

OUR BOARDING HOUSE

Reflections on Current Events by the Boarders.

"The De Boucherville Government can't afford to spend \$22,000 on night schools," said Phil, "because the province is bankrupt; but it can afford to maintain at an annual cost of nearly \$80,000 a legislative Upper House which is of about as much use and a great deal less ornamental than the fifth wheel to a coach. If we are compelled to pay that sum to run a museum of antiquities, then I for one insist that this item for night schools shall not only be placed in the estimates, but that the sum be increased. I would go even further than that, and compel every man in the Assembly who voted against Morris's resolution to abolish the Legislative Council to attend these night schools and learn something so that they might make a living at some other calling, and not be under the necessity of making themselves ridiculous as legislators."

"If Kennedy, Villeneuve, Martineau and Hall, all of whom voted against Morris's resolution, were to seek re-election upon the stand they took in this matter," said Brown, "all of them would be defeated by greater majorities than these by which they were elected. The Upper House is bound to go; the people have no use for it, and the province can't afford it. The treasury is empty, and Hall intimated in his speech that it might become necessary to resort to direct taxation. Now, I for one, am much in favor of such a step. I believe that all revenue should be raised by direct taxation. I'll guarantee that if that is done it will do more to secure honest government and purify politics than all your compulsory voting and election laws put together. The biggest galoot in the province will at once understand the responsibilities of the franchise if he is compelled to put his hand in his pocket and shell out the spoudulooks required to run the show. The most indifferent elector will find time on election day to cast his vote, and he won't wait until a cab comes for him either, and no government which did not conduct the affairs of the province in a businesslike and economical way could ever hope to be re-elected to power. Introduce direct taxation and let it take the form of a poll tax which would be placed upon every mother's son in the province, and your Upper House will die a natural death inside of twelve months, for not even Pat Kennedy would dare to vote away money so obtained at the bidding of anybody. He and the rest would be made to understand in short order that they were not elected to support De Boucherville so far as to forget the interests of those who sent them there. And they will be made to understand, anyhow, that if we are too poor to pay \$22,000 for night schools that we ain't rich enough to pay \$80,000 for a De Boucherville, whether we have direct taxation or not. The old premier may be a darned fine fellow, for all I know, and an able man, but if, in order to have him, we are compelled to maintain all his colleagues in the Council, it would be better for us to look around for a man with less encumbrances. I suppose that there are other men in this province equally as honest as he is, and perhaps just a little more progressive, for, between you and me and the member for Montreal Centre, I have my own opinion of a man who wants to save money by the closing of schools. I believe that such men should have been born two hundred years ago, when their ideas would have been more in keeping with the times."

"I suppose the working classes, for whose benefit these night schools were established," said Phil, "will have something to say in this matter before it is finally settled. Organized labor, which for years agitated for these schools and finally succeeded in getting

them, may also have something to say upon this question; at any rate, I do not believe that De Boucherville & Co. are going to have it all their own way. There is something which is more powerful than any government, and that is public opinion, and to it we must appeal. The report of our Factory Inspectors show that there are a large number of people in our factories and workshops who cannot write their names; now, this is the best possible proof you can have of the necessity of these schools. Besides, the experience of the last fifty years has demonstrated that wherever public money has been spent for educational purposes it has proved a most profitable investment. What we want, and what this province must have is not only free night schools, but free day schools with compulsory attendance and text books at cost price."

BILL BLADES.

BORN FOR HEAVEN.

Archbishop Ireland, in a lecture in favor of an eight-hour day for work, said: "The laborer is born for heaven as well as for earth, and it is his inalienable right, from which no power of individual or society may deprive him, to fit himself for his future home, and to acquit himself of the present duties which devolve upon him as the creature of God and the heir to Paradise. Time must be given to religion if we would have him cultivate his moral life and practice the moral virtues that render him a benefit instead of a threatening danger to his fellow-men and the whole social fabric."

HOW THE SINGLE TAX WORKS

A real estate and land speculation firm in Toronto, Ont., holds a tract of vacant land in the suburbs which they rent for market gardens. In conversation with a member of said firm the single tax came up for discussion. "That would never suit us," he said. "Every week these market gardeners come in and pay us a good fat rent. If the tax on the land was too high we could not hold it, and all that would be spoiled."

Some time afterwards the subject was again introduced, when the gentleman was asked if he was aware that the single tax was actually in force to a limited extent in Manitoba, where all improvements on farm and garden property are exempt from taxation, and that the result is that vacant land has to bear a fair share of the burden. "Yes," he answered, with a growl of dissatisfaction, "I should think I was. We have a farm up there, and every quarter get such a thundering big tax bill that we would sell it for almost nothing to any one who wanted to farm it."

Under the single tax the "good fat rent" had been changed into "a thundering big tax bill," and the user of the land could step in on favorable terms.

Grove City is a village about twelve miles from Columbus, Ohio, on the Midland Railroad. For the past two years speculators in land in that village have been making strenuous efforts to induce workingmen of Columbus to buy lots and build homes out there, and as they put it, to "get out of paying rent." They have succeeded fairly well, and have run trains morning and evening for the accommodation of workingmen. A gentleman from there was asked how the boom flourished, and he thought that those mostly interested had done better than they pretended. As an evidence he gave the following account of an investment he had made for his son: "There is a piece of land out there of six acres that a year ago went begging for a buyer at \$700. Nobody seemed to want it. But my son finally bought it and rented it out. The other day he was offered \$1,200 for it. Don't you think that that is doing well enough?"

"Yes," was the reply. Did he take

it? "No, he didn't, because he has it rented for \$150 a year to a good tenant, and that is 10 per cent. on \$1,500." And so the poor renter pays the piper. The workingmen of Columbus leave home early and get home late, and put up with a thousand and one other inconveniences, never seeing their family in daylight for a great portion of the year. By so doing they have increased the value of the speculators' land and the working renter pays for it all.—The Standard.

THE OWNERS OF NEW YORK.

Most of the large estates in this city, such as Trinity Church, Columbia College, Sailors' Snug Harbor, the Astor, Rhinelander and Golet estates, have their own peculiar forms of conveyances and leases. Some estates strictly adhere to the policy of steadily acquiring but never selling any property. It is a very rare occurrence for any of the large estates named to part with a piece of property. It has not been the policy of the large land owners to improve their own land. They merely give leases, generally for twenty-one years, with privileges of renewal at certain stated rates, and in most cases stipulate what kind of a building shall be erected. If the property is situated in a business district, a shrewd land owner will insist that a building shall be put up of sufficient size, style, and durability to make the locality desirable and enhance the value of the land. Nearly all of the old land leases of property in the lower part of the city were made out with a view of preserving uniformity in size and style with regard to the business blocks. A veteran real estate lawyer informed a Times reporter that a far greater proportion of the buildings in this city stood on leased ground than was generally supposed.—New York Times.

POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC.

The Washington, D. C., National Economist, leading organ of the farmers' movement, publishes under the appropriate title of "Traitors" an article of which this is a leading passage:—"Combativeness is a good thing in its place. The reform cause needs fighters, and it can use every one it can get. But it wants fighters who are brave enough to turn their faces towards the enemy. Those who are constantly fighting within the reform ranks others with whom they do not agree as to method show plainly that their object is to advance their own personal position in the ranks and possibly, when they are brought face to face with the foe, that will surely return the fire, they may show the white feather and flee in terror." The experience of the labor movement, in New York especially, can confirm these views. We could mention several such "fighters," and from our intimate knowledge of them, we would suggest that the title of the article be amended to read "Traitors and Cowards."

Last Sunday's New York World publishes the pictures of twelve leading European Socialists and says of them: "Their faces are particularly worthy of attention. In every case they indicate the possession of large mental powers. Most of the defenders of law, order and property are inadequately equipped mentally to deal with these men. One seldom sees an officer of that police which does the bidding of the brutal bourgeoisie with a face half as intelligent as any of these Socialist ones."

Erastus Wiman, a land speculator, lectured last week before the Young Men's Christian Association in this city on the subject "How to Get Rich." He showed the steps by which he was getting rich himself by stating that ten years ago he bought for \$50,000 the patent of a penny-in-the-slot weighing machine, and a year later sold it for \$150,000. Here we have it all in a

nut-shell: "Pay low and sell high." That the wealth of the community did not increase by the transaction; that the \$100,000 which he "made" was money in existence, and simply transferred from its previous owners to his pockets; that his getting rich meant the impoverishment of others, and that if everybody did the same nobody would be the better for it and things would remain as they are—these were not considerations that concerned the lecturer. The fact, however, remains that this way of "How to Get Rich" is the equivalent of "How to Empoverish Others"; and is just the way of capitalism: to rise on the wrecks of others.

The Boston Dawn, Christian Socialist, has made the interesting discovery that "The rich are becoming Socialist," and with its conscience quieted by the convenient discovery, it turns its dough-face countenance to a certain class, about whom a certain Nazarene said that its chances for getting into heaven were about as good as a camel's to squeeze itself through a needle's eye.—The People.

IDLENESS, WAGES AND EARNINGS.

From the last report of Carroll D. Wright on wages and cost of living it appears that cotton operatives, when employed, earn on the average \$1.02 per day in the Northern district of the United States, 69½ cents in the Southern district, and 66 cents in Great Britain. But the average period of employment is so much shorter in the United States that the total earnings of the operatives are considerably lower than in England. For instance, in a period of six months the operatives of the northern States worked only 79 days and earned \$80; in the Southern district they worked 45 days and earned \$38; whereas in Great Britain they worked 131 days and earned \$86. According to these figures the amount of enforced idleness in the United States was over 50 per cent of the working time; in other words it was greater than the amount of employment. Again, the average earnings of operatives while at work convey no correct idea of the actual rate of wages, because piece work is the rule and the working day is longer in the United States, especially in the South, than in England. By taking into account the number of working hours and the amount of product turned out, it is found that our Southern operatives are paid considerably less than the British for the same amount of labor. The most important point, however, is as to the small earnings in America consequent upon the enormous amount of enforced idleness in the face of a prodigious development of the cotton industry. These facts cast a lurid light on the condition and prospects of labor in this country. They are in a line with the state of affairs in the iron and steel, coal and other great industries. Will they open the eyes of the poor masses that "pure and simple trade unionism" has chloroformed?—The People.

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PROVINCE OF QUEBEC, District of Montreal, Superior Court No. 2566.—Dame Jeanne, alias Felicia, Chataignier, of the city and district of Montreal, wife of Pierre Jean Baptiste Monier, journalist, of the same place, has this day instituted an action for separation as to property against her said husband.
Montreal, 6th February, 1892.
LAMOTHE & TRUDEL,
Attorneys for Plaintiff.