

THE TRADES' UNION BILL.

For some few days past the impression had got abroad that it was not the intention of Sir John A. Macdonald to bring forward the bill he had introduced into the House of Commons, some weeks since—a bill in which so many workmen feel a deep interest—and it was freely rumored that Sir John had yielded to the solicitations of those opposed to the bill, and withdrew it for the present session; but the proceedings in the House on Tuesday night proved the groundlessness of those rumors, and though urged to withdraw the bill, Sir John refused, and pressed for its passage, stating that the sole object of the bill was to relieve mechanics from the penalty of being indicted for every association they might form. Recently, employers in Toronto had taken advantage of the old law to arrest members of trades unions, and this bill was designed to modify this harsh law, in the same way that the English law on the same subject had recently been amended. The modification had been adopted there, because the law was felt to be too harsh for freemen to endure.

After discussion the motion for its second reading was carried, and the bill passed its final stage.

The act to amend the criminal law relating to violence, threats and molestation, was also read a second and third time.

The latter act, as we have already stated in our columns, has proved very obnoxious to the members of trade unions, and in our issue to-day we publish an amendment to that act, as drafted by the Parliamentary Committee appointed at a Trades' Union Congress, and we think it would be advisable for workmen to agitate its substitution in the place of the bill passed on Tuesday.

DEATH OF MR. JOHN HENRY JONES.

The members of the printing profession generally will learn with regret of the death of Mr. J. H. Jones, which occurred at his residence, Ann Street, on Wednesday, 12th inst., in the 64th year of his age. Mr. Jones was one of the Charter members of the Toronto Typographical Union, and had greatly endeared himself to his brother craftsmen by his urbanity and geniality of disposition.

The funeral will take place from his late residence, 97 Ann Street, this (Thursday) afternoon, at three o'clock. All members of Typographical Union will attend and pay the last tribute of respect to one whose memory will ever remain green.

THE BRICKLAYERS' AND MASONS' STRIKE.

On Thursday last the Bricklayers and Masons of this city struck work for nine hours per day. Some 160 men came out, leaving about fifty or sixty working under the new system. Yesterday afternoon a conference of the employers and employees was held, but no compromise was effected.

We understand a requisition is being largely signed, urging Mr. Ald. Robt. Bell to put himself forward as a candidate for the position of Water Works Commissioner for the West Division.

DESTRUCTIVE FIRE.—On Saturday afternoon a destructive fire occurred in this city, the Soho Foundry, on Beverley Street, the property of Messrs. Dickey, Neil & Co., being partially destroyed. The loss was about \$30,000, which is covered by insurance to the amount of \$16,000. Two cottages, on the opposite side of the street, occupied by Mr. A. McCormick and Mr. J. Venebels, also took fire, and were considerably damaged.

Communications.

BRANTFORD CORRESPONDENCE.

To the Editor of the Ontario Workman.

[The following communication was received too late for insertion last week:]—

I have been wondering this last week or two whether or not you could find a corner in your valuable journal for a Brantford correspondence, and I have come to the conclusion that the only way to find out is to try. As a general rule Brantford is a quiet place, and its denizens are remarkably so, especially its workmen. At present, however, there is a considerable shaking among the dry bones.

The policy inaugurated by the Honorable George Brown towards the employees of Canada is bearing its fruit here as well as in other places. What a pity the honorable gentleman is a Scotchman. Surely he has forfeited his claim to be called a Scot. Scotchmen are generally considered "canny chieftains," but there is naething canny about Geordie. He is only Scotch in stubbornness and fearlessness. His has been a stormy life. 'Tis a pity that the storm is not abating as the evening shades of life are gathering thick and fast around him; he thinks, as the poet says, "age might have taught him policy if not generosity." But nature gave him a turbulent disposition, and I suppose he is never at peace but when at war with some class of the people. Candidly, it affords me no pleasure to see a man of his venerable years and reputed intelligence become (by his own folly) the by-word of the Canadian mechanic. But as he is not a very interesting subject at best, we will drop him for the present, and let those who admire his beautiful proportions sing his praises, and point out the remedy that will bring back at least ten degrees the lengthening shadow of his departing glory.

I suppose you are aware of the lock-out in this town. The result has been anything but satisfactory to employers or employees. Neither one or other made anything out of it. If the balance is either one way or the other, employees have it; for they get off work at four o'clock on Saturday evening. Before the lock-out they worked till six P.M., but they had to sign the circular before they returned to work. The circumstances connected with the return to work is really amusing, although degrading. I think I had better relate the story for the edification of future generation, that the name of the mechanic who so skilfully led the retreat, may receive his meed of praise for his unparalleled manly act. His name will yet, doubtless, become the jest of future ages, and his act will call forth the jeers of all posterity, that is, the few that will know such a man lived to shame his countrymen and co-laborers. On the seventh or eighth day after Waterloo and Wilkes paid off the men that would not sign this circular, a report appeared in the Brantford Daily News (a sheet that has the presumption to call itself a newspaper), that the circular was removed and the men could resume work. By this time the best mechanics, with few exceptions, had left town, that is, the members of the League. What was left of them held a meeting on Victoria square, and appointed a delegation to go to see the firm, and enquire into the truth of the report that appeared in the Daily News. Mr. Cowhord (a gentleman worthy of the name, and fit for the occupation that his name suggests) was leader of the delegation. (I have not learned the names of the rest.) They left their fellow-laborers at 3 P.M. and did not return till after 6 P.M., and oh! my countrymen, what a report they had to give:—"The circular is not removed, and will not be. We signed it; you do as you think proper." What a delegation; sold their birthright for a mess of pottage. This of course opened the way for others; the leaders were gone, and rank and file were scattered to the four winds of heaven.

The men—with some twelve exceptions that left town, and six or seven noble exceptions that remained firm till they got work elsewhere—returned to work, but are dissatisfied, and cannot hold up their heads as of old. The pressing circumstances of some, and the want of firmness of Cowhord and his colleagues broke the spirits of those that would otherwise remain firm.

The League is still alive. We had a meeting lately; the roll was called; several were reported captured in the power of their masters, others missing or gone off in a passion. But what remains reviewed past events and came to the conclusion to keep the ball rolling. Employers will hear from us soon, and our brethren throughout the fair Province of Ontario will yet be convinced that there are some friends in Brantford.

VERA PRO GRATIS.

FUTILITY OF STRIKES—AN EQUITABLE DIVISION OF PROFITS.

To the Editor of the Ontario Workman.

"My vineyard flourished by my toil and care, I thought as a reward the fruits to share, Says Jezebel they shall be mine; Naboth was slain—another drank his wine."

The convulsions which are taking place in the labor market both in Europe and America, the rapid increase of wealth through the introduction and improvement of machinery, capitalists becoming millionaires in a few years, building themselves palaces, and living in luxury, while the workmen who make the wealth, cannot raise themselves homes of their own, prove that there is something "rotten in the state." The workmen think, and justly, that they are under remunerated, and they ask for higher wages, and if they don't get them they strike. Suppose the employer concedes a raise, does this remedy the evil? Not at all, it leaves them in the same condition as they were before. Unless there is a radical change in the relationship between labor and capital, the evil will still remain in all its magnitude. Now, sir, I am a member of the Trades' Assembly of this city, the object of which is for mutual help among the different trades if there should be a struggle between capital and labor, and to avoid strikes, unless they are absolutely necessary. But, sir, our in-

terests under the present existing state of things are antagonistic. If the tailor helps the shoemaker to get a raise in wages, he reduces his own, or what is the same thing, reduces their purchasing powers—the increased cost of production is charged by the manufacturer to the customer. "It is our interest to buy in the cheapest, and sell in the dearest market."

Strikes are contagious, and they never stop until they have gone the round of all the trades, and although a raise may have been conceded in every instance, capitalists are not disposed to abate their profits one jot, and the increase in the cost of production has to come out of the strikers' pockets indirectly. Wages are only nominally higher, and strikes leave us where we were before. What is the remedy for this state of things? There is only one, and that is for the Legislature to pass a law to give to workmen an equitable division in the profits of his own productions. The idea is not original. A few capitalists are doing it voluntarily in England and France, and it works satisfactorily. It would do away with strikes forever, as the workman's labor would be his capital invested in the concern, and instead of being an employee, he would be a partner. It would extinguish forever the odious word master. A law ought also to be passed to give the people a share in the profits of merchants. There is nothing new in this, as it is done voluntarily by the various co-operative establishments in England. In order to do this, it would require the workmen to obtain political power, which they can if they only will to do so. In all free countries a majority has the right to rule, and if they can get a majority in the Legislature, they have a right to make laws to secure themselves justice. If the Trades Unions, and the laboring men generally, would commence an agitation for an equitable division of profits, use some of their funds to employ men of ability to lecture on labor and capital, it would be going on the direct road to "the equalization of all elements of society in the social scale."

Are the sons who have to toil,
In the shop or on the soil,
Ever to be in the coil,
Of the profit monger.

I am, yours respectfully,

B. MERCER.

Hamilton, June 11th, 1872.

A STEP IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION.

To the Editor of the Ontario Workman.

DEAR SIR,—If the employers of the city of Toronto would come forward and meet their men in a friendly spirit, instead of standing aloof, good results would necessarily follow. Mr. Coghill, Coach Maker, King Street West, came to his men voluntarily last Saturday morning, and told them that for the future he would allow them to quit work at half-past four on Saturdays, without a reduction of pay. Such concession on their part would tend to do away with those hard feelings at present existing between employer and employee. All honor to Mr. Coghill for his noble example.

JUSTITIA.

Toronto, June 12, 1872.

CONSISTENCY!

To the Editor of the Ontario Workman.

DEAR SIR,—I feel it my duty to communicate to you the following, which I can vouch to be true:

Messrs. R. Hay and Co.'s chairmakers petitioned their employers for an advance of wages, whereupon they dismissed the whole of them. At the same period Hay & Co. are enlarging their workshops, and the builder who is doing the alterations comes down and states that he cannot proceed with the work, as his bricklayers have struck work. The astounded manufacturer scratches his head, and enquires what they have struck for. "The Nine Hours," says the builder. "Oh, give it to them, and let the work be got along with." What more passed I cannot exactly say, but you will at once see that *se'y* has a long arm yet.—I am your respectfully,

F. B.

Toronto, June 12, 1872.

A German paper offers statistics to show that all the attempts of France to raise an army of equal strength and efficiency to that of United Germany must be fruitless.

The Duke of Edinburgh was converted into a Fishmonger on Saturday, when His Royal Highness accepted the invitation of the Ancient and Honorable Order of Fishmongers to a banquet, and received the freedom of the Company.

According to the *Danske Tilender* of Thorshavn (Faroe Islands), a monstrous association of pirates has been discovered at Riek-iavik, and immense stores of plunder found concealed in caves. It is understood that the disappearance of many ships may be traced to their doings.

MASS MEETING OF THE NINE HOURS LEAGUE.

(From the Hamilton Standard.)

Thursday evening at 7 o'clock, pursuant to announcement, a meeting was held in the Market Square, when speeches were delivered by several of the representatives of the league. The attendance, perhaps, was not so large as might have been expected, scarcely 300 being present to listen to the various arguments of this oft-mooted and at present all momentous theme; but the speakers did justice to their cause.

The chairman, T. C. Watkins, opened the proceedings in a formal manner, remarking that he believed the employers thought the men would return to their various employments as soon as they had not individually the means to withstand longer for want of money. But they were mistaken. They (the workmen) intended to hold their stand until the masters should yield to their proposals, which, he thought, they were right in trying to obtain, for if the young men especially had more time and relaxation they would certainly have time to improve their talents, and enjoy more intercourse with their wives and children, and, above all, be able to improve their inventive faculty; without which they cannot advance and make that progress which the present period demands.

Mr. Ryan, Secretary of the League, next addressed the meeting.—Friends and fellow workmen, I have great pleasure in meeting you here this evening, and wish to pass a few remarks for the benefit of our world-wide unions, and to express my feelings. I strongly desire you to hold out; to remember that the eyes of the world are on you, men of Hamilton, the ambitious city; that you will scorn and pass him by without a greeting that dares to return to his employment until the victory is gained, or on the old terms; that you will ever hold a friendly hand and help to support them who are still on strike. I have great pleasure in announcing the fact that out of the large number of men who were locked out for refusing to sign a document that was detrimental to their interests, only ten have returned and turned traitors to our designs. If the capitalists and manufacturers in the United States can grant their men their moderate request what is to hinder our employers in Canada from doing the same? What is the reason of our large manufacturers realizing immense fortunes in a few years as they do? Is it any personal gift of theirs; by their superior skill, energy, education or attainment of theirs? Certainly not, it is by your labor and perseverance; by your superior skill and energy; by you workmen of Canada; by the skill of the men employed in the various departments of handicraft, which a skilled workman alone can accomplish. We are more than machines, we are immortal beings with the same feelings, the same aspiration as our employers, and we require relaxation and enjoyment as well as those who can afford three months holiday in the year, while we are degenerating and sometimes spoiling our health by overwork at the anvil or vice to support them in luxurious ease. The cause I now plead is not as some would have us suppose, detrimental to the interests of Canada, it is not so; for as the Dominion depends on the labour we supply, without us would fail for want of support. One of the peculiar arguments they use is that they say let every man work as long as he chooses, and pay him accordingly. But look at the absurdity of this for instance in a manufactory. The men wish to work nine hours and the engine driver fourteen; but what is the use of the engine driver to work that time if the other men leave, or vice versa. You men must work in union. He then proposed a resolution in favor of nine hours.

Mr. John McKeown said he was not going to argue the right or the wrong of the nine hours movement, but if they really believe their cause is just and equitable then see it through, and stand true to their opinion, and I say that if men have a grievance they have a right by law to combine, and if possible remove that grievance. I do not say that they are acting judiciously. If I say I choose to work fourteen hours no man has a right to interfere. It is pleasing to notice the peaceful demeanor of the men that have been on strike in Hamilton, and I sincerely hope whatever is right will prevail.

Mr. Hewitt, Toronto, made a most lengthy speech, which was full of sound reasoning. He said workmen have a sense of eternity, for as we look on the work of man throughout the universe the sentiment of labor is imprinted thereon. There was a time when labor was done on the serf system, and some would advocate it again now; but what reasonable man would desire to see that time come again? Now let that be forever banished; for it never raised but lowered the workman below his fellow

creatures. There are several men such as H. W. Beecher who write about political economy, and pull about the logic of social economy and the such like, and who know no more about it than a cherry tree does a Court of Chancery. But you must look to it from the standpoint of justice, and in this school get to the bottom of this movement. For instance, a capitalist knows a certain article is in great demand he intends to manufacture it, and for this purpose wants a hundred men; but not he, but society sees the demand must be supplied, and if he cannot obtain the men, society suffers. He concluded his remarks by a reference to the political duties of workmen.

Mr. Parker then spoke first on the goodness and mercy of God who held the waters in the hollow of his hand and made the earth his footstool, and spoke good reasons in favor of the movement.

Cheers were then given for the chairman, Mr. Ryan and the others, also "progress to the nine hours movement."

The meeting, which was very orderly and well conducted, then broke up at about a quarter to ten.

THE TRADES BILLS.

"The Parliamentary Committee," appointed by the Trades Union Congress in January last, have been very busy in getting into shape the several bills which they are anxious to have passed into law, but they have met with many obstacles. The Truck Act has become so manipulated in the Committee of the House which has it in charge, that it has now assumed a shape very distasteful to the workmen, and "the Parliamentary Committee" will probably oppose its passage altogether. They have succeeded, however, in getting the amendment to the Criminal Law Amendment Act into a shape which satisfies them; and the following is a copy of this amendment as finally agreed upon:—

1. Amendment of the principal Act.—The first section of the Act of the 34th and 35th of Her Majesty, chapter thirty-two, entitled "An Act to Amend the Criminal Law relating to Violence, Threats, and Molestation," shall be repealed, and instead thereof it shall be enacted as follows, viz.: Every person who does any of the following acts, with the view as hereinafter mentioned, that is to say, who

- (1.) Uses violence to any other person, or to the property of any other person; or
- (2.) Threatens or intimidates any other person in such manner as would justify a Justice of the Peace (on complaint made to such Justice) in binding over to keep the peace the person so threatening or intimidating; or
- (3.) Molests or obstructs any other person
- (a.) By persistently following him about from place to place; or
- (b.) By following him in or through any street or road with two or more persons in a disorderly manner; or
- (c.) By hiding or depriving him of, or hindering him in the use of, any tools, clothes, or property, owned or used by him; or
- (d.) By threats or acts calculated to intimidate him with a view in the case of any of such acts as aforesaid, thereby to coerce such other person.
- (1.) Being a master, to dismiss or to cease to employ any workman, or being a workman, to quit any employment, or to return work before it is finished;
- (2.) Being a master, not to offer, or being a workman, not to accept, any employment or work;
- (3.) Being a master or workman, to belong or not to belong to any temporary or permanent association or combination;
- (4.) Being a master or workman to pay any fine or penalty imposed by any temporary or permanent association or combination;
- (5.) Being a master, to alter the mode of carrying on, his business, or the number or description of any persons employed by him,

shall be liable to imprisonment, with or without hard labour, for a term not exceeding three months.

Nothing in this section shall prevent any person from being liable under any other Act, or otherwise, to any other or higher punishment than is provided for any offence by this section, so that no person be punished twice for the same offence.

Provided that no person shall be liable to any punishment for doing or conspiring to do any act on the ground that such act restrains or tends to restrain the free course of trade, unless such act is one of the acts hereinbefore specified in this section, and is done with the object of coercing as hereinbefore mentioned.