

CO-OPERATIVE MANUFACTORIES.

(To the Editor of the Ontario Workman.)

SIR,—Co-operation when accomplished will make a complete revolution in society. The great evil of modern society is the accumulation of too much wealth in the hands of a few, and the consequent dependence, degradation and often extreme poverty of the masses of the people. The capitalist classes are too rich and the industrial classes are too poor. It is vain for political economists and hireling writers of the old school to tell the people that the interests of the employer and the worker—of the rich and the poor—are one. The object of the employer is to get labor at the very lowest rate of remuneration—the object of the capitalists is to get the highest profits upon his money. While on the opposite side, the object of the worker is to get the highest profit on his labor; to keep to himself as well as he can the wealth he creates, by the unsatisfactory struggle of unions and strikes; is it not manifest that contention and ill feeling must always exist under the present system? The idea of the interests of the employer and the employee being one, is only realized when Co-operative Joint Stock Companies are formed, in which the entire capital is owned by the employees,—and interest is allowed on capital and on wages. The next approach to the realization of this idea is seen in those companies which, while consisting of a few capitalists, the sole owners of the business and the estate, give the regular rate of wages to their employees, and wisely, for their own interest, add a percentage of interest on wages, or admit the employees to the privileges of share-holders, with profit upon their shares. In either of these instances, but beyond all measure more in the former than in the latter, the idea is realized that the interest of capital and labor are one. Then the laborer is as anxious about the preservation of the general property and the quality and excellence of the goods produced as the employer; and then the best feeling and harmony prevail, because it is not the interest of one to get the greatest amount of labor at the lowest rate nor of the other to give the least and get the most.

But the revolution is so vast, so grand in its consequences, that it is no wonder it would be opposed, discouraged, and denounced by one class, and doubted and neglected by the other. It would have the same effect upon the political economy of a people as democratical institutions have on governments. It would distribute and equalize power. The doctrine of the socialists failed and was mocked and despised by the wise ones who have no faith in progress. But the principle was only wrong in its details. Socialism, whether Owenism or Fourierism, really aimed at a juster distribution of labor and wealth. But it failed only because it aimed at too much. Co-operation interferes with no law or opinion, assails no rights or just privileges. It only carries out a business principle, most successfully carried out by the moneyed classes. Wealthy men put their money together and build railways, or telegraphs, or establish large manufactories, or carry on great mercantile operations and secure to themselves all the profits. Co-operation encourages working men to follow that example, to club their savings together, to form Joint Stock Companies, and secure the profits to themselves instead of working, as they now do, at the lowest fixed wages given by a capitalist class, which monopolizes and enjoys the immense profits which under the co-operative system would remain the property of the industrial class.

Co-operation has done all this—is doing it now also, most successfully. All over Europe co-operative societies have been established, and are carried on with complete success by the industrial classes—veritable working men—for their own benefit; successfully competing with old established capitalists; getting their full share of employment—the shareholders being the employees; and managing and controlling with admirable prudence, skill and business tact their own affairs. They are in France, in Germany, in Switzerland, in Russia. But it is in England that the principle is carried out with the greatest success—probably because, as here and in the States, the political power the people enjoy disciplines and exercises them for the right use of all other power; and although your successful business man announces himself with a great flourish of drums and tries to impress you with a very profound idea of his wisdom and ability, a little experience soon convinces the novice that business success is due simply to the exercise of common sense, prudence and industry. In England there are now in successful operation about 100 co-operative companies with capital varying from £5,000 to upwards of £100,000. The largest number are in connection with cotton

manufactories. But every department of productive industry is represented by successful co-operative societies. In London, Liverpool and Manchester there are large shoe and clothing factories. Many of the societies have been in existence for more than twelve years, and some upwards of twenty years; and although there have been failures—these failures, whether due to mismanagement or fraud, bear no comparison to failures due to the same causes amongst the race of capitalists—"business men" as they like to be called.

I will conclude this letter with an outline of the plan for the division of profits. Interest is first allowed upon capital, say 5 per cent.; but as each man's shares are limited, it is impossible for any single wealthy capitalist to get the control of the company. After this payment and an allotment for the depreciation of fixed stock, the declared capital of the society and the total amount of wages paid during the previous half year are added together and the balance of profits is equally divided on both capital and wages. "Here is a plan," said John Watts at the Glasgow Social Science Meeting, 1861, "by which a workman who has never been able to save a penny out of wages may yet become his own employer; nay, there is even a gentle coercion, to make him a partaker of profits, (delightful coercion), and to invest such profits for him, so that by the time he is unable to work, the interest and profit of a capital which has cost him no effort beyond what would have been necessary elsewhere to earn average wages, may support him in old age. For assuming the society to divide 15 per cent. on capital, and 10 per cent. on wages per annum, then a man may commence work at 20, getting and spending his 20s. per week of wages as at another establishment, and simply allowing his share of profits to accumulate, and he would at the end of 20 years find himself credited with £536, which if left in the concern at 15 per cent., would enable the workman to retire at the age of forty, on £80 per annum."

Trades Unions are now powerful both in number and wealth. The Amalgamated Engineer's Society has more than 25,000 members with an income of more than £100,000. The Canadian societies are growing in the same direction. Will their members not learn wisdom? Will they not learn that if they wish to control wages they must become their own employers, and use their capital in production.

GRACCHUS.

CO-OPERATION.

(To the Editor of the Ontario Workman.)

SIR,—In those days when the social problem of the proper relations of Labour and Capital, is being so freely discussed by all classes of the body politic; when learned savants, political economists and literateurs, are promulgating fancy theories, and members of Social Science Congresses fulminating threats against Labor and indulging in dismal forebodings and prophecies respecting the probable outcome of the present agitations, it becomes increasingly necessary that Labor should make its voice heard, and contribute its quota to the solution of the problems at which the friends of Capital have so long been tinkering, and which, with a few exceptions, such as the idea of sharing profits with workmen adopted by some few firms in the old country,—are no nearer solution than before they commenced their interminable discussions.

To this end, I was, as a workingman, especially pleased to find your notification that you would be glad to have the opinions of workmen on the important subject of co-operation, and propose, with your permission, and following in the wake of your correspondents "Gracchus" and "Henry Robinson," to offer a few remarks, which, if not erudite or brilliant, may, I hope, be found to have the virtue of being practical and based on common-sense foundations.

I apprehend, sir, that none who will read these lines, needs to be told what constitutes co-operation in the abstract; therefore, I will not occupy your space by attempting to give an exposition of its principles. But, as many of your readers may not know what results have been produced by a careful and systematic application of them, I propose to give some few co-operative facts that have come under my own somewhat limited observation.

Every ordinary reader knows that Oldham, Lancashire, England, is one of the busiest hives in the cotton manufacturing industries, and that in addition to manufacturing that staple itself, it manufactures and exports annually, an immense quantity of cotton machinery. But every one who knows this does not know—and many will be surprised to learn—that, in that particular town nearly all the largest mills, and certainly all the best paying ones, are work-

ed on a slight modification of the pure co-operative principle, and are owned by the workingmen of the town, and in many instances by the operatives who work them. Amongst others there are "The Sun," "The Melbourne," "The Central," "The Greenacres," and "The Royton" Spinning Companies, each of which are gigantic and increasing concerns, and each employing from 400 or 500 to 1,000 hands, and paying—just think of it—quarterly dividends on capital invested, of from 15 to 35,—and "The Sun" has even paid 40 per cent.

In addition to these there are the gigantic Cotton Manufacturing Machinery Works of Messrs. Platt Brothers & Co.—at which from 7,500 to 9,000 hands are employed and at which each workman receives a monthly dividend, in addition to his ordinary wages, varying, in the different departments, from 15 to 45 per cent, on every shilling earned,—also "The Oldham Co-Operative Iron and Engineering Works," which is purely co-operative. And in addition to, and crowning all, because it is the fountain from which all the others sprang, there are co-operative stores having head-quarters consisting of a magnificent block of buildings in the central part of the town, and 7 or 8 distinct branches in the outlying districts. The head branch is fitted up in such a manner, that groceries, dry goods, boots and shoes, butcher's meat, clothing and in fact, everything that conduces to man's physical comfort can be obtained readily and without confusion or mixing-up of departments. All this on the ground and first upper floors. The second upper floor is devoted to Committee and Reading Rooms and Library, and the top floor is a spacious hall capable of accommodating from 1,500 to 2,000 people. In addition to this there is in connection with it, a Co-Operative Corn and Flour Mill at which all the flour sold is manufactured. And this is all freehold property, and this society pays a quarterly dividend of from 8 to 12 cents on every dollar expended in its stores.

Now, sir, what I am trying to get at, is this. If this town of Oldham, can carry on these gigantic concerns, and make them pay so well, why cannot the workingmen of Toronto, and indeed, of every other city, do the same? The shares in these concerns vary in value; some are worth \$5, some \$15, some \$25. Only a small per centage is paid on allotment of shares, and the rest at stated periods, of which periods the shareholders receive due notice. The directors and managers are all practical men, and in the choice of managers efficiency is not sacrificed on the altar of economy, and the result is that good profits accrue to the shareholders. The benefits derived from co-operation in this town are strikingly exemplified in the facts that in it, there are many bona-fide workingmen who are the possessors of sums varying from \$1,000 to \$5,000 and many of the richest men in the town trace their success to the benefits of co-operation. And there are probably more workingmen living in their own houses in this town, than in any other in the United Kingdom or out of it.

Thus, sir, from small and insignificant beginnings, do great results spring, and I can see no valid reason why the same kind of experiment should not be made in this Dominion. Why cannot co-operative Carpenter's, Bricklayer's, Blacksmith's, Boot-maker's, Tailor's and Dry Goods Societies be organized here, and thus, instead of the employers pocketing the lion's share of the profits, let those who produce them, have the full benefit. What though the number of co-operators be small? The Rochdale Equitable Pioneers were small in number, yet I hesitate not to say, that could the most inveterate opponent of co-operation survey, as I have done, the truly magnificent block of stone buildings in which the business of this society is now transacted, they would, as I was, be truly amazed at the thought of what can be done by honest persevering efforts even though against great odds.

In conclusion, sir, let me say, that I can verify every statement I have made in this communication; let me express the hope that the Trades Unions of Canada will take up this matter in right good earnest; that numbers more of your subscribers will ventilate their views on the subject, and though my remarks be crude and ill-put together, they may be received as the contribution of one who has an earnest desire to see the social, moral, intellectual, and political condition of his fellows ameliorated, and the cause of humanity triumphant.

As a guarantee of good faith, I subscribe my name and address, and beg to remain in the bond of fraternity.

Yours, &c.,
JOHN FOSTER.

47 Dundas St., Nov, 15, 1873.

Ball Cards, Programmes, etc., executed with promptness at the WORKMAN Office, 124 Bay Street.

ST. CATHARINES.

(From our own Correspondent.)

PRESENTATION TO A. C. MAXWELL, ESQ.

A few nights ago a number of the Caledonians of this town, waited on the above gentleman, and presented him with a splendid family album on the occasion of his marriage. The album was presented by J. B. McIntyre, Esq., President of the Caledonian Society in a brief and touching speech, which elicited applause. Mr. Maxwell in replying, stated that he received the handsome gift with much pleasure, not so much for its intrinsic worth, as for the kindly feelings of which it was the exponent. The album bore the following inscription, "Presented to A. C. Maxwell, from a few Caledonians—1873."

After drinking to the health of the newly-married couple, and wishing them long life and prosperity, the happy company separated after singing "Auld Lang Syne."

THEATRICALS.

Jennie Casrall's selected company opened in the Town Hall for a four night's season, on the evening of Wednesday last; the piece selected for the opening night was from the prolific pen of Wilkie Collins, and entitled the "New Magdalene." All the artistes who took part in the piece acquitted themselves very creditably, but special mention must be made of Miss Casrall, and Miss F. Vincent, who in their respective characters exhibited talent of a high order. The audience on the occasion was large and appreciative. We must not omit to mention the cornet solo executed by Mr. Henry, which showed him to be a master of the instrument. Mr. H. Bulkley danced a jig which was well received. Altogether, the company are well worth a visit, we understand the company intend paying Hamilton a visit next week.

MOULDERS' UNION.

It gives us much pleasure to state that the moulders who are a numerous body in St. Catharines, have organised a protective union. We have not got sufficient information on the subject to allow us to give you particulars, but we believe we are safe in saying that a large number have joined the society; we shall make enquiry and give particulars in our next communication. We congratulate the founders of the movement, and bid them persevere.

TRADE.

Trade in all its branches continues good so far as we have enquired, 'tis well it is so, for winter is now upon us, and the working man requires all he can possibly gain.

COAL AND WOOD SOCIETY.

Fuel of all kinds in St. Catharines has risen enormously during the last few years, so much so, that the question is now being discussed whether it is not desirable to form a society under the the above title. For ourselves, we believe that such a society is not only practicable, but highly desirable, wood (hard) could be produced in large quantities at from four and a half to five dollars per cord, while at present we have to pay from six to seven per cord; as regards good household coal, it can be purchased in large quantities at from five to five and a half per ton, while at present we have to pay the large sum of eight dollars per ton. We hope to hear of such a society being organized, which will certainly demonstrate that at last, the working men are alive to their own interests.

St. Catharines, Nov. 15, 1873.

GEN'S FURNISHING STORE.—We would direct the attention of our readers to the advertisement of Mr. George Rogers, who has opened out a very select stock of every description of articles needed for gent's furnishing. Not only is the stock very choice but the prices are such that it will pay to give him a call. A choice assortment of goods, pleasing manners, and fair prices cannot fail in drawing custom.

The Mechanics Quadrille Class, finding their late hall too small for their increasing numbers, have removed to the Agricultural Hall, where on each Tuesday evening, they hold most successful social gatherings.

We direct the attention of our city readers to the card of Mr. J. Edwards, who is in the field as candidate for Water Commissioner for the ensuing year. Mr. Edwards places his qualification for the position before the public, and they are such as will render him an efficient member of the board.

Mr. F. H. Medcalf is a candidate for the office of Mayor for the ensuing term. Mr. Medcalf very successfully served the public in that position some years since, and is again desirous of placing himself at the service of his people.

J. J., UTICA.—Unavoidably left over again till next week.

D. W. T., ST. CATHARINES.—Next week.

The Smithfield Manufacturing Company of Hyde Park, a suburb of Boston, has placed its help on half time.

The Hopkins & Allen Manufacturing Company, of Norwich, Conn., has discharged fifty-two hands, and brought the working time to nine hours a day.

ELECTION OF WATER COMMISSIONERS

FOR 1874 & 5.

To the Electors of West Toronto:

GENTLEMEN,—

I have been asked by many Property Owners and Ratepayers of West Toronto to offer myself as a Candidate for your suffrages as Water Commissioner, at the Ensuing Elections, (to be held January 5th, 1874.)

In cheerfully acceding to the request, I assume that the duties of the position call for some practical knowledge of the sanitary laws by which dense populations should be guided in obtaining unlimited and readily available supplies of water, and that the duties also demand from your Representatives an honest determination to so act and vote that you shall have undoubted security that the monies to be expended shall be scrupulously guarded and the disbursement thereof so faithfully managed that no reproach may rest on the shoulders of your Commissioners.

Having the privilege of personal acquaintance with leading Engineers of Great Britain and Ireland, and having had different opportunities of examining the thoroughness of their work. Careful observation of their efforts has guided my judgment in matters that will of necessity be decided by your Representatives.

To the second requirement, I base my claim to general support on the fact that I have been for twenty-three years a resident ratepayer in Toronto, during which term I have so acted in your and my own interests, in the varied positions of Mechanic, Tradesman, and Ratepayer, as to entitle me to your confidence.

I am at liberty to state that my candidature has the approval of at least three gentlemen to whom the Citizens have heretofore given their confidence for the planning and execution of the work now to be done in our City.

I shall make it my duty to call on as many of you as possible. Should the limited time between the issue of this and "Election day" prevent me from seeing each voter in the West at his place of business or residence, I request that for this reason I may not be the less confident of your vote and support.

I am, Gentlemen,

Yours most faithfully,

J. EDWARDS.

TO THE

ELECTORS OF TORONTO.

GENTLEMEN:—

The time having now nearly arrived, when (by the Act of the Legislature) you will again have the privilege of electing from amongst yourselves one to fill the important office of Mayor, I have been requested, by a large number of citizens, to offer myself as a candidate for that position. In compliance with their request, and with a desire to see our common city prosper, I now ask for your suffrages at the coming election.

Let my former conduct be a guarantee for my future services.

I remain, Gentlemen,

Yours, etc.,

F. H. MEDCALF.

Toronto, 17th November, 1874.

1874—ST. JAMES' WARD.—1874

YOUR VOTE AND INTEREST

Are respectfully requested for

R. H. OATES,

AS ALDERMAN,

For St. James' Ward, for the Ensuing Year.

Election takes place Monday, January 5, 1874.

GEORGE ROGERS,

330 Yonge St., opposite Gould St.,

DEALER IN

Gents' Furnishing Goods,

SHIRTS, COLLARS,

TIES, SCARFS,

HOSIERY, GLOVES, &c.

In great variety. Shirts made to order in a superior manner.

MECHANICS!

Will find it to their advantage to deal at this establishment.

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TAILORS' STRIKE!

Strike in Toronto not yet settled. Workmen will govern themselves accordingly.

JOHN KELLY,

President.

WM. MAIR,

Secretary.

Toronto, Nov. 17, 1873.

IN ORDER TO SUPPLY OUR MANY Customers in the Eastern part of the city with the

BEST AND CHEAPEST FUEL,

We have purchased from Messrs. Holliswell & Sinclair the business lately carried on by them on the corner of

QUEEN and BRIGHT STREETS, where we shall endeavor to maintain the reputation of the

VICTORIA WOOD YARD

As the Best and Cheapest Coal and Wood Depot in the City. Cut Pine and Hardwood always on hand. All kinds Hard and Soft Coal, dry and under cover, from snow and ice.

J. & A. MONTYRE,
Corner Queen and Bright Streets, and
26 and 28 Victoria Street.

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