

# Ontario Workman.

THE EQUALIZATION OF ALL ELEMENTS OF SOCIETY IN THE SOCIAL SCALE SHOULD BE THE TRUE AIM OF CIVILIZATION.

VOL. I.

TORONTO, THURSDAY, AUGUST 22, 1872.

NO. 19

## LABOR CONFERENCE AT NEW YORK.

July 30th, a conference of members of the Labor Party was held at New York. Mr. E. M. Chamberlin, in calling the meeting to order, said that they had assembled to consider what might be done towards preserving a national political organization of workmen. The industrial labor movement was generating a government within a government. It was a movement that might finally culminate in organized and widely spread resistance to the officers of the law. The peaceful settlement of the labor question depended upon our ability to reform, through the regular legal channels, the relations of laborer and the capitalist, before the laborers should lose all faith and hope in the Republic, and set up by force a Democracy of their own. A necessary prerequisite to peaceful reform was the maintenance of a distinct political party, having for its object the emancipation of the laborers of society; for all the power of the other parties, through their police, militia, army, and other servants of their government, is and will be used to crush out those ideas that we avow.

Mr. Chamberlin, of Massachusetts, and Mr. McDowell, of Pennsylvania, were chosen chairman and secretary of the meeting.

Mr. Troup called for a report of the committee appointed at Columbus to notify Messrs. Davis and Parker of their nominations.

Mr. Puett, of Indiana, member of that committee, and chairman of the National Executive Committee, endeavored to explain. His conduct, and that of other members of the committee, was violently attacked. During the discussion, it became apparent that a few were endeavoring to create confusion by raising points of order and motions to adjourn till afternoon.

Mr. Dalton, of New York, said that there was a premeditated intention to carry this conference for Grant or Greeley, and that the motion to adjourn was to give time to get supporters of those men here. For himself, he "wouldn't have Grant, and he couldn't go Greeley."

It was voted that a committee of five on credentials be appointed, who should report at 2 p.m. who were entitled to seats.

In the afternoon, the committee of credentials reported 53 delegates present from eight States.—Pennsylvania, 13; Massachusetts, 5; Connecticut, 5; New York, 24; Maine, 3; West Virginia, 1; Indiana, 1; Kansas, 1. The report was adopted, and a sergeant-at-arms appointed, who, assisted by two policemen, prevented the ingress of outsiders.

Mr. Steward, of Massachusetts offered the following resolution:

Resolved, That the working-classes of this country have nothing whatever to choose between President Grant and Horace Greeley; and that upon the questions and measures dearest to labor, the wealth of both parties, Republican and Democratic, is known to be thoroughly united in opposition thereto.

After a long discussion, the resolution was carried almost unanimously.

Mr. Douey, of Pennsylvania, moved that the conference resolve itself into a nominating convention, and proceed to nominate candidates for President and Vice-President of the United States.

This elicited a long discussion, which was continued into the evening session, during which a letter from Gov. Geary was read, advising no national nominations, but a concentration of the labor vote upon independent nominations for state officers and congressmen.

Messrs. Van Truok of Pennsylvania, Day of New York, McAdams of Pennsylvania, Troup, Graves and Harrison of Connecticut, spoke in favor of the motion. The delegates from Massachusetts, McCauley, Blissert and Groom of New York, Thompson of West Virginia, Puett of Indiana, Sider of Pennsylvania, and others, against. Nearly all who spoke on either side were emphatically against both Grant and Greeley,

but divided as to the expediency of making nominations, or of making them then. Finally, the vote was taken by yeas and nays, and 20 voted to proceed to nominate, and 19 against.

Mr. Douey said so small a majority in favor of the resolution did not satisfy many who were in favor of independent nominations, and he moved a reconsideration of the question, which reconsideration was carried, 25 to 14.

After further discussion, it was finally voted that the chairman of the conference call a delegate convention, to meet at Philadelphia, Thursday, August 22, to nominate candidates for President and Vice-President.

The following resolution was then moved and carried unanimously:—

"We, workingmen, in conference at New York, assembled this July 30, 1872, declare our sympathy with suffering workmen everywhere, and especially with those who have, in obedience to the dictates of humanity, placed their lives and liberty in danger. To those how confined in prison, by the remorseless rigor of unchristian laws and the inhuman executors of them, we tender our confidence in the rectitude of their intentions and our willingness to share their misfortunes.

We pledge ourselves neither to vote nor aid in the election of any of the candidates of those political parties, which are responsible for the continued vassalage of labor and willingly lend their aid in the repression of every endeavor for emancipation."

A vote of unqualified censure of President Grant's administration for failing to properly enforce the eight hour law, was unanimously passed, and the conference adjourned.

A few New York rowdies met in the beer saloon down stairs and furnished the reporters with an account of a bogus meeting which they said had endorsed Grant.

There was no split in the convention, which as a body was thoroughly hostile to both Grant and Greeley. Delegates from Pennsylvania were especially opposed to these men, but were not sufficiently prepared to suggest candidates, and if nominations had been pressed, though doubtless they would have been independent ones, there is no telling who might have been selected for standard bearers.

If Pennsylvania goes to the convention, August 22, thoroughly united on names that would be satisfactory to her, it would probably be safe to follow her independent lead.—*American Workman.*

## THE LIFE OF THE ENGLISH COLLIERS.

Have the readers of the *London Society* any idea of what a coal-pit, viewed from the earth's surface, is like? It has not a round black hole, about twice the size of an ordinary table, and straddling over it is a sort of gallows, a wire rope as thick as one's wrist, hanging down over a wheel and lost in the depths below. By and by the action is reversed, a clinking and a wheezing is heard in the adjoining engine-shed, and up comes the "tub" (a square box holding 2,200 weight) filled with coal. It came up so while our little party of six (I being the only novice present) was waiting to go down. I viewed the coarse, strong tub with approbation, making sure that as soon as it was emptied we should all get into it; but in this I was disappointed. It was not in the tub, but standing on the grating on which the tub had stood, that we had to descend; on the naked grating with nothing to "hold on" to but a cross-chain over head. But the pit was only 600 feet deep, and the coal smoke that arose from the enormous mine furnace below was not unbearable by the time it had benumbed one's senses a bit.

Six hundred feet down, and half a mile this way or that, under low-arched roofs, from which depended frequent fleeces of fungus, snowy white, and looking like lamb's wool, and making the black floor and the black walls, lit by feeble tallow

dips stuck there in daps of clay, blacker than ever. We all carried tallow dips stuck in balls of clay, and in Indian file followed the "Butty" and his foreman through the turnings and windings that led to the "chambers," from which coal was being hewn. Chambers are as wide as an ordinary street, and as high as the three-storied houses; and on every side, whenever the dingy light of the red-nosed dip was shifted was revealed a human creature naked to the waist, and blacker than any sweep, with savage gleaming eyes and savage glittering teeth, and with a weapon in his hand that in the uncertain light looked like a tomahawk, grinning at you, or making a dash with his weapon apparently in the direction of your visage, but which alights harmlessly on the face of the coal wall.

Heavers, packers, tubbers, fillers—these are all men, and hard as the work is they earn good wages, and if they dislike the labor they are at liberty to leave it. But they don't dislike the labor, and they are jolly enough—all except the boys. It was these boys that so perpetually haunted my coal scuttle, when I returned from Staffordshire. It is villainously cruel to serve the poor little chaps so.—The matter stands this way. The hewer is the man whose business it is to "break in" at the foot of a coal wall. He lies on his side or on his stomach, and he breaks it with his peck right along for a length, say of twenty feet, a gap that is two feet or less in height. He pecks his way into the rock till he has burrowed sixteen or eighteen feet. Naturally in the process of pecking he makes a deal of "slack," or small, and the boy in question is called the "slack boy." Regarded as a boy, as a human creature, he is slack indeed. He is not much like a boy. All-fours is his perpetual posture, and he wears a leather girdle about his waist, from which an iron chain depends, the other end of it being attached to an iron cart. The slack boy has an iron shovel as well, and the business of his wretched life is to crawl in at the hole the hewer makes, to fill his cart with chips and dust, and then to crawl out again with the load, always on his hands and knees, and with his poor limbs hung about with a few rags of which nakedness might be ashamed.—*London Society.*

## A MECHANICAL CURIOSITY.

The Sacramento (Cal.) *Record* furnishes the following:

W. M. Bernard, blacksmith and waggon-maker, of Dixon, Solano county, has invented, discovered or constructed a road cylinder, which is designed to carry freight or passengers. It consists of a large drum open at both ends, supposed to be from four to sixteen feet in diameter (according to the size of machine desired), and from five to seven feet in length. Inside of this wooden cylinder three grooved tracks of steel, one one inch by three-eighths, are laid. This completes the description of the shell, which in perspective looks like a wine vat lying on its side. Within this is placed another cylinder closed at the ends, and upon the outside of which are three tracks of iron cylinder. To the centres of this inner cylinder the shafts are attached. The freight is placed in the inner cylinder and the machine is ready to go. The force required to move it is just equal to the force that would be required to slide the inner cylinder on three rails well oiled. It is in one sense a sled which lays a track for itself as it goes. The inventor believes it will revolutionise the whole waggon business. Experiments have been made with one roughly constructed, only four feet in diameter, which was freighted with 2,300 pounds of iron, and seven men on the outside, which was carried easily over level roads by one horse. The tracks were rough and the entire model imperfect, but the experiment greatly encouraged the inventor, who has applied for a patent and will have a working model on exhibition at the State Fair. The trouble so far has been to give the thing a name which will be dis-

criptive of its construction and use. Many have been suggested. Among them, "revolving sled," "barrel roller," "cylindrical waggon," "drum coach," "roller portage," and the one used by us, "road cylinder." Like all inventors, "Billy" is laughed at for the quaint novelty of his invention, and the neighbors talk of placing the machine under bonds not to kill sheep or teapass upon the dairy; but "he laughs best who laughs last," and Billy is reserving his laugh for a final chuckle.

## THE FAMINE IN PERSIA.

The Rev. Henry Jones, secretary to the Turkish Missions Aid Society, whose office is at 18 Adam street, Strand, sends to the *Times* a letter which he has just received from one of the society's missionaries in Persia. Mr. Jones stated that his society, of which the Earl of Shaftsbury is the president, takes charge of any contributions remitted to himself, the Rev. Henry Jones, 18 Adam street, Strand, and forwards them immediately to the American missionaries in Persia, by whom, as will be seen from the following letter, they are judiciously distributed:

Orvirnab, June, 1872.

My dear brother,—This is to acknowledge the receipt of £400 sterling, sent through you to the Rev. J. F. Pettibene, our treasurer at Constantinople, for the relief of sufferers by famine. As soon as Mr. Pettibene received this he telegraphed (the telegram would authorize the missionaries to draw for the amount, and expend it immediately) to us that he was sending funds for the famine, but not till recently did his letter reach us, informing us of the fact that this was through you. This and the £300 from Germany are about used up. An amazing amount of suffering has been relieved, and yet the mass suffer still. We have endeavored to act systematically. The country has been divided between the missionaries here for special care, each in his district. The large body of pastors and teachers under our care has helped us materially in our work, and saved much imposture. We have endeavored to be specially careful to aid only those who have become the sufferers by this sore visitation. We have done what our limited means would allow to prevent complete demoralization, and to help those who were disposed to help themselves, and thus be saved to the commonwealth by giving seed to sow, cotton to spin, and spade with which to work, and thus earn their own bread. We have hired rooms for the refugees who have come from more destitute regions, and furnished clothing for the naked. When we have given means into the hands of reliable men, we have required a strict account of every farthing. Several scores are daily fed at our doors. Our missionary physician spent several months in Hamadan, some fifteen miles south-east of us, where the suffering has been, and continues to be, fearful. When we left there in March the death-rate was from 70 to 100 daily. The dead were gathered up in carts and tumbled into large pits, and a little earth was thrown over them. We have since heard from our helper there, who writes that cannibalism was on the increase, and had become frightful.

Little children of parents not in distress were decoyed on one side, killed, and eaten. The poor people sold everything for bread, and as a last resort would tear down the houses to sell the timber with which to buy their last crust, and then die. A correspondent writes us from Teheran that it has been computed that 106,000 have died in that city from famine and disease, though many of these were refugees from more destitute regions. It is supposed that not far from 3,000,000 souls have perished in this wretched land from the famine. God knows what will be the end of all this. The charities of Christian lands have made a profound impression on the Mussulmans of this country. May God grant that this famine for the bread that perisheth may awaken a hunger for the bread of life. Mr. Bassett, one of our number, left yesterday, en route for Hamadan, taking with

him the little we had left. Sir Moses Montefiore has done nobly for his co-religionists here. Pray for us and for poor Persia. The rains have been unusually abundant this spring, and the harvest promises well.—Very truly yours, G. W. COAN.—Rev. H. Jones, Secretary to Turkish Missions Aid Society."

## Labor Notes.

A Labor Union has been organized in Omaha, Nebraska.

A strong organization in the interests of Labor has been effected at Helena, Kansas.

The Labor movement in Pennsylvania is gradually but surely becoming powerful.

The Southern States are rapidly organizing under the banner of the National Labor Union.

A strike by the mechanics in the employ of the Central and Hudson River railroads is imminent.

An organization intending to embrace all classes of wood-working mechanics has been started in Syracuse, N. Y.

There were seven machinists and blacksmiths' Unions organized in the United States during the month of January.

Fourteen thousand members belong to the State Miners' Association of Illinois. It is in a prosperous condition.

In Virginia the Labor movement is spreading finely. The Richmond *Union* proposes having speakers give the State a thorough canvass.

In Templeton, Mass., a party of chair-makers have saved \$10,000, formed a co-operative company, and bought a mill of their own.

A Labor Union is being organized in Baltimore, Md. Ed Johnson is President, and Charles Luke Secretary. They have applied for a charter.

Considerable trouble has been recently caused by striking workmen in some of the Departments in the vicinity of Paris. Troops have been ordered to the disturbed districts.

Schools for printers are established throughout Germany, designed to instruct apprentices in the theory and practice of printing not only, but to impart a general knowledge of foreign languages, and an accurate acquaintance with the type of all languages.

The Executive of the State Committee of the Labor Reform Party of Massachusetts have decided to call a nominating convention for the 21st of August, to meet at Boston or South Framingham, probably at the latter place. They mean to be first in the field. The Republicans meet on the 26th, and the calls of the Liberals and Democrats are not yet out.

The managers of the Cincinnati Industrial Exposition for 1872 have appointed Alexander Gordon, of the firm of Gaff, Grey & Gordon, of the Niles Tool Works, Hamilton, as special representative, who will shortly make a trip East for the purpose of inducing manufacturers of novel and attractive articles to put their wares on exhibition, and for furthering generally the interests of this well established enterprise.

Coolie labor is largely employed in the British West India Islands, as well as in the Spanish, as a substitute for colored servitude. In the thirty-seven years from 1835 to 1871, inclusive, there were 137,981 coolie emigrants introduced into the island of Mauritius. During 1871 British Guiana and the British West Indies received 6,163 coolies. The coolies are found to be much more useful and willing to work on the plantations than the liberated colored men. Many of the latter have acquired an ambition to work for themselves, and those who have not won't work for anybody.

During the last two years Fall River has outstripped Lowell, Lawrence and Manchester in its productions, and became the chief seat of the cotton manufacture in America. Commencing work less than half a century since in iron works, upon a small stream, with a capital of \$24,000, it has, by its untiring industry, gradually expanded its business, until it has become a seat of vast manufactures of both iron and cotton, giving employment to several railways and steamers, and many thousand operatives. Its spindles have increased, during the last year, from 500,000 to 100,000 with the prospect of gaining another 250,000 the present year.