

Ontario Workman.

THE EQUALIZATION OF ALL ELEMENTS OF SOCIETY IN THE SOCIAL SCALE SHOULD BE THE TRUE AIM OF CIVILIZATION.

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Labor Notes.

The Silk weavers of Paterson, N. J., are out on strike for higher terms of remuneration.

The outdoor operatives in the employ of his Grace, the Duke of Buccleuch at Granton have had conceded to them the 51 hours a week, their rate of wages to continue the same.

The Ship Joiners of the Pacific Slope are sustaining themselves very well; there are more of the members employed just now than there has been for some time past. They are getting from \$4 to \$5 per day.

The Bricklayers of California are still sustaining an association. Their members only work eight hours per day for \$5. Those outside of the society are getting the same price, but are working nine hours per day.

The trades unionists of Liverpool held a meeting on Wednesday night, and expressed their sympathy with shop assistants in their effort to obtain shorter hours of labor. The meeting pledged itself to render every assistance in its power, and to give up shopping after 7 p.m.

The masters in the Belfast Building Trade, have agreed to grant the terms demanded by the stonemasons, viz., 7 1/4 per hour, winter and summer. The stonemasons commenced work on Wednesday morning. The strike continues in the other sections of the trade, but negotiations with a view to a settlement of the dispute are going on.

Mr. Mundella, M.P., has requested Mr. Birwistle, of Accrington, general secretary to the East Lancashire Power Loom Weavers' Association, to meet the Government Commissioner, who is about to visit the cotton mills of Lancashire relative—amongst other things—to the proposed change in the hours of working from 60 to 54 per week.

On Wednesday a conference regarding systematic overtime in calender works, Dundee, was held between employers and delegates of the employes. After a long discussion, it was resolved that systematic overtime should be abolished, and that overtime beyond six hours per week should not be wrought, and that on Tuesday and Friday nights this amount of extra labor should be performed.

About ninety laborers in Edinburgh struck work last week, the reason being that the masters wished to reduce their wages from 5 1/2 d to 5 d per hour. The master builders have in turn locked out about 230 of their men, non-society as well as those belonging to the union, so that at the present moment upwards of 320 laborers in the city are out of employment. The masters have assumed a very firm attitude.

The strike of engineers employed in the locomotive department of the North British Railway, at St. Margaret's Station, has now terminated. On Tuesday, a deputation of the men met the superintendent by appointment, and were informed that the directors had resolved to concede the 51 hours, without any reduction of wages taking place. The men employed at the Cowairs Works have resumed work on precisely the same terms.

At present there is a strike at the dry dock in this city, arising from the fact that the men, recently imported from Quebec, receive sixty cents per day more than the workmen who are, and have been residents of Detroit. Perhaps the American Consul at Quebec can throw a little light on the reason why? Canucks are good enough in their place; but when such a display is made in their favor our friends can rest assured there is a "nigger in the fence" somewhere.—*Workingman's Advocate.*

The Crispiens of California are sustaining themselves very well. They have several co-operative establishments, most of them doing as well as they can expect.—The Chinese are making boots and shoes, and have a complete monopoly of slipper manufacturing. They are also making all the cigars, caps for fruit, miners' clothing and other coarse apparel. They are generally

filling the place of domestic servants, and do not hesitate about demanding higher wages as fast as they learn the language and ways of white people. They learn everything but drinking whisky very rapidly.

The *Daily News* holds that question of the wages and houses of agricultural laborers is mixed up with some of the great social and political problems of the time. The enthusiasm with which the meeting received Mr. Ball's demand for the political enfranchisement of the rural working men indicates, at least, one bearing of the matter on politics. Its relation to the land question is another. The national union of agricultural laborers is a great fact, and its direct effect must be to force the land problem to the front. The problem will never be entirely solved till land is owned as other things are owned, and transferred and dealt with as easily as consols or railway shares.

A number of representatives of the trade association of Washington, D.C., have organized a Mechanics and Workingmen's National Council. The president stated that the object of the meeting was to organize and set in motion a continuous council of workmen that will meet as often as once a month at the national capital, and consider all national issues pertaining to workmen, and to recommend to Congress any legislation that may be deemed necessary. Resolutions were adopted requesting Congress to pass a law establishing a bureau of education; declaring that every citizen is entitled to a free home, and every child to an education; urging members of Congress to oppose the disposal of public lands other than to actual settlers; providing a graduated tariff; asking Congress to give full effect to the eight-hour law; declaring that accumulated wealth should pay an equal tax to all taxable property.

A special court was held at Stockton-on-Tees lately, for the purpose of hearing charges against 48 puddlers who were charged by the proprietors of the Moor Ironworks with breach of contract under the 9th section of Master and Servants Act. Both employers and employed are members of the Board of Arbitration and Conciliation for the iron trades of the North of England. It was alleged by the prosecution that the defendants had absented themselves from work without just cause or excuse, while in defence it was urged that the coals supplied to the men were of inferior quality, and that this form a reasonable cause for ceasing work. The President of the Board of Arbitration was called as a witness, and he stated that the coals in use at the works were not capable of giving the heat necessary for puddling iron without excessive labor, and this opinion was confirmed by twenty witnesses. The magistrates decided that the men had broken their contract, and ordered each to pay the 17s. 6d. compensation claimed, with costs, or be imprisoned for one month.—*Manchester Guardian.*

NATIONAL EARLY CLOSING LEAGUE.—Recently a meeting in connection with the Manchester and Salford Branch of this League was held in the Waste Dealer's Exchange. Mr. Croston, vice-president of the branch, occupied the chair, and there was a good attendance. The objects of the League, as stated by the chairman, are to secure the extension of the Factory and Workshops Acts to all retail shops, to obtain the half holiday, the seven o'clock system, and the extension of the Bank Holidays' Act, which it was proposed to do by an application to Parliament to extend to shopkeepers' assistants the advantages enjoyed by other branches of industry. Mr. J. J. Allen, Bradford, secretary to the League, moved: "That, with a view to remove the evils attendant upon the late hour system in the retail trade, and seeing that moral suasion has hitherto failed, this meeting pledges itself to use every legitimate means to attain the objects sought by the League." The motion was seconded by Mr. T. Taylor, and passed. Mr. T. Chapman, Jr., proposed: "That the best thanks of the meeting be tendered to Sir

John Lubbock for his kindness in undertaking to introduce a bill into the House of Commons to restrict the hours of labor in retail establishments." Mr. M. Needham seconded the resolution, which was agreed to. A vote of thanks to the chairman concluded the proceedings.

THE DIRECT REPRESENTATION OF LABOR.

The question of the representation of the people is always one which demands grave consideration by the people who live by manual labor. It is no fault of the working classes that we are divided and subdivided in our interests as to make class legislation a consequence of our divisions. The history of our representative institutions, when it comes to be fairly written, will be found to be one course of error, and occasionally oppression, by the people who acquired power by the use of fictions in the laws, which they took care to make convenient to themselves. The king-makers of our age found it desirable to perpetuate the institution of the House of Commons, which preceding kings had founded to supply the money needed for royal wars; and an aristocracy which only sought to transfer the burdens of taxation to the people, was ever ready to acknowledge the House of Commons, provided the Commons would supply the money that otherwise the land would have to contribute, as its first and primary duty. The invention of indirect taxation led gradually to the release of the land from burdens which the owners by confiscation had undertaken to bear, and it was only another step in the same direction when the aristocracy discovered that the money paid by the people in transfer of the burdens upon land could as easily be spent upon the younger sons of aristocracy. The Church and the Army were very soon turned into two institutions suited to the relief of the aristocracy out of elbows; and the Navy would probably have shared the same fate, had it not been that aristocrats have never liked sea-sickness; and the bar and physic would also have been absorbed, but that the practice of these professions demanded brains that the order could not supply. This exclusive possession of the good things which the Crown and the Constitution were made to yield, were broken in upon at last, and the middle classes entered into joint possession—and there we rest. The Reform Act of 1832 was a great advance, but it fell short of justice; and the Reform Act of 1867 fell short of equity. We have never shaken off aristocracy in the counties, nor have we got rid of plutocracy in the towns. The cardinal vice of the representation of the people so far has been this—that it has been the representation of poor men by rich men, under conditions which made it impossible for poor men to succeed, unless they were adventurers, prepared to do the work of rich men; and hence all the laws have been made under a bias which tends always in one direction—the narrow, restrictive ideas of the aristocracy, tempered only by the competition of the plutocrats, who, if they can be satisfied, are only too ready to make common cause with the aristocracy. One class asks and obtains compensation for a cattle plague which endangers rent; the other asks for security in the form of a law which is called "besetting." "Claw me; and I'll claw you," is the rule which is acted upon from a sense of mutual danger.

There is a great gulf fixed between rich and poor, but there is even a deeper gulf fixed between the idle and the industrious. We do not realize how much of this has been produced by our political antecedents, but in all the great issues which are before us to-day we may trace the influence of bad legislation, and what is equally, if not more, to be noted, the absence of good laws, such as would have been made by a just and impartial system of representation. The people who live by labor in the counties have no representation at all. They are supposed to be represented through the farmers and the shopkeepers, who respectively pay as little for labor, and take as

much as they can get in the prices they ask for the few articles of food and clothing the laborer can buy. In towns the artisan has the right to vote under conditions that forbid him to make a free choice, for he is asked to select one or two gentlemen merely because they are rich, and are able to please themselves as to whether they call themselves Liberals or Conservatives. Forty years of experience of both parties since 1832 has shown us this—that it matters little which is in power, for, after forty years, we still find ourselves in the wilderness, with no prospect of the Canaan of our hopes. An honest House of Commons would not have listened to a lawyer whose political hopes are confined to the Solicitor-Generalship, and after that the bench, when he sought to deny the obligation of borough and county rates to pay the legitimate expenses of elections. It is obvious that the only object of such a prohibition was to exclude the working classes of this country from the right to elect men of their own order to the House of Commons. It is asked that a workingman, if he stands as a candidate, shall pay over his share of the expenses—an easy matter to his competitors, who are all rich, and who desire to buy, or, at least, to pay their way into the best club in London, for the House of Commons is "the rich man's club," in a sense which is not political. The House of Commons is intimately interlaced with the social purposes of the upper classes; it is the "open sesame" of the cave of the Forty Thieves, and the social treasures which lie beyond the threshold attract the eye of the vulgar rich who have made fortunes by beer, or soap, or petroleum, or shares in the companies they have got up or let down, or in the markets which they have rigged. It is lawful to rig the market, to make a fictitious price for shares; and it is equally lawful to "beset" a company, to run it down, and to ruin thousands of widows and orphans; to "bull," and to "bear," but it is unlawful to do any of these things if the subject of them happens to be connected with labor. "This is a wonderful country for justice," as Sam Weller said; for there is only one law for rich and for poor; but—and everything depends upon the but—there are two modes of administering it. "Mon do not gather grapes from thorns, nor figs from thistles," and, therefore, we do not get what we have a right to expect from our so-called representatives, if we take their promises as trustworthy; but we do get what we may expect if we take their connection with the Society as an index of the future. The instincts of the rich and of the expectant of profit are naturally allied in the purchase of land, and the lower classes are as remorseless as the lords, but which they employ for the coercion of labor, as they make themselves think labor is remorseless to them. We have come to this pass: that each class has lost the confidence of the other, and now, like Hal-o'-the-Wynd, each fights for his own hand.

The exact conditions of the fight are yet all in favor of the upper classes, with one exception—they have numbers against them. The working classes have only to be united in one general election, daring to disregard party cries, and the battle is won. They must determine that the people who live by labor shall either be represented by their own class, or shall refuse to be represented at all. The spectacle of a dozen working men entertain the House of Commons would disenchant that house, would disillusion society, and create a new and salutary feeling of respect in the minds of the holders of property looking for the usurious interest which only trade now cares for. The spectacle of the working classes, where they cannot obtain candidates of their own order, refusing to vote for party candidates, would also strike terror into the hearts of both parties—that they had been found out, and found wanting. The House of Commons could not go on for a session under an election by a minority of the people; it would cease to be representative if it was composed only of rising lawyers, army officers, and push-

ing professional politicians. There is only one hope of labor, and it lies in the alteration of the spirit of legislation, which experience has shown is only to be attained by an invasion of the social pact which now gives law to the people. It is this spirit which now supplies sentences of six weeks' imprisonment for working men for breach of labor contracts, which to the middle classes are only punished by civil actions for damages and the payment of such a fine as the jury may award. A mistake in judgment, an error in manner by a working man, is visited by the cropping of his hair and association with thieves. This is considered justice—by Society. In the counties, where no laborer is allowed even to see inside a polling-booth, the same provision is made if he snares a hare or shoots a pheasant—creates so sacred in the eyes of English Brahmins that they may not be touched by the profane hands of the vulgar, nor eaten by plebeian teeth. The Scotch farmers are just now showing what working men should do. They are electing men who will vote against the law of hypothec and the Game-laws, and they will not listen to either Whigs or Tories until they pledge themselves distinctly to the views of the farmers. Men who are faithful to themselves soon obtain the agents they need; and so Sir George Balfour enters the House of Commons unopposed, and Mr. Barclay will probably beat his judicial opponent. If working men wish to succeed, they must imitate the Scotch farmers, and revolt against the parties which now unitedly misrepresent them. The social revolt is working under-ground, and the day, we may hope, is not far distant when it will be felt in the only circle which has hitherto escaped its influence.—*Lloyd's News.*

SCIENTIFIC AND MECHANICAL POSSIBILITIES.

Gas wells in various localities indicate that immense deposits of coal oil and petroleum exist in the earth, which may be at great depths; and New England may yet count it among her treasures, and large and enduring deposits, which few now dream of, be found. We may burn it for fuel as well as for illumination; by its use steamboats may cross the ocean, and locomotives fly by its aid. We are just beginning to learn the power of this new servant that man has awakened from the sleep of ages. The country also abounds in limestone, sandstone and bituminous shales, which, by scientific and mechanical aid, may afford an almost never ending supply of this wonderful material.

And notwithstanding the seemingly advanced state of the means of transportation, it is inadequate to the present wants of man. Steamboats and railroads do not even meet the wants of our own country. New England and the Middle States want Western and Southern products; and vice versa, the West and South want Eastern products at cheaper rates. Can the possibility of aerial navigation be doubted? Every year is bringing us nearer the practical solution of this great problem.

If a light motive power is required, science may yet discover a cheap method of separating aluminum from our clay, some of which contains as much as 30 pounds of this most wonderful material to the ton. This metal is three times stronger than steel, and as light as chalk. On the very surface of the earth, we daily walk over a material from which the machinery for a motive power may be constructed of about one-tenth the weight of iron or steel. In the oxygen of the atmosphere is abundant fuel which may yet be used to rarify the air for a motive power; other powers also exist in Nature, which will, no doubt, yet become the servants of man. One discovery opens vast and expansive avenues, leading to unexplored regions where magnificent creative Nature holds in store rich treasures which the scientific hand may drag from her dark arcana.

He who engages his mind, his time, or his fortune in the development of scientific means for bringing forth from Nature's rich stores that which will add to the enjoyment, happiness and comfort of man is entitled to the greatest honors that can possibly be bestowed by an appreciative world.—*Scientific American.*