

Ontario Workman.

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

VOL. I.

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NO. 17

WORKINGMEN OF ST. JOHN'S WARD.

ENTHUSIASTIC GATHERING.

CAPITAL AND LABOR.

LECTURE BY MR. ROBERT WILKES.

THE TABLES TURNED.

THE MEETING PRONOUNCES IN FAVOR OF MR. SHANLY.

A meeting of the workmen was called by Mr. Robert Wilkes, the "Grit" candidate for the Central Division of Toronto, at the Mission House, Elizabeth street, last Thursday evening, for the purpose of addressing them on the subject of "Capital and Labor." The object of the lecture was evidently a political one, but the intelligent workmen who went there, were fully prepared to meet the arguments offered by Mr. Wilkes.

By eight o'clock the building was fairly packed with mechanics interested, to the number of at least four or five hundred. Among those present, were Mr. R. Wilkes, R. Jaffray, W. Anderson, J. Hewitt, A. Scott, J. S. Williams, A. McCormack, W. Levesley, J. Dance, J. Harrington, Dr. Howson, J. Macdonald, W. Millichamp, W. West, E. K. Dodds, H. W. Meredith and others.

Mr. A. McCormack, President of the Toronto Trades Assembly, was unanimously elected chairman.

The chairman having called the meeting to order, said that as Mr. Wilkes had not yet arrived it would be necessary for the meeting to exercise a little patience until he put in an appearance.

A few minutes having elapsed, Mr. Wilkes appeared and was introduced by the chairman, who requested the audience to remain quiet and orderly and give the speakers a patient hearing.

Mr. Wilkes then came forward, and expressed himself gratified at meeting so many of the intelligent mechanics of the city on a question in which they were all deeply interested, viz, the relations of capital to labor. He proceeded to give a history of Trades Unions and the cause of their springing into existence. It was about the beginning of the present century that they were first originated. The cause of their springing into existence was the introduction of steam-power and machinery as an opponent to hand-power. The working-classes had at first endeavored to battle against steam-power, but they soon found that the power of the human arm must give way and that the power of the brain would gain the supremacy. They soon hailed it as their aid. He then proceeded to relate a few facts relative to the condition of the working-classes previous to the introduction of steam-power and Trades Unions. At that time in England, in the iron trade, the average rate of wages was 10 shillings, or \$2½ per week. In the Sheffield steel and cutlery trades the average wages was 13s 6d or \$3.25 or \$3.40 per week. In the cotton trade 8s to 9 shillings per week was the wages in those days. In the crockery trade of Sheffield the wages were 9s 6d per week, and in the coal mines of Newcastle 15s 6d. In round numbers there was not more than 20 per cent. paid 100 years ago in proportion to the wages of the present day. A large advance had taken place. He referred to the intermediate period—the year 1837—a period when Canada was contending for the right of responsible government. The iron-workers of Birmingham, Rotherham and Wolverhampton, were receiving from 20s to 30s per week. In the Sheffield trades they had increased from 8s 3d to 25s or 26s per week in a period of 35 years. In the cotton trades from 12s 6d to 25s. The agricultural laborer, 800 hundred years ago, was

receiving from 6 to 8 shillings per week. In 1847 they had risen to 10 shillings per week. All other branches of industry had risen at a greater average.

A voice—Let us have something about politics.

Mr. Wilkes—I am not in that line to-night.

A voice—We knew all about what you are telling us long ago.

Another voice—What do you know about workingmen?

Another—He ain't one at all.

Mr. Wilkes continued—Provisions had not risen in a like proportion to the increase of wages. Tea and coffee were cheaper now than 100 years ago. (Cries of Hinks did that.) He had just thrown these few facts together to give them an idea of the state of things at the time Trades Unions sprung into existence. It was endeavored to keep down these Unions by legislative oppression. (Cries of "Brown" and "Globe.") That legislative oppression was only in England, and did not exist more than 14 years.

A voice—Tell us something about Toronto.

The chairman here explained that the meeting had been called to discuss the question of Capital and Labor.

A voice—We have had all that in the *Globe*. (Laughter.)

Mr. Wilkes proceeded to show the large amount of money which had been subscribed from time to time in England for the support of Trades Unions.

A voice—Tell us about Canada.

Mr. Wilkes thought that most of them were interested in and had sprung from the "old root." Although some raised the cry of independence, he would say England for ever. (Cheers.)

Mr. Wilkes proceeded amid considerable uproar.

Mr. Hewitt here rose and said he came there to hear the remarks of Mr. Wilkes, and if that gentleman said anything objectionable to the workmen of the City of Toronto there were men present among them who were qualified to reply. He hoped they would allow Mr. Wilkes to proceed.

Mr. Wilkes then proceeded to say that he did not desire to dwell upon the historical aspect of the subject, and would come down to the present day. Capital became accumulated, and became a power in individual hands. This was necessary to all countries for the carrying on of all great works. If this centralization of capital were legalized, it became necessary for the workmen to be allowed some legalization for their own protection. It was alleged that these combinations of workmen led to the expenditure of a large amount of money. It was, however, necessary in order that they might have power to protect their own interests to be united. There were no objections to combinations of the working classes in England, and they in Canada could now feel satisfied that they were free to combine to maintain their rights. If anything against their being allowed to do so remained on, the statute books it was time it was removed.

A voice—Sir John A. Macdonald has done so. (Loud cheers.)

Mr. Wilkes had read charges which had been made against the working men, (cries of the *Globe*) he had read charges that these unions were formed for party purposes. If such were the case, the workmen were responsible for it. If such things were perpetrated every working man should withdraw from them. The danger of all these organizations consisted in the abuse of the power which they possessed. Perhaps money had been thrown away which, if put to some other use, might have put money in the workmen's pockets. He did not object to the last reserve which every union held behind it; the strike was the great reserve every workman held behind him, but it should not be resorted to until every other means had failed, as it cost them money. He hoped the time would come when all questions arising between the laboring

classes and capitalists would be settled by arbitration: when the workingman should have his Board of Arbitration, composed of his own equals, and meet the capitalists' Board on a perfect equality, and these together should decide the matter in dispute. (Cheers.) This was the only mode by which such questions could be satisfactorily settled. There was one great thing in connection with Trades Unions—that was honesty of administration of the funds subscribed for the maintenance of such Unions. He hoped the time was coming when these funds could be legally invested in good securities for the benefit of the Unions. No better securities could be found than the securities of the Dominion, and he felt proud in saying so. (Cheers.) No man could deny but that the workmen had a right to organize for their own protection, and that they had as much right to sell their labor as a merchant had to sell his goods, and if they could sell a half day's labor for what others would sell a day for they would be foolish if they did not do so. He thought there should be an organized system of registration of workmen throughout the country in all towns and villages, so that men when out of work would be enabled to ascertain at what places they would be most likely to obtain employment. Another idea which he maintained to be a good one was the appointment of an inspector of buildings. The duties of such inspector would be to inspect all houses erected, before being let, and receive proof of the same being fit for habitation, and having all the necessaries for a family. He believed in employers giving a bonus or share of their profits to those men whom they thought deserving of such. He desired that they should not think, because he was brought into a political contest, unsolicited (cries of "bogus petition"), that he spoke of this; he gave every man who worked for him his Saturday afternoon's holiday, and he would like to see others doing likewise. (Applause.)

Mr. Andrew Scott having been loudly called for ascended the platform, and was received with enthusiastic cheering. He said that at no time was he reluctant to let his voice be heard, especially when the subject on which he spoke was one in which he was interested. He had seen in the *Globe* (groans)—he took up that paper sometimes to glance at it—that a meeting was to be held in St. John's Ward, to discuss the subject of Capital and Labor. He was a Trades Union man, and felt interested in the subject, but felt somewhat surprised that a candidate on the eve of an election should take up the subject. He was always glad to hear any remarks on this great question. The workmen had just passed through an ordeal, in which all classes were more or less interested, and in which all classes of workmen came forward. (Cries of where was Wilkes then?)

Mr. Wilkes—I was in Europe.

Mr. Scott continued—If they had heard from Mr. Wilkes then what they have heard that night, then they might have been benefited by the same. There were some allusions made at the introduction of Mr. Wilkes' address to the electors which was almost a rehearsal of what had appeared in the columns of the *Globe*. Since he had come to this country he had taken a particular interest in these columns, and he had seen, as they all saw, that the proprietor of that journal had taken good care to keep clear of all questions affecting capital and labor in this country. He had crossed the Atlantic to the old country on the subject, but directly it had been agitated in this country down he goes on the working men. Mr. Wilkes had said he was not there in connection with political matters. If such was the case then his visit was of no interest to the workmen of the city, for all of them had their hearts set on politics at the present time, because the subject affected them. (Hear, hear.) They had arrived at the time when workmen felt they should have an interest in politics. They had two candidates now in the field soliciting their support, and it ought to be a felt duty to endeavor to choose the better

of the two, and only by their united efforts could they expect to elect their candidates. It was the duty of the workmen to send those to Parliament upon whom they can rely. He had no reason to believe that they could not put confidence in the gentleman who had addressed them, but he regretted that he was unfortunately allied to a party of politicians who had never hitherto shown an interest in Trades Unions. There were a few good men in their ranks, but it seemed a pity they should have been deluded into such ranks. It seemed that the "Grit" faction were a multitude of misguided politicians, who were led and ruled by a tyrannical leader. (Cheers.) Their ideas seemed to be gathered from the gossip and slander of their leader's paper. He called upon workmen to pledge themselves to no such party, but keep themselves free from all such. (Cheers.) The question which came before them was, which of these parties they could depend on. The future was dark, but the past was clear before them. If they took the past they had every reason to believe that the present administration was favorable to them. (Enthusiastic cheering.) It had a record of five years, which remained unproved. They had been treated to a long lecture by Mr. Wilkes, but he did not think they felt much interested in the history of England one hundred years ago. They had enough to attend to at home at the present time. If the employers of this country had imitated those of the old country, there would have been a better feeling existing between them at the present time. (Cheers.) They had heard some reasonable remarks from Mr. Wilkes, and at some future time they would be pleased to consider them. He could not allow the meeting to pass by without giving some expressions to their views. He had framed a resolution which, he thought would affect the interest of the working classes. He then read the following resolution:—

"Inasmuch as this meeting views with deep interest the progress of the present election contest, and considers it to be a bounden duty devolving upon workmen to secure the triumphant return of those candidates who meet with opposition from the *Globe*, be it resolved, that the mechanics of St. John's Ward pledge themselves to support the election of Mr. Shanly, (loud cheers), the candidate of Union and Progress, as their representative in the Dominion Parliament, and to use every effort to prevent the return of Mr. Wilkes, or any other candidate who comes out under the wing of George Brown, the universally acknowledged obstructionist, and the well known avowed enemy of the workmen of Canada." (Cheers.) He concluded his remarks by moving the above resolution amid loud and prolonged cheering.

Mr. J. S. Williams, having been loudly called for, ascended the platform amid immense enthusiasm. He said that as he felt a great interest in the election in St. John's Ward, he had great pleasure in coming forward to second the resolution proposed. As a mechanic, he was pleased at seeing a placard on the fences announcing the meeting, and with his fellows had come there to hear what Mr. Wilkes had to say. Although that gentleman had made an elaborate speech, he had failed to touch upon the subjects in which they were at that time most interested. (Hear, hear.)

A cry of fire outside the building at this moment caused considerable commotion, and Mr. Williams had to cease speaking for a short time.

Mr. Williams having waited till order was restored, continued—Mr. Wilkes had informed them that over a century ago repressive measures were introduced against Trades Unions in England, and that they only existed for a short time, and that measures had afterwards been introduced for their protection. They thought this here in Canada, but when they endeavored to better their condition they found that their employers, under the leadership of George Brown, (groans) tried to crush them under. A certain Q. C. had been in-

structed to search up some old statutes, which they thought buried years ago. He allude to the vain endeavours made by the *Globe* to show that its proprietor had reason for arresting the printers and throwing them into jail, and the slander it had endeavored to cast on the workmen of the city by stating that it was the intention of some of them to create a disturbance. When all was black before them, how was it that they sent down to Ottawa for a detective to arrest them as criminals. On the same night that they were arrested they found that Sir John A. Macdonald gave notice of his intention to amend the act relating to the legalization of Trades Unions. (Cheers.) Sir John A. Macdonald and his party had shown themselves to be the friends of the workmen, and until he (J. S. Williams) had reason to think otherwise, he should always believe them to be so. He concluded his remarks by calling on the working classes generally to support those who had supported them when they required their aid. (Cheers.)

The resolution was then put and carried unanimously, amid loud and enthusiastic cheering, not a single "Grit" raising his hand in opposition to the same.

Mr. E. K. Dodds was then loudly called for, and came forward and addressed the meeting. He reviewed the political platform on which Mr. Wilkes offers himself for election, and completely exposed the fallacy of it. In a most eloquent and effective speech, he perfectly quashed all the arguments advanced by Mr. Wilkes, and at the close of his remarks the enthusiasm of the meeting was intense.

Dr. Howson then attempted to speak, but the meeting refused to hear him. After several appeals from the chairman, he was allowed to speak. He commenced to speak in abuse of Mr. Walter Shanly, but as his remarks had no reference whatever to either of the candidates for the division, the meeting would not longer listen to him.

On looking round for Mr. Wilkes, it was found that he, with three or four of the Jaffray-Adamson clique, had made themselves scarce, the atmosphere evidently having become too warm for them.

After giving three cheers for the Queen, three for Mr. Shanly, three for Sir John A. Macdonald, and three for the chairman, the meeting broke up, having proved anything but satisfactory to those who had been the instigators of the same.

A SECOND LOLA MONTEZ.

A sharp young American woman, a Mrs. Fanny Jordan, whose maiden name was Chumley, has been playing a pretty and profitable game with the King of Bavaria. His Majesty rarely appears in the capital, but leads an isolated life at his villa of Hohenschwangau, where his chief enjoyment is that of music. The lively adventuress went to that place with the sweet and pretty name, and took lodgings at the Golden Bear Hotel, determined upon the conquest of the King. Walking out with her *jeune de chambre*, when she saw royalty approaching she fell to drawing the beautiful landscape with all her might. The King, who is proud of the scenery, approached the fair artist and opened an affable conversation. Then he invited the engaging Fanny to visit his country seat; and gave her a white mare, a diamond bracelet, his portrait framed in solid gold set with emeralds, and other gifts of great value. Then he lent her money in quite large sums; and then his uncle Leopold, hearing of the matter, employed two Munich detectives to hunt up the antecedents of the enchantress. Learning his determination she fled, leaving behind her a large trunk containing 100 letters from different lovers. For the last three years the lady has been seeking, and occasionally finding, her fortune in different European capitals. Her last affair, before the Bavarian speculation, was in Berlin, where she did so bedevil an unfortunate Colonel, that he resorted to forgery to gratify her incessant demand for money, and so was ignominiously cashiered. The Bavarian detectives having found her in a retired village, allowed her to make choice between leaving the country or going to prison. So she continued her flight into Switzerland, with \$10,000 in money and valuables, the net proceeds of her Hohenschwangau speculation.