

In The World Of Labor

A Budget of News For Those Interested in Labor

By G. A. M.

Gleaned From the Exchanges and Other Sources

The Workmen's Compensation Act

The workers of the Province are vitally interested in the passage of a fair and equitable compensation act modelled on the lines as recommended by the Government's own Commissioner, Sir William Meredith, and this subject is now forming a very interesting topic both in organized and unorganized labor circles, for the same law will apply to all classes of workers, union or otherwise.

While the proposed act does not concede all that the workers believe they are justly entitled to, it will be accepted by them as an evidence of good faith on the part of the Government if it is passed in the form as recommended by the commissioner. If the act is mutilated and shorn of its protective features at the behest of the manufacturing interests who have openly, it is alleged, voiced their opposition to the measure, it will not be acceptable to the workers of the province.

For years the need of an equitable measure has been keenly felt, and the said need has been acknowledged by politicians and employers alike. There is no question that the present existing act is worse than useless and must be superseded by a better one. In selecting Sir William Meredith to investigate the entire question and bring in recommendations upon which to model a fair and equitable scheme the Government made no mistake.

Sir William Meredith is a man in whom the people of Ontario have the greatest confidence. As Chief Justice of Ontario, he has earned the reputation of being one of the fairest and most impartial individuals that have ever sat upon the bench, and there will be a general disposition on the part of the laboring classes to believe that in making the recommendations to the Government that appear in his final report, he has been actuated by honesty of purpose and a desire to do his duty to the various interests that will be affected by the recommendations he has seen fit to submit.

In arriving at a conclusion the Commissioner has made a most exhaustive research; he has taken evidence in the industrial centres of the Dominion and heard the views expressed by workers and manufacturers alike. He has visited the United States and different countries in Europe, and become conversant with the legislation that the various governments have enacted dealing with the question at issue, and the results that have accrued therefrom. He has taken some three years in this investigation, and he is in a better position to make recommendations to the Government than are the manufacturers who are directly interested in the matter, inasmuch as it may interfere with a few dollars per year out of their already large and constantly growing profits or dividends.

Sir William Meredith is neither the representative of the workers or the manufacturers; he is the agent of the Government appointed to secure information and make recommendations as a natural result of the know-

ledge that he has gained by careful personal investigation and research. The recommendations that he has submitted, coming as they do from such a source, must necessarily carry great weight with Sir James Whitney and his Cabinet. To refuse to give them the consideration that their importance warrants would stamp the Government in the eyes of the workmen, as vacillating and insincere, and inasmuch as Sir James has given his word that he proposes to be guided by the experience and recommendations of the Commissioner and will not be influenced by the efforts of the manufacturers to mutilate the proposed act, organized labor, and the workers of the province confidently look to him and his advisers to see that the pledges given will now be redeemed.

The workers of Ontario are only desirous of a fair and equitable measure that shall be just to employer and employe alike, and in the act as proposed by the government's own commissioner, they believe they will receive no more than what they have a right to expect.

Are Making Headway

John P. Merrigan, of Montreal, third vice-president of the International Brotherhood of Boilermakers, Iron Shipbuilders and Helpers of America who has been in Toronto during the past few days, speaks encouragingly of the progress of the organization in Canada at the present time. Recently a new local was planted in Hamilton, Ont., which bids fair to blossom into a lusty youngster. The recent agreement secured in the Quebec section of the Canadian Northern was a most satisfactory one, both boiler-makers and helpers securing an increase of wages of three cents per hour. It was also the first agreement that the corporation has ever signed with the Brotherhood, and in addition to the higher rate of wages, working conditions were materially improved. The bogey of national unionism no longer bothers the international movement in the Dominion, it has clearly petered out. It is probably stronger in Toronto than anywhere else. A number of national charters have been retracted, and their members have come over to the international fold. The organization was never in better shape than now. During the past year the membership had increased 1,214, and the need of organization was being more fully recognized than ever before. The union had long since passed the experimental stage.

The local organization in this city while not overly strong, is in good shape and is capably managed by intelligent and pains-taking officers.

According to a report just issued by the United States Department of Labor, the cost of living in the west has increased 50 per cent. in the past ten years, while the wages of skilled workmen have advanced only 26 per cent. So far as the wages of the unskilled and unorganized workers are concerned there has been but little change.

Announcement Of Prize Winners

In the Big "Foxy Grandpa" Contest Will Be Published in this Paper on Friday next, December 12th.

We are sorry that the decisions could not be made sooner, but the fact that the number of replies received was so large and they were all of such high quality, has rendered the work of judging more difficult than we expected.

However, a full announcement of the prizes will be made on that date and also of the time and place of presentation of these prizes.

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What Will the Churches Do?

There never was a time in the history of the Province of Ontario when the church has had such a splendid opportunity to demonstrate its interest in the cause of the working masses as at the present moment.

The question of an equitable workmen's compensation for injuries act is, above all, a moral and, if you will, a religious question—a question that is of immense import to the wage-earning population of the Province, and moreover, one that the church cannot afford to sidetrack or ignore. It is an act designed to protect the home and the family when the breadwinner has been taken by death while in the discharge of his duty or incapacitated by accident from earning a livelihood for those dependent upon him.

It means provision for the widow in her hour of need and in her battle to maintain her home and protect her little ones from the grim spectre of want and destitution.

If this is not a religious question that affects the moral and material welfare of the working class whom the church teaches that "Jesus died to save," then there has never been a real religious question since the creation of the universe.

How society shuddered in horror at the recent catastrophe on the Great Lakes, with its toll of less than three hundred lives, and hastened to make provision for those who had been bereaved of husband and father.

What of that infinitely vaster army, that infinitely greater tragedy, the hundreds sacrificed yearly upon the altar of industry in this great province for which no provision has been made, and whose needs are just as real and worthy of relief?

Will the church at the present moment take advantage of the splendid opportunity that presents itself and raise its voice in defence of the widow and the fatherless and for the protection and sanctity of the home?

Will the thousand pulpits throughout Ontario speak out and demand justice for the workers of the land? If they do, there can be no question as to the ultimate result, if they fail, then perforce the workers must fight the battle alone, as they have so often done before.

Never before was the church so on trial, in the eyes of the laboring classes, as at the present moment. What is the verdict to be? Will it speak out and take a stand in the battle for the home or remain silent and allow the golden opportunity to go by?

London To Have Labor Temple

At last it seems as though London Ont., is to have a real Labor Temple, and after years of patient waiting the initial steps have been taken to acquire a home where the various organizations may meet and feel it is their own. It is hoped that enough progress will be made to have the building open for occupancy by next spring.

The plans provide for a two-story building, with a basement. In the basement, plans provide for a banquet hall 29 x 39 and a kitchen 29 x 10, cloak rooms and all other conveniences. On the ground floor there will be an assembly hall 32 x 36, this will have a stage. On the first floor the meeting rooms, the plans call for two. The proposed building will cost about six thousand dollars and will be especially built to allow of additions to be made that will harmonize with and add to the symmetry of the edifice. Work has also been received that the site for the proposed building has been acquired. It is situated in a most central locality.

At the present time there is a serious dearth of suitable meeting halls in the Forest City for labor and fraternal organizations, and the place once completed, it would mean that additions would have to be constantly made; this would bring in added revenue, and within a very short period of time an imposing edifice will have been erected that will stand as a monument to the local labor movement.

The price of shares has been placed at ten dollars each, and there is no reason why every local union in the Forest City should not be enlisted in the work and aid in carrying it on to successful completion.

What are the Brantford Labor Unions doing towards securing a new Labor Temple in this city? There was a proposition mooted at one time to secure the old post office, but it is quite a while now since anything has been heard of this matter. It seems to be high time for organized labor to wake up in this city in this regard, and provide themselves with a hall that will not only be useful to themselves, but an ornament to the city.

Are They Opposed?

According to the "Industrial Banner," from which we quote the following, "one thing the workers of Ontario may now rest assured, and that is that if the Canadian Manufacturers' Association can have its way the proposed new workmen's compensation for injuries act will not be modelled on the lines recommended by Sir William Meredith, the Government's special commissioner.

This fact does not redound to either the honor or credit of the employers' organization, for it was expected, and the impression had been created, that on this occasion at least the manufacturers would be actuated by a broader spirit and would honestly unite to secure the passage of an act that would provide ample protection to the workers who might be killed or maimed in their factories while engaged in advancing the interests of their employer.

In fact, up to the time that Sir William Meredith submitted his preliminary report and recommendations last year it was believed that both the representatives of the manufacturer and the worker had agreed upon the provisions of the proposed bill to be introduced into the House.

The person whom the manufacturers association had secured to present their case before the commissioner, practically acknowledged that the stand taken by the Labor representatives was the proper one. They agreed that any measure to be of any practical value must entirely eliminate the possibility of law suits, that in the past have largely eaten up any benefits that may have accrued to the injured through the operation of the present, obsolete compensation act.

It was, therefore, a matter for both surprise and regret that after Sir William had presented his first draft of recommendations that the employers should change ground and use every effort in their power to occasion delay and though the evident intent of the commission to secure the passage of an equitable measure that would be fair and acceptable to both employer and employe alike.

Mr. F. W. Wegenast, the representative of the manufacturers association, who has had charge of their side of the case, now intimates most unmistakably that he proposes to fight the proposition, and is opposed to the most important provisions contained in the commissioner's report, as noted in the following, which has appeared in all the large local daily papers.

According to Mr. Wegenast, there has been a great deal of misapprehension about the proposed law. Farmers, he said, are included, and domestic servants, retail merchants, barbers, doctors, preachers, lawyers, hotelkeepers, and the like. He points out that these industries are not included in the insurance system, and therefore come under the common law liability. At the same time, Sir William Meredith proposes to take away from these employers their three common law defences—namely contributory negligence, common employment, and assumed risk. When sued for damages the employer will not be able to plead any of these defences, and in the event of a judgment will have to pay the damage directly himself.

The above arguments of Mr. Wegenast are too shallow to deceive anyone who is at all conversant with the real facts of the case. It is not intended that farmers, doctors, etc., shall come under the provisions of the legislation proposed, and the agent of the manufacturers is well aware of that fact, and is arguing for effect from a mistaken premise to it possible, work up opposition to the proposed new measure.

Labor will insist upon an act that will entirely abolish the defence of contributory negligence and assumed risk, if the manufacturers want law suits the workers do not. The cat is now already out of the bag. Mr. Wegenast has apparently spoken without due consideration and given the case of the manufacturers clearly away. What the latter apparently desire is not justice for the workers, but negative law suits to make the proposed new act like the present one—of non-effect.

Our Wants

Every man is as big as his wants, are little. If he can get along without other people, other people cannot get along without him! If he can find ample amusement within his own skull, he will discover entertainment in everything and everywhere!

If one big book, like the Bible, like Shakespeare, is a library for him, he will be able to extract profit from all books. If any tree fashion for him a beautiful picture, he will walk in a prepetual art-gallery. It is not what we lack that makes us unhappy, it is what we think we need. Contentment is the richest possession, and self-reliance is the fundamental power.

This is because the kingdom of God is within us and not outside us, and so our most precious goods and our strongest resources are there. Happy is the man that understands these things, and is not led away by the temptations of exterior.

According to a report of the National Civic Federation, in seventeen department stores in New York City 1,000 women and girls earn less than \$8 per week; 2,063 get less than \$5.

Carpenters Will Unite

The intelligence that the referendum vote submitted to the memberships of the Amalgamated Society and United Brotherhoods of Carpenters and Joiners had been carried in favor of both organizations, will be welcomed by the entire labor movement. It means the building up of one powerful carpenters' organization in the Western Hemisphere, a union of hands, a union of hearts, and a union of high endeavor not only will it strengthen the carpenters as a craft, but it will be an incentive for other dual organizations to follow the example thus set before them.

Now that the carpenters have come together, there is no reason why the International Association of Machinists should not do likewise. In the solidification of labor lies its strength for both offence and defence. It is too late in the day for craft divisions and dissensions. The vote of these two big organizations will be far reaching in its effect. One craft, one union, is a good motto, and its necessity becomes more apparent every day.

Already in our own city, it is understood, that joint meetings of the two organizations have been held, and that eventually one solid front will be presented in the future.

Labor Notes

The North Dakota Educational Association has declared in favor of women's suffrage and teachers' pensions. The Minneapolis horseshoers union has secured the nine-hour day and an increase in wages averaging thirty per cent.

In Alabama and the Carolinas 10 per cent. of all employees in the great cotton mills are children under sixteen years of age.

Through the efforts of the local union of barbers in Niagara Falls, N. Y., the barber shops in that city will hereafter be closed on Sundays.

The International Longshoremen and Transport Workers organized 28 new local unions last year, and it did not lose a single strike it entered upon.

The granite workers had 38 strikes on their hands during the past year, and won every one of them. It is needless to add they are solidly organized.

Sixty-five thousand workers in the factories of St. Petersburg and throughout Northern Russia laid down their tools on Nov. 19th in protest against the trial of the Buchar workers on a charge of illegally quitting

their employment. If the workers are convicted a strike will be called all over the empire.

A board of arbitration has awarded the Detroit Street Railway employes an increase of wages of two cents per hour, bringing the scale up to thirty-two cents per hour.

The threat of a general strike by the French miners has brought the government to representatives of an eight-hour day would be taken up by the Chamber of Deputies immediately. Consequently only a few men came out, as it was realized that the strike would be premature. There are over 200,000 members of the miners' organization. If action is delayed, however, every mine will be shut down.

John F. Sheenan had the trades unionists solidly behind him in his fight for election as a Massachusetts State Senator, and won by a plurality of over 2,000. As is well known, Governor Foss, twice elected as governor, was turned down by the same vote which formerly was responsible for his elevation. It does not pay to run up against organized labor in this little state; the politician who does so is sure to know what it means the morning following election day.

The board of school trustees of South Vancouver recently awarded contracts aggregating over \$100,000 for the erection of additions to three of the school buildings. In the specifications for these buildings was inserted a clause which requires that union conditions, in so far as wages

and hours, existing in the building trades at the time of the contracts, shall prevail through the construction of the additions. This result was attributable to a measure from the fact that the secretary of the local typographical union is a member of the board of having been elected last spring member of the board by the men of South Vancouver.

The October number of the monthly Journal of Agriculture, that the establishment of markets in many towns of the province has not only brought down the price of living, but has at the same time increased the farmers' profits. Angeles alone has seven of these markets in successful operation, and are planned. It is claimed that the farmer saves as high as fifty per cent on the goods he buys by means of the municipal system, which eliminates the middleman.

At the half-yearly meeting of Earlscourt Central Methodist Own Brotherhood, Toronto, the church on evening of Nov. 21st a resolution was passed that all aures pertaining to the work of the Brotherhood should bear the Printing trades union label. The Brotherhood is a live organization, discusses the live questions of the day, and has pronounced in favor of the union because it believes in the principle of a living wage. Good for the Brotherhood. Organizations in Brantford might follow this example.

Additional Labor News on Page 17

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FORTY-FOUR

DR. McMEIN

He Writes Let Monterey—self and Fa

Dr. Andrew A. McMein, well-known Brantford resident in Mexico City, sends a stirring letter, Mrs. A. C. Hamilton, house street, city, has just had a letter with his family in Mexico and he graphically better than ordinary, as what the war meant to British and there.

Dr. McMein writes that the day you recall Oct. 23rd, the rebel city, the first guns six in the morning, was the telephone to true state of affairs, formed that by order the phone could not be used, but the occasional orderly hung there and the bullets in every direction.

To understand our situation, I remember, the city, four or five blocks north of the center, is higher than the center, as our home, matamoros, one block north of the center.

Mr. We are just the mill so guns fire zados were striking a house runs down our patio, so much as the kitchen, so which the firing were unprotected, came into the patio.

However we could not get out of the house, but when a part of the kitchen was a roar of another sharp in the air, I thought our last

issue paper against engines of a health risk, have under the sort of cellar or basement, partially protected servants rooms, but being half under a some little protection, so we grabbed these

THE FIRST GRIND

There Was a Big Six-Day Bicycle Race New York

NEW YORK. The seven teams which might in the twenty day bicycle race at Garden, were still in the eighth hour, a record notwithstanding, occurred during the race.

Three men, Walter Applehouse of West of New York were track in a bad spill Avenue turn. Carny unconscious, and thought that he broken, but it deviated only a strain. While still suffering insisted upon return was back on his hour. The other two slightly injured and wheels.

The score board, ed that 185 miles covered, equalling by Walthour and Applehouse were leading.

Shortly before 9:20 two bad spills on turn. In the first down in a heap, and tried from the track was attended by a ter a rest resumed sprint. As he did so and there was hurt one was badly hurt.

British Mail. The postal authorities report a record forward from this of the United Kingdom of letters and parcels despatched by Empire here to relatives in Old Country.

Broke Her Ankle. Mrs. Menzies, wife of Mr. Walter Menzies, of St. John's, was unfortunately enough, broke her ankle, on Saturday. She was in hospital on Sunday for some time up for some time to her.