

Ontario Workman.

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

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Labor Notes.

The London Shopkeepers' Assistants Association is again holding meetings in London with a view of extending its organization.

The Amalgamated Carpenters and Joiners of Scotland Report for the year shows a great increase in branches, number of members and funds.

A rotary puddling furnace, invented by Mr. Crampton, is shortly to be tried at the Royal Gun Factories, Woolwich, to supersede, in a great measure, the laborious operation of puddling iron by hand.

A large meeting composed of the London Imitators of woods and marbles, was held on the 17th ult., at Munster Square, Regent's Park, to take into consideration the formation of a trades union. The meeting was largely attended.

The "International Herald," says the next struggle of working men will be to have the whole of Saturday as a holiday. The same paper thinks ten hours a week would be enough to produce all the wealth required for the comfort of the people.

The workmen at Britonferry Ironworks, Nonmouth, have made arrangements with their employers Messrs. Townsend, Wood and Co., to resume work at once until the strike question is settled, at the higher rate of wages, agreeing in case of reduction of wages generally, they would accept the lesser rate.

THE CONGLETON STRIKE.—Two or three of the silk-mills recently opened in this town, by the masters giving the price demanded by the hands, viz., 9s. per week. It is expected that the rest of the hands will go in at this price, and thus this disastrous strike brought to a close. The strike has lasted about four weeks, and the attendant anxiety has been somewhat severe.

The Machinists and Blacksmiths' Journal for January says, that during the year 1872, forty-six Unions were organized, with an increase of membership of over three thousand. The International Union is out of debt, and has nearly \$7,000 of a balance in its favor. Besides this, their President talks of organizing only seventy-five new Unions during 1873.

The total number of members of the Associated Iron Molders of Scotland, was in December, 3,261, with funds on hand amounting to £15,714—nearly \$80,000. Trades was slackening up considerably, and attempts at reduction of wages were anticipated. The rules adopted by the English Society in reference to molders emigrating to this country, have been submitted to the members of the Scottish Society, and will, without doubt be adopted.

The Chinese brought to Beaver Falls, Pa., to take the place of white laborers, at one-fourth the wages, have been on strike for an advance. It appears the first lot were getting seventy-five cents per day, the second lot only received sixty, and as they could save nothing out of that amount, they struck for seventy-five, and they got it. "Mo wantee more payee or no workee."

Thirteen of the gas-stokers imprisoned for participation in the recent strike were let out of Maidstone Goal on Wednesday morning; but they were only the men who had been sentenced at Woolwich Police-court to incarceration for six weeks—no step whatever having yet been taken to soften the doom pronounced on the leaders in the strike by Mr. Justice Brett.

The colliers, to the number of 600, employed at the Morewood Collieries, Alfreton, have resumed work. They struck about a fortnight ago in consequence of the owners refusing the eight hours system. That has now been conceded, and the owners have agreed to advance the wages of the men, 4d. per ton of 25 cwt. until the first of August, after which 21 cwt. will be the maximum weight of a ton.

There has been for some time much dissatisfaction existing among the women and girls employed in the spinning department of the Chatham Dockyard on account of

the small amount of money they can now earn. They were put on "task" work a little time back, but the scale of prices was such that they have been unable to earn anything like what they were paid when on "day" work, and hence the discontent. But there are hopes that the matter will now be remedied, as dockyard officials are engaged in preparing a revised list of prices, which will, it is hoped, enable the workmen to earn as much money as they used to receive.

THE IMPRISONED GAS STOKERS.—The Rev. G. M. Murphy, as chairman of a meeting of South London workingmen, has received the following communication from the Home-office:—"Whitehall, Jan. 16—Sir,—I am directed by Mr. Secretary Bruce to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 11th inst., and to acquaint you that the memorial and resolution forwarded by you on behalf of the gas-stokers have been duly received, and that they and other memorials on the same subject are now under the consideration of the Secretary of State.—I am, sir, your obedient servant, HENRY WINTERBOTHAM.—The Rev. G. M. Murphy."

An aggregate meeting of the members of the various branches of the composition and ornamental glass-frame trade, was held on the 25th ult., in the Franklin Hall, Castle street, Oxfordstreet, to consider the propriety of applying to employers for the nine hours day. The meeting was fully attended by union and non-union men, and the utmost unanimity prevailed. Mr. Lloyd Jones, by invitation of the committee, occupied the chair, and urged upon those present who did not belong to the union, the advisability of at once joining it, as it was only by acting with the united thought and decision of man, that they enforce their past claims, or so regulate their proceedings as to decide as to what general rule in the trade would be applicable to all, and in the interest of all, employers as well as employed. The best spirit prevailed throughout the whole of the proceedings.

The co-operative movement seems to be spreading in France, for we hear of new enterprises started on all sides. For instance a co-operative bake-house founded at Jouy-sur-Morin, (Seine-et-Marne) has proved a great success. A month ago a similar baker's co-operative society started at Chantay near Tours, called "la Chantayenne." The inhabitants of Beziers, (Herauld) received it appears, a copy of the rules affecting the co-operative bake-house of Arcueil-Cachan, near Paris, and were so impressed that they resolved to start a similar institution. The adhesions were so numerous that the society was at once founded, and we extract the following paragraph from their circular:—"It is by co-operation, that we shall gradually obtain the solution of those social problems which have been the subject of so many discussions and so few deeds. It is by co-operation that we shall attain the moral and material improvements of the working classes."

A PUBLICANS' STRIKE.—A "strike" of an extraordinary character, the particulars of which have not until now appeared in print, has taken place at Basingstoke. The publicans there, as well as in other places, feel very sore about the Licensing Act, and they determined to make at least some of those who passed the bill feel the inconvenience of its provisions. Accordingly, as the county ball was to be held there a few nights ago, they agreed not to apply to the magistrates for any extension of hours; and the local gentry who came to the ball before eleven o'clock, found that if they put their horses in the hotel stables they would not be able to get them out again until six o'clock the next morning, while those who arrived after eleven found the public-houses shut up, and there was no accommodation to be had at any price, the publicans saying, "You, gentlemen, have passed the Licensing Act, and now we will give you a turn of it." The amount of inconvenience occasioned may be more easily imagined than described, as numbers had come from a long

distance out in the country. The members of the workingmen's clubs gave the coachmen bills informing them that as they would not be able to get refreshments at the public houses, they might come to the clubs, where they would be supplied with refreshments at the same price as the members were charged.

The men on strike in South Wales have caused a statement to be published in which they say that they are at direct issue with the masters on a question of certain figures, and that it is on this point, and this point only, they ask for arbitration. They repudiate the idea that they want an examination of the masters' books for the purpose of ascertaining the profits made by the masters, or for the purpose of having a decision by arbitration as to what those profits ought to be. They believe that the rate of wages, after the 10 per cent. reduction, would not bear the same ratio to the prices now received by the masters as did the ratio of wages paid by the same masters at different antecedent periods to the prices received by them at those periods. They submit that the assurance of this fact is a fair subject for arbitration, and that it in no way involves an offensive inquiry into the affairs of the masters, or an attempt to dictate to them as to the profit they ought to be allowed on their colliery ironworks. If the result of such an arbitration should be to show that the wages offered by the masters bear the same ratio to the prices they receive as the wages paid by them at certain antecedent periods bore to the prices received at those periods, the men would accept the reduced scale.

TRADES' UNION CONGRESS.

The sittings of the Fifth Annual Trades' Union Congress were commenced on Monday, in the New Assembly rooms, at Leeds. A hundred and thirty delegates were present, representing trades and societies from all parts of the kingdom.

On Tuesday the president (Mr. Lishman) delivered an address, in the course of which he alluded to the gas-stokers' strike, condemning it as inopportune. He, however, thought Mr. Justice Brett showed vindictiveness in his sentence. He further urged the abrogation of the present criminal law as regards strikes. He very much regretted that the parliamentary committee had not been successful in all they had done with respect to the truck system, the nine hours' question, and other matters. He then reviewed various subjects which were to be discussed by the congress, and recommended that working men should give prominence to the questions in which they were interested, and be prepared to support their representatives in Parliament. The business was chiefly formal.

On Wednesday the report of the committee was discussed. Mr. J. D. Prior moved a vote of thanks to the parliamentary committee, but also proposed to exempt from the adoption of their report that part which relates to the Criminal Law Amendment act.—Mr. J. Naylor moved that the committee had exceeded their powers in regard to this act, as it had been resolved at Nottingham that there should be no compromise on the subject.—Several other delegates strongly condemned the conduct of the committee, and some defended it, Mr. George Howell replying to the attacks that had been made upon them, and insisting that there should be a total repeal of the law.—The Hon. Auberon Herbert, M.P., said he was confident that the criminal law would be amended, and he recommended that a deputation should be sent to Mr. Gladstone.—Mr. Alderman Carter, M. P., advocated its total repeal, and ultimately the original resolution was agreed to. That part of the report relating to the Arbitration act was also adopted. In the afternoon other portions of the report were discussed.—A public meeting was held in the evening in the Mechanics' institute. Mr. Alderman Carter presided, and spoke at some length on the subject of trades' unions and the representation of labor in Parliament. Resolutions appropriate to the occasion were moved and spoken to by Mr. Odger, Mr. Joseph Arch, and others.

At Thursday's sitting of the congress a series of resolutions were carried unanimously after an animated discussion, in favor of the further amendment of the law which regulates criminal proceedings against workmen for breach of contract. The speakers repudiated the association of the idea of conspiracy with combination for trades' union purposes. During the discussion, Mr. Cremer, of London, said that in reply to a memorial from the Amalgamated Society of Carpenters and Joiners, founded upon a speech made at Reading by Mr. Lefevre a member of the Government, as to what were combinations and conspiracies, Mr. Gladstone had sent a reply which he (Mr. Cremer) would read. Mr. Lefevre had said that during last year the Government had paid £50,000 more for coals for the Royal navy owing to the extraordinary high prices, the main cause of which he said had been a combination of the coal owners. That was the language of a Minister of the Crown, and the Amalgamated Carpenters and Joiners therefore memorialised Mr. Gladstone as to whether the Government was prepared to put the law in motion against those conspirators (the coal owners), and whether it would appoint a commission to inquire into the causes of the present high prices of coals. This put Mr. Gladstone in a fix, but he sent the following reply:—

10, Drowning-street, Whitehall, January 8, 1873.—Sir,—Mr. Gladstone has directed me to reply to your letter of the 6th inst., to express his conviction that his colleagues agree with him in regarding the present prices of coal as a great evil; but he is not aware of any facts which would warrant Her Majesty's Government in assuming that individuals have in any manner made themselves obnoxious to the law in connection with this subject. Should such facts be produced, they will meet with immediate attention. In the absence of these, though he does not say no circumstances could not justify an inquiry, he is not convinced that it would be for the public advantage in the present situation of the question. In regard to the gas-stokers lately sentenced to imprisonment, Mr. Gladstone has no doubt that you will perceive that an opinion, whether correct or otherwise, that they have received a severe sentence, ought not to lead to the adoption of another promise of any measures not justified by independent reasons, but should rather lead to a desire that the case should be carefully examined by the Secretary of State, and that the examination of any allegations laid before him Mr. Bruce has already expressed his willingness to undertake.—I am, &c., J. A. GODLEY.

After some discussion, Mr. Cremer moved the following resolution:—

That this congress is of opinion that the present high prices of coal and iron are due to a combination of coal owners, ironmasters, and capitalists, and that such combination is a conspiracy of a grave and much more serious character than the so-called gas-stokers' conspiracy, instructs the Parliamentary committee to institute such proceedings in a court of law against either coal owners or ironmasters, with a view of ascertaining whether the laws of combination and conspiracy are so framed as to apply to all who combine and conspire, and whether they have been enacted especially to crush combination on the part of working men.

Mr. M'Donald, Manchester, seconded the motion, which was strongly opposed by Mr. Kane (North of England) and Mr. M'Donald, (Glasgow).—Mr. Kane moved the following amendment:—"that this congress considers such a proposition to be unworthy of the consideration of any body of intelligent men." Eventually Mr. Kane withdrew his amendment, and the original motion, on being put, was lost by a large majority, only three hands being held up for it.

The "Trades' Union Act and its Working" next came under consideration. On Friday the first business was the adoption of a memorial to Government praying for the release of the gas-stokers, on the ground that they did not intentionally violate the law, and that the congress, while not questioning the legality of the verdict, were surprised at the severity of the sentence.—Mr. Taylor, of Leamington, then

read a paper on the employment of women and children in agriculture, factories, workshops, &c.—Mr. Halliday, miners' delegate, next made a statement respecting the dispute in the coal and iron trade in South Wales. He contended that the workmen were fairly entitled to an increase of wages, considering the rise in the prices of coal and iron, and said the dispute continues without any prospect of a settlement. Mr. Kane, ironworker, said the union would be able to support 2,000 ironworkers without any appeal. A resolution expressing sympathy with the men on strike, and hoping that the dispute would be settled by arbitration, and calling upon the congress to use the means to raise funds for the men locked out, was passed.—After a very warm discussion the following were elected as a parliamentary committee—Messrs. Howell, M'Donald, Odger, Allen, Guile, Shorrocks, Owen, Kane, and Plackett. For the holding of next year's congress five places were proposed and seconded, viz.: Glasgow, Newcastle-on-Tyne, Sheffield, Liverpool, and Hanley. The voting was as follows: Glasgow, 9; Liverpool, 22; Sheffield, 80; Hanley, 17; Newcastle, 12. Sheffield was thus selected.

THE AMALGAMATED ENGINEERS.

On Saturday last the anniversary meeting of the council of the above society took place at Anderson's Hotel, Fleet street. After partaking of an excellent and well served dinner, the Chairman (Mr. Whetstone) in proposing prosperity to the society went into details as to its progress within the last few years, which were of the most satisfactory kind. The members now number 41,285, whilst the funds have risen to the unprecedented sum of £155,000. There has been a general rise of wages without striking, and many other advantages obtained through the instrumentality of the society.

Mr. William Allen, the general secretary, also spoke in a very encouraging manner of the society's proceedings and progress. He advised a steady perseverance in the course they had been pursuing, with the assurance that if they kept moving forward peaceably and wisely, they could not fail to realize in the future many advantages in addition to those secured up to the present time.

Mr. Lloyd Jones replied on behalf of the guests, and sought to enforce on the engineers and members of trade societies generally, the necessity of perfecting their trades organizations. They were now becoming in a certain sense national institutions, and it was their duty so to work them as to give them increased power in influencing the business of the country, so as by the operations of law to secure to labor an equitable share in the net profits of the nation's industry, and to secure an education for every poor man's child, whereby the general manhood of the country should be elevated, and the safety and happiness of all made more secure.—*English Exchange.*

A SCIENTIFIC ANECDOTE.

A professor's wife, who occupied herself sometimes with assisting her husband in making casts of interesting objects of geology and natural history, says the *Manufacturer and Builder*, also for her own pleasure, made sometimes flowers and fruits of wax and other materials, and notwithstanding she had become quite a successful expert in this line, she found that almost always her efforts were criticised by her friends. Once, at a tea party, she passed a large apple around, and quoted her confidence that this time she had been quite successful in her imitation of nature's product; but her friends were as usual, not of her opinion; one criticised the shape, saying it would be more natural if it was not so globular; another criticised the colors, and said it was better than other imitations, but that she had not quite hit that natural indescribable peculiarity which distinguishes the natural apples from the imitations; almost every one had some fault to find. After the apple had passed round and came in her hands again, she ate it, without saying anything. Her friends had been criticising a real apple, but never afterwards criticised her imitations of fruit.

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