

Written for the Miscellany.

### A Canadian Typo's Experience in England.

BY RED INK.

Concluded.

To turn to a more pleasant theme, the "House" supplied excellent porter at one penny per half pint, the potman coming around at 10.30 in the morning, being lunch time, when almost every one partook of refreshments; between 1 and 2 o'clock, the workingman's dinner hour; and at 7 o'clock in the evening, — quite enough for one day, I fancy I hear some advocate of total abstinence remark. A potman from a neighboring "pub" also goes the rounds at the same time. The temperance party patrolize a big can of coffee, which was presided over by genial Dick, from across the road.

There is a large kitchen in connection with the office, and those who wish, get their dinners without leaving the premises. The bill of fare is posted up at the door every morning, consisting of three or four kinds of meat, the same of vegetables and pastry. The meat is 5d. a plate, vegetables 1d. each extra, and 2d. per piece of pastry. There are two drawbacks to this system. One, that a tolerably hungry man feels but half satisfied after demolishing his dinner, owing to its size; and the other, that it is generally half cold before it reaches him. Similar fare is to be had at different coffee-houses outside.

At 4 o'clock the "House tea" is brought around in big tin cans, a pint of which is furnished each man per day for the very moderate sum of 6d. per week. It is of fair quality and serves to wash down the substantial "British Workman" slices of bread and butter supplied by the aforesaid Dick at a half-penny per slice.

Athletic, cricket and literary clubs bear the office name; a sick club is also one of the institutions of the House, as well as a good library (free); and a bonus is given each year of 5 or 6 per cent. on all wages amounting to £70 or upwards. Considering the nature of the work, I think it would be fairer to let every one have the benefit of the bonus, whether his wages range to the above amount or under; for it is a physical impossibility for some workmen — whose only fault is being a little slow — to average 27s. per week throughout the year, and those are the men who stand most in need of the bonus.

The newspaper work is a better class of work,

and the "ships" in which they are composed consist of men drafted from other "ships" who have a character for good work and steadiness in their habits. House apprentices, as soon as out of their time, also have the first chances of entering these ships. The wages earned are from 36s. to £2 10s.

The sporting element is far more largely represented in the English mechanic than in his brother-ship across the Atlantic. No race is run in any part of England of any consequence on which there is not a "drawing." The following is the *modus operandi*:—Say 12 men will club together at 6d. each. Slips, bearing the names of the horses advertised to run, are folded up and placed in a hat. Another set of slips, with the names of the men interested in the "sweep," are placed in another hat. After both being well shaken up, one man takes up a slip and reads the name of a horse, while another takes a slip out of the other hat and calls out the name inscribed thereon, and the horse's name is put down opposite the holder of it. Consequently, when the race is run, the holders of the three lucky horses take the prizes of 3s., 2s. and 1s.

During Christmas week, also, the "sweeps" are very numerous, the prizes consisting of bottles of spirits, tobacco, cigars, etc. Another species of sport serves to pass away the time during dinner hour yeclapt "skittles." Nine em quads are placed diamond-shape on the stone and shied at with small pieces of metal furniture. Another consists of a diagram, chalked on the stone, and pennies furnish the motive power. They are placed overhanging the end of the stone, and hit a smart tap with the palm of the hand, the design being to place the penny in the highest numbers marked on the diagram. These two mediums of "amusement" seemed to be exceedingly popular, some of the "prints" indulging in them with great gusto week in and week out the year through.

I cull a few extracts from the *Compositor's Guide*, an interesting little pamphlet furnished on application at the rooms of the London Society of Compositors, Racquet Court, Fleet street, which may prove useful for future reference:—

"ESTABLISHMENT HANDS.—That members engaged in the establishment (i. e., on time) shall not receive less than 36s. per week; and if employed on weekly papers not less than the