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The Business Committee meets first Monday in each month, R. Glockling, chairman; Jas. Wilson, secretary, J. H. Huddleston, treasurer, B. R. Eaton, W. R. Ward.

TORONTO, JUNE 6, 1902.

The Mayor has a hobby for secret sessions.

❖

The Metropolitan and every other agreement should be considered in open session.

❖

Rock-faced cement blocks—That was a hard subject for discussion in the City Council on Monday. The smooth fellows were not in it.

❖

The hope is expressed that the aldermen will get down to business again on this suburban railway business and settle it up right. A couple of sensible men should be able to settle it in short order.

❖

What a line up that was against the Technical School. It's a good list of aldermen for the workers to keep under their hat and remember that no political game should be allowed to destroy the usefulness of this school.

❖

If, as Ald. Hall says, Ald. Crane was willing to accept a cracker box building at the Exhibition Grounds, it would only be in emulation of his value in the City Council, as compared with a real live alderman Ward 4 wake up!

❖

"The glory of the schools of old England and of Upper Canada College is plain deal desks with names now famous carved on them."—Mayor Howland.

Yes, Mr. Mayor, and the glorious and useful men in history have been the plain unvarnished fellows.

❖

The way to avoid coal strikes is for the Government to expropriate all coal lands and keep all discovered in the future, pay living wages to mine workers and sell on board cars at 5 per cent. above actual cost. Coal is just about as necessary as air, and though not free should be obtainable by all at a bare margin above cost. The Canadian Government should act along this line.

❖

The B. C. Legislature must be a pretty warm spot. It is getting quite common there now to have a real bad scrap. The dignity of the position evidently cuts very little figure with some of the members who are in the habit of using the word liar. Then again the Government are going to adopt the closure to kerb the wind and stop obstruction. Real nice times there must be.

❖

These are the worthies who voted against the civic employes getting a miserable 20 cents per hour:

THE MAYOR,
LAMB,
HUBBARD,
CURRY,
CRANE.

Just paste them in your hat for next January and see what you can do for them. Better cut off their salaries altogether.

❖

What is to prevent the City Council establishing a city coal yard, where all citizens would be able to get coal at a mere fraction above cost? The city can borrow money more cheaply than any private company can, and being a large consumer itself would be able to buy in large enough quantities to ensure getting the lowest prices at the mines. This would not be speculation — it would be simply business and business profitable alike to the city as a corporation and the citizens individually. There would be no risk involved.

❖

The Canada Atlantic Railway is in the market and the Canadian Government should buy it as the necessary complement to the Intercolonial. This road at present is used by the Grand Trunk and the Canadian Pacific as a purely incidental outlet or feeder for their systems and of itself cannot expect to be profitable for years to come. With the addition of the Canada Atlantic it would come in touch with the great lakes at Peninsular Harbor and besides doing a profitable local traffic would get all the freight it could carry from the great west to the seaboard. This would make the road really what its name means, but what it never has been—an Intercolonial Railway.

❖

By the time all the difficulties of the Boer war are overcome Great Britain will probably have spent $1,000 000 000 in protecting the commercial interests of a few thousand speculators and a few hundred thousand working citizens of her colonies, and this within the short period of three years. What has the Government of Great Britain done in that time to protect the workers from the rapacity of her landlords, manufacturers, ship owners, bankers and general grafters? The most ardent Government supporter could but answer "practically nothing." It is the business of the workers, including the farmers, who are in the majority, to teach governments that their interests are paramount, not those of the so-called "upper classes." Don't you think so? If you do what are you doing to bring this about?

❖

Those who were unwilling to grant the required amount for running the Technical School and who, in doing it, stood behind the plea that the Government had not done its duty, should also be remembered by the workers. This school is one of the benefits that needs no recommendation from any of the workers who have taken advantage of it to better their positions in life. It is a grand institution and run cheaper than any institution of its kind in the world, yet we have aldermen that will stand to have its estimates cut down and say to its board cut off some of your "classes." These aldermen should also be remembered on January next and asked to explain the reason of their voting against the interests of the workers in trying to cripple their school:

BELL,
CRANE,
DUNN,
FRAME,
GRAHAM,
HALL,
HUBBARD,
LAMB,
LOUDON,
McMURRICH,
RICHARDSON,
STEWART, A.
STEWART, W. T.

❖

Where Are We At?

The election is over. Some people will not have it so, but it is for all that. Now that it is over what have the largest class in the province to their credit from the fight for power? Nothing but discredit. It is about time that organized labor took a definite stand upon this question of politics and either say we don't believe in the principles we have already enumerated or take the proper steps to carry out those principles by action. There's never going to be very much gained by being the tail to the kite. Neither is it going to do the movement any good to have irresponsible organizations seeking political honors under the cloak of representing labor, when the rank and file are not behind them and they are in no way endorsed by the central heads. Let us have independent labor candidates and let them be chosen upon the plan of a referendum. Let us not wait until the election is on top of us, but start as soon as possible and have a system of nominations from every union in the city, all nominees to return later to a vote of the locals upon an approved plan and let every man as he votes put in ten, fifteen or twenty-five cents as the case may be with his vote to create an election fund. Let us have a labor platform for our candidate to stand upon. Then we may go to the polls with some assurance that the man who is willing to put up his money will in all likelihood vote the way his money has gone. We should have a representative in both the local and Dominion legislatures representing an industrial centre such as Toronto.

Very Bad Conditions.

The Cigarmakers Journal for May has a lengthy account of the disaster last month in the factory of Harburger, Homan & Co., Philadelphia, who are the makers of the Geo. W. Childs cigar. No better way of illustrating the conditions under which this cigar is made could be given than the quoting from the article in question:

To be sure, you are aware that Harburger, Homan & Co. are the manufacturers of the famous, or rather infamous, Geo. W. Childs cigar, and while the factory is operated in their names the output is controlled wholly by the cigar trust known as the American Cigar Company. The facts of the accident follow:

The building in which the disaster occurred is a five-story brick structure, and reaches an entire block. Twelve hundred persons were at work at the time of the accident, 90 per cent. of whom were girls whose ages range from 9 years upward.

HOW THE PANIC BEGAN.

The trouble began on the fourth floor of the structure. Baccus, who was janitor of the building, started for the fifth floor for a ball of twine. The elevator was at the top of the shaft, and Baccus pulled the rope to bring it down. He opened the door leading to the shaft, and leaned forward to see where the carriage was. As he did so the elevator which was descending slowly struck him across the back of the neck, pinioning his head between the elevator and the floor.

The foreman rushed from the building to call an ambulance, and immediately there was a panic among the employes. Some of the younger girls fainted, while others, not being able to control their feelings, cried fire.

THE AWFUL CRUSH.

After a few minutes the men were enabled to check the awful crush of the stairway, and then began the work of rescuing those who had been trampled and crushed between the second and third floors.

The alarm for ambulances had been turned in, and as quickly as the dead and injured could be carried from the building they were hurried to the hospitals.

The number of ambulances were entirely inadequate, and patrol wagons were brought into use to carry the victims away for treatment.

While this was going on the scene about the structure was heart rending. The building is located in a section largely inhabited by Hebrews, many of whom were caught in the terrible crash.

Parents and relatives of the unfortunate girls were screaming and rushing about the streets like mad, and it was almost impossible for the police officials to restrain the mothers and relatives of supposed victims from entering the building.

THE WORK OF RESCUE.

The work of rescuing the girls from the windows was necessarily tedious. They were so excited that they did not seem to understand the pleadings of the firemen. At nearly every window of the huge structure were girls screaming for help.

Many were so excited that it was with the greatest difficulty that they were prevented from jumping from the building, notwithstanding that there was not a sign of fire, and their rescue seemed only the work of a few moments.

The panic was over in less than half an hour, but in this brief space thousands of persons had been attracted to the scene by the wild screams of the relatives of the victims and the shrieks of the girls at the windows.

Because of the great excitement it was almost impossible to get an intelligent idea of the disaster, and it was three hours after the accident occurred before a single victim was identified.

THOSE KILLED OUTRIGHT WERE

Mary Geneva, aged 12.
Helen Tolini, aged 9.
Elizabeth Tartina, aged 10.
Annie Rosschneider, aged 16.
Louise De Sepi, aged 14.
Ida Green, aged 16.
Annie Ford, aged 10.
Unindentified woman, about 18 years of age.

The killed and injured number 28 girls and young women, none of whom was over 20 years of age, and most of them are from 9 to 12. The list of dead, as given above, will not be the total mortality from the accident, as the physicians at the hospitals state that many of the victims now under their care cannot survive, and those who will be cripples or invalids for life.

The accident is generally accepted here as a striking commentary on the methods employed by the cigar trust. This factory, as we have stated, employed at the time of the accident, 1,200 persons, 90 per cent. of whom were girls, ranging in age from 9 to 20 years. It will therefore be seen that the majority of the employes should have been in attendance at school, were the conditions as they should be in this boasted "land of freedom and enlightenment." But the class to which the majority of these little ones belong are indicted before the civilized world of the

HORRIBLE CRIME OF POVERTY,

which, in the eyes of the cigar trust, has no extenuating circumstances, and the great octopus has continued to thrive, by trading on the ill-luck and misfortune of this class. The highest wages that has ever been paid to these girls has been $3.50 per week, and from this sum the pay scaled down to $1 per week. You can imagine what is the life of the older girls, say those of 18 and 20, who are supposed by the trust to be able to clothe and feed themselves on the miserable pittance of $14.50 per month. That they cannot do so goes without saying, and how they manage to live, and many of them looking sleek and well clad, is a problem easily solved by those who give the matter a moment's serious reflection.

This is a terrible condition of things to be in force in the country right across the line. But we have the same conditions here and the men of this city go on from day to day smoking cigars made in Montreal under just such conditions as are portrayed in this extract. The Cigarmakers' Union of Montreal are making a gallant fight against a further continuance of such conditions and they call upon you to smoke none but blue label cigars as a guarantee against bad and unsanitary conditions and against child labor.

THE LABOR PRESS.

Now here is a rhyme for the Labor press
That blazes the toilsome way,
And shoulders the load o'er the rocky road,
And gets more of knocks than pay.
For you grudgingly give to your truest friend,
Who bears the brunt of your fight,
What you freely bestow on your deadliest foe,
The organ of wealth and might.

You have dollars to help the plutocrat's press,
And pennies to give to your own,
And a kiss of delight for the hand that would smite,
While you hurl at your friend a stone;
Yet the Labor press in the battle's van,
Ever welcomes the fiercest fight,
With a scornful smile for the knocker's guile,
And a dauntless heart for the right.

Yes, here is a song for the Labor press,
Whose heroes may never know
Their need of fame, or the world's acclaim,
As they battle our common foe;
But whose hearts, as ever did heroes' hearts,
"Since this queer old world began,"
Ask naught for pay, but with the dawning day
Of the Brotherhood of Man.
—Luke McKenny, in Cleveland Artisan.

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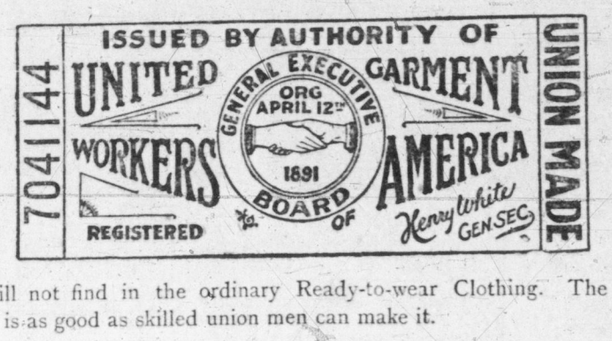

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