

# On our Workman.

THE EQUALIZATION OF ALL ELEMENTS OF SOCIETY IN THE SOCIAL SCALE SHOULD BE THE TRUE AIM OF CIVILIZATION.

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## Labor Notes.

The Ninth Annual Session of the Workmen's Association of the State of New York was held at Albany on the 28th ult. Matters of great importance were brought before the Association.

A meeting of the Associated Joiners of Glasgow was lately held in the Trades Hall, Glassford street, at which it was resolved to request the sanction and support of the Association to obtain an advance on the present rate of wages in the ensuing spring to the extent of one half-penny per hour.

The tanners of Chicago are still exerting themselves in behalf of a Union. Each member of the Union is working might and main to get another member of the craft to join the organization, and from the appearance of their numbers on Thursday night they appear to have met with success. —*Workingman's Advocate.*

The Iron Moulders' Union of Chicago met at their hall, corner Clark and Lake streets, on Saturday evening. They report business flat, with many members leaving the city to find work in smaller towns. The election of officers was the most important business transacted during the evening. —*Ibid.*

A special meeting of the members of the Glasgow United Trades Council was held in the Tontino Hotel—Mr. Box, the president of the Council in the chair. The object of the meeting was to consider the sentence recently passed upon the London gas stokers. The members were unanimous in expressing the opinion that the sentence recently passed upon the gas stokers was a most severe and vindictive one, and that it appeared to unsettle all recent legislation respecting the laws affecting capital and labor, and rendered the same of no value whatever.

At a meeting of the Amalgamated Association of Veterinary Surgeons and Master Horse-shoers of Edinburgh, held on Friday in the Craigie Hall, it was reported that all the forges, with the exception of two, have now the full complement of men for the winter, the men being employed at the old rate of wages.

The strikes in the coal mining districts of South Wales still continue. All attempts at compromising the disputes have been unsuccessful. No disturbances have yet occurred.

The Amalgamated Society of Carpenters and Joiners, whose general offices are at 53 Grosvenor street, Chorlton on Medlock, was lately registered under the Trade Union Act, 1871. The number of members is 11,265, as against 9,845 this time last year. The rules, as registered, will be issued to the members forthwith.

The high rate of wages in the labor market continues to affect very seriously the recruiting for the army. The *Times* states that at Chatham recruiting goes on very slowly, much difficulty being experienced in getting the men required. "Additional recruiting parties have been therefore sent out for the Royal Engineers, while recruiting sergeants for this corps, the Royal Artillery, various infantry regiments, and the West Kent Light Infantry Militia were also patrolling the streets of Chatham and the contiguous towns daily in search of men. At the present time, the whole of the corps at Chatham garrison are said to be much below their proper strength.

A meeting of the master builders was recently held, at the Acorn Hotel, Temple street, Birmingham. To take into consideration the notices received from the men, asking for an alteration in the working rules. The men, in these notices, demand an extensive rise of wages, and the carpenters and joiners require a reduction of hours as well. These are the principal points, but there are details as to walking hours, &c. At the meeting on Tuesday night the master builders agreed upon a new set of rules, which they will issue as a counter notice. The representatives of both parties will meet to discuss the points at issue, and in the event of their being unable to agree, the dispute will be referred to arbitration.

A correspondent of the Dundee *Advertiser* describes the manner in which a strike is dealt with in Russia. About two miles from Narva, in Esthonia are the Krahnholm Cotton Works, in which some 5,000 work people are employed. When the cholera visited Narva this summer, ten per cent. of the over-worked, under-fed, and sadly-lodged cotton operatives died, and, ignorant though they were, it did occur to their minds that this remarkable mortality was owing to their wretched condition. They got up an agitation for shorter hours, and other improvements in their lot, and a meeting of shareholders, at which the Governor of Esthonia was present, agreed to make a few concessions. Some of the shareholders, however, got up a petition to the Governor to dismiss the workmen that had taken an active part in the movement. The workpeople hearing this, sent a deputation to the Governor to represent to him their view of the case. The deputation was met at the Narva railway station by a body of secret police, and conducted to prison. When the arrest became known at the factory a general strike ensued, and some indignation was expressed by the operatives. Upon this the military were called out, reinforcements ordered up from St. Petersburg, and the place kept in a state of siege for ten days. The leaders of the strike were handed over to a judicial court, and out of the thirty-five arrested, eight have been condemned to banishment to Siberia for life, and the others to various periods of imprisonment. Something more than an Imperial Decree is needed to make the late serf a free man.

## CHEAP HUMAN LABOR.

BY ROBERT SCHILLING.

*Cheap Human Labor!* I despise the word. It signifies crime and a shame. It signifies squalor, degradation, ignorance, vice. Are not laborers men—our fellow-men? They have bodies to clothe and stomachs to feed, and minds to educate, and spirits to elevate, and old age to provide for. They have homes which they love, and wives whom they cherish, and children whom they hope to make worthy citizens—the honest fathers and virtuous mothers of a succeeding generation. And can you remember these duties and see these aspirations, can you contemplate the patient hopefulness of the cheerful and contented (because fairly compensated) industry, and talk about cheap labor? —*Geo. H. Peckleton.*

It is not often that a politician hits the nail on the head as aptly as has been done in the above quotation. It may have been said to catch votes, but it is nevertheless too true. "Cheap human labor signifies squalor, degradation, ignorance, vice."

They tell us words are cheap, and it is easy to make an assertion, but let us refer to any country where cheap human labor is the rule. Can those who are favoring the introduction of Chinamen, close their eyes to the state of society in China? Can they not see that it is cheap human labor which makes the majority of Chinamen thieves, which makes human life so cheap in that country that it can be bought for a small sum of money; in short, which makes that country one of "squalor, degradation, ignorance, vice?"

And how is it in other countries in which cheap human labor is the rule? Look at Turkey, Egypt, or any other absolute despotism. Human labor is rewarded but insignificantly, if at all, and life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness are valued comparatively low, while countries in which labor is properly rewarded are enlightened in proportion. In fact, if a table of all countries were made, in which the most enlightened country was placed at the head, while all other countries were placed upon it in proportion to their enlightenment, so that the lowest, most degraded country was placed at the foot, it would be found to be a true scale of the wages paid to the workmen of each country. Is any further argument necessary against the introduction of "cheap human labor?" If there is, look around you, and if you are not entirely blind, you will see that of workmen, who

receive high, or even fair wages, but few are addicted to bad habits, while those but poorly remunerated are suffering from "squalor, degradation, ignorance, vice." It is not only the laborer who will be benefited by dear labor. The merchant, the journalist, in fact every branch of trade and industry will be bettered in the end. If all our laborers were Chinamen, and receiving wages as low as they work for, they would live on the coarsest food, wear the cheapest clothes and consume but very little of any thing. And where there is no consumption there is no chance for production, and without a market for the productions of a country, the capitalist as well as the laborer must suffer; the country will be flooded with surplus production, labor will be more and more oppressed, and it will become so cheap as to be used in the manufacture of fire crackers, fans, kites, and other insignificant and intrinsically worthless articles, while the country itself will go to ruin from "squalor, degradation, ignorance, vice." —*Coopers' Journal.*

## CO-OPERATIVE STORES IN ENGLAND.

A correspondent sends us an account of a meeting of the North of England Co-operative Wholesale Society, which took place at Manchester on Nov. 23rd, containing many facts which are at once interesting and suggestive. This society represents a federation of co-operative societies, and has a central board and stores in Manchester, from which the retail stores of the various societies are supplied. The wholesale society was started in 1869 in the federation of fifty-four societies with an aggregate capital of less than one thousand pounds. On the first of October of the present year the societies in the federation numbered four hundred and sixty-six, with a paid up share capital of £28,300. The business done during the last quarter averaged £28,000 a week, and the net profit of the quarter, after the payment of interest on shares and loans, amounted to £3,274, or over sixteen thousand dollars.

At this meeting of the wholesale society it was announced that arrangements were making for largely extending the business of the association. Hereafter stores required from America, Holland and Ireland would be imported by the society direct from those countries. It was determined to increase the amount of subscription required from the federate societies participating in the benefits of the association as a guarantee for loans. The capital used in the business of the society is supplied by subscriptions of the shareholders and by loans, to which are added, of course, the profits of its traffic as they accrue. The loans consist in surplus cash belonging to co-operative societies deposited with the wholesale society, which pays five per cent interest on such deposits. At the close of the last quarter the money so deposited amounted to £65,000. By making these deposits transferable, the society propose to introduce what is practically a system of co-operative banking into their business. In future the retail stores dealing with the wholesale society may deposit the whole of their receipts and transfer the amounts as bills become due, receiving interests so long as their money remains on deposit.

The society has also resolved to still further enlarge the field of its operations by engaging in the manufacture, on the co-operative principle, of course, of several descriptions of goods which are the most in demand by their customers. In answer to inquiries addressed to the retail associations supplied by the society, statements had been received from one hundred and forty-six, showing that the aggregate requirements of these societies during the past year were: Cloths, £147,000; boots and shoes, £46,000; tailoring, £20,000; and blankets, £4,000. The central board was therefore authorized to open a wholesale cloth warehouse separate from the general stores; to go into the manufacture of boots and shoes; to establish a blanket and flannel factory; and to purchase a bakery then

for sale in the neighborhood of Manchester. It will be seen that in this case at least, the principle of co-operation has accomplished all that its most ardent advocates have ever claimed for it. —*N. Y. Sun.*

## AMERICAN VS. ENGLISH TRADES UNIONS.

The Twelfth Annual Report of the Amalgamated Society of Carpenters and Joiners, from December 1870, to December 1871, is replete with instruction and valuable information, from which the skilled mechanics of America should take a lesson. A cursory glance at the statistics furnished convinces us that the strength of these foreign trades organizations lies more in the *morale* and *discipline* than in the number of their members—a fact that we seem persistently, to our own injury, to ignore. Strange as it may seem, this powerful organization, in Gt. Britain, Ireland, the United States and Canada, numbers but 9,764 members, despite the immense influence exerted. For example, London with its 4,000,000 population has only 1632 members in good standing, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, with a population of 150,000, presents a list of 95; Liverpool, the rival of New York, furnishes to it five branches 253; Glasgow, Scotland's commercial metropolis 67; and Dublin 80 members. Now when we consider that Chicago, almost the growth of a decade, with its 350,000 residents, claims on its union records in this branch alone, 3,000 members, more than the aggregate presented by this entire list, and yet exercises less influence than the least among them, we are certainly justified in ascertaining the causes which lead to such results.

*Lack of discipline* is the great drawback to the successful development of American trades unions. In Great Britain the members seem to recognize the value of their obligation; that the pledge taken is no lip service, no temporary expedient. A glance at the financial standing of this organization, with its surplus fund of \$90,000, furnishes such evidences. That "the law is for the lawless and disobedient," is practically illustrated in its enforcement of its rules, and the punishment meted to the laggards and non-attendants. A penalty means punishment in case of non-observance, while the man who lives up to the requirements is sure to reap the full mede of the advantages it offers. It prefers a live trunk with a couple of branches to a dead one with a score of them; a union with a membership of a dozen true and tried men, alive to its requirements, who are always on hand in time of danger, to one with a thousand, who are union men just so long as the tide carries them along; a good substantial foundation to an imposing superstructure built on sand, and this is the great lesson we desire our workmen to learn.

The *beneficial feature* forms also a conspicuous position in English trades organizations. For example, by again referring to the report, we find that there was paid out last year \$34,000 to unemployed members; \$1,800 in replacing stolen and burnt tools; \$20,000 to sick members; four members who have become permanently disabled from following their employment as carpenters and joiners, received each the sum of \$500; \$5,525 for the funerals of deceased members and their wives; to the aged and infirm, \$650; and in benevolent grants to distressed members, of which \$250 was sent to Chicago after the great fire, \$2,125, making the enormous aggregate of \$84,000.

As a matter of course, where such advantages are confessed, taxation will be heavier than in a purely protective organization. The receipts for the past year amounted to \$110,000, and this, too, be it remembered, was drawn from less than ten thousand members. How many of our home associations would submit to such a drain? Not one in a hundred; and this accounts for the empty treasuries, in the hour of need; the repeated failures of the strikes in which too many of our unionists indulge. The union which enters into a conflict, without due preparation, and the sinews of war, generally leaves it in a bankrupt condition. The organization which engages in a struggle with capital, without having first counted the cost, without preparation for an emergency, is like one brigade firing blank cartridge against another, which pours its loaded messengers from the most improved weapons.

But what others have done, we can do. We have good faith in the foresight, the administrative ability, and the integrity of the presidents of our representative national trades organizations, and the immense strides which have recently been made in the right direction, prove our belief to be well founded, and in their hands for the time being at least, we can safely trust the issue. —*Exchange.*

## GRAVITATION, LIGHT AND HEAT.

The law of gravitation enunciated by Newton is that every particle of matter in the universe attracts every other particle with a force which diminishes as the square of the distance increases. Thus the sun and the earth mutually pull each other; thus the earth and the moon are kept in company; the force which holds every respective pair of masses together being the integrated force of their component parts. Under the operation of this force, a stone falls to the ground and is warmed by the shock; under its operation, meteors plunge into our atmosphere and rise to incandescence. Showers of such doubtless fall incessantly upon the sun. Acted on by this force, were it stopped in its orbit to-morrow, the earth would rush towards and finally combine with the sun. Heat would also be developed by this collision, and Mayer, Hemholtz, and Thomson would have calculated its amount. It would equal that produced by the combustion of more than 5,000 worlds of solid coal, all this heat being generated at the instant of collision. In the attraction of gravity, therefore, acting upon the non-luminous matter, we have a source of heat more powerful than could be derived from any terrestrial combustion. And were the matter of the universe cast in cold, detached fragments into space, and there abandoned to the mutual gravitation of its own parts, the collision of the fragments would in the end produce the burning of the stars.

The action of gravity upon matter originally cold may in fact be the origin of all light and heat, and the proximate source of such other powers as are generated by light and heat. But we have now to inquire what is the light and what is the heat thus produced? This question has already been answered in a general way. Both light and heat are modes of motion. Two planets clash and come to rest; their motion, considered as masses, is destroyed, but it is really continued as a motion of their ultimate particles. It is this motion, taken up by the ether, and propagated through it with a velocity of 185,000 miles a second, that comes to us as the light and heat of suns and stars. The atoms of a body swing with inconceivable rapidity, but this power of vibration necessarily implies the operation of forces between the atoms themselves. It reveals to us that while they are held together by one force, they are kept asunder by another, their position at any moment depending on the equilibrium of attraction and repulsion. The atoms are virtually connected by elastic springs which oppose at the same time their reproach and their retreat, but which tolerate the vibration called heat. When two bodies drawn together by the force of gravity strike each other, the intensity of the ultimate vibration, or, in other words, the amount of heat generated, is proportionable to the *vis viva* destroyed by the collision. The molecular motion once set up is instantly charred with the ether and diffused by it throughout space.

We on the earth's surface live night and day in the midst of ethereal commotion. The medium is never still; the cloudy canopy above us may be thick enough to shut out the light of stars, but this canopy is itself a warm body, which radiates motion through ether. The earth also is warm, and sends its heat pulses incessantly forth. It is the waste of its molecular motion in space that chills the earth upon a clear night; it is the return of its motion from the clouds which prevents the earth's temperature on a cloudy night from falling so low. To the conception of space being filled, we must, therefore, add the conception of its being in a state of incessant tremor. The sources of vibration are the ponderable masses of the universe. Let us take a sample of these and examine it in detail. When we look at our planet we find it to be an aggregate of solids, liquids and gases. When we look at any of these, we generally find it composed of still more elementary parts. We learn for example, that the water of our rivers is formed by the union, in definite proportions, of two gases, oxygen and hydrogen. We know how to bring these constituents together, and to cause them to form water; we also know how to analyze the water; and recover from it its two constituents. So, likewise, as regards the solid portions of the earth. Our chalk hills, for example, are formed by a combination of carbon, oxygen and calcium. These are elements, the union of which, in definite proportions, has resulted in the formation of chalk. The flints within the chalk we know to be a compound of oxygen and silicon, called silica; and our ordinary clay is, for the most part, formed by the silicon, oxygen, and the well known light metal, aluminum. By far the greater portion of the earth's crust is compounded of the elementary substances mentioned in those few lines.