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Minutes of the Fourth Annual Meeting of the Grand Association of Patrons of Industry of the Province of Ontario.

The Fourth Annual Meeting of the Grand Association was held in Temperance Hall, Toronto, on March 11th, 1895.

The meeting was called to order and opened in due form by the Grand President, C. A. Mallory, Esq., at 8.30 p. m.

GRAND PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS.

BRETHREN,—I again welcome you to the annual convention of the Grand Association of the Patrons of Industry for the Province of Ontario. Your presence here, representing, as you do, the several counties of the Province, is proof that Patronism is a living factor, increasing in strength and destined, as its objects indicate, to unite and harmonize the aspirations of the wealth-producing classes of the land in which we live.

The continued depression which began among the industrial classes, and has now reached every line of legitimate business, not only in this, but in other lands, but adds force to the argument that men should unite, regardless of former ties, to alleviate, as far as may fairly be done, the condition of those upon whose industry and care the prosperity of our country depends. We fully recognize and appreciate the magnitude of the work which we have undertaken. We realize the difficulties in the way of accomplishing our ends. We expect and have prepared for the reproaches and misrepresentations of designing men, whose interests are best served by keeping the masses in two divided armies apart. We are rather pleased than otherwise at the proof of the strength and justice of our claims, as evidenced by the continual effort to engender jealousy and discord in our ranks rather than reply to our arguments or question the justice of our demands.

PATRONISM A LIVING FACTOR.

Patronism is now acknowledged to be a living factor in Canadian politics. The experimental stage has been passed. The presence of a body of Patron representatives in the Legislature of Ontario, organized as a body, distinct and separate from existing political parties, and having made specific demands which are recognized by all as reasonable, is a revelation to partizans, and is conclusive proof that it is possible for men to forget their differences in the past and unite for the common good. It was, no doubt, a matter of surprise to many that our annual convention was postponed from the usual time of meeting, and a word of explanation is due in regard to such action on the part of your Grand Board. Many letters from prominent Patrons throughout the Province had been received, advising the postponement of the Grand Association, in case it appeared that the elections were near. In view of this I was instructed by the Grand Board at its January meeting to postpone the calling of the Grand Association unless a session of the House of Commons was called previous to the time at which notice of postponement could be given to the several delegates. The one special reason for this action was that your Grand Board could not think it wise that a large number of our best men from the several constituencies should be shut up in the city of Toronto for a week or longer, and thus allow party wirepullers to make a dead set upon the electorate in their absence. Since that time other circumstances have arisen which have led to the calling of the Grand Association at the present time. One or more of the Ministers of the Crown have in their speeches indicated that no election would occur during the winter.