

The Canada Citizen

AND TEMPERANCE HERALD.

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TORONTO, FRIDAY, JANUARY 23RD, 1885.

This number is sent to many friends whose names are not yet on our subscription list. Will they kindly aid our enterprise by forwarding their dollars and addresses? It is desirable to subscribe early, as we propose making every number well worth preserving for future reference and use.

MEN, WOMEN, AND THINGS IN GENERAL.

When we are assured that the socialists of Chicago are in the habit of meeting together for the purpose of practising military drill, that they are well supplied with fire arms of the most approved form, and that their number is already large and rapidly increasing, we can only wonder what the motive prompting them must be. They cannot desire a greater amount of political freedom, for each socialist can have a vote at all public elections, whether municipal, state, or national, by becoming a citizen and registering his name. They cannot desire a greater amount of social freedom, for in Chicago the restraints imposed by society either formally or informally on the individual are of the mildest possible kind compatible with the existence of society at all, each man doing more than almost anywhere else that which is right in his own eyes. There are no "blue laws" to protest against. Those who want to buy and sell on Sunday can do so. Those who want to ride on street cars on Sunday can do so. Those who want to indulge in Sunday carousals can do so. Those who want to go to churches can find them in abundance and well supplied with good preachers. Those who want to go to gambling dens can find them in equal abundance and without being put to much trouble in the search for them.

What, then, in the name of common sense, can the Chicago socialists want, and why do they practice drill in arms as a means of obtaining it? One can understand why the narrow, autocratic, and often cruel and unjust despotism of the Russian Government should foster nihilism. It is equally easy to comprehend that the socialism which is becoming so prevalent in Germany, which so disturbs Bismarck, is the natural outcome of his "blood-and-iron" policy of the past twenty years—a policy which has made Germany a great political nation at the expense of individual freedom. But there is no class in the United States thus entrenched in power. In the

first place, the legislative and administrative functions are so divided up between nation and state that neither the national nor the state government can greatly or for any length of time oppress the individual. Then elections are held so frequently and are so perfectly untrammelled that if the voice of the law making bodies is not the collective voice of the majority of the people it is because the majority have not taken the trouble to make their preferences known through the ballot box. It is said that the millionaires oppress the people by means of gigantic corporations. Assuming that they do so, they at all events act under powers conferred on them by law, and if these powers are found to be too great for the public safety, the legislative bodies elected by the people can take them away, as they conferred them in the first place, by formal enactment.

If the socialists wish merely to reform society by redressing grievances they will accomplish their object sooner by laying aside their arms and expending on the work of legitimate political agitation the energies and powers now worse than uselessly employed. It is to be feared, however, that they have some less commendable purpose in view. Whether it is anarchy, or plunder, or something equally detestable they are aiming at, the practice of drilling with arms should be promptly and rigidly suppressed. It is dangerous to the public peace and to human life. Occasionally there are mob uprisings in large cities, as recently in Cincinnati, and the possibilities in such an event become infinitely more ghastly when a certain portion of the crowd have fire-arms which they know how to use with deadly effect. The only proper subjects of drill in arms are the legally appointed guardians of the peace, soldiers and police, and they should be fully armed, thoroughly drilled, and well officered. The law-abiding people of Chicago had better take the socialists in hand and give them the alternative of either refraining from threatening war on society or taking themselves to some place where they will have neither taxes nor tailors' bills to pay.

The Philadelphia *American* points out the urgent necessity of some mode of rapid transit in that city of magnificent distances, unless the inhabitants are to be compelled to raise their dwellings higher in the air and crowd themselves into tenement houses like the residents of Manhattan Island. The elevated railway will probably take the place of, or at least supplement, the street cars. It will soon be necessary for Torontonians to think seriously over the same problem. The dweller in Parkdale, Brockton, Rosedale, or Riverside, who has to be at his work in the city at seven or eight in the morning cannot walk, and he loses too much time even on the horse cars. The more the dwelling houses of our citizens are scattered the better for the public health, and it is to be hoped that Toronto will never become more crowded than now. The charter of the Street Railway Company will revert to the city in a short time, and advantage should be taken of that event to renew the franchise, if it is renewed at all, on conditions quite different from those which now obtain. When horse cars were first introduced here short rides were common. Now the passenger has to be carried as a rule for distances varying from half a mile to a mile and a half or two miles. The great number of horse cars on King Street and their usually crowded condition seem to show that the time for the introduction of the elevated railway has almost arrived.

The *Week* of this city, in a recent issue got off the following at the expense of the New York *Nation*:—

Chagrined at its failure to promote Irish discontent by disingenuously representing itself as voicing American sentiment on English politics, the *Nation* gets off a petulant peevishness worthy of O'Donovan Rossa. *Harper's* and the *Century*, the Fenian New York journal declares in alarm, are pandering too much of late to England—"read as if some sheets of *Cornhill* or *Macmillan's* had got bound up by mistake with the home product." *Harper's* staff has even been demoralized by the addition of an Englishman.

The *Week* goes on to say that one consequence of the desire of Englishmen to know Americans better is "a rapidly-increasing demand for American magazines and newspapers in England—an increase all the more displeasing to the *Nation*, since that journal does not share in it. The *Nation's* remark which gave rise to this ill-natured and discourteous paragraph is the following comment on a recent number of *Harper's*:—