

following:—"Presented to Mr. W. J. Graham by the employees of the upholstering department of Messrs. Hay & Co." The presentation was suitably acknowledged by Mr. Graham in an appropriate and sympathetic speech. Mr. Graham is leaving the establishment, with which he has been connected for the past eighteen years, for seven of which he held the position of foreman, for the purpose of commencing business for himself; and we are assured that all his friends wish him the most unbounded prosperity in his new enterprise.

Communications.

TORONTO.

CONVICT LABOR.

(To the Editor of the Ontario Workman.)

SIR,—Resuming the evidence adduced in my last respecting the demoralizing effect of the contract system on prison labor, I intend to merely give support to what has been already advanced.

Robert McCutcheon, Overseer for eight years in the House of Refuge, gave strong testimony against this obnoxious system.

E. Mapes, E. R. Bryant, James Finley, Lewis C. Wilcox, Machinists; H. Gallagher and Wm. Ryan, Shoemakers, testified against contracts.

Arthur S. Wolff, Physician of Clinton prison, spoke strongly against the system, and as a proof of his statements, he referred to the fact of eighty per cent of the prisoners committed to Clinton prison between sixteen and twenty-five years of age, had been either in the House of Refuge or Albany Penitentiary, both prisons having contracts in full swing.

R. J. Wentworth and D. F. Craw, Instructors in Albany Penitentiary, gave a horrible account of the torture inflicted by contractors in prison.

Gaylord B. Hubbell, merchant and manufacturer, formerly Agent and Warden of Sing Sing prison, testified to the evil effects of political influence in the management of prisons. Would multiply the trades, and have moral and instructive lectures during the evening. Also would have a classification of prisoners according to offence and number of criminals.

"I believe that, as far as relates to the pecuniary interests of the State, the contract system is decidedly detrimental. For the amount agreed to be paid for labor by the contractors is not sufficient to cover the expense of carrying on the institution.

"The effect of the contract system on the discipline of the prison I consider every way bad. The contractors, many of them, become prominent politicians; they thus bring a powerful influence to bear on the nomination of State Prison Inspectors. As a natural consequence, they wield a large influence with the Inspectors in the appointment of Wardens and keepers. They also combine to control the actions of the Warden. Many of them have a long experience as prison contractors, while the Wardens are generally inexperienced from being frequently changed.

"They often bring into prison a large number of instructors and foremen, whose habits are not of the best, from the fact that first-class mechanics will not engage in such employment, either from a natural aversion to doing so, or because controlled by Trades' Unions. These instructors and foremen continually tamper with the prisoners by illicit trade and intercourse, selling to them, in return for overwork, contraband articles (sometimes even liquor) at exorbitant prices. They also constantly bring in news from the outer world, contrary to the rules of the prison; they further bribe the men, with some trifling thing, to do an extravagant day's work, and then demand that day's work of them as a rule. They interfere with the duties of the keepers, banding themselves together as politicians, and thus holding a threatening influence over the officers. This interference is such that I consider it impossible to maintain order where they are. As an illustration of the mode in which they deal with the prisoners, I will relate a circumstance that fell under my own observation. A contractor's foreman bargained with the prisoners for overwork, contrary to the rules of the prison, kept accounts in his own book, and drew the money from the contractor to pay the convicts; he then quarreled with the men, tore the leaves out of his book, put the money in his own pocket, and under an investigation denied the whole thing, placing himself on his dignity as a citizen, and shielding himself from punishment, because the report, as he said, was only based upon the word of a convict; under this rule he could not be tried. This same man was subsequently detected in furnishing liquor to prisoners, and ejected from the premises. I could mention other instances, if it were deemed necessary.

"As far as reformatory agencies are concerned, I consider the contract system, as now conducted, a complete bar to any extended reformation. The reasons are obvious."

S. D. Brooks, Superintendent and Physician for twelve years in the Asylum, Fort Washington, had seen the effects of the contract system, and knew something of its machinery. Considered it the greatest hindrance to the reformation of boys that could be devised. Knew some institutions which nearly proved failures as reformatories in consequence of the contract system. In a number of instances there had been either a collusion between the contractors foremen and the inmates, which tends to destroy all hopes of reformation, or there had been a feeling of almost murderous hostility between them, originating from a belief on the boys' part that they were overworked and misused by the foremen. In letters from boys in prison they had spoken of the ignorance of the men who were placed over them, and the manner in which they were ill-used without the knowledge of the Warden.

From his observations, and from using all the means in his power of acquiring information, he had arrived at the belief that the contract system was a decided hindrance to reformation.

Brother Teliow, Rector of the Catholic Protectorate at West Farms, drew a vivid picture of the reforming influence of the institution he had in charge, and believed he was able to accomplish so much good from the fact that the contract system was rigidly avoided.

Thus the universal verdict is that no reformation is probable under the contract system, and where it is not the best possible results flow from the reforming influences administered kindly, with earnest efforts to improve the individuals under charge.

Yours, &c.,

J. W. LEVESLEY.

Toronto, 21st April, 1873.

FIFTY CENT LECTURES.

(To the Editor of the Ontario Workman.)

SIR,—Allow me to occupy a small portion of your space while I endeavor to notice, in my own simple way, a subject that has called forth no small amount of comment from our city press, namely, the lecture delivered by Dr. Tiffany on "The New Civilization," in this city some two weeks ago. Sir, this is an age—perhaps more so than any other—that might be styled the age of lectures. We have our "Stars," and legion of lesser luminaries in the lecture field, reaping fortunes by tickling the fancy and pleasing the tastes of those whose easy position in life enables them to pay for such trash. The lecturer of the day to be successful must rather study the tastes of his audience than the truthfulness or the justice of the subject he assumes to speak upon—the truth must be contorted to please the ears of those who pay; so that, as a rule, the lectures of the day are nothing more than oratorical displays, almost void of the first semblance of sound facts, based upon the everlasting principles of truth and justice. But sometimes a lecturer is found bold enough to say some unpleasant truths that would be rather better suited to the ears of the masses, than to the ears of the elite who are in the habit of hearing fifty cent lectures; and he has no sooner done it than he is assailed by our respectable press on all sides for a want of prudence in not suiting the tone of his lecture to the ears of his audience, a want of taste, impertinence, &c. Evidently the lecturer who kicks over the traces of lecture etiquette, and points truthfully to the tendency of the age, and its future triumph in establishing righteousness, equality and justice among men, must prepare for a storm of respectable indignation. And Dr. Tiffany, by not studying the tastes of his Toronto audience, has brought this storm about his ears by pointing truthfully to the final result of our civilization, and what must be the grand, glorious and crowning triumph of our blessed Christianity in this condensed platform, that speaks volumes in its brevity:

1. The claims of the unworking aristocracy will cease under the regis of the new Christianity.
2. No privileged classes will be tolerated under the new Christianity.
3. Education is to reach and elevate the masses under the new Christianity.
4. Reverence for God will become the claim for reverence from men under the new Christianity.

Surely if man's progress in civilization means anything, it is embodied in those four principles laid down by Dr. Tiffany. If Christianity possesses the power we credit it with—the subjugation of all that is evil, and the elevation and salvation of man—it can only be worked out on the

platform laid down by the lecturer; otherwise, if this is not the tendency of Christianity—to equalize and elevate humanity,—it is but a myth, and our civilization a failure. True, the reverend gentleman from Washington may have been overwarm, in praising his native land, for the United States is by no means an ideal for the rest of humanity to lure them on in their pursuit after the new civilization. Laws that produce and sustain aristocracy under a monarchy, can only produce the same results in a republic. A change in the executive function of a country can make no material change in the social system of that country, while the laws relating to labor, land and money remain the same under both executive systems, or nearly so. The evil is in our system of labor, and the distribution of the results of labor.

Yours truly,

JOHN HEWITT.

Toronto, April 21, 1873.

TRADES' UNION BILL.

(To the Editor of the Ontario Workman.)

The natural haste in which the above law was passed gave little or no time to trades' unions to petition the Government and Parliament for a law without the objectionable features of the English bill—yet thanks to Sir John A. Macdonald, who introduced the bill, most of the tyrannical clauses were entirely omitted from the Canadian Act. And though it would require careful thought and large experience to frame a bill perfect in all points, some of the provisions stand prominently forth as evidently unjust towards those whom the bill was intended to benefit.

It will be necessary to petition the Government, Senate, and House of Commons, to so amend the Trades' Union Bill as to do justice to all concerned. The fourth clause provides that no damages can be recovered for the breach of any agreement between members in respect to work, subscription, benefits, or contributions to any workman not a member of a trade's union, and payment of fine levied in a court of justice.

Personally, I agree with some of these provisions, and differ with others.

An agreement by a union to pay certain benefits to individual members in case of sickness, old age, and death, should be legally binding on the union; and the amounts should be recoverable by law, in a summary and cheap manner; yet it would be unfair to make it compulsory to pay the benefits, if the officers had not power to collect the subscriptions from the various members.

I hold that agreements as above, are, or should be, binding legally and morally. An amendment in this matter would be acceptable to all. To illustrate this, I herewith give the amount of benefits paid by the International Union of Machinists and Blacksmiths:

In sickness, a member receives five dollars per week from the sick fund; and a member of the insurance department receives an annuity in old age to the following amount, viz.: If a member of the department fifteen years, eight dollars per month; if a member for twenty-five years, nine dollars per month; and if a member for thirty years, ten dollars per month until his death. On the death of a member, the united contributions of the members to the extent of three thousand dollars is paid to the legal claimant named in the policy of the deceased member.

It would be some satisfaction to a member if he knew he could legally claim the above benefits, though the Machinists and Blacksmiths always pay the claims.

In the seventh clause provision is made for the leasing or purchase of land to the amount of one acre.

As some unions, if not all, are incipient co-operative organizations, having a desire to build homes for their members, and erect workshops for their employment, this clause practically shuts out the great aim of the future.

While philanthropists are devising schemes for the benefit of the working classes, we are neglecting the most noble of all means of elevation—Self-help. Trades' Unions are combinations for mutual advancement, and united effort. Combined to instruct, to protect and advance, they claim justice from the laws made by lawmakers they help to make, and though laws have been harsh and oppressive, trade unionists are among the best of law observers.

Hoping to see the thoughts of others in your columns,

I remain,

Yours, etc.,

J. W. LEVESLEY.

Toronto, April 21, 1873.

Books, Pamphlets, Posters, Handbills, and Job Printing of every description, executed at the ONTARIO WORKMAN office.

HAMILTON.

CORRECTION.

The following was received last week too late for insertion:—

(To the Editor of the Ontario Workman.)

DEAR SIR,—By a typographical error in my letter last week, I am made to make several mistakes in changing Canadian to English currency. With regard to the wages paid on the Great Western to mechanics at Hamilton, charge-men, or leading fitters, are paid \$2, or 8s. 4d. English; and two mechanics are paid \$2 25, or 9s. English. By making this correction you will oblige,

Yours, etc.,

YULCAN.

(To the Editor of the Ontario Workman.)

SIR,—Perhaps no country in the world is more misrepresented by those whose interests, one would think, lay in spreading a truthful statement of the position and progress of the various classes of which society is composed, than this Dominion of ours. In it there is a class of journals claiming to be Reform, and if we are to believe their professions they are anxious to foster and protect all needed reforms. Yet when we see these same journals, regardless of what may be the result of their misrepresentation of facts on the minds and actions of those who, in the older countries, are seeking for the countries most suitable for the making of new homes, we cannot but lament that, for the attaining of the most trifling and fleeting advantage over the progress of labor reform, these same journals stoop to acts which at once stamp them as the bitterest enemies of the progress and development in all its parts and interests of this young and rapidly advancing Dominion. As an illustration of this statement, I will quote a notice to be found amongst the Ontario items of news in the tri-weekly edition of the Montreal Witness, issue of the 17th inst. This paper claims to lead the great social reforms of the age, and really its zeal sometimes appears to overstep the bounds of prudence. Now, when a paper assumes to lead public opinion—nay more, when such a paper feels called upon to enter the private dwelling of a gentleman and demand the key of his wine cellar, that his invited guests may be treated just as it shall dictate: or, on the other hand, enters one of our workshops, the property of a chartered company, and tries by its influence to bring about a change in the management of the establishment—its utterances should, at least, be above suspicion, and of such a nature as not to mislead the most unwary of the strangers who are constantly arriving in our midst, and who require reliable information on the state of trade in all our large cities. Surely a paper which claims to be the leader in religious and moral reforms, should be careful not to give the enemy cause to blaspheme. Now, I will give you the notice that I have referred to, and also the notice by which a large establishment in the West is run, and these notices shall speak for themselves:

"The G. W. R. employees in the Hamilton workshops now work ten hours a day. However, they leave off on a Saturday at 11 a.m., instead of 5 p.m., thus squaring the circle."

NOTICE.

"In order to provide for the Saturday half holiday during the ensuing summer, the working hours shall be as follows:—

"On and after Monday, the 31st of March, every day, except Saturday, from 7 a.m. until 12 noon, and from 1 p.m. until 6 p.m. Saturday, from 7 a.m. until 11 a.m. Thus making 54 hours per week."

Now, when we remember that the mode of working the 54 hours per week has always been left to the employer and his employees to arrange as shall best promote the interest of all. And we find, as in this instance, the Saturday half holiday is made a prominent feature in the arrangement. Surely one would think that those who have for years cried down Sabbath desecration and all its train of evils, (including the key of the cellar), would be amongst the first to foster such an arrangement, and to bid its promoters God speed. Yet, let any unprejudiced mind examine those two notices, and say if the motive of the Montreal Witness, in its reproduction of the item, was the good and welfare of labor reform. Far, far from it. The design is unfortunately too apparent. And we again regret to think that a paper of its standing could so far forget all that is just and honorable in its dealings with any class in our land.

We hope, through your now widely circulated journal, to counteract the evil influence thus sought to be disseminated not only through this country, but also through the old land. And we know that as your paper is now read in hundreds of old coun-

try homes; that by your insertion of this in your columns, it will dispel any false impressions which may have been made by the Montreal Witness, and its comrades, in misrepresentation, so that not only those who may have already arrived amongst us, but also those who may be seeking a new home, may come fearlessly on, fully assured that 54 hours per week is the working time in the G. W. R. workshops, Hamilton, and that for every extra hour wrought, time and a quarter is allowed.

Allow me to congratulate you on your anniversary, and wishing that you may see many, very many returns of the season, still pursuing the same straightforward course that you have followed during the past year,

I remain, &c.,

WORKMAN.

Hamilton, April 21, 1873.

OSHAWA.

(To the Editor of the Ontario Workman.)

SIR,—I have been requested to write to you in order to put the readers of the WORKMAN on their guard against a dodge, which has been practised on some recently arrived immigrants.

As I am informed, while passing this station on the train which conveyed them to Toronto, some one was heard to call out, that "Carpenters and bricklayers were getting from \$2 to \$2 50 per day at Oshawa." On the arrival of the train in Toronto, an individual, supposed to be an agent of some sort, represented to some carpenters who were amongst the passengers, that they could obtain \$2 50 per day in Oshawa; and three of the carpenters, believing the statement to be true, came here, but to find that they had been deceived. They were offered \$1 25 per day, and I believe that they are now working for \$1 50, that being the average rate of wages of carpenters here.

I believe that the Government agents, both in England and in Quebec, are the cause of gross misrepresentations being made with regard to the rate of wages, as well as to the cost of living in Canada; and I believe Mr. Witton, M.P., would confer a favor on the working classes generally, if he could succeed in obtaining a committee to enquire into the matter.

The employees of the Joseph Hall Works now quit work at 5 o'clock on Saturdays, and will continue to do so until October, when they will have to work till 6. A slight attempt has been made to cut down the wages in one or two instances. I am informed that an employee has been taken to task by the president for writing a letter to the Messrs. Gibbs, regarding their adverse vote on the Ballot, and was requested to apologize for his shocking impropriety in presuming to criticise the doings of M.P.'s. I have not heard that he has done so yet.

The employees of the Oshawa Cabinet Factory still work till 6 o'clock on Saturdays, there being no election this year.

Readers of the WORKMAN would do well to accept with caution any statements which may be made regarding the high wages which are being paid in Oshawa; and previous to answering any advertisement in person, they had better ascertain what wages are to be paid.

Yours, etc.,

HEATHER JOCK.

LABORERS' UNION, OF TORONTO.

There will be a meeting of the Laborers of Toronto, in the TRADES' ASSEMBLY HALL, King Street West, a few doors west of Bay Street.

On Saturday Evening Next, April 26th,

At half-past seven o'clock, for the purpose of submitting the Rules and Regulations for adoption, the election of officers, and the enrollment of members.

ALL LABORERS ARE EARNESTLY INVITED TO ATTEND.

SPRING SHOW.

T. EATON & CO.,

Are showing extraordinary attractions in

Handkerchiefs, Ties, Scarfs, Gloves, Ribbons, &c., &c.

CORNER YONGE & QUEEN STREETS, 42-46

Business Cards.

S. MCCABE, FASHIONABLE AND Cheap Boot and Shoe Emporium, 59 Queen Street West, sign of "THE BIG BLUE BOOT." 54-oh

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-oh