

believe in the continuity of individual life because of its incomprehensibility. "Existence around us," he goes on to say, "illuminated by modern sciences, is full of antecedently incredible occurrences; one more or less makes no logical difference. . . . Does anybody find the doctrine of the Incarnation incredible? The nearest rose-bush may rebuke him, since he will see there the aphides, which in their wingless state produce without union creatures like themselves; and these again, though uncoupled, bring forth fresh broods, down to the tenth or eleventh generation; when, behold! winged males and females suddenly result and pair." "Miracles" are cheap enough! "Another consideration having some force is that we should find ourselves speculating about this matter at all. All the other aspirations of infancy, youth and manhood turn out more or less, as time rolls, to have been prophecies. . . . There is a significance like the breath of a perpetual whisper from nature in the way in which the theme of his own immortality teases and haunts a man. Note also that he discusses it least and decides about it most dogmatically in those diviner moments when the breath of a high impulse sweeps away work-a-day doubts and selfishnesses. What a blow to the philosophy of negation is the sailor leaping from the taffrail of his ship into an angry sea to save his comrade or to perish with him! He has never read either Plato or Schopenhauer—perhaps not even that heavenly verse, 'Whoso loseth his life for My sake, the same shall save it.' But arguments which are as far beyond philosophy as the unconscious life is deeper than the conscious sufficiently persuade him to plunge."

On the subject of death not staying, but hastening, the development of the individual, Sir Edwin has a fine thought or two with which we must now conclude. "Birth," he remarks, "gave to each of us much; death may give very much more. It may give us subtler senses to behold colours we cannot here see, to catch sounds we do not now hear, and to be aware of bodies and objects impalpable at present to us, but perfectly real, intelligibly constructed, and constituting an organized society and a governed, multiform State. Where does nature show signs of breaking off her magic, that she should stop at the five organs and the sixty or seventy elements? Are we free to spread over the face of this little earth and never freed to spread through the solar system and beyond it? If death ends the man and cosmic convulsions finish off all the constellations, then we arrive at the insane conception of a universe possibly emptied of every form of being, which is the most unthinkable and incredible of all conclusions."

But we cannot continue to draw upon these beautiful re-settings of the "intimations of immortality." As men's minds rise into higher planes of thought and science continues its revelations, they will not be the final word, even in the religion of nature. We could wish that they formed a part of the actual gospel of Buddhism, so barren is it of comfort in the presence of death. Then might we extol the ethics of its founder, and see in his precepts something of more value than the "renunciation" of home and home's sanctities and a sombre loathing of life. Our thanks are not the less due or less unfeignedly accorded to Sir Edwin Arnold. He has given us a glowing picture of a land of vivid colour, of bright flowers, and glad sunshine. A land of song, he has also made it a land of romance. His poetic sympathies and fervid genius have lit up for Western readers an old historic faith. Would that that faith were more worthy the heart-trust of its Eastern disciples, or that, discarding Krishna, they might receive the Christ.

G. MERCER ADAM.

MONTREAL LETTER.

THE LABOUR CONGRESS.

MONDAY, September 2nd, having been announced by the Mayor as a public holiday in honour of the meeting in Montreal of the Dominion Trades and Labour Congress, business generally was set aside, and the city was in fête attire. The session was inaugurated by a public parade of 25,000 men in presence of enormous crowds of citizens, through streets gaily decorated and enlivened by music, flags, banners, mottoes and official regalia. The stream was two and a half hours long, and the day so auspiciously commenced was concluded at the Exhibition grounds in games and friendly contests of skill in various forms, among which the most conspicuous were races for presidents, for presidents' wives, for delegates, for members of labour organizations, for married women, for young women, and an amusing one for fat men.

The session for work opened the following morning in the City Council Chamber, where an address of welcome from Alderman Rolland in behalf of the Mayor was read, and a reply from the President of the Congress was delivered. Thereafter the meetings were held in a hall of less pretence and were enthusiastically attended by an intelligent and earnest set of men, who if they exhibited at times the little knowledge which is dangerous, at least showed an inclination to conviction and enlightenment.

The platform of the Congress demands reform of abuses, equal rights to all, the abolition of all laws which work with a bias, eight hours' work in the day, and a just proportion of the wealth which labour produces. The Secretary's statement reported 200 affiliated bodies, sufficient revenue for expenses, and an improvement in organization which constituted the chief work of the past year. A bare outline of the ground gone over by the Congress,

and an idea of the far-reaching questions with which it intends to occupy itself in the future, may be formed from a glance at resolutions proposed, discussed, and carried with more or less unanimity:

That the system of subsidizing railways by land and money grants is detrimental to the best interests of the country, and that this Congress request the Government to discontinue said practice, but that when need arises the Government shall provide facilities to the citizens of this country to exchange their products with each other, and not delegate this important duty to private corporations.

That a Dominion Employers' Liability Act, uniform in its operation in all Provinces alike, is necessary to place the citizens of Canada upon an equal footing in this respect.

That, in the opinion of this Congress, any terms of stipulations other than the rendering of an equivalent for wages insisted upon or demanded by employers in the engagement of employees should be declared by law null and void; and that any attempt at their exaction be declared a criminal offence, punishable by imprisonment for a specific period on proof and conviction in any court of competent jurisdiction. Be it therefore resolved that both the Provincial and Dominion Governments be respectfully petitioned to introduce and pass into law measures to that effect.

That this Congress approves of the use of Union labels and hereby recommends to the subordinate bodies represented to see that such labels are on all manufactured goods which they may purchase, and in which callings labels are in use by labour.

That whenever tenders are called for by either Federal or Provincial Governments, or by any municipality, for the building of any public work or the performance of any public service, and where in the building of such work or the performance of any public service workmen will be employed belonging to a trade or calling in which there is a usual and commonly recognized scale of wages, none shall be allowed to tender who have at any time during the previous twelve months paid less than the standard rate of wages in such trade or calling.

That in the opinion of this Congress the Provincial Government should take steps to establish printing offices in which all legal Government printing and the publication of school books should be done.

That the Provincial Governments be asked to transfer the allowance now enjoyed by the universities and colleges to the public schools for the purpose of further promoting their efficiency and providing the pupils of such schools with books free of charge.

That the Government establish offices where the workmen out of employment could go and enquire to obtain employment.

That, in conformity with the principle of equity, the labourer should have a first lien to the extent of his wages on all his labour creates, irrespective of ownership.

That in the opinion of this Congress the interests of the female workers require that female inspectors of factories and workshops should be appointed by the Government, and that in order that the duties of such female inspectors when appointed shall not be performed in a merely perfunctory manner, the wishes of the various labour bodies should be consulted in making such appointments.

That as the violation of any law with impunity tends to bring the Government into disrepute, and to make our judiciary system ridiculous, this Congress demands the appointment of one or more officers in each judicial district whose duty it would be to prosecute all parties violating or evading any law, either local or Federal.

That whereas the giving of piecework to apprentices is detrimental to the good and welfare of their future as journeymen, and also a menace to trades unions generally, be it therefore resolved,

That this Congress petition both the Local and the Dominion Parliaments at their next session to have an addition made to their respective Factory Acts, making it unlawful for any employer to give apprentices piecework, except in the last year of said apprenticeship, and that this Congress requests that all trades unions and Knights of Labour assemblies petition their respective members of both Houses of Parliament to give the matter their united support.

This Congress calls on the Quebec Legislature to enact a law for the protection of workmen in the Port of Quebec and Levis, that all proprietors of floating booms be compelled to keep such booms in proper order so as to prevent accidents, and that the wharves be kept in good order, and that all persons neglecting such means of prevention shall be held liable for compensation in case of accident.

That this Congress places itself upon record in approval of Bill No. 8, introduced by H. H. Cook in the House of Commons during last session of the Federal Parliament, entitled, "An Act for the examination and licensing of persons having charge of stationary steam engines and other devices worked under pressure," and which measure failed in being placed on the statutes of the country.

That the Government be petitioned to repeal the clause in the Seamen's Agreement Act not allowing any appeal after a conviction of any offence, and giving all persons charged under said Act the right to be tried by jury.

That all religious institutions, industrial schools, reformatories, penitentiaries or prisons in which any article of trade is manufactured, or in which the labour performed enters into competition with outside free labour should not, in the opinion of this Congress, receive any grants or subsidies from the Government, either Local or Federal.

Whereas, land is necessary to life and to the exercise of labour. Whereas, no generation of men have a right to sell forever the land that must needs be used by all succeeding generations; and

Whereas, the immense land grants of recent years by which vast tracts of the public heritage have been ceded to railway corporations is very injurious to the common weal; and

Whereas, land speculation, so rapidly developing in our cities, is enormously increasing the rents paid by all who require to use land; and

Whereas, the value of land, which is created not by individual labour but by the growth of population—that is, by the whole community—belongs to the people in the same manner as the product of the labour of each individual belongs to him; and

Whereas, the withholding of land from use causes a perpetual congestion of the labour market; therefore, be it resolved,

That this Congress, representative of Canadian workmen, does hereby express its approval of the Henry George land reform, and resolves to take all lawful measures for the promotion of land nationalization by means of the taxation of land to its full annual rental value, irrespective of improvements.

And further, that we call upon the farmers of Ontario—our co-workers—to aid us in our endeavours to thus lighten the taxation of labour and place public burdens upon the almost untaxed fruits of the land speculation.

That we ask the Ottawa Government to pass a law compelling cigar dealers to either burn or break the boxes after they are emptied.

That this Congress ask the Dominion Government to enforce the Internal Revenue Department regulations re the transference of cigars from boxes before sale.

That the law be amended so as to pay the petit jurors \$2 instead of 50 cents, which they are getting at present.

That this Congress petition the Government to pass a law compelling all vessels, whether steam or sail, navigating the inland waters of Canada, to carry competent crews of seamen; and also a law making it necessary to have hulls and rigging properly inspected by competent men appointed for that purpose; and also a law to stop the loading of vessels below a certain mark, to be designated by law.

That this Congress petition the Dominion Government to amend Subsection 2 of Section 13 of Chapter 173 of the Revised Statutes of Canada that said section shall read, "that no prosecution shall be maintainable against any person or persons for conspiracy for refusing to work with or for any employer, or for doing any act or causing any act to be done for the purpose of a trade combination unless such act is an offence punishable by statute."

That, with the object of facilitating the adjustment of disputes arising between employers of labour and employees, it be an instruction to the Legislative Committee of this body to seek the enactment of such legislation, either Federal or Provincial, as will provide machinery under which boards of arbitration may be provided for with power to act in such cases, and whose verdicts will have force of law.

That, in the opinion of this Congress, intemperance is one of the greatest drawbacks to the prosperity and social standing of the young men of this country.

That the Dominion Trades and Labour Congress call upon all labour organizations throughout the country to use their influence in

their respective localities in the direction of promoting and encouraging temperance.

Whereas, at the present time female labour is manipulated and used as a means of reducing the price of labour in general; and in trades where the female is so used to the detriment of the male labour, as exemplified particularly in the printing business, she is scarcely ever properly taught said trade or given an opportunity of earning a fair rate of wages, being merely used for the time being as a lever to reduce the price of labour; and whereas, if woman is to be recognized as a competitor in the labour market such competition should be on a fair basis, brought about by her going through the same routine of learning a trade as the male, and consequently getting the same rate of wages; therefore, resolved:

That the Dominion Trades and Labour Congress strongly discontinue this evil, and requests that employers of labour be urged to pay the woman the same wages as the man for the same class of work properly done.

That this Congress, recognizing the great injury done to organized labour in the passage into law by the Federal Parliament last session of an Act entitled, "An Act for the prevention and suppression of combines formed in restraint of trade," be it therefore an instruction to the Legislative Committee to lose no time in securing, if possible, such legislation as will give organized labour at least that legal status of which it has been deprived by the Act referred to.

That the continued and systematic expenditure of large sums of public money in encouraging to this country paupers, indigents and orphans from abroad is a gross injustice to the people of Canada, and in particular to the working classes; therefore, be it resolved, that it is the imperative duty of the Governments to peremptorily abolish the existing immigration system, and that due care should be exercised in preventing the introduction of such classes into Canada, whether they be sent under the authority of the Imperial Government or through any other channel.

The questions before the Congress which called forth the eloquence of the members were those of manual and technical labour, and the movement to reduce the working hours of the day to eight. On the former much diversity of opinion prevailed, and much shrewd common sense was exhibited. The debate found its key note in the system of manual training in schools proposed by the Minister of Education for Ontario. While favouring a judicious system of technical education, the scheme proposed by the Hon. Minister was considered prejudicial to the interests of the wage-earners. In time of strikes those enjoying such manual training would respond to the call of employers, and the trades would be filled up with greenhorns. The members of the Congress did not want their children to be greenhorns. The popularity of any such scheme shown by the numbers passing through the schools was no more to be taken as a guide than the expression of popularity of our prison-houses could be estimated by a similar computation. Labour and skill were all they had to protect, and these could only be protected by the old system of apprenticeship. A smattering might procure a young man a situation. It would be of no use to him in after life. If the system of the Hon. Minister is intended, as it is frankly admitted to be, for the relief of the professions, let the professions relieve themselves without injuring the working classes. Let the manual instruction be given in the evenings, and not in the day when only the better classes could avail themselves of it. If technical education does not reach the poor, the labouring classes need not fear it. What they have to fear is the theoretic mechanic, the full-blown, know-everything, who goes railroading through an entire craft in twelve months, and then hies off as a superintendent of hundreds of men who know more than he. In some of these schools the teachers were incompetent. Young men were placed in responsible positions who were incapable of anything beyond the merest A B C. On the other hand it was urged that if Quebec had reason to dread the innovation, Ontario had not. In that enlightened Province the workmen wanted as much technical and scientific knowledge as possible added to their manual training. Skilled labour is a relative term. If every man was skilled, the term would lose its meaning. In the United States, native labour was being elbowed out by foreign skill. In Canada we shall soon see the same thing.

The question of reducing the labouring day to eight hours was introduced by the following resolutions:—

That the Dominion, Provincial, and Municipal Governments be petitioned to declare eight hours a legal day's work, and that such constitute a day's work for all employees of said Government whether in their immediate employment or on contracts let by them to separate contractors, or given out by them at day's work.

That this Congress take action in the direction of having legislation introduced into both Local and Dominion Parliaments to the effect that eight hours per day, and no more, be a legal working day on all works under Government control.

That, in the opinion of this Congress, the time has arrived when our Federal and Provincial Governments should enact laws declaring eight hours per day a legal day's work in all branches of industry.

And the arguments were all on one side. The eight hour movement walked the course. In Government work profit was no object, and legislation was therefore the easier. First compel Government to adopt the system, and the end was sure. The great trouble in life is over competition. As civilization advances, desires increase, but the absence of money to procure their satisfaction soon destroys the desires. The real remedy is to reduce production. To secure that we must shorten the hours of production. When the hours are shortened competition in labour will be reduced, and wages will be increased. With an increase of leisure comes an increase of moral growth. Labour unions have done much, but they can't do all. They are not perfectly organized. Government alone has the power to impose the law in the whole country. One-fifth of the labour of the world is idle, and capital is doing all it can to keep it idle. After the struggle in Toronto between the Carpenters' Union and their employers, the result was eleven cents per hour more with shortened time. An eight hour day will take the surplus labour off the market. No need to fear the eight hour pay for the eight hours' work. Ten hours' pay will follow on the heels of the eight hour day. Reduce the length of the working day, and wages will rise. An increase in wages will increase the purchasing power of the workers. This in turn will benefit the manufacturers, and increase production. Clerks in Government employment work only six hours per day.