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MEETINGS.

CENTRAL TRADES AND LABOR COUNCIL OF MONTREAL.

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1711, K. of L.
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QUEBEC NOTES.

FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.

QUEBEC, March 24th, 1892.

There would seem to be nothing of interest going on in the Ancient Capital just now. The press is busy selecting for the Government the new Legislative Councillor who is to replace the Hon. John Hearn. Custom requires that he should be succeeded by an Irish Catholic, and some unfortunate letter writer hazarded the statement that there was not one to replace him. Just now he must believe that there is a choice from a regiment of aspirants, any of whom will be insulted if their claims to preference are overlooked.

The relics of Canada's former barbarous inhabitants, the Huron Indians have addressed a letter to the new Provincial Premier, DeBoucherville, congratulating him upon the number of scalps he has recently taken. The letter was acknowledged in flowery language with a due reference to the moon. The new Premier probably wished them to understand that he appreciated their congratulations at their true worth, and his allusion to fair Luna was no doubt meant to imply that he was well aware of something which they the Huron Indians required and sought to thus obtain from the new government.

I see by press reports that Taylor's Alien Labor bill has again come before the Federal House and that great statesman, Sir John Thompson, of great intellect, has, so to speak, wrestled with and worsted it. If the meagre report that I have seen is correct, he begun by asking for a careful consideration of this bill, which was approved by a large section of the community, and wound up by moving the six months hoist. During the course of his remarks he acknowledged that the laborers on the border had suffered. Well he, the Minister of Justice, wants them to still continue suffering. He acknowledged too that the American bill hurt Canada, but then what have our Canadian statesmen to do with Canada's harm. Oh! just think of a cure in six months, after two years thinking! This portion of his remarks reminds me by the way of the story about the rheumatism cure, when discovered to be applied plentifully to the coffin. He also stated that Canada wanted to encourage immigration. Let all come in who would earn their living and the men imported could prosecute Sir Charles Tupper for bringing them in. But I would like to point out that the Canadian public have been told more than once that the importations had ceased. I would also like to call attention to the fact that the cities of Quebec, Montreal and Toronto are trying their level best to give work to their unemployed to save them from starvation, perhaps Sir John Thompson did not know this. He told Parliament that the United States act was harsh and extreme in its provisions and barbarous in its enforcement. Now it would follow as a very natural deduction that the apathy of our Canadian statesmen to the sufferings of Canadian laborers is tender and humane and that there is nothing barbarous about starvation, its Christianizing and chastening influence must of course be felt to be appreciated. Now for the Liberal side of the House. Lanier opposed the bill, and quite right. Oppose everything, and remain in opposition. Don't chop about Washington reciprocity treaties when there is a fair opening to give our American cousins a Roland for their Oliver. Let it quietly pass. By the way have not the Liberal party of the Dominion enough wit to create a sensation, it being all the go. They should advertise for a policy. If our Dominion Government shelve this bill it would appear as if the United States, having slapped Canada's cheek in the McKinley bill, the other one is turned to be likewise slapped by the American Alien Labor law. All that now remains us to do is to turn the patient round and kick somewhere else. Call it annexation.

Another matter, that of Chinese immigration and the action of the members of British Columbia seeking to diminish if possible the evil. They may as well not lose their time. The great corporation that governs the Canadian Government want passengers for their new line of steamships. They want cheap labor, so that settles it. John Chinaman fills the bill no matter if he be a leper. There is a leper colony at Tracadie, and another in British Columbia won't matter much, and of course our states-

men will never come in contact with this loathsome disease.

Apropos of the cheap labor question does it not seem more than passing strange that the Dominion Government just discovered that they would dispense with the services of a large number of their Intercolonial Railway employees on the eve of the trouble arising between the C. P. R. and its employees, and is it not equally strange that these same men should be employed to go out to the western section of the C. P. R. to replace the disaffected employees of that Company out there. Now as an impartial onlooker it would seem to me to be quite apparent that the C. P. R. are going to reduce working expenses and increase dividends and at the same time obtain what is called public sympathy. The first will be attained by reducing the wages of its employees of course, having begun by the conductors, as soon as the Company shall have ascertained the sentiments of the Brotherhoods, some of which have already declared themselves, I mean the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers. They are as usual out of it. But when their wages are cut 50 per cent as it no doubt will in a short time follow out the Company's policy, then they will be in it. Now when the first object is achieved the second will follow as a natural consequence and the last to obtain public sympathy. Why the easiest thing in the world, that Company being desirous of reducing their freight and passenger rates for the benefit of the general public and the good of the country but more especially of the farmers who shall be thus enabled to market their produce at a much less cost than at present. Now this seems to be about the position, if press reports, and they too come over the wires of the Company, can be believed. Just to think of ordinary workmen earning from \$1,000 to \$1,600 a year, why one-quarter of that is too much. Of course if these railroad men can't live on wages so reduced, their wives and children can help by working in our factories just the same as the rest of our Canadian people, this will likewise be a benefit to them, as an object lesson in industry to the rising generation.

THE TRADES COUNCIL.

The adjourned regular meeting of the above Council was held on Tuesday evening last. The President, L. Z. Boudreau, occupied the chair.

Credentials were read and accepted from the Glass-workers, La National Assembly and the Iron and Steel-workers.

Delegate V. Dubreuil was elected Financial Secretary in the place of Mr. E. Pelletier, who has left the city.

Delegate Chatelet was elected Corresponding Secretary in the place of Mr. O. Fontaine, who has withdrawn from the Council, and Delegate Renaud was elected Sergeant-at-Arms.

Delegates Ryan and Lessard were appointed members of the Organization and Legislative Committees respectively.

The committee in charge of the election in Montreal Centre reported in full, and made specific charges against Delegate Deloge.

The report was adopted, and a committee of five was appointed to investigate the charges against Deloge.

An invitation to attend D. A. 19 Banquet was read and accepted.

The resignation of the Painters and Decorators Union was read and accepted, and it was unanimously decided that this Union would not be admitted again until they apologized for the insult offered the Council.

The resignation of the Tailors' Union was then read and the secretary ordered to write them asking for their reasons for withdrawing from Council.

The resignation of the Marble-workers Assembly was accepted.

It was decided to rent the same hall for another year.

A resolution of sympathy with the C. P. R. strikers and condemning the action of Mayor McShane and Chief Hughes was then unanimously adopted.

A resolution authorizing the Secretary to write the three members for Montreal, calling on them to support the Alien Labor bill now before Parliament was also unanimously adopted.

A notice of motion to amend the Constitution was handed in by Delegate Rodier. Delegate Jos. Beland was then authorized to continue in his efforts to procure from the Government 5,000 copies of the Treaty on Hygiene.

The meeting then adjourned.

TORONTO NOTES.

(FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.)

TORONTO, March 23rd, 1892.

There was a good attendance at the Trades and Labor Council meeting last Friday evening, and as usual, President Banton was in the chair. After routine proceedings the report of the Legislative Committee was taken up for consideration. Referring to bill now before the Local Legislature for the incorporation of a company to reclaim Ashbridge's Bay, and to enable such company to own the property so reclaimed, the committee praised Mayor Fleming for his active, forcible and manly efforts in favor of retaining to the city the fee simple of the marsh after its reclamation. "This is done," said the report, "the more heartily because in other matters his course has not seemed so favorable to the interests of the great body of the people." The hope was expressed that the bill would either be thrown out or submitted to a vote of the people. In reference to the strike on the C. P. R. it was suggested that in view of the great interests involved in a railway strike the Dominion Government appoint a commission of railway arbitrators with full power to settle disputes between railways, railway employees and the public.

The magnitude of the proposed Ontario ship railway prompts the committee to suggest that it be undertaken as a Government instead of a private enterprise. After brief debate the report was adopted.

The Municipal Committee's report was lengthy. As this committee had been, at the previous meeting of the Council, authorized to attend to certain legislative matters, its report also dealt with the Ashbridge's Bay reclamation scheme, giving a history of the marsh and the various changes of ownership. The Mayor's message favoring reclamation by the city directly was commended, and a strong argument was made against any proposal to sell the marsh rather than lease it. The report was adopted.

Delegate E. Glocking presented the report of the Education Committee, which regretted that the school board at last meeting did not recognize the principle of equal pay for equal work and increase the salaries of female teachers accordingly. The refusal to decrease the salaries of highly-paid officials was evidenced as showing that the board is in favor of economy only as a theory and not in practice. The hope was expressed that the school board would not attempt to frustrate the desire of the citizens as expressed at the polls for free school books. The opinion was expressed that all public schools should in future have sufficient play ground, a feature sadly lacking in most of the existing schools. After an intelligent discussion the report was adopted as read.

The Vice-President and Mr. Buet, of the Single Tax Society, being present, asked for a few minutes to address the Council. Being granted, they expressed satisfaction at the fact that the T. and L. Council was always found in touch with every effort of common interest to the people, and then asked the members of the various unions to circulate a large consignment of single tax principles, recently printed for free circulation. They received a capital reception from the members of the Council.

Under the head of "New Business" Delegate O'Donoghue, seconded by Delegate Cribben, moved, and it was carried unanimously,

That the members of this Council do hereby place upon record their earnest belief that any proposal to sell the marsh lands for \$200,000, or any other sum, involves a crime against the citizens of Toronto that in our judgment no city council should perpetrate.

Under the same head Delegate Watson secured the passage of a motion, equally emphatic in its language, condemning any extension of the street railway franchise from 20 to 40 years, as asked for in the company's bill before the House. After which the Council adjourned.

In 1872 the trades organizations in Toronto determined on striving for a 9-hour working day, and the Typographical Union (No. 91) inaugurated the movement. A strike was the result, and some of the members were arrested for conspiracy. After a time, however, the proceedings against those so arrested were dropped and the 9-hour day conceded. The Mail of Saturday last tells us that "On the 26th of this month the printers who took

part in the fight for nine hours will celebrate the 20th anniversary of the victory of 1872. The celebration will take the form of a banquet.

At a meeting of the Markets and License Committee of the City Council, held on Friday last, fish pedlars applied for a reduction in the license they pay but were refused, and the fee of \$10 for those using a horse and wagon and \$2.50 for those on foot remains. Inspector Aude reported in favor of compelling all bakers to weigh bread, except such as comes under the description of fancy breads. A decision on the question was adjourned.

By a bill introduced in the Senate of Canada on Friday last by Premier Abbott it is intended that the Immigration Branch of the Department of Agriculture is to be transferred to the Department of the Interior, under Hon. Dewdney. Whether this is to be a step from bad to worse remains to be seen. This bill also proposes that the Geological Museum branch be placed under the control of Hon. Mr. Carling, Minister of Agriculture. This step is certainly very appropriate, and in accordance with the "eternal fitness of things."

Pending a more detailed reference to the expenditure in 1890 as to immigration on the part of the Federal Government, I find by the report of the Auditor-General, laid on the desks of the members last week, that Agent Daly, of Montreal, continues to be very fond of hack-driving, the cost of which in that year amounted to \$349.05. In 1890-91 a bonus of \$5 per head was paid on 892 immigrants, making a total of \$4,450 in that item, and this while Canada's workmen were daily bating themselves to the United States to seek a living which could not be secured in their own country. But of course those who prefer cheap labor must have it provided for them. Again, the "philanthropists" who make a good living at this vocation imported 1,284 children upon whom the country paid a per capita bonus of \$2, making a total \$2,578. The report also emphasizes the fact that almost if not every immigrant reaching Winnipeg is obliged to become sick, for every year the charges for hospital care of immigrants are very large in the aggregate. For instance, in 1889 the sum was \$9,724.40, in 1890, it was \$9,003.60, while in 1891 it reached only \$8,000 even. For this little decrease we should be, and no doubt are, really very thankful—either to Providence for the decrease in sickness or to the officials who varied the figures to give an appearance of honesty.

In 1888 Messrs. A. F. Jury, of Toronto, Georges Collis, of Hamilton, and J. F. Redmond, of Montreal, were a legislative committee of the Order of the Knights of Labor, and were in official attendance at Ottawa during the parliamentary term of that year. In their report to the General Master Workman of that Order, after detailing as to their efforts and work in other particulars they say, referring to an interview with the Hon. Sir John A. Macdonald, Premier, "We then called his attention to the injurious system of assisting immigrants to this country to compete with and lower the wages of those already here, in a labor market in which the supply is much greater than the demand. He assured us most positively that after April 27, 1888, the assisted passages would cease. . . . We then went to the Department of Agriculture and Immigration to request the Minister to still further reduce the expenditure for immigration. He assured us that no public money would be spent in assisted passages." And yet, despite these solemn promises on the part of two honorable (?) ministers of the Government—the Premier and the Minister of Agriculture—there was paid out last year for assisted passages no less than \$2,960.49. This amount does not take into account the bonuses already referred to for adults and children. The same report contained a lengthy reference to "a scoundrel of an immigrant agent named Watelet," and whose name, even in 1891, will not be unfamiliar to many in Montreal. Despite all that was proved against this fellow by the committee at that time, he has continued in favor at Ottawa, for in 1889 he received as bounty money \$365; in 1890 \$488, and last year he received \$50 in bonuses. How all these barnacles do stick to Canada's funds.

Bearing in mind that the Dominion Government is at the present session asking an enormous sum of \$199,325 for immigration purposes, and to that extent desirous of conveying the impression that business and work is prosperous and plentiful, let me draw the attention of the readers of the Echo to a

(Continued on Page 5.)