

to the classes that so sorely need it. The members of the Lords' committee are fully conscious of the terrible misery that so many men, women and children are called upon to endure. They hope that the inquiry on which they have been engaged will not be without moral effect on both employers and employed—on the former, in deepening their sense of responsibility; on the latter, in leading to improved habits. They advise capitalists to give closer attention to the needs and just claims of those who supply them with labour; they propose certain modifications of the laws relating to factories, which, they believe, would better the status of the working classes. But, after all, they hardly expect that any legislation will bring about all the ameliorations that are so urgently called for. They depend more on wholesome public opinion for the condemnation of those who drain the workpeople of their toil and skill without making any just return. Ultimately, they hope, the unscrupulous system that has been so glaringly exposed will be made impossible, and, at the same time, the sons and daughters of toil may be induced by counsel and encouragement to practise thrift and temperance, and to be more careful in matters pertaining to their moral and physical well-being.

It would be premature just now to pronounce on the utility of the Sweating Committee's labours. One thing it has certainly made plain—it has enlightened the well-to-do of England as to the ways in which their poorer fellow-citizens drag on their existence, and it is almost impossible that the knowledge disseminated by the reports can be entirely fruitless of good. In fact, some reform must be effected, or the consequences will be serious for those whose apathy and neglect help to delay its accomplishment. The labour agitation is no mere passing breeze of popular discontent. It springs from deep-seated social anomalies which must be adjusted and brought into harmony with the rights of the workpeople in England as elsewhere.

In our own country the labour question, though its discussion has been unaccompanied by any of the wild and menacing unrest that has characterized European labour movements, has reached a critical stage, which compels attention. Some years ago the Dominion Government, it may be recalled, appointed a commission of enquiry into the subject which, after discharging its responsible duties, published a report, which has for some time been in the hands of the public. About twelve months ago the Hon. Mr. Chapleau, Secretary of State, in pursuance of the same investigation, authorized Mr. Jules Helbronner to proceed to Paris, so as to study, at the various congresses on social economy held in connection with the exposition, such reforms, in practice or theory, as might be applicable to the condition of labour in Canada. Provided with letters of introduction to the Hon. H. Fabre, our Commissioner-General in France, Mr. Helbronner set out accordingly on his important (though for reasons long since made public) unofficial mission, and the results are embodied in a voluminous report recently issued from the Government press. This "Report on the Social Economy Section of the Universal International Exhibition of 1889 at Paris" is virtually an appendix to the report of the Canadian Labour Commission, of which Mr. Helbronner was an active member. It differs very materially from the reports of the English Sweating Committee, already referred to, inasmuch as it provides a remedy for the defects to which attention was called in the original report

of the Labour Commission. There is, indeed, no scheme for the improvement of the workers' position put into operation during the last half century, which the reader will not find described and valued at its true worth in this bulky volume. Apprenticeship, technical training, the regulations of the workshop, the labour of women and girls, systems of payment, wages, profit-sharing, co-operation, strikes, arbitration, provisions for old age and for attendance in sickness, the hygiene of the factory and workshop, workmen's dwellings, mutual benevolent societies, provident institutions, and all the schemes of reform that have been instituted in France and other parts of Europe—all these topics are exhaustively treated in this report. As Mr. Helbronner, through his whole inquiry, had his eye on Canada and sought especially such organization and appliances as would be likely to suit our country and people, the report is a grand labour encyclopedia, which the Canadian economist and student cannot consult without advantage. It is impossible to read the accounts of these hundreds of successful experiments recorded in this useful volume without reaching the conviction that there is hardly any labour problem so desperate that, with patience and forbearance, it does not admit of satisfactory solution.

#### THE NEWFOUNDLAND DELEGATES.

The affairs of the "ancient and loyal" colony of Newfoundland have, during the past few weeks, been placed prominently before the Canadian public by the visit of delegates charged with the duty of enlisting the sympathy and support of the Canadian people on the struggle of the Newfoundlander against the claims made by the French to a part of the coast of Newfoundland. The delegates have visited the principal cities of Canada and have everywhere been received most heartily, and the action taken by the people of Newfoundland in endeavouring to maintain their undoubted constitutional rights has met with unanimous endorsement from the people of Canada.

In view of their visit, a few facts in connection with the history of Newfoundland, in addition to what we have already published, may not be out of place. It was discovered by Cabot in 1497, and was formally taken possession of by Sir Humphrey Gilbert in the name of Queen Elizabeth on the 5th of August, 1583. During the wars of the early part of the eighteenth century, it was the scene of constant conflicts between the English and French, but at no time was it in the exclusive possession of the French. It was considered of great importance by both nations in these early times as a fishing station and as a nursery for seamen for their navies. The history of Newfoundland during the past century and a half, and the peculiar policy pursued towards it by the Imperial authorities, is well worthy of diligent study. The development of the colony, instead of being promoted, was carefully retarded. Settlement was prohibited, the cultivation of the land was made a crime, and the administration of justice was placed upon a footing unique in the history of British colonization. This was especially the case from 1633 to the early part of the present century. The first fishing captain that arrived in the spring would be the admiral, the second vice-admiral and the third rear-admiral, and these gentlemen had sole supervision and authority in all matters of law and order during the season.

In the early part of the eighteenth century Newfoundland was further confirmed as an English

colony by right of conquest and treaty with the French, and the unfortunate concessions made to the latter in the Treaty of Utrecht (1713), have resulted in nothing but trouble to the colony. By this treaty the French were given a concurrent right with the English to "catch fish and dry them on land" on a part of the coast of Newfoundland, and this right was confirmed and their limits extended by subsequent treaties. The French have constantly claimed more than what, under a fair interpretation of the treaties, they were entitled to, and the British Government, instead of confining them within their rights, have, for purposes of Imperial expediency, sacrificed the rights of the colonists. The helpless position of the colony places its inhabitants at the mercy of the Imperial authorities, and their appeal to Canada in the present instance is for the purpose of strengthening their case with the Home Government. The occasion of the present agitation was the claim, on the part of France, to take and preserve lobsters and erect factories on the part of the coast where they have fishery rights. For this they have not the slightest shadow of right under the treaties; but the British Government, instead of taking immediate measures to protect the undoubted rights of the colonists, entered into a *modus vivendi* with the French, granting them the right to take lobsters for the present season. This was done without the consent of the people of Newfoundland, and raised a storm of indignation in the colony. Mass meetings were called and delegates were appointed to proceed to England and Canada to place the grievances of Newfoundland before the people of both countries, and ask their assistance in opposing the claims of the French and the supineness of the English authorities. The delegates to England are Sir James Winter, K.C.M.G., P. J. Scott, Esq., Q.C., and A. B. Morine, Esq., M.L.A. They arrived in England *via* New York last week. The delegates to Canada are D. J. Greene, Esq., Q.C., Donald Morrison, Esq., and P. R. Bowers, Esq., and we present our readers with their portraits in to-day's issue, taken from photographs by Notman. Mr. Greene and Mr. Morrison are both members of the Newfoundland Legislature, and Mr. Bowers is editor of the Newfoundland *Daily Colonist*. These gentlemen have performed the duties of their mission with marked tact and ability, and have been the means of disseminating among the people of Canada much valuable information concerning "Britain's oldest colony," which, we have no doubt, will bear good fruit in the future. Their labours in aid of their fellow-colonists have been eminently successful, and they take with them our fullest sympathy and heartiest good wishes in the work in which they are engaged.

#### "BAY LEAVES."

"I see," says "The Rambler" in the *Week*, "the DOMINION ILLUSTRATED accords Mr. Mercer Adam praise for Professor Goldwin Smith's recent classical translations. This is even unusual stupidity; an act of inadvertence of which the editor is, no doubt, by this time fully aware." Yes. That would be stupid, indeed. But we never dreamed of such a thing. On the contrary, after quoting at some length from the "learned author's Introduction," we mentioned distinctly that it was signed by "G. S." and dated from "The Grange, Toronto." All the praise that we gave to Mr. Adam was an acknowledgment of his courtesy in sending us a copy of the book, for which we take this opportunity of again expressing our gratitude to him.