

one place, they could probably have found it in another; but it would not have been so easy for the employers to again set themselves up in business and secure control of capital. In time of trouble, labor and capital may render unusual service to each other.

In the third place, it is evident that there had been no such animosities in this establishment as often exist between workmen and their employers. These men can never have looked on their employers as selfish, greedy and unprincipled tyrants, "ready to screw the life out of them," and reckless of their interests and feelings. In like manner, these employers can never have looked on their men as enemies, or as banded conspirators who had no regard for the rights of capital, but determined to secure the largest amount of pay for the smallest amount of work, as nearly worthless as possible. There must have been mutual respect between both parties, before the action occurred of which we are speaking. There must have been a mutual consideration of each other's interest. There must have been a mutual understanding of each other's duties. The thing which these workmen did was assuredly the natural growth from many other things which had gone before. It does not indicate such a relation as exists between slaves and tyrants.

We might make many more reflections on this interesting incident, but we rather think we will stop with the few broad lessons we have drawn for the consideration of all concerned. — *Scottish American Journal.*

Communications.

TORONTO.

CONVICT LABOR.

(To the Editor of the Ontario Workman.)

In New York the Prison Commission put under oath John J. Bradshaw, shoemaker, who stated that he was assistant keeper in King's County Penitentiary, and had held converse with prisoners there, and found that nearly all claimed to have been inmates of the Randall's House of Refuge, and had been there taught criminality. They complained of not being treated right in the House of Refuge, alleging that that they were punished on the complaint of contractors' employees, and that older boys who had been thieves, taught the younger ones thieving, and created a sentiment in favor of crime.

Thomas P. Crowne, shoemaker and instructor in the House of Refuge, had some experience in outside labor. A man could last from fifty-five to sixty pairs of shoes per day. In the House a boy was required to last forty pairs per day, and if he fell short, he was punished. They were punished by the superintendent and keepers. Had seen a keeper strike a boy on the complaint of an instructor, so hard that it produced bleeding of the nose. Had seen boys, while their nose was bleeding, sent to the hydrant to wash, and if their work was not made up they were punished again. Had often seen red stripes on the boys' backs, and a common saying was, "You will get the stars and stripes." Had also seen instructors, when a keeper was around, and they dare not strike, to tread on the boys' toes, so as to make them "squirm all around."

George W. Coffin was employed as book keeper by the shoe contractor in the House of Refuge. After testifying as to price paid for labor and work done, he said, as far as he could see, and he had fifteen or twenty under his charge, there seemed to be no attention paid to their reformation. Had known boys sentenced for some trivial offence, who became in a short time as thoroughly hardened as any in the institution.

Valentine Feldman worked as a free laborer in the House of Refuge. Had "often and often" seen boys abused by contractors' employees. They did not call it abusing a boy to give him a kick or a blow on the head. Had seen boys punished until the blood ran down into their boots. There were two ways of punishing reported boys. In a small office connected with the shop there was a box; the boy's pants were taken off, the boy laid across the box, and whipped with a cane, so that the welts could be counted by the blood. The other way was to take the boy to the stairs, take down his pants and whip him in the same manner. Knew a boy to be punished so that he died in about four days. "The assistant superintendent, Mr. Halleck, carried him down to the office by his collar, and

there punished him for about fifteen minutes with his cane, so that the blood ran down the boy's back. Then the assistant superintendent brought him back and struck him on the side of the head, telling him if he did not do his work right he would give him more yet. Then the boy cried out, 'For God's sake, don't! I am not able to do it!' So he took him to the office again and caned him. The boy could not speak a word, yet he was caned a third time. After this caning the boy could not come upstairs, and they took him to the hospital, where he died in about four days. After his death a correspondent wrote to the New York Tribune, stating the facts and asking for an investigation, which took place. The punishment of Mr. Halleck was his deposition from his office as assistant superintendent, and installation as teacher of the school. The eye-witnesses were not examined, but the whole matter was settled in the office of the institution."

John Riley, Benj. F. Dymock, and Thomas Barber were examined to rebut the above evidence, on the same principle as the advocate who introduced six witnesses to prove that they did not see the prisoner steal. Israel Jones, the superintendent, admitted two punishments of the boy Frank Stevens, one on the 15th of July, and the other on the 18th.

On examination of the punishment book two punishments were recorded for the week ending the 15th of July, and no entry for the 18th. He was admitted to the hospital on the 26th, and died on August 2nd. I am tired of these sickening details, and here close my evidence of the demoralization of the prisoners, and cruelty to the same, by the inhuman contract system of prison labor.

It is refreshing to turn from these horrible accounts, and recite the evidence of Z. R. Brockway, superintendent of the Detroit House of Correction:—

"The pecuniary advantages of our system of prison labor are manifest in the increased income of the institution, the profits of the labor accruing to it instead of to contractors. The effect of the discipline is not so marked, but can readily be inferred from what will be immediately stated as to the superior advantages of ours over the contract system in a reformatory point of view. It facilitates the introduction of reformatory agencies as occasion may require; obviating the necessity for routine in this department, which the contract system renders imperative. It divests the establishment of a mercenary spirit, and sheds over all the inmates a kindly, curative air, putting labor where (in the prisoner's mind) it ought to be, viz., as the means to an end beneficial to himself. It enables us to organize a department, or a whole prison upon the co-operative idea, granting to good prisoners some participation in the profits derived in the industries of the establishment."

I earnestly hope that these items will be duly considered, and also treasured up for the time when our deputies shall come before the people for re-election to the post of honor as law-makers and executors of the law.

In that day let every honest man obtain a pledge from the candidates to Parliament to put down, as speedily as possible, the cruel system of contract labor.

Yours, truly,

J. W. LEVESLEY.

Toronto, April 28, 1873.

OSHAWA.

(To the Editor of the Ontario Workman.)

SIR, — Having been misled by statements regarding Canada, both as to the rate of wages and the cost of living, and as I am about to return the Old Country, I beg to request the favor to insert this letter, in order to let the workmen of Canada know the means employed in order to get workmen from the Old Country to come to Canada.

Having worked in Glasgow for 9 years consecutively in the one shop up till last year, and having been informed that carpenters were wanted to go to Canada, by a gentleman who was staying at Drummonds Hotel, in that city, I waited upon him in order to see what inducements there would be for a married man with a large family to emigrate to Canada. He informed me that carpenters received from eight to nine shillings sterling per day, in the work with which he was connected, viz., the Joseph Hall Works, Oshawa.

Having been informed by some of the workmen in the shop, that a number of the workmen in the above works were invariably discharged every fall, I went again to the party and told him what I had heard. He assured me of twelve months work. Believing his statements to be true, I came to Canada to find that I had been deceived, as I could only get \$1.50 or 6 shillings sterling per day, and I had only worked three months when I was discharged. From

the manner of speaking and use by the party referred to above, of the pronoun "we," I was under the impression that I was certain of at least twelve months work, or I would not have risked coming, as I had to provide for my family while absent from them.

I may mention that on my arrival here, I found out that the individual above mentioned was foreman of the general department in the Joseph Hall Works.

Yours respectfully,

WILLIAM RAMSAY.

(To the Editor of the Ontario Workman.)

SIR, — Allow me to make a correction in my last letter. I stated that the three carpenters who had been led to believe that they could obtain \$2.50 per day in Oshawa, were working for \$1.50, but they were only paid with \$1.37½ per day, at the Joseph Hall Works. And what makes the matter worse, they were told in London, Eng., that they would get \$2.50 in Canada, and left £1 17s. 6d. sterling, and nine hours a day to come here and work ten hours and get less money for their work. However, they are going to acquaint the society in London of the way they have been treated here.

To show the necessity that exists for the Ballot, one of the employees in the Cabinet Factory, who voted against Mr. Gibbs at the last election, has reason to regret the want of it, as the sons of Mr. Gibbs are endeavoring to get a man to supplant him in his situation. But Mr. Gibbs would say his sons "are of age and he is not responsible for their actions."

Quite a number of workmen are leaving the Joseph Hall Works, wages being under the average elsewhere; but doubtless there will be enough dupes from the Old Country to fill their places.

I should like much to know who is to blame for the lying statements of the Canadian agents in the Old Country; the intention evidently is, to get a surplus of labor, and then we will get the nine hours; the Government agents are not playing into the bosses hands, oh, no!

I believe that the M. P's. have increased their own pay to \$1,000 from \$600, but in order that the country may not suffer, I hear they are cutting the allowance of post masters, I would like to see the Oshawa M. P's. raise their employees' pay, but I am afraid that will not be till the millennium if ever then.

"Work! work! work!"

In poverty, rags and dirt."

Yours, &c.,

HEATHER JOCK.

THE AMALGAMATED ENGINEERS' SOCIETY.

In our last issue, we referred to a case that had occurred in connection with the Amalgamated Society of Engineers. Mr. Allan, Secretary of the Society, has addressed to the Editor of the *Dee Hire*, London, the following explanations, which we reproduce, as it satisfactorily accounts for an action which, without the explanations, looked very suspicious:—

Mr. Headlam's question, addressed last Thursday night to the Attorney-General, relative to a presumed case of hardship suffered by a member of the Society of Amalgamated Engineers, in Newcastle, and which has been made the subject of general comment in the press, requires a few words of explanation, which, with your permission, I take the liberty to supply, and trust you will insert the same in your next issue.

The facts are these: David Young, some months ago, made a claim on the Society for superannuation benefit, and produced a medical certificate in support of his claim. The circumstances of the case, however, were of such a nature as to cause the council of the society to have them examined by Dr. Gregson, one of the most eminent professional gentlemen in Newcastle, who refused to supply a certificate; whereupon the council declined to grant the benefit claimed.

On this refusal, Mr. Young commenced proceedings against me, as Secretary of the Society, in the Newcastle County Court. I appeared in December last, when the plaintiff was non-suited on the ground that he had not availed himself of the mode of procedure prescribed by the rules of the society. Notwithstanding this, he again instituted proceedings a few weeks since; and on appearing in Court, in consequence of certain expressions made use of on the first occasion, I was led to believe that the judge considered himself competent to deal with the case. The plea put in of non-registration was not against the plaintiff's claim but against the Judge, seeing that our rules make provision for the settlement of all disputes by arbitration, when their conditions are fully complied with.

Notwithstanding what has been stated in

the press, had we been registered—which we intend to be—the decision must have been the same according to the Trades Union Act of 1871, which strictly precludes the interference of magistrates and judges; in fact, we objected to be placed in a worse position than we should have been had the society been registered. If Mr. Young's claim was valid before the decision of the judge, it is equally valid now; but what ever it amounts to, it must be preferred in the manner prescribed by our rules. We are prepared to do justice impartially to all our members, but in the interest of all we must resist any and every attempt to force us before tribunals to which we are not amenable. We are now paying nearly £9,000 a year to superannuated members, and we have at all times willingly responded to every valid claim made; but that we may continue to do so, it is necessary that we should conduct the affairs of our society in accordance with the rules made and accepted by the body of our members, from which the Executive Council is determined not to deviate.

WM. ALLAN,
General Secretary Amalgamated
Society of Engineers.

COMBINATIONS OF WORKMEN.

A meeting of the trades unionists and workmen generally of the north-eastern district of London was held on Tuesday evening, 18th ult., in the Shoreditch Town Hall, for the purpose of protesting against the special penal legislation affecting trades unionists. Mr. Daniel Guile, Secretary of the Ironfounders' Association, occupied the chair.

The Chairman, in opening the proceedings, said the object of the meeting was to advocate the total repeal of the Criminal Law Amendment Act passed a few sessions ago, to protest against the inflictions of imprisonment of working men for a breach of civil contract, and to obtain an amendment of the law of conspiracy, which had recently been so unjustly brought to bear against the unfortunate gas stokers. He proceeded at some length to point out the injustice and inequality of the law as it now stood, and its capability of being turned into a monstrous oppression by an ignorant magistrate or an unjust judge. As an example of the gross inequality of the law as contained in the Masters and Servants' Act, he instanced a case where a young woman who was working under a three months' contract for a manufacturer, was charged before a magistrate for leaving her work before the time of her contract had expired. For this offence she was sentenced to three months' imprisonment with hard labor. The same manufacturer was summoned by one of his workpeople for discharging him before his contract time had expired; but the only punishment the magistrate had the power to inflict upon the employer was to order him to pay the wages due to the worker up to the end of the time for which the contract had to run. The law, therefore, punished a breach of contract on the part of the worker with imprisonment, but the employer could only be punished by a small fine. As working men they were determined this gross injustice should be put an end to.

Mr. George Howell moved the first resolution:—

That this meeting indignantly protests against the Criminal Law Amendment Act as partial and unjust; against the criminal clauses of the Masters and Servants' Act, as contrary to the equity of contract; and against the elastic and undefined common law doctrine of conspiracy; and this meeting calls upon the Legislature to at once amend these laws, with a view to bringing them into harmony with the spirit of the age, and of placing employers and employed upon the same footing of perfect equality before the law.

He claimed no special immunity for members of trades unions when they violated any law; but at the same time he protested against their being subjected to special laws that could not be enforced against other classes of the community. He detailed the action that was being taken by the Trades Congress Parliamentary Committee to obtain an amendment of these objectionable laws, and stated that Messrs. S. Morley, Mundella, and Vernon Harcourt had undertaken to bring the whole question before the House of Commons on the first opportunity.

Mr. George Potter seconded the resolution in a speech well received. He defended the action of trades unions, and contended that the legislation of the last few years in relation to trades unions had been reactionary, and virtually re-enacted some of the worst portions of the old combination laws.

Mr. Lungridge supported the resolution, strongly denouncing the late speech of Mr. Roebuck at Sheffield. The resolution was unanimously adopted.

Mr. Mackenzie, barrister-at-law, moved the following resolution:—

That in view of the approaching general election, this meeting calls upon workmen in every constituency to organize themselves to secure the return to Parliament of men pledged to the repeal of these laws; and especially to promote the return of labor candidates.

Mr. Ryan seconded the resolution, which was carried unanimously.

A vote of thanks to the chairman, moved by Mr. Broadhurst, closed the proceedings.

THE NINE HOUR MOVEMENT.

A crowded meeting of the members of the United Wheelwrights, Saddlers, and Painters' Nine Hours League has been held in the large hall of the City Terminus Hotel, London, England. Nine hundred men were present, and the proceedings throughout were most enthusiastic. The hours of labor in these trades have hitherto been fifty-eight per week. The chair was taken by Mr. Gaywood, and the proceedings commenced by Mr. Rider, the hon. secretary, reading a list of twenty leading firms which had granted the nine hours, and correspondence which had been received from secretaries of similar trade associations at Birmingham, Blackburn, Rochdale, Bury, Hanley, Tunstall, and other places. The writers all expressed earnest wishes for the success of the movement, and promised all the assistance in their power to that end, assuring the league that none of the men in the provinces would come up to London to take the places of the men there employed, inasmuch as trade was very brisk and they were already enjoying the nine hour movement and advance of wages. The reading of the correspondence frequently elicited hearty cheers. The chairman briefly reviewed the circumstances under which the employers had been memorialised to grant the nine hours movement. They had three months to consider the matter. The league had endeavored to obviate any ill-feeling between employers and employed in promoting the success of the movement. (Cheers.) Workmen were justified in endeavoring to improve their moral and social condition, but at the same time they must be careful, whilst endeavoring to benefit themselves, not to injure others. (Hear, hear.) Any success obtained under such circumstances could not be lasting. (Hear, hear.) He believed that to be the feeling of every member of the executive council and of the league. (Cheers.) It had been asserted that the league had been agitating for a strike. He denied it. They detested strikes, and had done everything to avoid one, but when a reasonable request was made to the employers and treated with contempt, if a strike ensued it was clearly provoked by the employers. (Hear, and cheers.) Mr. Rider said that the league numbered upwards of 900 members, and the movement had their unanimous support. He urged that the shorter hours of labor were required for mental improvement and the culture of social and domestic enjoyment. At present all their time was spent in labor, going to and from their workshops, and sleep. The advance of wages requested was not sufficient to compensate the workmen for the increased cost of living, &c. One pound now was not more than equal fifteen shillings ten years ago. He contended that a general rule ought to be established throughout the trade for working hour, and for the wages paid, either by the week or by the piece. (Hear, and cheers.) Messrs. Shaw, Bishop, Green, Carstairs, Wright, and Tomkins, also addressed the meeting, and a series of formal resolutions were passed and carried amid acclamation, expressive of regret that, after three months' notice, some of the employers had not conceded the fifty-four hours per week and 10 per cent. advance on piece work; approving the steps taken by the league, and announcing the determination of the men to be firm in their demands by taking such action as the committee might require, in order to obtain the terms memorialised for on the 2nd of December last, expressing hearty thanks to the employers who had acceded to the terms of the memorial, and pledging the hearty assistance of the meeting to the United Wheelwrights, Saddlers, and Painters' Nine Hours' League in any movements which they might make. The proceedings terminated with cordial votes of thanks to the chairman and to the executive council of the league.

Business Cards.

S. McCABE, FASHIONABLE AND Cheap Boot and Shoe Emporium, 55 Queen Street West, sign of "THE BIG BLUE BOOT." 54-55

J. & T. IREDALE, MANUFACTURERS of Tin, Sheet Iron and Copperware, dealers in Baths, Water Coolers, Refrigerators, &c., No 57 Queen Street West, first door West of Bay Street, Toronto, Ont. 54-55

Queen City Grocery & Provision Store.

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