

## OUR BOARDING HOUSE

Reflections on Current Events by  
the Boarders.

"There was a time, and it ain't so very long ago, either, when employers of labor looked with fear and distrust upon those of their men who had joined a union of their craft or else belonged to the Knights of Labor," said Brown. "They looked upon organized labor as a huge 'striking machine' whose component parts were discontented mechanics and laborers determined to harass their employers, and this idea to a large extent prevailed among union men themselves. The men, finding their condition growing worse and worse, without any knowledge of the real cause of their distress, laid the blame for all their troubles to the greed and avarice of their employers, while these in turn, not taking the trouble to inform themselves of the real object of labor reform, jumped to the conclusion that the movement was directed against themselves. Labor Councils and Congresses, however, have dispelled this illusion; their continued demands for progressive legislation has prompted all classes to study the underlying causes of the poverty and discontent of the masses and drawn attention to the high aim and great principles of labor reform itself. The result of all this was that, upon closer investigation, it was found that master and man alike were victims of circumstances over which they as individuals had no control, and that these were the inevitable outcome of the system under which we live. It was found that although the employer generally enjoyed a greater degree of comfort and ease than his employee that his tenure of prosperity was as insecure as the job of the latter, and that the result of both their labor largely found its way into the pockets of men who had monopolized the natural opportunities of the country or on whom a corrupt Government had conferred privileges not enjoyed by any other section of the community. This knowledge naturally created a better understanding between master and man, so much so that intelligent and unprejudiced employers now look upon labor organizations as the greatest conservative force in our body politic, destined to lead humanity to higher and nobler spheres and precluding the possibility of its taking a header backwards into chaos and anarchy. As a class, employers may not as yet be prepared to make common cause with labor, but that time will surely come. The very best men amongst them are already on our side and doing yeoman work in our cause, while the large majority of them are prepared to admit the justice of our demands."

"The workingman who to-day does not belong to a labor organization is held in as great contempt by his employer as he is by his fellow-laborer," said Phil, "and the time is not far distant when employers themselves will refuse to employ any man who does not belong to an organization of some kind. They know that a man who has intelligence enough to know his rights and the determination to stand up for them, that the man who does justice to himself can be relied upon to do justice to his employer, and he will get the preference, even if their opinions on economical or political questions differ. The 'thing' who shirks his duty to himself or his fellow-man will shirk his work if he can; content to reap the benefits of organization accruing to him by the efforts of union men, he virtually steals their time and money, and unless watched by his foreman will with the same avidity, steal the time of his employer. Some of this tribe must have felt mean and contemptible even to themselves when on Labor Day they saw their employers, by their presence, show their respect and sympathy with organizations which they as workingmen lacked the

manliness to join, and organizations at that whose only object is to better the condition of that very class to which they belong. Too ignorant to know their rights, and too mean to pay twenty-five cents a month into an organization which looks after their interests, these men are an element of danger to organized labor and employers alike. The organized men of today thoroughly understand the difficulties with which capital invested in manufactures or business is surrounded and but rarely make unreasonable demands upon their employers. This is more particularly the case where local Unions or Assemblies are under the jurisdiction of a higher body of their order or craft, whose officers carefully examine the grievances of the locals before action is taken. This restraint, however, does not exist among unorganized men, whose ignorance of existing conditions is a standing invitation to unscrupulous firebrands to use them for their own purpose, and cases are on record where manufacturers, by the aid of such men, have inaugurated strikes in the establishments of their rivals for no other purpose than to drive them out of business. Now, this cannot under any circumstances be done by union men, and employers know it. Whatever danger to society there may be in the labor movement is centered in that section of the working class which, unorganized and ignorant, leaves it a prey to every scheming plotter who chooses to use it."

BILL BLADES.

## SCRAPS FOR CIGARMAKERS

A joint special meeting of Unions 226 and 58 was held on Tuesday, Sept. 15, in Union No. 58 Hall, for the purpose of instructing the delegates to the Biennial Convention, which takes place on Monday, 21st inst. at Indianapolis, Ind. The meeting was fairly attended and the interest taken by the members shows that they intend to leave no stone unturned in having some of the present laws amended, which will not only be of a benefit to Canada but to the United States also.

Among the principal amendments which the delegates were instructed to offer is that a member may receive a continuous sick benefit instead of at the present limited time. That some of the advertising be done in the French and English papers in this city.

The requesting of a committee to be appointed by the Convention to wait on the Minister of Inland Revenue and request the amending of the present law so as to enable the manufacturing and retailing of goods made on the premises similar to that done in the United States. The amending of the article, whereby members holding retiring cards who are not manufacturing, may be permitted to attend and take an active part in all proceedings of the Union.

The delegates, Mr. A. Lafrance and Mr. T. McGreevey, of Union 58 and 226 respectively, left on Thursday evening over the G. T. R. They were accorded a hearty send off by a large number of their conferees who assembled to wish them every success in their under taking.

The number of men employed in Montreal whose names appear on the delinquent list in the semi-annual report as owing money to the Union is not creditable, to say the least it is disgusting. To think of men who would have been compelled to endure the hardships of life on the road had it not been for the loan system, which is one of the greatest benefits attached to our Union, and who refuse to remit the amount received when employed and who allow themselves to become suspended members, thinking that in doing so they will avoid the repayment of money advanced by the Union. Those are the people that members of the union associate with, and spend much of their time in their company and who are aware that their doing so encourages them to remain non-members of the union. Those delinquent and suspended members who refuse to become good members of the union and assist in bettering the condition of themselves and fellow-workmen I say let them severely alone; refuse to have any dealings with them, treat them in the same manner that they have been treating you; give them to understand that their action towards the union (while willing to profit by any benefits accrued through the union) is unprincipled and unjust and merits the condemnation of all honest men.

Mr. E. Silverstone, who has been visiting friends in Detroit, returned home on Tuesday last much improved in health after his pleasant sojourn; he says Montreal isn't in it with Detroit.

The French Constitutions which have been

printed under the supervision of third Vice Present, Mr. Todd, and which was delayed some six months before being received in Montreal, and when received were comparatively useless owing to the number of errors it contained, should be a matter for the delegate from Union 58 to attend to by suggesting some practical way of surmounting the difficulty which is to a certain extent an impediment to progress.

"SCRAPS."

## AMONG THE FIREMEN.

(BY ONE OF THEM.)

I see that the Exhibition Company, through the kindness of our Chief, have secured the Brigade for an attraction during the Exhibition. It is to be hoped that the men whose services will be required for the above occasion will receive some extra compensation for their labor. The fact that the Brigade is employees of the Corporation does not give the Chief or any of the Committee the right to order the men out as an attraction for any Company, and more especially the Exhibition Company, whose only object is to make all the money possible out of the public without giving any return for the same. If Chief Benoit wants to parade his official standing during the Exhibition I have no objections, but would suggest that a special pedestal be erected in the main building with an easy chair and have the Chief remain therein for three or four hours each day. But I object to be used for any such purpose and I have reason to believe that I voice the sentiment of a large part, if not the whole of the Brigade.

Probably the Chief will explain his reasons for interfering with and preventing the men in several stations from attending the present tation, to one of our comrades, on his promotion to Chief of St. Cunegonde Fire Department. To say the least it was a very small piece of tyranny.

No. 3 should demand another trial with the present holder of the White trumpet. They are entitled to it under the circumstances and it would be the means of settling any doubt as to the relative merits of the teams which exists at present.

I would like to ask the Executive of the Benevolent Fund what is the total amount contributed to the Fund by the different societies for whose special benefit a review of the brigade was held. This may seem a very abrupt question, but not so if you take into consideration the fact that no report from the custodians of this fund has been made for some time.

I feel that an answer through the columns of the press would be of interest to all the brigade, as well as myself, and at the same time it would be a matter for the Chief and Fire Committee to consider the advisability of continuing to make a side show with our brigade.

The picnic (if we are going to have one this year) ought to be well patronized. The proceeds are devoted to a good object, and, in comparison with other cities of similar size, the men are poorly paid. It is high time the matter was put in hand. As an attraction I would suggest a race for the fast horses of the Chiefs, which I am certain would prove a drawing card.

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