

THE IMPROVEMENT OF THE CONDITION OF THE PEOPLE.

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versity of Toronto.

(FROM THE EVANGELICAL CHURCHMAN.)
(CONCLUDED.)

And now I come to my second point. How are we to improve the condition of the great mass of the people, those who must remain working men? I do not mean that every one of them must so remain; most men have some sort of chance of rising. But by the conditions of modern industry the great majority must remain working men, and the real problem is how to benefit them. This is a country where a great many men have made money from small beginnings; and all such men are very apt to think that if they have got on, others can get on; and that there cannot be much amiss in the industrial world. Now, I have already said that there should be a career open to talent; but after all, it will be little good if a number of individuals with exceptional perseverance, or self-denial, or cunning manage to get their heads above their fellows, and, rising out of their old class, leave the masses where they were. We want to raise the working class as a whole. The first thinkers to realize this were the English writers known as Positivists, especially Mr. Frederic Harrison, Professor Beesly and Dr. Ingram; and it was due to their seeing this fact that they justified trades unionism. So I, also, would put in the forefront among the means for elevating the workman's condition LABOR ORGANIZATION. But in so doing, I wish to say in the most emphatic terms possible, that I do not approve of everything trades unions have done. They have made mistakes; they have sometimes been blindly selfish and greedy; they have often fallen under the control of unprincipled and self-seeking leaders. But then, neither have employers always been models of clarity and consideration. But still, I maintain that under the conditions of modern industry, workmen will not be able to make a fair bargain as to the condition of labor unless they are united. The sooner the better-to-do classes recognize that unionism itself—combination to make common terms taking the place of bargaining between individuals—is a necessary outcome of existing conditions, the sooner will it be possible to handle labor questions with reasonable courtesy and common sense. Canada and America are greatly behind England in this respect; and they are behind economic science. There is no great English economist of this generation who does not recognize that the union of workmen is necessary in order to secure them the best possible terms in the bargain for employment. But I would not be doing my duty, did I not say, that, as far as I can judge, the labor leaders of this continent have only too often been tainted by selfish motives. You do right to form unions; all reasonable people must recognize it; but you should do your best to win public confidence by choosing the best men available as your officials.

But I would not defend unionism so strongly as I do, did I not believe that it may be the foundation for a better arrangement. For, after all, trades unionism is at present very largely an organization for industrial warfare. I trust we shall be able by-and-by to find better means of arriving at a fair settlement of disputes than by strikes and lock-outs. In most cases arbitration is possible; in many of the larger industries it would be possible to go further and have permanent Boards of Conciliation or self-acting sliding scales. These have been found to work admirably, and have altogether superseded strikes for several years in the north of England in both the manufactured iron

trade and in the coal trade. But what English experience shows is that arbitration, and still more permanent boards of conciliation, can only be successful on a basis of unionism. Unless men are accustomed to act together, and accustomed to follow the advice of chosen leaders, you cannot expect a successful arbitration.

I will mention two other means of improving the condition of the workmen. The first is, WISE FACTORY LEGISLATION. Children who might be at school ought not to be in the workshop; women ought not to work excessive hours; the workshop ought to be sanitary. We have made a beginning with factory legislation in Ontario, and I am sure we shall have to go farther. But before loading our statute books with additional acts, let us see that what we have are properly enforced. I saw the other day that the action of an inspector in a particular case in simply enforcing the law was regarded as "unfriendly!" This is a matter where public opinion requires a good deal of educating.

The second is, a DECENT MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT, which is able to perform its primary duties. What good is a dollar or so more a week, if your drains are so badly laid, if your water is so corrupted with the germs of disease, that your family are ill from preventable causes, so that you run up a long doctor's bill, and lose your children by death? A little beginning has been made; we have a city engineer who is trying to do his work, we have a new and energetic medical health officer. Strengthen their hands, gentlemen, by returning men to the council who will support them; take every possible means, by communicating with the proper officials again and again, to get all the preventable causes of disease in your house and your street removed; and when you have saved a little money and begin to run up a few houses on speculation, do not grumble at being obliged to make the houses healthy before you can get rents out of the tenants. A man would not be permitted to sell poisons freely because he was poor; and yet men are allowed to spread pestilence around their houses and kill their tenants as truly as if they had given them poison, because they "can't afford" to put in a proper drain, and an alderman is afraid to lose a vote.

I am bound to say it is the little man who has scraped together enough to buy a couple of cheap houses on mortgage, who is usually the worst sinner. It is pitiable to see men pursuing will o' the wisp,—grand schemes of social regeneration, which even they must feel are not likely to be realized for many a long day; when in a few years, by a little common sense, and by realizing what city government is really for, they could at any rate make their homes healthy.

Just a word or so on one of those will o' the wisps—Land Nationalization. I once ventured publicly to say something upon this, and was at once told that I was biased by self-interest. But if I am biased at all by self-interest, it would be in favor of "the single tax" on land; for then I should escape from the income tax which I have to pay every year. As I am, in a way, a Government official, the assessor can get at my income easily enough, and I pay tax on every cent of it. I should very much like to escape it, but it surely is not fair that I should. It would take a lecture by itself to deal with this topic, and I may perhaps have an opportunity of doing so at some future time. But I can say this: land nationalization would not do justice so far as the past is concerned, for it would not touch those who have made their money by land speculation. It would do great injustice in the present. And, lastly, it would not be possible to uproot the idea of property in land, without violently disturbing the idea of individual property in general. The single tax men, without knowing it, are advocating a plan which would involve

a total reconstruction of society; and I for one do not see my way to joining in so hazardous an undertaking. Moreover, I believe there are wise and just ways for lessening the evils of land speculation. I would, for instance, tax at an especially high rate a man who keeps a lot vacant simply for speculative purposes. If we had a good municipal government, I think it would be quite feasible to buy up at a reasonable valuation land on the outskirts of the city, and for the city revenue itself to profit by the future unearned increment. But the single tax agitation tends to draw men away from advocating practicable reform; and, in the minds of many, tends to discredit even the most moderate proposals for land reform.

One word more, and I have done. I have said nothing of the personal duties of soberness, industry and prudence. It is because you have probably heard it all often enough already. But do you know what gave John Burns his hold upon the people in the great dockers' strike? It was because he who was a man of the people told them to their faces that many of them could be better men, and ought to be better men; and that it was but little use to gain victories in strikes, and earn a few shillings a week more, unless they honestly tried to do their duty in their work and in their homes.

MANUFACTURING CRIMINALS.

One of the most remarkable articles in a recent number of the Forum is Mr. W. P. Andrews' account of how the Americans are creating criminals, by their extravagant leniency to convict prisoners. It is almost incredible, were it not that it is set forth with due detail, that the criminals in some of the American prisons are fed on the fat of the land, provided with fruit collations every Saturday, and that brass bands, negro minstrels, orchestral selections, the best lectures of the day, together with flowers, pictures, and chromo Christmas cards, are provided for them, either by the State or by the charitable members of the community. The result is that in fifty years the ratio of prisoners has risen from one in eight hundred of the population to one in four hundred, while in the city of Boston one in every two hundred and twenty-two is a prisoner. In Massachusetts the population has trebled, and the number of prisoners has increased fifty fold; nor is this surprising when we read that a physician had, after two years of imprisonment, declared that it was just a vacation, the library being very entertaining, and first-rate players of dominoes and checkers being found among the men. The only wonder is that people who have never had a square meal outside do not flock by hundreds of thousands to the jails in winter. Many men every year, finding themselves in need of quiet and medical aid, voluntarily seek the seclusion which the State jails afford.

ROYALTY, AND WHAT IT COSTS THE PEOPLE.

During the present reign the Royal Family has obtained from the nation over thirty-four million pounds, and what has the nation—Great Britain and Ireland—received in exchange for this enormous sum?

Ireland may be dismissed from the inquiry at once, as Ireland has never had an opportunity of gazing on the fat, rosy face of Her Gracious. They have not even had the opportunity of being splashed with the mud of her carriage wheels, but all the same, Ireland has had to contribute towards the cost of the luxury of a monarch. Some statistics of Ireland under the reign of Victoria show that 1,225,000 of her children have died of famine, 3,650,000 have been evicted—turned out in the streets by the landlords—while something over 4,000,000 have emigrated to some other country, where

they might have a better chance of making a livelihood. The ruling monarch has absolutely no duties to perform, and is, therefore, the recipient of public charity, which does not change its essence because it is administered by an Act of Parliament. A pauper has been defined as a poor person—one supported by charity or public provision. Does not this also apply to Royalty?

There are paupers in palaces as well as workhouses, and, generally speaking, the latter are the more honorable.

Thousands of men, who have worked hard in their younger days for starvation wages, and who have had to pay rates and taxes to support the State burdens, have eked out their lives in the workhouse, some of them being buried as paupers. But are not they worse paupers who have not worked at all, who have lived on others from the cradle to the grave, and who add impudence to their independence, and glory in their degradation?

When Her Majesty came to the throne in 1837 it was ordered that £385,000 be the amount per annum allowed for household expenses, and that Bill was signed by Queen Victoria. In 1840 Her Gracious got married, and the people of England were again taxed to the tune of £30,000 per annum to keep the husband. On that paltry sum Prince Albert had to drag out an existence; but his pocket money was augmented by the following sums: £6,000 a year as Field Marshal, £1,695 as a colonel, £1,000 as a ranger of Windsor Park, £500 as a ranger of some other park, and £1,200 as Chief Constable of Windsor Castle. Although penniless when he came to England from Germany, this lucky prince man-

aged to leave behind him a large fortune, the amount of which is not known. There is what is called the civil list, which is divided as follows: Her Majesty's privy purse, £60,000; household salaries, £131,260; tradesmen's bills, £172,000; alms and charity, £4,200; royal bounty and special services, £9,000; unappropriated money, £8,540; total, £385,000.

To show the annual cost of royalty, I will give the following figures, compiled in 1887-8: Royal palaces, £14,690; do. do. (not occupied), £21,322; royal yachts, £34,656; royal escort (troops), £11,000. Here we have £31,638 received by our Sovereign in addition to the civil list of £385,000, and this, with the revenue of £50,000 from the Duchy of Lancaster, makes a grand total of £516,638 per annum; which the taxpayers of England have to find.—The Hummer, Australia.

An Ottawa correspondent says: Lower town is beginning to fill in, as shantymen and teams continue to come down from the woods, and there is a corresponding increase in the amount of bustle around the Chaudiere, with its many mills. The lumbermen report that the cut in the woods has been heavy, and that as they have no stock, the mills will be run to their full capacity. About 75 men are employed on Buell, Orr and Hurdman's new mill, which, it is expected, will be ready for operation at the opening of the season. Most of the machinery is in position, the flume is completed and a gang of men are working at the flume under the mill. The new mill will be one of the most solid structures of the kind in Canada. About 100 men will be employed in it and in the yards, the sawing capacity being about 200,000 feet, board measure, per day. The machinery is the most modern kind, and will when complete consist of three band saws and a wicker gate. The machinery will be driven by two large modern wheels of 1,000 horse-power each. The building is 87 feet wide and 136 feet long. The tail race runs under a stone arch of the Suspension bridge into the river. The power for the mill will be exceptionally good. The South American trade is expected to be good.

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