

public recognition among us of the right to organize implies a confidence in the intelligence and honesty of the masses; it affords them an opportunity of training themselves in the school of self-government and the art of self-discipline; it takes away from them every excuse and pretext for the formation of dangerous societies; it exposes to the light of public scrutiny the constitution and laws of the association and the deliberations of the members; it inspires them with a sense of their responsibility as citizens, and with a laudable desire of meriting the approval of their fellow-citizens. "It is better," as Matthew Arnold observes, "that the body of the people, with all its faults, should act for itself, and control its own affairs, than that it should be set aside as ignorant and incapable, and have its affairs managed for it by a so-called superior class."

God forbid that the prerogatives which we are maintaining for the working classes should be construed as implying the slightest invasion of the rights and autonomy of employers. There should not and need not be any conflict between labour and capital, since both are necessary for the public good, and the one depends on the co-operation of the other. A contest between the employer and the employed is as unreasonable and as hurtful to the social body as a war between the head and the hands would be to the physical body. Such an antagonism recalls the fabled conspiracy on the part of the members of the body against the stomach. Whoever tries to sow discord between the capitalist and the labourer is the enemy of social order. Every measure should therefore be discountenanced that sustains the one at the expense of the other. Whoever strives to improve the friendly relations between the proprietors and the labour unions, by suggesting the effectual means of diminishing and even removing the causes of discontent, is a benefactor to the community. With this sole end in view we venture to touch this delicate subject, and if these lines contribute in some small measure to strengthen the bond of union between the enterprising men of capital and the sons of toil, we shall be amply rewarded.

That "the labourer is worthy of his hire" is the teaching of Christ as well as the dictate of reason itself. He is entitled to a fair and just compensation for his services. He deserves something more, and that is kind and considerate treatment. There would be less ground for complaint against employers if they kept in view the golden maxim of the Gospel: "Whatsoever you would that men should do unto you, do ye also to them."

Our sympathies for those in our employ, whether in the household, the mines, or the factory, are wonderfully quickened by putting ourselves in their place, and asking ourselves how we would wish to be treated under similar circumstances. We should remember that they are our fellow-beings; that they have feelings like ourselves; that they are stung by a sense of injustice, repelled by an overbearing spirit, and softened by kindness; and that it largely rests with us whether their hearts and homes are to be clouded with sorrow or radiant with joy.

Surely men do not amass wealth for the sole pleasure of counting their bonds and contemplating their gold in secret. No! They acquire it in the hope that it will contribute to their rational comfort and happiness. Now, there is no enjoyment in life so pure and so substantial as that which springs from the reflection that others are made content and happy by our benevolence. And we are speaking here, not of the benevolence of gratuitous bounty, but of fair-dealing tempered with benignity. Considerate Kindness is like her sister Mercy:

"It droppeth as the gentle rain from heaven  
Upon the place beneath; it is twice bless'd;  
It blesseth him that gives, and him that takes;  
'Tis mightiest in the mightiest; it becomes  
The throned monarch better than his crown."

We are happy to say that commercial princes answering the description of the English bard do not wholly belong to an ideal and imaginary world, but are easily found in our centres of commerce; and if the actual condition of the average wage-worker in this country is a safe criterion by which we are to estimate the character and public spirit of American employers, we believe that an impartial judgment will concede to the majority of them the honourable title of

just, fair-dealing, and benevolent men. In our visits to England, Scotland, Ireland and the Continent of Europe, we have studied the condition of the labouring classes, and we are persuaded that the American workman is better paid and fed, better clothed and housed, and usually better instructed, at least in the elements of useful knowledge, than his brethren across the Atlantic.

Instances of genuine sympathy and beneficence exercised by the heads of business concerns towards those in their employ could be easily multiplied. Some time ago the head of a Baltimore manufacturing company received a message announcing the total destruction by a flood of his uninsured mills, involving a loss of three hundred and sixty-five thousand dollars. On receiving the news, his first exclamation was: "What a loss to so many families! Here are two hundred men thrown out of employment!" Of the personal injury he sustained, he uttered not a word.

But while applauding the tender feelings and magnanimity of so many capitalists, we are constrained in the interests of truth, humanity, and religion, to protest against the heartless conduct of others whose number, for the honour of our country, is, we hope, comparatively small.

When men form themselves into a business corporation, their personality is overshadowed, and their individual responsibility is lessened. And for this reason, many will assent in their corporate capacity to measures from which the dread of public opinion, or the dictates of conscience, would prompt them as individuals to shrink. But perhaps the injury is all the more keenly felt by the victims of oppression when inflicted by a corporation, as it is easier to obtain redress from one responsible proprietor than from a body of men, most of whom may be unknown or inaccessible to the sufferers.

No friend of his race can contemplate without painful emotions those heartless monopolists exhibiting a grasping avarice which has dried up every sentiment of sympathy, and a sordid selfishness which is deaf to the cries of distress. Their sole aim is to realize large dividends without regard to the paramount claims of justice and Christian charity. These trusts and monopolies, like the car Juggernaut, crush every obstacle that stands in their way. They endeavour—not always, it is alleged, without success—to corrupt our national and state legislatures and municipal councils. They are so intolerant of honest rivalry as to use unlawful means in driving from the market all competing industries. They compel their operatives to work for starving wages, especially in mining districts and factories, where protests have but a feeble echo and are easily stifled by intimidation. In many places the corporations are said to have the monopoly of stores of supply, where exorbitant prices are charged for the necessaries of life; bills are contracted which the workmen are unable to pay from their scanty wages, and their forced insolvency places them entirely at the mercy of their taskmasters. To such Shylocks may well be applied the words of the apostle: "Go to, now, ye rich men; weep and howl for the miseries which shall come upon you . . . you have stored up for yourselves wrath against the last days. Behold the hire of the labourers, . . . which by fraud hath been kept back by you, crieth, and the cry of them hath entered into the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth."

In the beginning of the present century Mr. Pitt uttered in the House of Commons the following words which reveal the far-seeing mind of that great statesman:

"The time will come when manufacturers will have been so long established, and the operatives not having any other business to flee to, that it will be in the power of any one man in town to reduce the wages: and all the other manufacturers must follow. Then when you are goaded with reductions and willing to flee your country, France and America will receive you with open arms; and then farewell to our commercial state. If ever it does arrive to this pitch, Parliament (if it be not then sitting) ought to be called together, and if it cannot redress your grievances, its power is at an end. Tell me not that Parliament cannot; it is omnipotent to protect."

How forcibly this language applies now to our own country, and how earnestly the warning should be heeded by the constituted authorities! The supreme law of the land should be