

CONFERENCE OF SOUTH STAFFORD SHIRE IRONWORKERS.

An important conference of representative iron-workers in the South Staffordshire and East Worcestershire districts was held at Wednesbury recently. Mr. Capper, chairman of the operatives' council on the Conciliation Board of masters and men, presided, and there was a very large number of delegates present, the whole of the operatives' council and 76 secretaries of the different lodges of ironworkers being present. The first matter disposed of was that in relation to the position of the various lodges in the district. From the reports presented it was shown that the numerical strength of the organisation had materially improved—at Whitsuntide there were 4,300 members, whereas at the end of January the members numbered 23,000. This was an increase of 19,000 men. Of this number 3,000 men were enrolled within the past month. The Unionists showed a majority of eight to one against the non-unionists. After this business had been disposed of the position of the South Wales ironworkers and miners was discussed. The reduction of 10 per cent. on the part of the masters was severely deprecated. The reduction proposed by the masters was shown to be unjust and unfair; whilst the South Wales puddlers had only received an advance of 2s per ton, the English and Scotch puddlers had secured an advance amounting to 5s per ton. This seemed to be additionally severe when it was borne in mind that the South Wales men had all along been working under the scale of wages prevailing in England and Scotland.

Reports were received from the South Wales delegates, in which unmistakable determination was expressed to resist to the utmost the action of the masters. The report added that some of the colliers consented to a reduction; the ironworkers would nevertheless steadfastly continue the struggle until they obtained what they deemed to be a fair concession. These reports were received with great enthusiasm, and a unanimous opinion was expressed to extend the sympathy and aid of the amalgamation to the men now on strike. In addition to the levy of 1s per week per member, which has already been made on behalf of the South Wales operatives, it was agreed to give the sum of 2s per head (amounting in all to \$2,100) out of the general funds of the society. It was also decided to give aid to the non-unionists during the continuance of the struggle.

The next question disposed of was that having reference to the wages basis in the iron trade. A uniformity in the rate of wages throughout the kingdom was considered desirable towards settling the present equivocal position existing between masters and men. It was hoped that at the forthcoming conference between both parties the wages basis would be so determined as to place the operatives in a much better position than they are now. In fact, it was confidently anticipated that the original proposal for the puddlers to receive 1s per ton in advance of the selling price of iron would be definitely agreed to. Much dissatisfaction, if not something far more serious, will probably ensue if this principle is not adopted.

WORKINGMEN AND EDUCATION.

If it be wished to show what education can do for the workingman, Scotland affords a handy, but not altogether an adequate, answer. For generations past, her schools have given to the children of workmen an opportunity of acquiring a certain amount of knowledge and mental training. But let it be remarked that the problem has never had fair play in Scotland. For, in the first place, till quite recently the Scottish workman, after becoming a workman, has never had the benefit of leisure; he has had to work his ten or twelve or even fifteen hours at the plough, or the bench, or the loom; for mental improvement he has seldom had more than an hour or two at night when the body is exhausted, and when most men are more disposed to chat or to sleep than to study. Secondly, until the present generation, the Scottish workman has not enjoyed the benefit of cheap literature; in the days of our fathers and grandfathers books were extremely dear. Scotland, therefore, during her past history, has enjoyed the benefit of but one of the three factors that are now conspiring for the intellectual benefit of workingmen, and that often in an inferior degree, for the education of the schools has often been defective. And then as to the results. It is very true that on the whole the Scottish people have been marked by superior intelligence; but what chiefly attracts notice, in connection with their education, is, that by means of it they have often been enabled to rise to a higher sphere of life than that in which they were born. But what is now chiefly to be desired is, not that a few educated workmen should rise to the middle class, but that the whole body of workmen should be raised by education and mental training to a higher intellectual level. It is, indeed, a great advantage to the individual workman that he has the chance of raising himself and his family to a place in the middle class of society. This affords him in many instances a great stimulus to self-denying exertion. But the working class, as a whole, are not benefited, but rather impoverished by his elevation. They lose one of their ablest and most creditable members. Unless the whole platform of labor is raised, so to speak, the general good that results is but small. Now, what we deem so important in the present conjunction of events, is, that it affords the opportunity for this general elevation.

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PARLIAMENTARY NOTICE. HOUSE OF COMMONS, THE CLERK'S OFFICE, Ottawa, Jan. 30, 1873. Pursuant to the 56th Rule of the House, notice is hereby given that the time for RECEIVING PETITIONS FOR PRIVATE BILLS will expire on Wednesday, the 20th day of March next. ALFRED PATRICK, Clerk of the House.

CAUTION TO SMOKERS. The Imperial Smoking Mixture. Sold only in registered 2 oz. packets, 15c. GOLDEN BIRD'S EYE TOBACCO, Registered, 15c the 2oz. packet. Masters' Celebrated Virginia Shag, Registered, 10c the 2oz. packet. THE IMPERIAL, 884 YONGE ST., TORONTO. W. MASTERS, IMPORTER.

GOVERNMENT HOUSE, OTTAWA, Saturday, 25th day of December, 1872. PRESENT: HIS EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR-GENERAL-IN-COUNCIL. Whereas the article known as Old Tom Gin, being a sweetened Spirit, cannot be accurately tested for by strength by Syke's Hydrometer, in the mode prescribed by law for testing spirituous liquors, and it is expedient with a view to uniformity in the collection of duty thereon, that an average strength should be adopted as the rule governing entries thereof. His Excellency, on the recommendation of the Honorable the Minister of Customs, and under the authority given by the 4th section of the Act 31, Vic. Cap. 6, intitled: "An Act respecting Customs," has been pleased to order and it is hereby ordered that in collecting Customs Duty on the importation of Old Tom Gin, the same be dealt with and treated as a Spirit twenty-three per cent under proof, or containing seventy-seven per cent of proof spirits.

W. A. HIMSWORTH, Clerk Privy Council. March 10, 1873.

GOVERNMENT HOUSE, OTTAWA, Thursday, 6th February, 1873. PRESENT: HIS EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR-GENERAL IN COUNCIL. On the recommendation of the Honorable the Minister of Customs, and under the provisions of the 8th Section of the Act 31st Victoria, Cap. 6, intitled: "An Act respecting the Customs," His Excellency has been pleased to order, and it is hereby ordered, that the Village of Coanage, in the County of Kent and Province of New Brunswick, be and the same is hereby constituted and erected into an Out-Port of Customs, and placed under the survey of the Collector of Customs at the Port of Richibucto.

W. A. HIMSWORTH, Clerk of the Privy Council. March 10, 1873.

GOVERNMENT HOUSE, OTTAWA, Monday, 17th day of February, 1873. PRESENT: HIS EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR-GENERAL IN COUNCIL. On the recommendation of the Honorable the Minister of Customs, and under the Act 31, Vic. Cap. 6, intitled: "An Act respecting the Customs," His Excellency has been pleased to order, and it is hereby ordered, that the Town of Strathroy, in the County of Middlesex, Province of Ontario, be and the same is hereby constituted and erected into an Out Port of Customs and placed under the survey of the Collector of Customs at the Port of London.

W. A. HIMSWORTH, Clerk, Privy Council. March 10, 1873.

GOVERNMENT HOUSE, OTTAWA, Monday, 17th day of February, 1873. PRESENT: HIS EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR-GENERAL IN COUNCIL. On the recommendation of the Honorable the Minister of Customs, and under the provisions of the 9th Section of the Act 31 Vic., Cap. 6, intitled: "An Act respecting the Customs," His Excellency has been pleased to order, and it is hereby ordered, that the Town of St. Thomas, in the County of Elgin, Province of Ontario, be and the same is hereby constituted and erected into an Out Port of Customs, and placed under the survey of the Collector of Customs at the Port of London.

W. A. HIMSWORTH, Clerk, Privy Council. March 10, 1873.