

The Tribune

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SATURDAY, DEC. 16, 1905

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Federated Council

Building Trades

TORONTO, Dec. 11th, 1905

W. L. Macdonald King, Esq., Deputy Minister of Labour, Ottawa.

oughly representative and well meeting was held with Pres. F. the chair. A communication ved in reply to the resolution sent to the board of control re the sanitary conveniences on some of the large buildings now in course of erection, also the failure to put in the proper flooring and railings around elevator shafts for the protection of the workmen, and the manner in which a good deal of the scaffolding is being put up. The action of the inspectors was strongly criticized in allowing the scaffold to be put up and used such as was used on the Consumers Gas Co's. new building on Eastern Ave., as a result of which a man lost his life a short time ago through the scaffold collapsing.

There is a strong feeling against the way in which the present inspectors attend to their duty. We should have a man for so important a position who is a capable scaffold builder and not one who happens to have a pull at the city hall, but who would not know which end of a rope to pull to make a proper knot in the erection of a scaffold. When the inspector was being appointed there was a candidate for the position, endorsed by the Building Trades Council of that time, who had the necessary experience and was fully capable of fulfilling the duties satisfactorily, but who did not have the pull at the city hall. As a consequence, See the results.

A motion was passed unanimously endorsing the candidature of Mr. John Tweed for the Board of Education.

It is felt that we need men of our own kind who will faithfully represent us in the city government, and not those who give you the glad hand and all kinds of promises before election day and after five o'clock of the election day forget all their promises and go on in the same old way. As long as men of that kind are in the city government, so long can we expect to get nothing for our benefit, except what the moneyed interest will allow.

The alteration of the contract for the tunnel under the bay by which cement is to be substituted instead of brick, was strongly condemned, as it was felt that such change would take the work from our home workmen and give it to a cheap class of foreign labor which has such a hold on the cement work here, and thereby put thousands of dollars into the pockets of the contractors, which should go into the pockets of the workmen of Toronto.

A committee was appointed from this Council to interview the Board of Control in reference to the charge made against the conditions prevailing at present in many of the large buildings in course of erection, also to interview Dr. Sheart and the City Architect, to whom the resolution was referred by the Board of Control. As our next regular meeting night falls on Christmas night it was decided to withdraw that meeting unless further notice is received.

Conditions in the various trades were reported as fair as could be expected at this time of the year.

FRANK C. WEESE,
SECRETARY F.C.B.C.

To the Editor of The Tribune:
"It was reported that a firm of coopers on Niagara street would not renew their agreement, and, therefore, was unfair to organized labor."

The above clipping from your report of last week is wrong and should be as follows:

"The firm of Lendreville & Son, Teumeth street and Farley avenue, with all the other cooper bosses, entered into an agreement last May for one year, and at the expiration of six months, with some negotiations between a committee of the union and Mr. Lendreville, he decided to run his shop, as he put it, to suit himself, so the committee took the union stamps out of the shop; also withdrew our men and declared the shop an unfair shop."

Your report was harmful to Mr. Samuel Thompson, the only cooper on Niagara street, who runs a straight union shop.

CHARACTERIZES PROHIBITION PARTY AS ONE BIG ROYAL FARCE.

Addressing the Epworth League of Trinity Methodist Church last night Rev. G. R. Fasken, of St. Paul's Presbyterian Church, spoke against the practice of abusing the men who sell liquor.

"What is the use," he asked, "of kicking the man who sells liquor? Get into his shoes. It is by the grace of God you are what you are; it is not of yourselves. You might have been born attached to one of those bar-rooms; then what would you have thought of all this outcry against the dealer? There is but one way to reform a hotelkeeper and that is by the power of God, the same as you and I can be reformed."

"We can't afford," said the speaker, "to go at this thing with a meat-axe or like screaming children, or in a cultivated, calm style—man! this demands your life! more than a little sputter once in a year; and you may be denying yourself a little, but you are saving souls. I don't believe in the prohibition party—one big royal farce, if there is one in this country—but I do believe that if as a man himself in the hands of God to do this each one of us will walk out quietly and love this thing, and walk in quietly and vote this thing, as an advocate of righteousness, and the drink curse will go away of itself, and no one will be happier than the hotelkeeper—for it is no thankful task to be a hotelkeeper."

AGAINST FAKE ADVERTISERS.

The feature of the session of the American Federation of Labor came in the afternoon, when the session of the Grievance Committee's report was presented asking for the abolition of the souvenir programme in connection with union labor events. Representatives of the smaller labor unions throughout the country were charged with grafting, forgery and threatening the employers with strikes and boycotts in getting out souvenir books for Labor Day and other occasions. Many of the leading delegates, including Samuel Gompers, talked on the question, and, while the names of the labor unions against which the charges were made were not uncovered, labor leaders in every city were accused of the practice. A resolution was adopted condemning the issuing of souvenir books by the labor unions and hereafter it is likely none will be issued.

The committee on grievances asked for a final and positive abolishment of souvenir programmes. The committee declared the evil had become one of the shames of union labor and the vote in favor of the resolution forbidding all souvenir programmes was unanimous.

During the discussion there was a general denunciation of the fake souvenir programme business. Mr. Gompers said his office had often been in receipt of checks for various amounts from employers who had been threatened with strikes or lockouts unless they contributed to some souvenir programme in the name of the Federation.

ANOTHER CASE WHERE THE LABOR MAN WILL GET A HARD RAP ON ALL DRUGS AND SUNDRIES HE PURCHASES.

Montreal, Dec. 8.—Completion of the drug merger was announced last night with the following companies taking part: The Hattie & Mylius Company, and the Simpson Bros. Company, Halifax; Canada Drug Company, T. B. Barker & Sons and D. McDiarmid Drug Co., St. John, N.B.; Evans & Sons and Kerry, Watson & Company, Montreal; Lyman, Knox & Company, Montreal; Elliot & Company and Lyman, Knox & Company, Toronto; Henry Skinner & Company, Kingston; Dominion Drug Company and J. Winer & Company, Hamilton; London Drug Company, London; Bole Drug Company, Winnipeg and Calgary; Henderson Bros., Vancouver and Victoria.

The following officers were elected: D. W. Bole, President; J. W. Knox, First Vice-President; A. B. Evans, Second Vice-President; C. W. Tingling, Treasurer; James Mathison, Secretary.

UNION INFLUENCE.

Speaking of the broadening influence of union training, the Review of Reviews predicts that in the near future all opposition between the employer and the employee will cease, and, speaking of better education, uses the following words: "Everything that adds to the intelligence of the worker will increase his productive capacity and his earning power. With his training for politics under our own American system the worker may be reasonably certain that in due time the laws of the country will not in any manner operate to his detriment."

Poverty covers a multitude of virtues.

To the Editor of The Tribune:

Much has appeared in the daily press of this city regarding the discussion last Thursday evening in the District Labor Council on the resolution introduced opposing reduction of liquor licenses, the sentiments expressed being entirely misleading and were no doubt inspired by some of our kind temperance friends.

According to the contentions of Mr. James Simpson, an ultra temperance advocate, the policy of the Cigarmakers, Brewery Workers, Bartenders, Glass Bottle Blowers, Malsters and Coopers unions in opposing any reduction of liquor licenses, is simply ridiculous, and Mr. Simpson would have us believe that our only salvation lies in not only favoring license reduction, but in assisting to wipe out the liquor business entirely.

Mr. Simpson pointed out that the statement of the Licensed Victuallers' Association was to the effect that if thirty hotels were cut off the trade would only be transferred to the remaining hotels, and, therefore, the members of the Brewery Workers' Union would not lose employment, as the same amount of beer and liquor would be consumed. This statement was made to offset any contention that the Brewery Workers' Union would be injured by reduction of licenses. Mr. Simpson also contended that the Cigarmakers would not be injured by a reduction of hotel licenses; that the cigar trade in the hotels would be transferred to the cigar stores and would really be beneficial to the Cigarmakers in the end. The argument of the Cigarmakers that they would suffer by a reduction of licenses was very foolish and it remained for Mr. Simpson, with his unlimited knowledge of such matters, to tell the Cigarmakers that they were acting very foolish in opposing reduction of hotel licenses. The attempt of Mr. Simpson to show an argument in favor of reduction of hotel licenses (from a trades union standpoint) was really marvellous, and might have been extended to the Bartenders, showing that they would not be effected.

I desire to say, in all earnestness, that Mr. Simpson does not know what he is talking about and is influenced by his fanatical attitude in favor of temperance.

Agreeing that by a reduction in number of licenses the same total of liquor would be consumed by the trade going to the remaining hotels, would it not follow that the same amount of liquor could be distributed to a reduced number of hotels, situated exclusively in the central district of the city, by the employment of a lesser number of drivers and helpers? Then by practical knowledge (not theory) those interested in the liquor traffic know that the one and two bartenders engaged in each of the thirty hotels which it is proposed to cut off, would not be engaged by the remaining hotels, as in many of the hotels an increase in the number of customers would not require the services of the bartenders displaced.

Then as to the effect in my own trade (cigarmaking) let me say that Mr. Simpson's knowledge of the benefits accruing to our members by cutting off hotel licenses is simply marvellous, seeing that a large number of his associates in the temperance movement are utterly opposed to the prosperity of the tobacco trade.

By intelligent acquaintance with the cigar industry, we know that many thousands of cigars are sold in the hotels every week that would not be consumed if a portion of the hotel licenses were cut off.

Thousands of cigars are sold every week in the hotels. A few friends, after enjoying several treats, eventually have their pockets filled with cigars, which are later on, very often given to friends or have become broken in the pocket. This abnormal sale of cigars is due to sociability. These same friends would not go from one cigar store to another treating each other to cigars during an entire evening if denied the convenience of enjoying a few hours in the hotel bars. For example, if ten hotel bars exist in any town and they each sell one thousand cigars per week, representing ten thousand cigars, and if five bars are cut off, the remaining five might sell possibly one-tenth more than their former sales, therefore the sales in that town through the hotel bars would be decreased every week by over four thousand cigars. Now, consider the large size of this city and you will arrive at some idea of the damage done every week to the cigar industry if the citizens decide to cut off thirty hotel licenses.

Now let me say to Mr. Simpson that his fanatical utterances on behalf of temperance will not be tolerated by the six unions above mentioned. His cant about being the best friend of organized labor is now understood, and steps will be taken to let the general membership of the said unions know his antagonistic attitude towards our interests.

Aside from the injury to many of the workers if reduction of licenses is accomplished, the general citizens are clear-sighted enough to see that the present monopoly in the hotel business would only be intensified, instead of decreasing the chances of excessive drinking, as our theorizing temperance advocates contend, the greater congestion in the trade would be a danger.

Mr. Simpson has no right to display his temperance views, as a representative of organized labor, but as an individual he may think as he pleases. When we recollect the intolerant views expressed by church people of Mr. Simpson's type, during the agitation against the Sunday street cars, it is no surprise to hear them rant about the poor man spending his money on liquor.

Many of the temperance people are antagonistic to the use of tobacco and cigars. Is it any wonder that we strongly oppose such fanatical agitations and look upon the temperance people with contempt.

We deliberately throw down the gauntlet to Mr. Simpson and will oppose him in every possible manner. Let him place in cold type his temperance ideas, so that the union men may see his narrow mind. As secretary-treasurer of the Licensed Trades League of Toronto, let me say that we view with deep suspicion this temperance campaign to reduce hotel licenses.

D. W. Kennedy.

What Labor Wants

The government received a deputation representing the provincial executive of the Trades and Labor Congress of Canada. They asked for legislation along the following lines:

The prohibition of the employment of children under fourteen years of age in stores, offices, canning factories and other places not already prohibited by the act.

The providing of aisles or passage ways in open street cars.

Compulsory certification of engineers for stationary engines of 25-horse power, or over.

Equalization of the tax rate on vacant city lots.

Prohibition of officers of the Crown-crown attorneys in particular—from acting for the government and private corporations at one and the same time.

Compulsory removal of old wall papers, burlaps, etc., before putting on new ones.

The deputation also presented a resolution approving of the work done by the Bureau of Labor.

Premier Whitney said the legislation regarding stationary engineers ought to have been passed last session. Some technicality had resulted in a delay but the bill would be passed next session. He promised consideration of the other requests and referred humorously to the report that the government had surrendered to the Street Railway Company in the matter of allowing them to enter Toronto.

REDUCTION IN LICENSES.

There is no use, and besides it is not fair, to cite statistics and quote authorities, labor or any other, in an effort to use them in favor of the effect the reduction of licenses in Toronto will have. Labor leaders all over—Toronto included—know full well how weak men and women have fallen through intemperate habits, but the local men claim, from a social and industrial point of view, that the present drastic effort on the part of the advocates of temperance will create such an upheaval among the liquor interests that in the end will be of no benefit to anyone in particular.

Toronto is growing fast, and as it is years since the number of licenses was allotted to Toronto, it is not evident that an actual reduction is taking place. Add then to those held by the Commissioners, taken from those hotelkeepers who failed to live up to the law. Then again, take the close proximity of Toronto Junction, where the reduction through local option has taken place. Yet with all this tendency to lessen the licenses per ratio to population, Controller Spence, to strengthen the demand for the submission of this question to the people, claimed there was more convictions for drunkenness this year than the previous years. He was correct in his figures, but he made no effort to account for it, for fear of weakening his and his temperance party's position, in claiming that a reduction in licenses would lessen the evil. I claim, Mr. Editor, that a reduction of licenses to the extent that's to be submitted to the people, if carried, will introduce new evils that the Toronto public have no idea of. Every temperate man thought the License Commissioners were doing well, but no, these public men, old maids, and where-is-my-boy-to-night mothers must take away from the poor man the opportunity of purchasing a glass of ale, while it would be a sacrifice to murmur at the privileges allowed the clubs in the city and suburbs, where public men, old bachelors, and dudes frequent. It just amounts to this, that as soon as we—the common mechanics and laborers—find ourselves legislated against we shall certainly merge into the club system—free from legislation, come and go when we like, drink and play, Sunday included; rambling home any old time in the morning, just as we did some forty years ago, with the possibility of the old drama, "Ten Days in a Bar Room," re-written to apply to the modern life, viz., "Ten Days in a Club Room." Just history repeating itself, and hastened by fanatics.

JOHN GARDNER.