

OUR BOARDING HOUSE

Reflections on Current Events by the Boarders.

"You say that if the people of this country wish to purify politics they will have to create a new party," said Brown, addressing Phil. "Now, I fail to see where the formation of a new party is necessary to attain this end; any party, to be successful, must contain a majority of all voters in the country, must have a majority in our Houses of Parliament before they can hope to crystallize any plank of their platform into statute law. When, therefore, the majority of the people of Canada are in favor of the reforms for which you agitate either one or the other of our existing parties will be compelled to embody them in their platform to save themselves from destruction. It seems to me that what is most needed is not a new political party but a vigorous educational campaign which would bring our people back to true economic principles and show them the absurdity of trying to improve the material condition of the masses upon existing political lines. Unless you so educate the people your new political party, no matter how good its platform, will have but few followers. Politicians carefully study public opinion and will give you all the reforms you want just as soon as the people are ripe for them."

"It is partly because of this very fact that I am in favor of a new party," said Phil. "Any man who acts as a weathercock in politics, and who is prepared to turn himself politically inside out to keep himself in power, is devoid of principle and honor and totally unfit to even mingle with, much less legislate, for honorable and fair men. We must elevate politics and make it something more than a mere scramble for office. It is because I am aware that the politicians of both political parties would willingly subscribe to anything to retain or gain position and power that I despair of gaining our ends with the material of the old parties. Without honor or principle, without appreciation of the grave responsibilities of their position, partyism has been so fully engrafted into their system that you cannot eradicate it. This is why I insist that the old-time professional politician and office-seeker with his attendants, the ward heeler and wire puller, shall have no place in the new political party. And even if its growth is slow, let it grow up pure and honest, and trustworthy, and in time it will command the respect and support of all that is good and true in the nation. As to the allegation that it requires a majority of the people to secure the enactment of necessary or desirable legislation, that is true only in countries where but two parties exist. So long as the Irish people contented themselves with only electing Liberals and Conservatives favorable to home rule, so long were they doomed to disappointment, because home rule was considered but a side issue, and the allegiance of the Liberal and Conservative home rulers to their party was stronger than to the people, but directly the Irish people formed an independent party whose only aim and object was home rule for Ireland their star was in the ascendant, and their cause prospered, until now it is but a question of days when home rule for Ireland will be an established fact. Now, it is a well known fact that the representatives of the Irish party are far from being a majority in the British House of Commons. Not only that, but every man who has watched this movement, and has some knowledge of the English people and their political feelings, knows that the cause of Ireland would never have attained that prominence it occupies at present, that the people of Ireland could never have secured the beneficial legislation of the last decade if they had not organized an independent political party. The

unparalleled success of that party has raised the hopes of reformers everywhere, for say what you like, and call it by whatever name you choose, the Irish movement is a protest, an economic revolution, against private ownership in land. If the record of that party is honorable in the highest degree, as it undoubtedly is, if of all the men chosen to fight its battles none ever proved recreant to his duty, if the patriotism and devotion of its members were such as to command the admiration and respect of the whole civilized world, it is because no Liberal or Conservative wire puller, no professional party politician was ever allowed to represent a home rule constituency. This should be an object lesson in politics to labor reformers everywhere."

"More particularly," said Gaskill, "when you consider the composition of our existing political parties. Seventy-five per cent. of our legislators are lawyers—men who live by litigation. It must be evident to the dullest intellect that such men will never introduce a 'clear cut' law; it is not in their interest to do so, for then their services as expounders of the law would no longer be required. Their greatest, and it seems only, aim is to make the laws of the country read so that no two of them agree upon its meaning, thus inducing litigation which keeps them occupied and enables them to fleece the people. The other twenty-five per cent. are capitalists pure and simple, with all the aggressiveness and greed of their class, whose interests are diametrically opposed to the interests of labor, and these are the men whom the old political parties choose to make your laws. The home rule members of Parliament, chosen from the rank and file of the Third Party, without money or political influence, without knowledge of law, in point of honesty, of patriotism, of self-sacrificing devotion to the people, stand head and shoulders above any man ever produced by Canada, bar none. Compare their records and draw your own conclusion. And what was necessary to Ireland and the advancement of the Irish cause is necessary in every constitutionally governed country in the cause of labor reform. Our politicians shirk the labor question as much as ever English politicians shirked the question of Home Rule. The prejudices which we have to overcome are no greater than those which have been overcome by the Irish people; we suffer from the same cause that made them suffer in the past—misrepresentation—let us apply the remedy which has proved so beneficial in their case."

BILL BLADES.

SCRAPS FOR CIGARMAKERS

The Central Labor Union of Boston at their last meeting elected F. McCarthy, President, and H. Abraham, Secretary, both members of Cigarmakers Union, No. 97, Boston, Mass.

Among the latest arrivals in this city is Mr. Davis, from California, who arrived here on Saturday last after a two years' absence. He reports trade as booming through the Western States and British Columbia.

Lays off are now in order, the first taking place this week in a shop recently established, in which several employees were dismissed.

The regular meeting of Union 226 was held in their hall on Craig street, on Friday, July 31, Vice President Duval in the chair. The attendance was very large, and the interest taken in this meeting was more noticeable than on any former occasion, it being the election of a delegate to the Convention, the candidates being Thos. McGreevy, Geo. Weir, H. Cohen. The result of the first ballot being: T. McGreevy, 24; H. Cohen, 9; Geo. Weir, 4; the President declared Mr. McGreevy elected delegate to Indianapolis, Ind., Convention. Geo. Weir was elected alternate delegate. After some further business the meeting then adjourned. The novel ideas introduced by the ex-delegate was unusually bright, but they did not have any weight.

The election of Mr. McGreevy was a great blow to the unqualified, and scheming element, which is to be found among all organizations, much to their detriment.

The election of Mr. Stars to the Presidency of Union No. 226, is a move in the right direction, and the members will see the benefits attached to electing a permanent member, who can devote his spare time to their welfare. He should, and no doubt will receive the support of his fellow members in carrying out the constitution.

In asking the members to consider the advisability of amalgamation, it was not my intention that it should take effect before the Convention and debar the regularly elected delegate from going to represent his union, as some of the members wish it to be understood.

The member for Montreal East made quite a coup d'etat when he asked that a report of the number of employees engaged in Montreal Custom House, the date of their appointment, their salary and their nationality be brought down. If he would only devote one quarter of the time wasted in his question to the cause which he is understood to represent, and endeavor to have some of the obnoxious laws bearing on the working classes amended or abolished it would be much better. Such senseless questions regarding the nationality of government employees has a tendency to encourage race feeling and create strife among peaceable people and at the best can serve no good purpose.

"SCRAPS."

REGISTRATION OF VOTERS.

3 PLACE D'ARMES HILL,
MONTREAL, July 31, 1891.

SIR,—I shall continue to receive declarations and keep the preliminary lists of voters open for the electoral district of Montreal Centre until the 15th August, and I beg to inform your readers of this through your columns,

Your obedient servant,
HENRY J. KAVANAGH.

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