of his own importance Your committee has repeatedly condemned the giving over of Ashbridge's bay to a company for forty-five years, when Engineer Jennings says the city can reclaim that land at a comparatively small cost, and which would afterwards become a valuable asset to the citizens.

The Parks and Gardens report favored the granting of the refreshment privileges at Island Park for a term of five years This monopoly also had its votaries around the council board. The mayor moved in amendment that the grant be only for one year. The lease for five years was carried with an unblushing majority in face of the fact that it was distinctly understood by the Parks and Gardens Committee of last year that no leases of any kind would be granted on Island Park more than from season to season.

The proposal to grant the Doty Bros., for a term of five years, the privilege of erecting swings and merry-go-rounds, Ald. Score fathered this "little harmless grant " It will be remembered that the Doty Bros a short time ago fought strenuously to procure the ferry monopoly of the entire bay, and would not allow an opposition steamer to land at Island Park if they could help it. With the assistance of your committee at the time their scheme was nipped in the bud. This firm has controlled for years all kinds of amusements at Hanlan's Point, and now their cloven hoof of grab all has been planted on Island Park for a term of years through the influence of such *quasi* representatives of the people as Ald. Score. The attack of the Mayor on this outrage of the people went for naught. He said, "if you want these things, let the city put them up and give all children the use of them free. If you are going to allow private parties to go on occupying Island Park in this way you will soon see people forced to pay five or ten cents to go into a resort that has cost the citizens many thousands of dollars. It should be a breathing place for the public and not a stamping ground for fakirs." But the Mayor's terse words fell flat on the ears of those aldermen who pledged themselves last January to stand between monopoly and the rights of the people. When Mr. Score was elected for the Noble Ward it was prophesied by your committee that he would be neither ornamental or useful around the council board, but it is a surprise that such a Sabbatharian as he would lend his voice and vote to the walking stick, cocoa-nut, Aunt Sally and other thimble-rigging fakirs to have a monopoly at Island Park under controlling power of the Doty Bros

Still another monopoly was granted in accordance with Ald Foster's pet hobby to grant to Clark Bros. for a term of three years the exclusive right of ferrying passengers from Winchester street down the Don to the Island. When it is considered that the Don was made navigable at the expense of the taxpayers of the city, the audacity of an alderman canvassing his fellow representatives to vote an exclusive right to carry passengers down that river to the Island simply out-Herods Herod

During his five months in the council Ald Foster has made himself somewhat conspicuous on two points. First. he opposed at every turn the taking over of the drivers of fire brigade and increasing their pay from 60 cents per day to $1, and now a few ambitious youths desirous of starting out in life for themselves think they have a claim on Mr. Foster, as they supported him in his election, are using him to forward their narrow and selfish ends Irrespective of his responsibilities to the entire electorate of St. David's Ward, to see justice done irrespective of personal consequences, Ald. Foster is as pliable in the hands of these youths, as clay is in the hands of the potter. It is to be hoped that when a re-adjustment of the wards come men of stamina will represent the people and not those who think they voice the citizens at large when they simply cater to the whims of a few neighbors

Ald Bell's notice of motion that the Engineer set apart one or two hours each day, during which time he will be at the call of aldermen and the public generally, your committee do not approve of The public has made no complaint that they cannot see the officials of the engineer's department when it is necessary It would seem that this motion is the thin edge of the wedge to inaugurate the old system of lounging round the Engineers department without any legitimate object in view

Superintendent Hamilton of the Water Works has now received sole control of his department This is a step in the right direction He shall now be held responsible for any mismanagement in his department. It is to be hoped there will be an all round improvement.

This new departure will place Mr. Hamilton on his ability in the future.

Your Committee approve of the act in giving the building of the new water works engine to a Toronto firm Home manufacture should be encouraged, particularly when similar work from the same firm has given approved satisfaction.

All of which is respectfully submitted.

JAS MORRISON, *Chairman.*

On a motion to adopt, several delegates spoke as to the tenor of the report and in condemnation of the action of the City Council in respect to the street railway contract, Ashbridges Bay and other city business. The motion was carried unanimously

Delegate F C Cribben presented the report of the Committee on Education as follows —

EDUCATIONAL COMMITTEE'S REPORT.

Your Educational Committee beg leave to present the following report :

The "Act respecting Truancy and Compulsory School Attendance," now before the Ontario Legislature, and in a fair way to become law, embraces the following features —All children between eight and fourteen years of age shall attend school for the full terms, during which the school is open each year : parents or guardians refusing or neglecting to send their children to school shall be liable to a fine of not less than five dollars nor more than twenty dollars, as the court may, in its discretion, require persons so convicted to give bonds in the penal sum of one hundred dollars, with one or more sureties to be approved by said court—conditioned that the person so convicted shall cause the child or children under their legal charge or control to attend some school within five days thereafter, and to remain at school as required by this Act. Any person employing any child during school hours, while the public school is in session, shall be liable to a fine of twenty dollars for each offence.

Every child over the age of fourteen and under sixteen, who has not passed the entrance examinations to high schools, shall be required to attend a night school for a period of at least three months each year. The following provision has been made evidently to meet the requirements of the rural districts :—Where in the opinion of any Justice of the Peace, or of the Principal of the school attended by any child, the services of such child are required in husbandry, or in urgent and necessary household duties, such Justice of the Peace or Principal may, by certificate setting forth the reasons therefore, relieve such child from attendance at school for any period not exceeding six weeks during each public school term. The following exceptions are made :—No parent, guardian, or other person shall be liable to any of the penalties of this Act in respect of any child

(1) If the child is under efficient instruction at home or elsewhere.

(2) If the child is unable to attend school by reason of sickness, or other unavoidable cause.

(3 If there is no school within two miles, measured by the nearest road from such child's residence, if such child is under ten years of age, or within three miles if over this age ;

(4) If there is no accommodation in the school which the child has the right to attend ;

(5) If the child has been excused from attending school by a Justice of the Peace or by the Principal of the school which such child is entitled to attend ;

(6 If the child has passed the entrance examination for high schools prescribed by the Executive Department.

The appointment of truant officers is placed in the hands of the police commissioners, or in cases where there are no police commissioners, the municipal council. "The truant officers shall, for the purpose of this Act, be vested with police powers, and shall have authority to enter factories, workshops, stores and all other places where children may be employed, and shall perform such services as may be deemed necessary for the enforcement of this Act"

The details of the Bill are such, that the system should work satisfactory. Taking the Act as a whole it appears to be a good one, and will compare favorably with the systems in vogue in other countries. Since writing the above the Bill has passed the Legislature with a few slight amendments.

Your Committee are pleased to notice the attention which the eight-hour movement is receiving in the older countries. While labor in Canada is apparently somewhat behind on this important question, yet it is satisfactory to notice the awakening interest in this city. In connection with this the Eight-hour League which was started under the auspices of your body, is doing some good work by the dissemination of literature and by other means. The League should receive the earnest support of the individual members of your body. More money and more men are needed to carry on the propaganda.

The Corresponding Secretary of this Council, under instructions of your body, wrote the librarian of the "Free Library," re THE LABOR ADVOCATE, and in view of the fact of the secretary not receiving a reply, a member of your Committee waited upon the librarian That gentleman stated that he intended at the next meeting of the Library Board to recommend that THE LABOR ADVOCATE be placed in the reading-room.

Your Committee are of opinion that the workingmen of this city sadly need educating up to the point of putting their principles into practical operation when an opportunity presents itself This is very noticeable at the present time in connection with the street railway question. Had organized labor been alive to the opportunity, there would have been no danger of this valuable fanchise falling into the hands of a private corporation

Respectfully submitted

F C. CRIBBEN, *Chairman*

The report was concured in after discussion

The Joint Committee on street railway matters submitted the following as their second report

STREET RAILWAY COMMITTEE'S REPORT.

Your joint Committee on street railway matters begs leave to submit its second report.

A report having reached your Committee that a member of the Trades and Labor Council had told Ald. Macdougall that the Council was indifferent as to the disposal of the Street Railway franchise so long as the city made money by the transaction, the Committee decided to test the truth of the rumor by appointing a sub-Committee to wait upon Ald Macdougall, and if the report were proved to be true, to ascertain if possible the name of the person who assumed to speak for the Council in this matter.

The sub Committee waited upon Ald Macdougall, who confirmed the report, but declined to divulge the name of his informant.

At a meeting of the Street Railway Committee of the City Council, held on the 29th inst., your Committee as represented by the Chairman and Secretary, were accorded a hearing, and again affirmed the views of this body relatively to the disposal of the franchise.

The Committee regrets the action of the City Council, which at a special meeting held last evening, expunged the "unearned increment" clause of the amended specifications, and declined to accept a motion for an universal rate of eight tickets for 25 cents, made by Ald. Bailey, who stood alone, but who richly deserves the thanks of this Council for his timely suggestions and opposition to clauses injurious to the city's case.

Your Committee desires to direct attention to Ald. MacMurrich's persistent opposition to all questions tending to labor reform.

JNO. W. DAVEY. F. C. CRIBBEN, *Chairman.*

This report produced a warm discussion in which the name of Ald. Hall received more than passing attention and in no very complementary manner. The trend of the discussion will be apparent in two resolutions, which were adopted later on, the report itself being adopted.

A letter from Mr. Robert Bandlow, Secretary of the Cleveland Central Labor Union stating that the Master Painters' Association of that city had refused to accept the union scale of wages, and were looking to Canada to secure men to take the places of unionists was referred to the Painters Union for consideration.

A communication from McM. Brooks on the early closing question suggesting that only those establishments which showed some consideration for their employees in the matter, should be patronized, was referred to the Legislative Committee.

Vacancies being reported, delegate Davey was appointed a member of the Education Committee, and Delegate T. Banton to the Street Railway Committee.

Under the head of "new business" it was moved by Delegate Banton, seconded by Delegate Waghorn "that this Council strongly condems the action of the City Council in amending the specification re the street railway franchise, to the effect that the unearned increment of land values shall go to the company on the expiration of the lease. Carried.

It was moved by Mr. Davey, seconded by Mr. Cribben, that in the opinion of the Council it is adviseable that there shall be appointed a joint committee, consisting of two representatives from the Trades and Labor Council, D. A. 125 K. of L , Canadian Women's Enfranchisment Association, National Association, and the Single Tax Association, and such other organizations or associations as it may be, by the said Committee, deemed advisable to co-operate with for the purpose of uniting the strength of the said organizations or associations upon questions of social reform; and that the secretary of the secretary of the Council be instructed to communicate with the above associations, asking them to appoint two representatives for the above-named purpose The motion was carried.

Mr. Dower, seconded by Mr. Cribben, moved the following : "Whereas, in the opinion of this Council, the Toronto Street Railway can well afford to sell tickets at the rate of eight tickets for twenty-five cents for night fares ; be it resolved, that the Council hereby call upon the City Council to re insert the clause covering eight tickets for twenty-five cents ; and that this resolution be referred to the Street Railway Committee of the Trades and Labor Council, with instructions to use their best endeavor to have said clause re inserted. The motion was carried."

The Council then went into secret session and adjourned without resuming open business.

GRATIFIED with the success of the London-Paris telephone, the London electrical papers are talking of a telephone between the United States and Great Britain It is believed that the mechanical difficulties may be overcome.