

# THE ECHO.

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## THE LABORER—HIS DAY AND HIRE.

Watchman, what of the day? The night has gone—a night of much woe that has sat for ages upon workingmen, as the shroud sits upon the hearts of the mourners. What of the night? has been asked these many centuries. But the day now dawns for the laborer. He is worthy of his hire. He has commenced to feel that there is dignity in his manhood. What means the discontent spreading over the civilized masses? Is it the leaven of revolution—the ghoul-like horror, for example, that laid liberty and monarchical despotism in the grave at one blow—such as ran into the untold horrors which were the real mainspring of its own early energy and final destruction? Not so. Observers have noted a steady progress of the masses of the people. The men to whom God gave life, liberty and hope to work on have gradually progressed from the blind groping of the semi-slavery which surrounded them for centuries. The farm laborer can read and count his beans. The laborer and the artisan have learned that patience is better than force; that votes are more cogent in reasoning with rulers than brickbats with policemen; that to squeeze the conscience of the Chancellor of the Exchequer is easier and more profitable than to invite the bayonets and bullets of the soldiery. Intelligence and education has taken possession of the workingmen—the artisan knows well that he has the balance of power, that he requires to wield it only in a sensible manner and the great forces that control the civilized wheels of progress are his. The change has not come in a day, nor in a year. It is very gratifying, however, that it is at our doors now. Even in the British army—the great centre of despotism—there is a difference almost startling. When would a colonel have been sent to private life on half-pay for tyrannically enforcing the Mutiny Act of twenty years ago? True, the soldiers also were punished; but a light punishment theirs. All progresses. There is no standing still. God never made man to be a slave to his fellow, to his passions, to anything. It is the revolt of reason that to-day cries out: "Away with tyranny! Root out the oppressor!" Quietly but firmly the work must go on. Push it no further, however, than its proper limit—to all men do as you would that they should do to you. It was not the cruel doctrine of supply and demand Our Lord preached. He never advised Pharisees of any century to get men at starvation wages because there was enough and to spare of them. Nowhere in the whole of His teachings were men urged to pay laborers one dollar a day in summer when they were hard to get, and eighty cents a day in winter when they were starving and idle in scores. In His teachings He upbraids and punishes the unjust debtor who, when forgiven his own debt, took his debtors by the throat. It was a direct rebuke to the supply and demand theory. When He paid (in the parable) the penny to the workers in the vineyard He never considered the supply and demand regulation. He taught that the laborer is worthy of his hire. The world has taken many centuries to receive the lesson and profit by it. Is the light dawning at last? Is the spread of intelligence in the masses, the education and sobriety advocated by their leaders and the growing faith in organization going to bring about the great reforms dreamed of half a century ago by our grandfathers? Let us try. What can be accomplished in Europe with the power in the hands of the educated multitude of workers? The armies disarmed, the navies dismantled, the wheels of commerce given an impetus that must, if carried to its legitimate conclusion, people and Christianize this earth to its remotest corner. Think of the millions of men and millions of money to be saved—by a court of arbitration between nations. Who shall count the anguish and woe of war? Where in the masses is there ever a desire for war? Put aside the war-makers. Speed the day of our victory everywhere. But here in Canada. Who would have, twenty years back, dreamed of the celebration of Labor Day in Montreal—of the sitting down of tens of thousands once a year to honor labor? There are young men who recollect in their youth

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worse than prison discipline in working houses in this city—who recollect kicks and cuffs to the unfortunate youths in the apprentice stage at the hands of the tyrant. There are recollections of mean little combines against too independent workingmen by their employers to force them out of town. There are recollections of futile efforts at combination on the part of workingmen to resist wrong. This has passed off, never to return. There is now organization everywhere. True, public opinion is not of the sturdy stuff it in many respects should be. The time has come, though, when the combine is not all on one side. Capital has taught labor. The lesson has been severe. They are now almost side by side. They should not get apart. There is no reason why they should be one on top of the other in a bitter war. The remedy, when any trouble does come, is that which Great Britain seeks in her disputes—which Powderly himself seeks to settle the disputes in New York—arbitration. Speed arbitration. Let this day be observed with a heartiness and a sobriety which will honor the cause of the toiler. So long as he seeks the honest price of his toil he will have the sympathy of the world with him. He must keep the law—must never approach that limit of tyranny, oppression or injustice on his part from which he seeks escape by combination. These adhered to, a fair day's work for a fair day's wage must always be a winning cry. Be true to your God, yourselves and your country. Celebrate the day as good citizens. Who shall say there is not the highest honor the greatest dignity in honest labor?

JAMES HARPER.

## THE PINKERTON POLICE.

The workingmen of the United States have reason to congratulate themselves on the check the authorities at Albany seem inclined to give to the Pinkertons. This firm of private detectives has organized a force of police, which is always at the disposal of the employing corporation when it is necessary to intimidate or coerce a body of men, who, in their struggle for better terms, are forced as a last resort to strike. Indeed, a Pinkerton policeman is never heard of in any other connection. Possessing no interest in the community to which they are sent, being thoroughly out of sympathy with the workingmen, with arms in their hands, they have repeatedly used their temporary strength to insult, injure and even to slay men whose only sin was to differ with a rich employer as to the terms on which they could be expected to work. The incidents at Albany, where lately three men were shot and seriously hurt by these so-called peace preservers, are but additions to a long list in which workingmen citizens have been the victims. There is nothing like this Pinkerton force in any country outside of the United States. It has been objected to time and again by the press of the country, and while it exists and operates as it has done at the capital of New York state will be a menace not alone to the laboring classes but to the well-being of the citizens generally. Its existence is a libel on the railroad workingmen and its employment an outrage. The local police authorities declare that its presence is not necessary to preserve order, and have shown their strength and ability to keep the peace by rescuing from an infuriated crowd one of the Pinkerton men who had provoked a conflict by firing his revolver into an unarmed assemblage. The employment of these men should not be allowed. Their interest is not to allay but to excite disturbance, for the fiercer the excitement and the greater the antagonism they can arouse the longer is the strike likely to last, and the greater the length of time they will be able to draw pay for.

Smoke the Union Cigar Picnic, 5c.

Workingmen! Do not be ashamed of your inheritance of labor. Turn out every one and show to political schemers and capitalists the votes you can control at the ballot box and your strength in a righteous fight against oppression. One of the grandest sights ever witnessed in Montreal will be the monster parade on Labor Day. Let there be no recreants from the ranks.