

of this statement as I will point out hereafter is very doubtful.

At first sight it might seem that a combination such as this is a violation of what are vaguely called free trade principles, but a moment's reflection will show that as the united action of the men is voluntary, the principles of free trade have usually nothing to do with it. Nor is the cause of this combination among the men very far to seek. The employers of labour are a comparatively small class, each of them dealing with considerable numbers of labourers, and often a single employer will have very large numbers of labourers under him. Sir Morton Peto for example, a few years ago had 30,000 men employed, and factories where from 500 to 2000 hands are at work are of common occurrence. The employers being thus comparatively few, are either directly or indirectly combined upon the labour question, and for long before Trades Unions were thought of they were in the habit of fixing scales or tariff of wages in their respective trades. No doubt the Trades Unions among the men have helped to increase the combination among the employers, but history only confirms what might have been expected and shows that the workers only followed the lead of the capitalists.

There is a further reason, however, for the Trades Unions, not only are the workers many, but they are poor. It is unfortunately very rarely that they have much ability or much inclination to save. Their capital is mainly represented by their household furniture and wearing apparel, and they are thus unable, unless in combination to stand out long against the terms which the masters might offer. In considering the elements which enter into prices, and especially of the price of labour, the keenness of the competition between the buyers and sellers, the employers and the employed has almost as much to do with the result as the extent of the relative supply and demand. To use a homely phrase, the person who can afford to wait will have the best of the bargain, and undoubtedly the workmen are, as a rule, the persons least able so to wait. Perhaps the best proof of the beneficial action of Trades Unions is to be found in the fact that whatever advance the men get they can retain. It is not frequently the case that the rate of wages in any particular trade is reduced. No doubt this is partly to be ascribed to the great and rapid progress of trade; but it is also in part due to the unwillingness of the masters to advance wages till the screw has got a slight turn.

There is undoubtedly a great prejudice in many minds against Trades Unions, as their name has been mixed up with some appalling tragedies. But it is worthy of note that these have been mainly confined to one or two localities, and have been much less frequent as the societies have become more powerful. Indeed it would probably be found upon examination that the majority of these outrages had really not much to do with Trades Unions properly so called; and even cases of revenge by a small lot of workmen against their employers for fancied injuries, which they felt themselves powerless to redress, owing to the want of Trades Unions. This is indeed no excuse for the crimes, but it is at least pleasant to know that as the power of these Unions increases such outrages become less and less frequent.

Probably the best founded objection is that they discourage individual excellence among the workmen, and by preventing the best men from getting a proportionate reward for their labour, keep them from exercising their skill. There is undoubtedly great differences among labourers, and a familiar instance of this is the case of Benjamin Franklin, who to the end of his life prided himself on having being able, as a compositor, to do as much work as two men; and Hugh Miller, in his "Schools and Schoolmasters," tells us of a stone-mason who was able to do as much work as three ordinary workmen. It is worth while therefore to examine what truth there is in this allegation.

The men are in the habit of replying that the rates of wages which they fix are a minimum for a fair day's wages, and that by fixing a pretty high standard they keep out incompetent men and bad workmen. They allege also, and with some show of reason, that in this way, and by their opposition to piece work, they really prevent bad work being passed off on the public. For example they state that in the building trade the work is not nearly so well done when the men are employed by the piece as by the day; and it is a very common stipulation by parties going to put up buildings that all the workmen shall be employed by the day. In fact the workmen say that they establish a fair standard of work, and by so doing prevent

the employer of labour from passing off inferior work upon the public, who would otherwise know very little about it. They further argue that their rates are a minimum, and that they do not object to employers giving more. It must also be borne in mind that the best workmen are naturally made from time to time foremen, and that the rules of Trades Unions do not generally refer to foremen.

It cannot, however, be doubted that many of the Trades Unions really do discourage a man from doing more work than his fellows. Their view is that there is a certain amount of work to be done, and that each man should do his proportion and no more. They would argue that the man who would and could surpass his fellows, was really taking the bread out of the mouth of some other tradesman, and such a man would be discouraged, and prevented from thus excelling the others. This action of the Unions, however, refers rather to the quantity of work done than to the quality, and there would probably be no great jealousy of the man who got a higher rate of wages for doing a higher class of work than ordinary. It is also to be noted that a considerable difference exists in the action of different Unions, and that among some of them there does not seem to be much attention paid to this point. Still, however, the general feeling is what I have indicated; and although good men do rise above the surface as foremen and in other ways, the general tendency of Trades Unions is to keep all the men at one uniform standard. That this is in itself an evil cannot be doubted, nor does it seem that the allegation of the men that it prevents inferior work being palmed off by unscrupulous masters upon the public, is a sufficient answer. In many cases, probably that of building, the contracts could be made by the public so that each man would be paid by the day; and whilst this would prevent the evils of piece-work, it need not prevent the superior workman receiving a higher rate of remuneration, and thus putting forth all skill. The real defence of Trades Unions is to be found in the broad fact that with the present relations of capital and labour they are unavoidable; that they have largely benefitted the working classes, and have, upon the whole, mitigated the bitter feeling between employer and employed which in former years, led to revolting crimes.

The following are the returns from the Bank of England, compared with those of the preceding week, and same time last year:

	May 15, 1887.	May 8, 1887.	May 16, 1886.
Public Deposits.....	7,524,000	7,408,000	5,986,000
Private Deposits.....	17,518,000	17,536,000	18,621,000
Government Securities.....	12,886,000	12,886,000	10,887,000
Other Securities.....	19,269,000	19,221,000	80,943,000
Notes in Circulation.....	23,136,000	23,147,000	26,121,000
Bullion.....	19,245,000	19,180,000	12,324,000
Reserve.....	11,061,000	10,984,000	1,208,000

Returns from the Bank of France at same periods:

	May 15, 1887.	May 8, 1887.	May 16, 1886.
Francs.	Francs.	Francs.	Francs.
Treas'y Balance.....	85,206,000	76,605,000	97,282,000
Private Accts.....	310,675,000	325,925,000	305,868,000
Commercial Bills.....	615,560,000	626,380,000	700,369,000
Advances.....	210,298,000	196,088,000	154,480,000
Notes in Circulation.....	1,028,756,000	1,028,756,000	884,372,000
Cash.....	799,784,000	790,984,000	514,687,000

May 18, 1887.

H.

USELESS AND DANGEROUS.

THE Toronto papers have accounts of a race which took place recently between the "City of Toronto" and the "Rothesay Castle," rival steamers between Toronto and Niagara, and which was the occasion of not a little excitement. Now we do not object to fast steamboats—on the contrary, they are a necessity of the age—but we do object very strongly to the highly dangerous practice of attempting to obtain from a vessel propelled by steam, a higher rate of speed than can be procured by the use of her boilers in the ordinary way. The number of accidents resulting from the racing propensities of steamboat captains has, especially on the Western Rivers, been very great, and generally attended with a cruel loss of life. The bursting of a boiler, or the burning of a vessel at a distance from aid, are accidents which usually involve the destruction either by fire or water of a great many lives, and anything which serves to unduly increase the ordinary risks of travelling, which are quite heavy enough, should, so far as the law is capable, be promptly put down by legal means. The writer has a very vivid re-

collection of a race which occurred some years ago between two boats on the Mississippi River, on one of which he was a passenger. The other, the "Ocean Spray," took fire through the careless use of turpentine, employed to produce a more intense heat, was immediately covered with flame from stem to stern, and within thirty minutes was burned to the water's edge. Fortunately for the passengers, of whom there were about three hundred on board, the boat, which was quite near shore, was at once headed for it, and there being deep water, was run close enough to permit most of the people to jump on land. A good many, however, were cut off by the fire, and were forced to take the chances of escape by trusting themselves to the impetuous current. Most of these were picked up, but twelve or fourteen found watery graves. Had an accident like this happened at a distance from land, even but little greater, the calamity would have been of appalling proportions. We earnestly hope a stop will at once be put to the practice of racing. We should be sorry to see it introduced amongst our lake and river steamers, which hitherto have been exceedingly fortunate; but if permitted by proprietors, it will be sure to end in some disaster that will cause the pound of cure to be applied when the ounce of precaution would have been less costly and infinitely better.

GOLD MINING INTELLIGENCE.

SINCE our last report, the Richardson Mine has continued, from various causes, to occupy a considerable share of public attention. Certain newspapers have of late taken very great pains to create the impression, that the discovery of gold in Madoc is—if not entirely a humbug and a swindle—at least a grossly exaggerated affair, which will finally end in a complete "fizzle." The Toronto Leader appears inclined to adopt this idea and in its issue of Friday last, quoted the following "with reference to the mud," from the Buffalo Courier of the preceding day:—

"The gentlemen appointed to appraise and assay the mud and quartz seized by Collector Kelly at Charlottetown a few days since, have made their report, or so far as relates to the mud. This is the mixture brought from the Richardson mine, in Madoc township, in Canada. The appraisers, from a trifle over a pound of the mud, found about two grains of gold, and they estimate that the yield will be from \$2 to \$2.50 per ton. The test of the quartz is not yet completed."

On the following day, Mr. Charles Dawbarn, Secretary of the Madoc Gold Mining Company of Toronto, addressed a letter to the editor of the Leader, in which, after referring to the above paragraph, he pointed out that—"the above yield of two grains per pound would amount to \$135 per ton, instead of \$2 to \$2.50 as stated by the Courier," and requested the favour of the correction of so palpable an error.

It will be seen by the annexed, from the Rochester Express, that what our Toronto contemporary on Saturday was then pleased to term "matter" instead of "mud," is, at any rate, very valuable, if not of extraordinary richness:—

"Fabulous stories were told of the value of this mud and quartz, an accurate neighbour putting the figures at \$100,000 or over. But we made no mention of the case, preferring to await an investigation upon the valuation of the articles seized. Samples have been given to competent assayers, who yesterday concluded their test, and report that the mud yields one grain of gold to the pound, and that the yield of the quartz will be the same, or allowing for wastage, \$250 per ton. The total weight of the quartz and mud is 1,812 pounds, and consequently the value of the whole is about \$225. This is in paying quantities, and if the mud did come from the Richardson mine, and has not been salted (that is, fixed up by preparation, as was the custom in olden times) the mine will pay to work. It will not pay at the assay our correct neighbour gives, viz., \$2 per ton."

On this subject, the Trenton Courier of the 22nd inst., furnishes the following:—

"Mr. Lombard says, so far the test is satisfactory, being a partial one, but as soon as he arrives in Rochester, (he was then on his way there) he would open one of the barrels in the presence of the principal bankers, and show that it is worth at least \$250,000 to the ton. He showed a piece of gold worth \$21, taken from half a pound of quartz."

In the conflicting statements as to the yield of gold per ton from the Richardson mine we have a striking illustration of the truth that "extremes meet." If it be equally true that "there is but a step from the sublime to the ridiculous," it will be hard to find a longer one than from the magnificent "\$250,000" to the diminutive "\$2.50!"

The prompt payment within the stipulated seven days by the Belleville Company of \$85,000 into the Commercial Bank, subject to the order of the Court of Chancery, will probably convince all but those who are determined to be sceptical, that they are prosecuting their claim to the mine in good faith, and that they are well convinced that there is no doubt as to its richness.

The continued wet weather—for it rained almost without intermission from Monday to Thursday—has not been without its effect on travel, and there has been consequently some falling off in the number of new arrivals. This led for a few days to active competition between the rival stage lines to the front, and Mr. Blanchard, of Picton, has withdrawn his vehicles, but those still running are generally well filled. This diminution in the number of visitors leads some persons to think that the "excitement" is dying out, and will