

The St. John Standard

Published by The Standard Limited, 32 Prince William Street, St. John, N. B. Canada. H. V. MACKINNON, Manager and Editor.
 THIS STANDARD IS REPRESENTED BY
 Henry de Clergue,, Mallers Bldg., Chicago
 Louis Kiebaum,, West 44th St., New York
 Freeman & Co.,, 9 Fleet St., London, Eng.

ST. JOHN, N. B. MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 15, 1919

THIS WEEK'S CONFERENCE.

The conference of representatives of employers and workers which opens at Ottawa this week marks the formal recognition of the fact that the relations of capital and labor have become a public question of first importance. It is the logical outcome of the inquiry conducted by the Commission on Industrial Relations which toured Canada in the early summer; an effort to give practical expression to the recommendations embodied in the report of the aforesaid commission.

Whatever may be the result of the conference it must be recognized that neither the government nor a central organization at Ottawa can of themselves deal effectively with that troublesome series of problems found up in what is loosely called the labor question. If we are to have orderly progress we must have a getting-together locally, of representatives of employers and employed, determined to face fully and frankly the facts of the situation, ready to recognize mutual rights and reciprocal responsibilities, prepared to subordinate selfish interests to public welfare, and unafraid to take issue with traditional usages and vested interests in definite and candid efforts to make life better worth living for the whole of the people. The fact that here in Eastern Canada we have so far had no serious labor troubles is not an excuse for an ostrich attitude to a problem which in other places is causing grave concern, and which even here is bound sooner or later to demand an answer. Industry here has been and is reasonably active, and opportunities of employment much better than in some other parts of the country. The workers are better off than they were a decade or so ago, but it does not follow that they are wholly content. In the past year there has been more organizing work among the workers of this province than in the previous ten years. St. John today is full of active trade unions, and the organization is spreading to smaller communities in the Province. In the circumstances there is obvious need of a local organization, in which employers and workmen may discuss questions at issue before they develop an acute form.

Unfortunately in Canada the disposition is to throw the responsibility for dealing with most questions of importance upon the government, and to ignore the possibilities of local action by the citizenship. Some time ago the Federal government adopted a measure empowering the mayors of cities and representatives of Boards of Trade and Labor Unions to conduct local investigations into the cost of living, but so far as we know not one city in Canada availed itself of the power to determine whether its people were suffering from profiteering. Now the government has undertaken to deal on its own account with profiteering, but whatever results it may obtain it is idle to suppose that a reduction of prices will answer all desires. The Board of Commerce will not solve the housing question, nor will it remove the uncertainty of employment, which is probably one of the greatest causes of labor's discontent. Labor is everywhere asking a greater share in the enjoyments of life. Employers would get together and prepare their answer to that question. If they cannot give what may be demanded they should be prepared to show why they cannot do so.

DREDGING THE BERTHS.

The Telegraph says "Commissioner Bullock said yesterday that the government was already making plans to call for tenders for the dredging of the harbor. This is the first development in the matter of Harbor Commission that has come to light at City Hall from Ottawa for a considerable time." Here is what actually happened. A couple of weeks ago, previous to going to Ottawa to attend the Parliamentary session, Mr. Wignmore, realizing from previous experience at City Hall that a number of the berths in the harbor must be in need of cleaning up, spoke to Commissioner Bullock on the matter and offered to use his influence to have this necessary work done as promptly as possible. Mr. Bullock advised him that no such work was required, as the berths were in excellent condition. Mr. Wignmore had an impression that such was not the case, for work of this nature had not been done for several seasons, and in the ordinary course of things a certain amount of deposit would be found in these berths, rendering them unsatisfactory for this year's business. In possession of this knowledge, Mr. Wignmore waited, and was approached some time later by Mr. Bullock with the request that he see the authorities at Ottawa and endeavor to have this necessary cleaning up done promptly.

The Commissioner had in the meantime undergone a change of opinion and had discovered his job to be necessary. Mr. Wignmore went to Ottawa, saw the proper persons, and has apparently succeeded in having the affair put through. The berths will be cleaned up immediately. They would not have been cleaned had the matter been left to our City Commissioners, who, not only failed to make the proper representations to the Federal authorities, but were found to be in ignorance of the necessity for such work.

THE WILDONES ELECTION.

Arthur Henderson's election in Wildones was an undoubted triumph for the Labor party in England, and it raises a pretty problem for Lloyd George. The former Minister made his light on the question of the nationalization of the mines, but it was generally recognized that the result of the election would have an important influence upon the question whether he would pursue the policy of constitutional action or resort to direct action—the general strike with all its possibilities of social disorder. A pronounced victory in the political field would, it was felt, strengthen the hands of the Labor Party against the young men in a hurry who wish to use the stronger method of direct action to force the government to carry out their programme, and that probably explains in some measure why there was such a turn over in the vote of the constituency. In defiance of the declaration of Mr. McLean, House Leader of the Liberals, that his party would not accept the policy of the nationalization of the mines, the Wildones Liberal Association decided to support Henderson, and the London Express, a Unionist organ, generally supposed to be controlled by Bonar Law and Lord Beaverbrook, expressed the hope that Henderson would win. Moreover, Mr. Fisher had great difficulty getting Unionist speakers to help him. These circumstances may discount the importance of the victory from a labor standpoint, which otherwise, combined with other labor victories since the general elections last fall, would augur the very serious possibility of a Labor government in Britain in a short time. Nevertheless Lloyd George, who while consenting to government operations of some mines has flatly refused to carry out the recommendations of the last report of Justice Sankey's Commission in their entirety, will find it difficult to sidetrack the issue, on which the Trade Union Congress, representing about 5,000,000 men and women, has decided to ask the Premier to reconsider his decision and if he refuses another convention is to be called to consider a course of action. Commenting on the possible course of action the assistant secretary of the Parliamentary Committee of the Trade Union Congress is reported to have said that the government would be given its choice between calling a general election in which the question of the nationalization of the mines would be the principal issue, or a general strike.

JUSTICE GONE WRONG.

On Friday last in Montreal an Italian who had murdered a railway employee was hanged for his crime. The executioner was one Ellis, who had conducted many similar affairs, and was not lacking in experience. The condemned man weighed one hundred and twenty-five pounds, and Ellis expressed the opinion that being of such light weight, the drop through the trap would not be sufficient to break his neck. In this he was right. The man's neck was not broken; he was cruelly choked to death. The trap was sprung at seven forty-five o'clock and at two minutes past nine, an hour and seventeen minutes after the attending physicians pronounced the man dead.

This is not punishment of crime. It is inhuman torture. The object of the death sentence is to remove from society one whose presence is regarded as dangerous, not to merely drag out the suffering of an offender who is surrendering his most precious possession. What must have been the feelings of those compelled to be in attendance at this affair, standing around for more than an hour, compelled to look, during all this time upon the death agonies of one who, whatever his crime may have been, deserved to be put out of his misery with the least possible delay. Hanging is obsolete. This horrible affair in Montreal should lead to an immediate revision of our criminal court laws, by which some less antiquated form of punishment may be provided. If a death sentence is to be imposed, let it be a death sentence and not an hour of torture.

The big game season commences today. We may anticipate the usual list of fatalities. This will continue so long as the authorities see fit to dis-

regard the murder of human beings by so-called sportsmen who are too careless to ascertain the nature of the object at which they fire. And we must also anticipate that mouse-meat, killed legally, a hundred miles away, will be on sale as usual in the city market this morning.

WHAT THEY SAY

Up-to-Date.
 Dallas News: The little pig that went to market in the old days now has descendants who spend all their time in the cold-storage plants.

Old Stuff.
 Bluegrass (Ky.) Clipper: Marriages in airplanes are quite the correct thing these days. It insures newspaper publicity. Likewise, we can remember the time when the home paper never failed to add an extra paragraph when the joyous couple stood up in the old buggy and the parson tied the knot.

His Immediate Worry.
 New York Sun: It has been estimated by British statisticians that the English coal supply will give out in about 900 years, the German supply in about 1,400 years and America's store of fuel in about 2,000 years. But that doesn't worry the property owner whose bins are empty and who has just read of a coal shortage threatening us this winter.

The Initiator.
 New York World: Readers of Napoleon I's sayings in his captivity will remember that most of his utterances began with, "If I had done," "If I had not done," "Only for this," "Only for that," "What I failed to see," or "What somebody else failed to see." Ludendorff and von Trepitz are not anywhere near St. Helena, but they are traversing the same ground that Napoleon covered in his last days.

Cape to Cairo.
 Baltimore Sun: In the era of up-building which is to succeed the years of destruction, few great projects will be of more profound international importance than this realized dream of Cecil Rhodes, to connect Cape Town with the Mediterranean. And while the startling idea of the aerial route is romantic, the construction of the railway through an incredible tangle of giant vegetation will be one of the great achievements of our era.

Getting After the Profiteers.
 Cleveland Plain Dealer: These are sorry days for men who have manipulated food supplies for their own profit. The tide of public sentiment is settling heavily against them. The people have neither mercy nor sympathy for them, and they are entitled to neither. Whatever his function in the handling of necessities, whether producer or middleman, the only policy which the public will accept is one of strict honesty and strict obedience to law.

The Innocence of the German People.
 New York Tribune: Experience proved that the German people were entirely innocent in their support of the war as long as they thought the war was going to be a profitable investment for them. Dr. Mahlon, in his diary, accurately described the spirit of the German masses, even of the radicals and Socialists, when he said that they would gladly go along with the Government while it was victorious, and would turn and rend Hohenzollernism only if the German armies were beaten.

In Disturbed Africa.
 Bulwain Chronicle: But the sanest nation on earth is not going to hand itself over to Bolshevism at the bidding of a few strike-organizing internationalists. Troops are being drafted to the disturbed districts, not to force sanity upon organized wrong-headedness, but to protect those who, by keeping the mines from destruction, are guarding the deluded strikers from what would otherwise be the permanent consequences of their suicidal acts. Those who, deliberately and unwittingly, are the enemies of British freedom, will be heard, urging the soldiers not to do their duty. The troops such as stood up against the direct tyranny of Prussia will not lend themselves to the late enemy's more round-about game.

A BIT OF VERSE

AID THE ERRING.
 As Life's steep thorny path we tread
 With perils girt on every side,
 If heedless from the narrow track
 A fellow traveler's foot should slide,
 Ere far he sink beyond our aid,
 Let us not fear our robes to soil,
 But kindly stoop and help him rise.

Dare we with callous heart unmoved,
 Coldly aloof self-righteous stand,
 And see him perish, on in scorn
 Pass by, nor lend a helping hand;
 We, who have kept the straight high road,
 By Heaven's sustaining grace alone
 Condemn him to the leper's fate,
 Or smite him with a cruel stone.

Or gloat upon the blighted fame
 And ruined prospects that portend
 One with the ruthless, ravening pack
 That turns a fallen mate to rend;
 Aye he might be adventurous, rash,
 Misguided, weak and wilful, yet,
 Could we have passed quiet scathless through
 Temptations that his course beset?

For the Great Father wise and just,
 Has formed us of the selfsame dust,
 With feeble wills and passions to soil,
 To stray from virtue's precepts known,
 Then shall we from ten thousand devils
 Freely absolved by mercy true,
 Sternly exact the paltry mite,
 To us from fellow sinner due.

Nay rather, to the erring lend
 A helping hand whenever we may,
 And lead the hapless wanderers back
 To wisdom's way and pleasant way,
 As to Himself the Master counts,
 The least sweet pity shown to them.
 And bright each rescued soul will stir
 Our exulting gladness.
 —Mrs. A. F. Calder,
 Peterboro, Ont.

Little Benny's Note Book

BY LEE PAPE.

Last night while I was asleep a musketeer bit me on the nose because I had it sticking out of the covers, and I woke up to rub the bump, and while I was going to sleep again I heard the staid skreek down stairs as if somebody was coming up slow, me thinking, G, berglars, gosh, G, holy smoke.

And I hesitated hard as I could, and every once in a while there was another skreek, me thinking, in going down and tell pop, gosh, holy smoke, G.

And I snuck out in the hall and listened and I could still hear the skrecks, and I slid down the banisters so I wouldn't make any skrecks myself, everything being dark as anything, and I went in pop and mas' room and stood by pope side of the bed, saying, Pop, pop, pop, which nobody didn't answer, and I sed, Hay, pop, pop, skrecks on the stairs.

Which jest then ma woke up, saying, Who is that, is that you, Benny, wat on erth are you whispering about at this time of the morning? Theres skrecks on the steps, I sed.

Who? Wat? sed ma. And jest then a man came in the room, me thinking, G, hear he is. Meeting the berglar, ony who was it but pop, ma saying, Well, Willyum Potts, its a wonder you wouldn't stay out all nite.

Wats you got in your hands, pop, your shoes? I sed, G, pop, I thart you was a berglar making all those skrecks, and I came down to tell you, and ma woke up.

Very brille of you, very brilliant, very smart, now suppose you go back to bed and think up some more dammed, sed pop. And he gave me a crack some place with one of the shoes he was carrying and I quick ran up and got in bed agen and the first thing I knew I was asleep.

A BIT OF FUN

A little success is apt to make a small man dizzy.

The perfect husband always belongs to the other woman.

Schoolmaster—Now, Tommy, can you tell me who was Abraham's father?

Tommy—Please, sir, which one?

Schoolmaster—Why, he had only one father.

Tommy—I thought, sir, you told us "he slept with his four fathers" (fore-fathers).

No woman with a new hat enjoys riding in a closed automobile.

The sooner some men get married the longer they have to repent.

He—I can't afford to marry for five years. Will you wait for me?

She—Certainly if no one else marries me before that.

Mistress—I am not quite satisfied with your references, whether Applicant—Nayther am I, mum; but they're the best I could get.

Augustus (delightedly)—So your sister really expected me to call tonight? How sweet of her.

Willie—Yes. She said when she broke all for one thing, replied the old grocer in the corner, "I'm trying to keep out of his way as much as possible."

"I see," said Crittiek, "you painted this on one of the other days."

Real Help.

"What are you doing to help your fellowman?" asked the reformer.

"Well, in his diary," replied the old grocer in the corner, "I'm trying to keep out of his way as much as possible."

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ABE MARTIN



What's become o' th' ole fashioned girl that waited till th' right feller came along? You don't have t' borrow trouble if you make your own booze.

stated that the union's headquarters has notified the local strikers that they will not receive strike pay, as they were advised by the chief executive against declaring a strike unless they gave the necessary notice, and made the walkout a legal one according to the union rules.

"That's my last canvas," said D'Auber; "I started that six months ago. You see, some days I paint away feverishly, forcefully, absorbedly, while on other days I can't paint at all."

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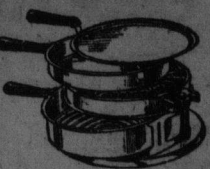
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Nursing Sister

Casswell Honore

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Gagetown, Sept. 12.—In the last light of Canadian sisters recommended for especially good work in the C. M. C. appears the name of Nursing Sister E. J. Casswell, Granville Special Hospital, Buxton, who is still an active native of Gagetown to win well-deserved honors overseas. Going with the Loyal Unit, she has served since 1915, in England and France the greater part of the time with Granville Special Hospital, where she treats cases requiring long periods of treatment. This hospital, which first at Ramsgate, was later moved Buxton on account of air raids.

Sister Casswell, who is a daughter of Dr. and Mrs. J. A. Casswell, is the wife of Capt. R. Hamilton, M. of Regina, with whom she is spending the summer in Toronto and vicinity.

That her good work has thus earned recognition will be heard with pleasure by hosts of friends, especially perhaps, by the soldiers who cannot but feel her cheerful, comradely influence.

Rev. Dr. and Mrs. Raymond, who have been at the Kennedy Hotel, St. John, for the month of August, left on Saturday for Woodstock, where they will visit relatives before proceeding to their home in Toronto.