

NOTICE.

We shall be pleased to receive copies of interest pertaining to Trade Societies from all parts of the Dominion or publication. Officers of Trades Unions, Secretaries of Leagues, etc., are invited to send us news relating to organizations, condition of trade, etc.

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All communications should be addressed to the Office, 124 Bay Street or Post Office Box 1025.

We wish it to be distinctly understood that we do not hold ourselves responsible for the opinions of correspondents.

Our columns are open for the discussion of all questions affecting the working classes. All communications must be accompanied by the names of the writers, not necessarily for publication, but as a guarantee of good faith.

WILLIAMS, SLEETH & MacMILLAN,
124 BAY STREET.

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- Meetings are held in the following order:—
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 - Painters, 1st and 3rd Monday.
 - Coachmakers, 2nd and 4th Monday.
 - Crispins, (159), 1st and 3rd Tuesday.
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 - Tinsmiths, 2nd and 4th Tuesday.
 - Cigar Makers, 2nd and 4th Wednesday.
 - Iron Moulders, every Thursday.
 - Plasterers, 1st and 3rd Thursday.
 - Trades Assembly, 1st and 3rd Friday.
 - Bricklayers, 1st and 3rd Friday.
 - Coopers, 2nd and 4th Friday.
 - Printers, 1st Saturday.
 - Bakers, every 2nd Saturday.

Messrs. LANCEFIELD, BROS., Newsdealers, No. 6 Market Square, Hamilton, are Agents for the WORKMAN in that vicinity, who will deliver papers to all parts of the city.

MR. J. PRYKE, "Workingman's Book Store," will also continue to supply papers.

TO CITY SUBSCRIBERS.

City subscribers not receiving their papers regularly, will oblige the proprietors by giving notice of such irregularity at the Office, 124 Bay street.

The Ontario Workman.

TORONTO, THURSDAY, JUNE 12, 1873.

LORD DERBY AND THE WORKING CLASSES.

"The propertied classes," as they are called, take—in their way—a lively interest in the well-being and well-doing of the working classes, at least, they talk sufficiently about it. The objects they usually seek to promote cannot but be regarded with approval by thoughtful men. The motives by which they act, however, do not always call for this same commendation; whilst the almost habitual manner in which they seek to obtain public approval by overstating their case, not only involves frequently libellous defamation of the working people, but is too often a degrading and undeserved reproach to the character of the whole nation in all its classes. We have seen it stated as a strange anomaly, that in one of the most industrious and richest countries on the face of the earth, somewhere about seven million pounds sterling should have to be annually paid for the support of a multitude of poor people who cannot support themselves. But, if the Earl of Derby and others who deplore this state of things, attribute it to the wasteful and improvident habits of the working people generally, we are of opinion they are only deceiving themselves and others.

It is, however, the happiness of the working classes to know that whatever may be wrong with them, it is not for want of people trying, in a way, to set them right. Like refractory children, they are surrounded by nurses—religious, philanthropic, political, social,

&c.—whose sole aim is to lecture or persuade them into paths of rectitude and economy, from which they have, apparently, a determined tendency to depart. Organizations for their benefit are plentiful indeed—many of them chimerical in the extreme, others not only well-intentioned, but practically useful, and no doubt productive of a large amount of good. But practical or chimerical, fantastic or useful, it seems that in the opinion of Lord Derby and others of that nobleman's way of thinking, there are not quite enough of them, and so one more has been added to the list—this, of course, of supreme value and importance. The new organization bears the title of the "Provident Knowledge Society," a name that certainly does not very clearly express its objects, and which a contemporary says would be better, if not so briefly, indicated in some such designation as the "Thrift and Provident Habits Incultation Society." The necessity for something of this kind was dwelt upon at length by Lord Derby, and we elsewhere re-produce his remarks. Undeniably, there is great truth in many of the statements made, and it must be admitted that amongst the masses there is a sad neglect of the decencies of life, much improvidence, extravagance and vice—and the thoughtful workingman cannot too clearly realize to himself all that the slavery of debt spoken of by Lord Derby entails upon him. But when we come from abstract generalizations to practical remedies, the prospect is probably not so cheering. We would not at all deery philanthropic efforts; but, we might be allowed to ask, are the toiling masses of any country to be made thrifty and economical, and kept out of debt, by the operations of any conceivable society? The particular society which Lord Derby advocates is to busy itself in establishing Penny Banks in all places where many men are employed, and in every elementary school, depositing their receipts with the Post Office, and thus giving an almost absolute security.

This is the main feature of the society's operation, so far as we can gather them; and no one can object to the well-meant efforts of the "Provident Knowledge Society," and that it should act as a propaganda for the Post Office Savings Bank system, so as to include Penny Banks, with paid agents to collect the pennies. But it seems to us rather a degrading thing that the working classes should be considered incapable of taking care of their pennies, without being perpetually looked after by "a paid agent." But while, perhaps, experience unfortunately proves that this may be true in a sense, we do most stoutly contend that its application is not by any means universal. We believe there are thousands of workingmen who are quite capable of looking after their own affairs—prudent, economical and far-seeing—and the operations of the Provident Knowledge Society, as contrasted with what workingmen are doing for themselves by a multitude of provident plans, will be simply a bit of insignificant child's play. What is wanted is to increase the number of such men. There can be no objection to looking after the weaker brethren; but it is not within the range of possibility to bring to bear influences for reducing their numbers. In education, in the ever increasing spread of intelligence, in organizations for securing the just claims and upholding the dignity of labor—in all these forces for the elevation of the masses, we are more sanguine of an improvement in the social condition of the operative classes far above anything to be effected by the latest movement inaugurated by Lord Derby.

TORONTO MECHANICS INSTITUTE.

We are in receipt of a copy of the 42nd Annual Report of the Toronto Mechanics Institute, and from its perusal are glad to learn that the institution is in a healthy and flourishing condition. The Mechanics Institute should be more highly appreciated than it is, by a large number of the operative classes, and we urge upon them a more generous support.

For first-class Book and Job Printing go to the office of the ONTARIO WORKMAN, 124 Bay street.

MONOPOLY—LABOR STRIKES.

Throughout the entire country, East and West, there seems to be lurking a sullen disposition that bodes no good to much of its general mechanical business interests. Of course we allude to the uneasy relations between capital and labor, over which a menacious cloud hangs lowering. The partisans of each are more or less moved by a perverse, belligerent desire to demand, which, if nothing worse, begets at least a stern predetermination to resist, and settles into a kind of permanent ambush, where each lie in wait, ever watchful of a favorable moment to strike with advantage, while, at the same time nursing a blind prejudice that is wastefully injurious to all concerned. There should be no *casus belli* between these two great powers, and can be none without serious mischief.

Labor is the natural power, capital the artificial; both are necessary to each other, and their combination is the very basis upon which the social system is erected. If equitably disposed, each in its proper place, neither intruding on, nor seeking to invade the just rights of the other, the sublime principle of an equalizing Providence would be fulfilled. It seems, however, that no good can be in this world without its concomitant evil. Greed comes in to destroy the balance of justice, and in its baleful wake follows a whirlwind of human passions, set raging by the unscrupulous fiend.

The equalization and restriction of capital and labor, each to its proper sphere, is one of the grand problems which this free Government has yet to solve.

It was impossible that the despotisms of the old world, or the privileged powers emanating from them, could approach these subtle questions at all, having nothing to apply but brute force, which could only stifle and subdue, but not satisfy.

The prodigious monopolies towering up in this country, and absorbing the rights of whole communities, are steadily forcing this vital question to a point of prominence, where the bribes of the richest corporations will scarcely be able to reach or control. All classes generally are made to feel the pinching effects from the cold, cruel exactions of those hard, grinding bodies, that in their compactness, are utterly void of sympathetic pulsations.

What cared the coal mining companies of Pennsylvania and Ohio how many of God's creatures perished last winter, provided they could only add more to their hundreds of millions of capital? Nothing. These mercenary phalanxes—securely ambuscaded—saw an opportunity of wrenching money from the necessities of the poor. They had a quantity of coal on hand, scarcely sufficient to accommodate the wants of a large district, of which they had entire monopoly, and of which this vast mineral deposit seems the providential supply. The chance was met to squeeze all their victims at the same time, and they accordingly commenced, by reducing the pay of workmen to a rate which they well knew could not be accepted, and so they forced the workers to go idle while they forced extortionate prices from the famishing people!

In a short newspaper article we can give only a glance. The capital stock of one of those companies is estimated at nearly two hundred millions of dollars! This, in the hands of unscrupulous men, is too dangerous a power, and capable of enslaving and destroying too many people, unless curbed and restrained by wholesome, merciful laws and restrictions. When corporations of this nature arrive at certain stages of wealth they become monstrous: all ties of sympathy relating to the mass of humanity have ceased, and they have grown utterly unconscious of any bounden duties or moral obligations on their part, evidently confounding all mortal men, who labor for subsistence, with ordinary beasts of burden, or merely regarding them as machinery which money—their god—can adapt at will.

When we reflect that these corporations, whether of mines or railroads,

Credit Mobiliers or others, though dressed in this panoply of what they call rights, yet the very power they abuse so meanly is accorded them by will of the very people whom they plunder and trample on—even the laws that protect them. It is to be hoped that their many daring acts of aggression will awake the latter from their mischievous indifference and stupor. It is not a little remarkable that where a few in a community grow unwieldily rich, in just the same proportion, the vastly greater number grow wretchedly poor! And why not? When one man's yearly income rises to \$200,000 is it not clearly evident that he gathers to himself the comfortable support of at least two hundred families—a thousand people! We are not prepared to hurl foolish, intemperate denunciations at any one, or at any party, nor are we sufficiently egotistical to set up a cathedra on our own credit; we merely point out some grave defects, knowing that it requires the great majority of the people to correct them. Primitive settlements present us with equality amongst the inhabitants; none are very rich, nor are any very poor, and if high, polished civilization can introduce no better order than that of handing over to the crafty, the cunning and the selfish, the fruits of labor without restraint, while the honest, sober, industrious laborer is condemned to poverty, then we say, without hesitation, civilization is a huge fraud! We do not, however, believe this, by any means. We have more faith in God, who rules the Universe, and more confidence in the intelligence of man, than to think that civilization leads only to human debasement. On the contrary, with a fair attempt to attain it, we believe there can be a far higher destiny arrived at, through the concrete mass of intelligent men, than any other possible form of ordinary human life, and moreover, under the regis of our own government it is attainable, if on earth. Co-operation points out a principle that may be applied in various degrees, and it is not difficult to imagine a system whereby the operative could be made a partaker in the general accumulation, without interfering with any just right of the capitalist.

The threatened labor strikes now pending led us into this discussion.

In a country like ours, where all men's rights are equal, it is strange if we cannot devise some means less devastating and destructive to take the place of strikes: a means by which the general interests could be so rectified, intelligently, that the individual energies of all would be utilized with undivided sincerity, and productive economy be the supreme director.

Strikes are a species of civil war, and from them irreparable damages often result; through them injuries are interchanged, the bad blood often hoarded for future revenge! Surely a free people can produce something better.—*Collier Index.*

"THE ARGUMENT OF FORCE."

During the past two months newspaper writers of all grades of merit and shades of opinion have very freely indulged in windy discursive and advisory articles upon the aggressive attitude some workingmen were compelled to assume by the force of circumstances they had no part in originating, and over which they had practically no control. These writers can not regret any more than we do the existence of lawlessness, or the fact that workingmen sometimes resort to "the argument of force," nor can their condemnation and reprobation extend any further than ours, but there is this difference between us: they condemn the immediate perpetrators of the unlawful acts, while we level our shafts at the remote perpetrators—the causes that produce the results. The history and experience of the world are pregnant with testimony proving most clearly that "popular tumults and dissension have ever existed, the bane and avenging scourge of all States, where wealth and production have been unevenly and unjustly distributed. But we maintain that it is far from being just to arraign at the bar of public opinion the parti-

cipators in a broad riot, while the system of law or custom that produced the necessity for the riot should be a subject of commendation and laudation. Society, acting through its agent, the law, imprisons a thief or hangs a murderer, while the man who throw the boy into the street, to become a vagrant or a vagabond, deprived him of the refining and civilizing influences of culture and education, and made him a thief and murderer, not only goes unpunished but is respected, honored and lionized. If through our system of social and governmental law, one man gathers to himself one-half the substance of one thousand souls, who drag out a miserable existence on the other half, while he assumes the airs and domineering pretensions of a boorish earl, is it to be wondered or regarded as "passing strange" that these thousand souls should become restless, and after having implored and entreated the robber to restore at least a portion of their substance, and being insolently refused that they should demand what they had a right to demand, and were bound to demand, and could not help demanding, unless they were cowards and slaves of the first water. But to demand is not to receive in all cases. If you unjustly take anything from the capitalists, the law protects him, but he may take any portion of the results of your labor he deems convenient, and that same law will fail to give you a remedy. Workingmen are aware of these things, and after exhausting all known methods of degrading themselves by begging and beseeching for justice, they fall back upon the "argument of force," and strike. But now they find themselves the target of every ink sputterer in the town or city. The press is against them, the employer is against them, the law is against them, the judges are against them, the police are against them, and finally public opinion, taking its cue from the press, is also found against them. The men look in vain for justice, they look in vain for redress, they look in vain for sympathy, they become desperate, take the law into their own hands and mob law and tumultuous disorder follow. But who are responsible for this state of things? Workingmen may in a measure aggravate the evil, but they are not responsible for it. They are merely the agents of the cause, the exerting power that produces the effect. Remove the cause, remove poverty, degradation and ignorance, and "the argument of force," will become obsolete. But say our mentors, "it is productive of no possible good while it is the source of unmixed evil." From this phase of the argument we dissent, and claim for "the argument of force" a negative good. The mere fact that men may strike and may be driven to resort to still more forcible measures, has deterred many an employer from reducing wages or enforcing obnoxious rules. If workingmen would tamely submit to every wrong the employer choose to inflict, if they would never resort to "the argument of force" in its milder or harsher forms, they would be bought and sold like cattle, in less than fifty years. The fear of revolution has ever kept tyrants within certain bounds, and the fear of strikes has often turned the scale in favor of workingmen; when the employer considered the chances of forcing an aggressive measure; and yet we are not an advocate of strikes, or an apologist for violence of any kind; but we are in favor of giving every accused individual the benefit of any doubt that may arise, as well as the benefit of every extenuating and mitigating circumstance. The miners of Indiana, the engineers of Missouri, or the gasmen of New York City, or the Crispins of Cincinnati, may have acted rashly, but they are not wholly to blame for the lawlessness which grew out of strikes, into which they were forced and driven by remote and ulterior causes.

Had not the Barons of England appealed from the entreaty to "the argument of force" in dealing with King John, it would be difficult to imagine what would be the condition of the English-speaking people to-day, and if the fathers of American liberty had not appealed to this same "argument of force" it would be equally hard to imagine