

a few Scotchmen in Ontario, said few Scotchmen comprising the leaders of what is called the "Reform party." For the benefit and glory of these few, the people of Canada are called upon in the reform jargon of the *Globe* to place these few Scotchmen in a position to rule, to control and dominate over the whole country.

Latterly we have had enough of them to get to know them well. They have used their organ unsparingly to crush the aspirations of the workingmen of Canada; they have gone heartily with the "masters" in carrying out the hateful dogma of "property first" and man—why, let him go to Hong Kong.

According to their social and political catechism, bricks and mortar and bullion count for everything, and man for nothing. George Brown has, in effect, said that workingmen are slaves, and should remain where they are—in slavery. That they have no rights; that if they dare to maintain they have, then trump up some of England's tyrannical laws (that have yet to be repealed,) under the term of conspirators, try them for conspiracy, and crush them; have judgment rendered against these men anyhow, for as police judge have we not the righteous Scotch "Macnabb."

Assumption! Is not all this assumption? Who is George Brown? Is he the same man that, at a former time in the history of Toronto, when the printers requested or demanded an increase of wages, as the pitance they were getting was not enough to keep body and soul together, some one urged that they (they printers) could not afford flesh meat. "Beef," said George, "workingmen have no right to eat beef."

No, according to this plausible hypocrite, workingmen have no right to eat beef, nor had he his will carried out, have they any other rights. Possibly in the diet way he may have accorded to working men as a privilege, but not as a right, the liberty to eat *brose*, for that is an orthodox Scotch dish.

Away with such reformers. They believe the very name of "reform." Workingmen will teach them the true doctrines of reform, of progress and of humanity.

Conspirators! Conspiracy! We know who are the conspirators; we know who are the plotters in secret conclaves, and we know who they are conspiring against. Is it come to this, that at this time of day, honest, industrious workingmen are to be persecuted and prosecuted at the behest of a cast-iron and narrow-souled bigot? Do we live on the free soil of America? If respectable and intelligent men unite as one man on a given principle, which they conceive involves their social status, their elevation or depression in the social scale, are they, because of this intelligent union of sentiment, and because they are determined on carrying this given principle into practice, to be pounced upon by some local tyrant (who hires lawyers and police to do his bidding), and arrested by the police as if they had committed some foul crime, and all the paraphernalia of what is called "law" put in force against them.

The case is simply this: the workingmen have minds; latterly they have been cultivating their minds. They have been looking into their own case, studying it, reasoning the case with regard to themselves. The conclusion they have arrived at is, that their lot is a hard one, a degrading one, for their whole lives is one endless routine of working, eating and sleeping; that while they are held to work ten hours a day there is no time (unless they take it off their sleep, which would unfit them for work,) left for mental improvement. They see the value of mental studies and acquirements; they see that knowledge is power, that it is absolutely required in this age to enable them to be good citizens and fulfil the duties of true manhood. Very naturally, they conclude that a reduction of their hours of toil is necessary, that they may do all this in their own interest and the interest of society generally.

They approach their "masters" on this subject. How are they received? One would think that these "masters" should see the reasonableness and propriety of this thing as well as the men. But no, the "masters," with the redoubtable "Geordie" as their leader, ignores the righteous claims of these workmen, and we have seen what has transpired. We have seen that what is called "conspiracy" on the part of the men is right and proper on the part of the "masters."

Verily, even in America, in Canada, there is despotism, and a mean, selfish despotism it is. Under the garb of what is called "reform," under the leadership of a newspaper editor whose euphonious name and title is "Hon." George Brown, and in the columns of a paper called the *Globe* the workingmen of Canada have their most unscrupulous and determined enemies. By their fruits ye shall know them.—I am, dear sir, yours truly,

JOHN MCCORMICK.

Spadina Avenue,
Toronto, May 20, 1872.

A WORD FOR THE LABORER.

To the Editor of the Ontario Workman.

SIR,—While the grand march of civilization is being accelerated by the increasing intelligence and spirit of the workingmen to its glorious destination, while throughout the world the sons of toil are emancipating themselves from their long night of thralldom, and spurning their shackles in disdain, while the artisans and tradesmen of all classes are asserting the rights of labor and of manhood, the laborers *par excellence*—the men of the pick and shovel, of the crowbar and hod—are, I regret to say, lying in a state of lethargy and supineness, and are as much serfs as in the times "when George the Third was King," or, to go further back, in the days of Jack Cade and the feudal Barons.

This state of things may be ascribed to several causes. Amongst others, to their general lack of intelligence; but, after all, the principal cause is the want of organized union. Union is strength the world over.

The consequence of this want of organized union is that they are completely at the mercy of the bosses, and liable to be tyrannized over and discharged at pleasure. They are compelled to work for what wage those bosses like to give them, and, in fact, live on sufferance.

In Toronto, during the summer months, they receive the miserable pittance of one dollar and a quarter for a day's work of ten hours; in winter, for a dollar or less, and think themselves fortunate if they can work at all. What kind of work this is let any one judge who has observed them dragging their weary way homewards, after six o'clock.

—Unfriendly, melancholy, slow.

How a laboring man who is unlucky enough to have a family can manage to live—or more correctly speaking, exist—on this wages, has always to me been a matter of the most profound mystery. But it certainly is not a mystery how the master builders and other employers of unskilled labor (and skilled too, for that matter), realize large fortunes so rapidly.

If you question the "boss" about his luxurious home, his carpets, his Sicilian vases, his articles of vertu, he refers, with pride, to the time when he, too, was only a "common workman," and, perhaps, sarcastically remarks that his employees are only a shiftless, improvident race, who frequent taverns, &c., and who, if they got more wages would drink all the more whisky—good heavens! drink more whisky when they have not sufficient to buy bread for their families.

But hold on, my dear master builder, we all can't be employers you know; some of us must do the work, and if we were all as bright and intelligent and thrifty as you profess to be, you, my dear boss, would still have to take a turn at the pick and shovel, and be thankful to their honors, the Corporation, for the little job at a dollar a day.

A boss takes a contract, he employs, say fifty men, they work six months and finish up, and behold, at the end of that time the contractor has netted as much money as it took to pay all those men for the whole period, all clear profit. Surely, Mr. Editor, there must be something radically wrong when such a state of things can exist in this nineteenth century of railroads, telegraphs, progress and general enlightenment. Yes, there is a screw loose somewhere.

But people will perhaps, say, "oh, the employer invests his capital at considerable risk, he may fail, and then—Capital! where did he get his capital? Did not capital originally spring from labor, and not labor from capital? I have no hesitation in saying that our venerable first parents had not a York shilling in their possession wherewith to bless themselves. Besides, I take notice that somehow or other, when they do break down, they keep as good a house and wear as magnificent a watch guard as before. In fact, it is with them, "once a boss always a boss."

Let no one imagine I am preaching a crusade of labor against capital. A capitalist has a giant's strength, but that is no reason why he should use it like a giant; or, if he feels that way inclined, he should not be allowed to do so by the laborers. It may be asked, how prevent them? Well, I answer, by organizing unions like the iron moulders and carpenters, or any other branch of industry, and by acting like men and not serfs, to be whipped and cuffed by every fellow who choose to call himself "master." There is any amount of shrewd common sense amongst laborers, and intelligence too. It only requires a commencement; it only wants a few earnest men to initiate the movement, and the rest will come also.

Let them only pull together, and nothing under heaven can prevent them obtaining the Nine Hour system and an advance of wages, for labor *omnia vincit*.

EX-LABORER.

THE NINE HOUR MOVEMENT AND THE BOOKBINDERS' STRIKE.

To the Editor of the Ontario Workman.

SIR,—The strike in the Bookbinding trade—which has continued over eight weeks—has had the effect of establishing the 54 hours per week in nearly all the binderies in this city, the employers gradually, one by one, having requested their workmen to resume work on the terms set forth by the Bookbinders' Union, namely, 54 hours to constitute a week's work, all time over 54 hours to be considered overtime, and paid for at the rate of time and half.

I have no doubt but this new arrangement will be found to work well. Let us hope that the time has now come when employers will no longer turn a deaf ear to the reasonable requests of the employees, but will listen to and discuss subjects which affect the well-being of employers, employees, and the country at large, thereby affording an opportunity for the promulgation of that harmonious feeling that ought to exist between employers and employees.

Looking around, we still find two of the "leading elders" in the "Unholy Alliance" as dogmatical and obstinate as ever, lashing themselves into a fury at those employers who have recognized the Nine Hour system, and declaring that they (the noble two) will starve their *lute* employees into subjection to their mighty will. Well, you ask how can they manage that when all the other employers have their shops open on the nine hour system. I don't think they will manage it; but a case in point illustrates how they are attempting it. A bookbinder applied for a situation in a nine hours' shop. He was informed that they required a man, but could not engage him without the permission of his "former master." This the man could scarcely believe, but, determined to find the truth of it, proceeded (accompanied with a friend) to the office of his late employers. On being ushered into the presence of "his master" he (the workman) pointedly asked, "have you any objection to me working in another shop," to which "his master" pointedly answered, "I have every objection," and also informed the other man that he ("his master") "would not employ him without the sanction of his late master."

Well, that is certainly trying on the "humbling and degrading" process, as recommended at the bosses' secret conclave, held in the Agricultural Hall.

Mr. Editor, is that proscription? If so, how does the Common Law of England deal with such cases?

So this is practised in "Canada our Home," and, if I mistake not, practised by men professing to be elders in Christian churches. I am an advocate for the union of the Christian churches; I would like to see fewer sects and more religion; but when a "leading Methodist" and an "Elder" in a Presbyterian Church unite for such unholy purposes, I think it is time the house was put in order.

I read a letter, some time ago, in the *Leader*, which recommended the appointment of missionaries to visit the Toronto employers. It is a good idea, and in some cases very much required, but if certain "Elders" are to continue visiting their districts, I would recommend the following quotation to their clergymen:—

"Sir," said Mr. Cantwell to his clergyman, who had a great dislike for hypocrisy, "how can I best help to reform the world?" "By beginning with yourself," was the conclusive reply.

By giving this insertion you will oblige one who takes an interest in the conversion of the heathen.

BOOKBINDER.

THE EIGHT HOUR MOVEMENT IN THE STATES.

While in Canada the agitation for the nine hour system is being vigorously prosecuted, across the lines the movement for eight hour is being still more vigorously followed up, and we learn that the workmen are gaining fresh accessions of strength every day. The initiative in this movement was taken by the painters, and after a short and peaceful struggle, they succeeded in gaining their object. The next to move were the carpenters and bricklayers, and the success that has attended their efforts was so great that other trades, which had no intention of moving for the eight hours, have announced their intention to take action.

Speaking of the meeting of the men on strike, the *N. Y. Herald* says:—"The Chairman stated that the strikes had gone beyond their utmost expectations, and more shops had acceded than they had any idea of. They had calculated that the strike would last at least two weeks, but from present prospects it was likely to end in two days. The smallness of the meeting and the diminished numbers outside the hall was due to the fact that more than one

thousand men had resumed work at the new rates.

"The three secretaries were kept busily employed in enrolling the non-society men, 200 of whom joined yesterday, making in all 500 since the commencement of the strike."

OTHER TRADES.

The other trades are all stirring, and those which have no organization are rapidly forming them in order to be in a position to take action when the necessary time comes. The bricklayers met their employers last week according to agreement to consider the eight hours question, and the *pros* and *cons* freely presented by both sides. In the event of the employers not acceding to the reduction of the time, the bricklayers will strike. The organization is a very strong one and business is unusually brisk, so it is to be hoped that a peaceful consultation and mutual forbearance will prevent the necessity of a strike.

At a meeting of the Carpenters the Secretary read the following communication, which was received with the most enthusiastic applause:—

To the Carpenters, Greeting:

The Bricklayers' Committee met the bosses this afternoon, and the conference resulted in an adjournment until next Tuesday, when the eight hours will be definitely settled upon. Should the carpenters fail, however, then we shall depend on the Lord, as he hath promised to help those who help themselves.

Do not hesitate in your action. Let it be earnest and determined. If there ever was a time when we ought to strike, now is the time. Delays are dangerous. Whatever you may do, the Bricklayers heartily sympathize with you.

JOHN W. BROWNING,
Master of the Bricklayers.

The cabinet makers are also preparing to strike, as they voted early in the winter to be governed by the same rules as the carpenters. The trade is almost identical in every way with the carpenters, and numbers some hundreds of men. Action is to be taken at once.

The plumbers and gasfitters have held several meetings to consider the eight hours question, and the result has been that a demand is to be made at an early day of the employers to consent to the reduction; failing this they announce they will strike. The staimakers will strike next week.

The granite cutters made a formal demand for the reduction of the time to eight hours, and announce their entire success.

The Central Park laborers have demanded an increase of pay from \$2.24 to \$2.50, and, having appointed a committee to confer with the Park Commissioners thereon, are awaiting the event.

The grinders and polishers connected with the silver, nickel, brass and iron business have combined for the purpose of forming a trade association, and by its means to regulate their hours of labor and rates of pay.

Every trade is organizing, and there seems to be a universal feeling among workingmen that their time has come. The topics of hours and wages, the proper recognition of the rights of labor, and the growing power of the workingmen are among the gravest topics of the day, and receiving a very large amount of attention. New York city has taken the initiative in the movement, but it is not by any means confined to it, as responses are coming in from all parts of the Union. Both the skilled and unskilled laborers are participating.

Whatever may be the issue of all these movements, it cannot be denied that the mechanics in that city on strike are conducting themselves in an orderly and peaceable manner worthy of all praise.

A NEW LABOR LEAGUE IN THE STATES.

There has been, for some time, a growing desire for a combination in the interest of labor that shall be so broad, so comprehensive and so catholic as to be capable of including all workmen and their friends, and of reaching all difficulties in the controversy of labor versus capital. The first public meeting for such an organization was held last Tuesday. Representatives of the labor reform movement were present, and the subject of a constitution was considered. It was decided that there should be a recording and corresponding secretary and a treasurer. In the matter of presiding officer or chairman, the general feeling was in favor of calling a chairman from the floor at each meeting. This plan gives to many the opportunity of experience in conducting a meeting, and would, besides, be likely to increase both interest and attendance.

The first public meeting of the union will be held on Tuesday of Anniversary week at Horticultural Hall. C. M. Chamberlain will preside. Wendell Phillips, who is to act as chairman of the Committee on reso-

lutions, will make the principle speech of the evening, and will probably also be heard at other times in the day. Words of interest and suggestion are anticipated from Hon. Charles Sumner, Hon. B. F. Butler, Hon. G. F. Hoar, and others. All presidents of trade unions will hold rank as vice-presidents.

It is intended to hold meetings each month during next winter, at which essays will be read and discussions held upon any topics bearing specially on the labor question.

As a consolidation of the various trades unions, this organization is destined to hold a distinguished position. It copies the International, and has assumed the title of Massachusetts Labor Union.

CO-OPERATION.

We are pleased to think some of the workingmen are beginning to see the necessity of becoming their own employers, and by combination and mutual aid establish shops for themselves. Co-operation is the only true remedy for the insolence of office, when the men can—as happily, they can in this instance—see their way clear to start upon a sound, broad basis, a co-operative establishment for the purpose of manufacturing stores and general castings. They are the men whose skill, ingenuity and labor have made their employers rich, and if properly directed the same time and talents can enrich themselves.

In this country the moulding trade, above almost all others, stands pre-eminent for the increasing demand for goods of their manufacture. They will, assuredly, when working for themselves, display more skill, more carefulness, both in the manufacture and finish of their work. They will be more thrifty with the scrap, more painstaking with their work, more determined to make their goods of such a character that, from that very fact, they shall command a sale in the market, and it is very easy to see they will gain a sale among the working classes, not only on account of the excellence of their manufacture, but also because they are workingmen. The spirit the workingmen are showing throughout the country is one of mutual assistance and support, and as they are those who mostly need such wares, it is self-evident that a workingman's co-operative establishment will gain the largest proportion of the sale. It is to be hoped that the committee appointed to draft a constitution and issue a prospectus, will speedily issue them to the notice of the workingmen of Hamilton. We feel confident, from what information we have gleaned, that there will be no lack of persons desirous of obtaining shares. So that the sooner business is commenced the better. Within a fortnight after the first payment of shares, a frame tenement building can be erected, with the necessary materials for starting work. We hope that as much dispatch will be used as can be, with safety to the success of the movement. Just now the best workmen in the city are not only willing to be shareholders, but also workers, and that fact in itself will induce many persons, beside workingmen in other branches of trade, to join in the speculation. We heartily wish the movement every success, and hope that, before a twelvemonth passes, we shall have the pleasure of announcing, through the columns of the *Standard*, the report of a dividend that will prove satisfactory alike to its members, and every well wisher of the workingmen.—*Hamilton Standard*.

MEETING OF IRON MOULDERS.

A semi-monthly meeting of Iron Moulders' Union No. 23 was held last week at Millers' Hall, Bowry. Mr. F. Barlow presided, and Mr. J. Hogg officiated as Secretary. A communication was read from Chicago relative to the Iron Moulders' strike in that city. It stated that the prospects of the strikers were brightening, and that the "scabs" that went from New York to fill the places of the men on strike had since struck themselves as the employers, contrary to contract, had charged them with the expenses of the journey thither. Addresses were delivered by Messrs. Jas. Carroll, Wm. Fagen, and M. Smith, after which delegates were appointed to attend the National Biennial Convention, to be held in Troy in July next. The meeting then adjourned. This society has at present 450 members in good standing. The entrance fees are \$5, and the dues are 50 cents per month; \$50 is given towards the burial of a member, and \$5 per week is allowed in case of sickness.—*N. Y. Star*.

A MEMORIAL OF CHICAGO.—Among the ruins of the Western News Company's establishment, there was found a single leaf of a quarto Bible, charred around the edges. It contained the first chapter of the Lamentations of Jeremiah, which opens with the following words: "How doth the city sit solitary that was full of people! How is she become as a widow! She that was great among the nations and princess among the provinces, how is she become tributary! She weepeth sore in the night, and her tears are on her cheeks; among all her lovers she hath none to comfort her." And that was the only fragment of literature saved from the News Company's great depot.