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THE COAL TRADE AND RECIPROCITY.

TRADE UNIONS V. SOCIALISM.

The question may be asked: "Is the continued advancement of the coal trade so bound up with the future prosperity of Nova Scotia as to justify its people in claiming for it particular and special consideration at the hands of Parliament?"

The answer can only be, Certainly, that industry which in conjunction with its ally—the steel industry—gives employment to 22,000 able bodied workmen; distributes in wages ten million dollars, and in wages and supplies fifteen million dollars; the industry which furnishes the province with its chief source of revenue; which makes markets possible and profitable for our farmers; which stimulates the trade of our wholesale and retail merchants; which supports one-fourth of the population of the province; appreciably benefits half of the population, and indirectly the other half, and which promotes immigration and checks emigration, demands the most careful and, may I not say, concessive consideration. As to the beneficial effect of briskness in the coal trade on the province, I may be permitted to quote, as I cannot improve upon it, from a paper read last year before the Mining Society:

"The best and surest plan of retarding emigration, and at the same time, stimulating immigration, of the kind most desirable,—people to settle on the land—is to promote and foster mineral production, and give all encouragement to the establishment of industries. We have been complaining of the number of vacant farms, in nearly every county of the province. When, let us ask, did the emigration from the farming districts show most activity, and what were the chief causes of the exodus? Emigration from the farms was most active from say 1860 to 1885, a period when mineral production was in nigh a stagnant condition in Nova Scotia, and was becoming very active in the U. S. The reasons for this emigration were that employment at the mines was precarious, and there was a lack of population and consequently little or no home market, at anything like remunerative prices. For these reasons thousands upon thousands of her browniest sons left Nova Scotia for the States, where they could obtain steadier work and higher remuneration. And had there been no growth in mineral production since 1885 it is hard to estimate how many more vacant farms might have been added to the list in the counties east of Colchester. This emigration from the farms, to the States, was checked as soon as Nova Scotia, in the matter of mineral production, had cast off its swaddling clothes. It should not be a matter for surprise that farms were deserted in the sixties, seventies and eighties. The husbandman could get no adequate return for his long and grinding hours of labor. At home there was an insufficient market; while the market abroad was unprofitable. It is scarcely to be wondered at that men turned their backs on the farm, when eggs had to be exported to the States, netting eight cents a dozen, and when butter did well if it fetched 12 cents a pound. All farm stuffs sold at unprofitable prices. To an inadequate home market in these days, was undoubtedly due the decline in husbandry."

"The Labour party was not yet a Socialist party, but the Labour party is bound to become a Socialist party."

This expression of opinion by Mr. Keir Hardie has had the result of rousing many trades unionists in the West of Scotland and letting them understand the true aim and purpose of the Labour party. In Aberdeen on Tuesday evening Mr. Keir Hardie frankly told his audience that "the trades union movement knew nothing of either Liberalism or Toryism, and if it was to be called upon to subscribe to a party at all it must be a party based on the same lines—a working class." Withn the past few months since public interest was focussed on the Osborne judgment, it has been plainly evident that many workers were at variance with several of the Socialist leaders. There are in the ranks of the trades unionists both Liberals and Tories, even although Mr. Hardie does not seem to know this, or refuses, if he does, to recognize it. At the same time, to be equally candid, there are thousands of trades unionists who, were a vote taken, would vote solidly for the Labour party. In order therefore to get the views of the workers a representative of the "Mail" interviewed a number of trades unionists and co-operators—the latter are always, as a rule, sturdy trades unionists—and their opinions are worth having. There was scarcely a man who did not admit the solid work of the Labour party, and yet many refused to be drawn into that political party's melting pot. The first man to be interviewed—a member of the Trades Council—put himself down as a trades unionist and a Socialist "You can't be a good trade unionist if you are not a Socialist. Without assistance from the Socialists where would trade unionism be today? They are the eyes and brains of trade unionism. They are clever enough to conceive ideas and bold enough to carry them out. Until the old pernicious conditions of labour are altered there must be a fighting