

## OUR BOARDING HOUSE

Reflections on Current Events by the Boarders.

"Canada isn't much of a country," said Brown, "as compared with the United States, but there is one thing at least in which we can not only beat the people south of us, but every other nation on the face of the earth bar none, and that is the unblushing way in which Canadian politicians of both sides rob the people. The investigation at Ottawa proves our Public Works Department a perfect boodling machine, run in the interest of men who, had they remained in their own country, would have long since been hung or else placed in jail, but who here hobnob with members of Parliament and responsible Ministers of the Crown who shape the destiny of the nation. It is proved beyond doubt that the contractors for the Quebec harbor works have at different times paid sums varying from five to thirty thousand dollars to 'our friends' at Ottawa. What was this money paid for, do you think? Men who are defaulters to the tune of fifty thousand dollars are not in the habit of parting with their money without receiving value in return. These men were contractors; some of them had graduated in boodling in a city which has become notorious for its raids on the people, and when we find cattle of this description paying large sums of money to secure contracts for public works the chances are a thousand to one that the people are being robbed. In England a Government that would tolerate abuses of this kind would be swept from power like chaff before the wind, but in Canada the electorate is either too ignorant or too indifferent to their own interests to take action."

"It ain't that," said Phil. "Politicians have so well succeeded in corrupting the free and independent citizen that he would sooner see the country robbed than have his party injured. Just as the Conservative party stands solidly by the Conservative boodlers now, just so solidly would the Liberal party stand by Liberal ones. If ever charges of boodling are made and investigations demanded of the conduct of any public man by any other public servant, don't make the mistake of imagining that it is done with a desire to serve the public. If you look beneath the surface you will find that what you took for honest patriotism is merely private pique or party spite, and the actions you credited to public spirit are the outcome of jealousies which exist among party leaders. However, when thieves fall out honest men may get a chance, and if these periodical boodling investigations have no other result than that of calling the attention of the people at large to the corruption and barefaced rascality of those in power, they will have done good. The time will come when governments as constituted at present, will be abolished, when the great men of the people will realize that they but hold the country in subjection in order to enable their friends to more effectively rob the people, and then the history of their venality and corruption, as compiled by the records of the investigations, will not be one of the least objections raised against them."

"That's all very well," said Gaskill, "but the Government is but a reflex of the electorate. An honest electorate would no more tolerate a corrupt government than a corrupt electorate would choose an honest one. The man who is elected to parliament by bought votes can not be found fault with for selling his own, and least of all by the man who sold himself in the first instance. The great trouble is that such a large number sell their birthright for a mess of pottage. If you wish to reform the government you will first have to reform the people. Among other things, you will have to teach them the responsibility of the franchise by framing and enacting a law which will compel

every man who has a vote to cast it, and which will severely punish him for neglecting to do so. You will have to have free and unsectarian schools, coupled with compulsory attendance, which will wean the people from the kind of superstition which prompts them to neglect their duty to themselves in this world in order to secure a reserve seat in the next—you must rid them of priestcraft by separating church and school. The Church, like the State, has ever been the subservient tool of capitalism, and it is worse than folly on the part of reformers to close their eyes to this fact. In defending the rights of labor we must strike at all our enemies under whatever guise they may appear, and anything that impedes the march of progress must be removed from her path."

BILL BLADES.

## THE K. OF L.

MAPLE LEAF ASSEMBLY.

The regular weekly meeting of Maple Leaf Assembly was held in their hall, McGill street. There was a large attendance of members, besides a number of visiting brethren. Applications for membership were read and referred to a special committee.

The report of the delegates to the Trades and Labor Council was adopted.

A bill for per capita tax from the Trades' Council was ordered to be paid.

An invitation from the Labor day committee to take part in the parade and picnic on that day was unanimously accepted.

Resolutions were adopted condemning the judgment of court in the case of Mrs. Flynn vs. the C. P. R., and ordered to be published in the press.

After some further business was transacted the meeting adjourned.

## MRS. JOSEPHINE PEARY.

The First Woman to go on an Arctic Expedition.

Engineer R. E. Peary, of the U.S. Navy, heads the Arctic expedition sent by the Philadelphia Academy of Sciences, and purposes to travel north through the interior of Greenland to the north pole, if Greenland extends that far. From previous experience he thinks there will be no difficulty in traveling over the inland ice. Of course his vessel, the Kite, will winter on the coast, and the interesting fact is that his wife will be in it, and perhaps go still further with her husband.

Josephine Diebitsh Peary, as she signs her name, laughs at the idea of danger and declares that there isn't a tittle of the hardship or peril that there is in tropical Africa, where many ladies have travelled, notably Lady Baker and Mrs. Holub. Not only will the party have abundance of provisions, such as is common in the Arctic regions, but will have all sorts of canned and evaporated fruits, condensed soups and jellies, materials for cake, and even such confections as will enable them to celebrate Christmas and other holidays in a fitting manner.

She is strong, fond of open air life and not afraid of hardships. In the near vicinity of her quarters live many Danish women of intelligence, chiefly the wives of whalers, who find life very pleasant except for the isolation. Her description of the dress she is to wear in the Arctic regions makes one sweat freely in this season just to read it. In the three months of daylight she expects to do a good deal of work, but in the three months of night little more than cook, eat, sled, read and play checkers and other games.

## THE COMPETITIVE SYSTEM

The Whole Matter in a Nutshell.

An employer of labor, engaged in manufacture, and whose name is withheld at his own request for excellent reasons, writes us as follows:

Permit me to assure you that there are numbers of employers as well as employees who thoroughly appreciate the evil of the present social system, but who must, nevertheless, play according to the rules in vogue or certainly lose the fight. It is not necessarily that human nature needs changing, or that employers are a naturally cruel species, distinct from the employed, but that the conditions are such that the most conscientious and liberal minded employer of to-day must have his work performed, not for what it is worth, ethically, but for what he can have it done for, as his competitors do!

Suppose our competitors pay \$10 per week for the services of a certain mechanic; what does it signify if all but our competitors agree that he and his fellow-craftsmen ought to get \$15? Can we hope to edge our way into the jam by paying \$15?

If the labor organizations would only take

the broad and logical view of all these points they would find many employers in full sympathy with them; but they must recognize the utter inconsistency of trying to compel Boston manufacturers to pay more than those of New York for a given amount of work upon an article which they all sell in the same market.

I am an ardent advocate of Nationalism and have my partners 'almost persuaded', and am perfectly willing and anxious to enter into a social system which will make the clouds of uncertainty of living at all, much less comfortably, a certainty—not only for myself but for my children—without its being dependent as it is now upon the amount of success I may have in fighting my fellow-men and the ability of my children to attain the spoils if successful.

Wishing the utmost success to the work of infusing a knowledge of the causes of and remedies for the fearful defects of the present social system,

I remain, &amp;c.

Our correspondent is unquestionably right in his views of the competitive system. His remarks, however, may usefully be supplemented by some kindred considerations.

Organized labor has an immediate purpose, which is to obtain better pay at a uniform rate of wages for all workers in the same branch of industry. It says to employers: "You may compete among yourselves if you so choose, but not to the detriment of your employees." It says to employees: "You shall not compete against each other; you must unite for mutual protection. Any worker who degrades his fellows and himself by accepting lower wages or working longer hours, or who refuses to elevate himself and his fellows by demanding, together with them, higher wages and shorter hours, shall be branded a 'scab' and treated as a pestiferous enemy."

Of course, conflicts ensue. If organized labor is strong enough to enforce its demands throughout an industry, and if at the same time employers persist in fighting each other, some of the latter must go to the wall and concentration of the industry is the result.

If organized labor is just strong enough to enforce its demands in some establishments only, the other establishments have an advantage which they use to destroy their competitors, and concentration of the industry is again the result.

If organized labor is weak, different rates of wages may prevail in the several establishments and the most favored employer drives his competitors out of the field. Again, concentration of the industry is the result.

Besides wages, other factors must be considered, such as superiority of capital, location, ability, etc., all operating in the same direction, to wit: self-destructive competition and concentration of industry.

Since concentration is the inevitable outcome of the competitive system under any condition that we may suppose, it is evident that all humane people should prefer the condition under which the least possible suffering will be endured by the masses while the process of transformation is going on. It is evident also that this condition is found in a strong organized labor, able to generally enforce its demands.

And this is also the condition under which labor at large—the masses of the people—can best and soonest become sufficiently intelligent to put an end to the capitalist system with its corrupt, despotic, political government, and replace it by the co-operative commonwealth with its honest, industrial, self-administration.—The People.

## A Peruvian Railway.

The Oroya road is a very remarkable piece of engineering work, executed perhaps not wisely but too well. The difficulties surmounted are enormous. The Constructor, an American, Henry Meiggs, used to say, "I was told, at certain arduous points, 'The line has to go there, and if we can't find a road for it, we'll haul the track from balloons.'" This remark illustrates the boldness and almost recklessness with which the line has been built; and even now, fine as the work is, it is in constant danger of destruction in many parts. Every year sections of the line, bridges and viaducts are swept away by floods and landslides which cannot be foreseen. A water spout bursts on a mountain peak, an immense volume of water, mud and boulders dashes down, and half an hour later all is calm again but the railway track has disappeared, or one of the bridges will be found twisted into a knot, half a mile away from its proper place. For this reason the line must always be very expensive and difficult to keep in repair. The working of it is also very expensive on account of the high price of coal, and the quantity wasted by the continuous firing required to force the train up the steep gradients. Experiments, however, are now being made with cheaper fuel, in the form of petroleum residuum from the Talara wells. As it is, the locomotives have twenty-two-inch cylinders, and the steam pressure all the way has to be kept at 140 pounds to the square inch. The maximum train is five cars, weighing eight tons each, and carrying ten tons of cargo; and in order

to drag this weight from Lima to Chila, the locomotive burns seven tons of first-class English coal. The maximum gradients are 4 per cent., and the maximum curves 120 metres radius. This radius is found in all the tunnels, of which there are forty between Lima and Chila, the longest measuring 296 metres. The number of bridges is sixteen, the longest being the Verrugas viaduct, now destroyed. The total distance from Callao to Chicla, where the rails end, is eighty-six and one-half miles.—Harper's Monthly.

## MILL STRIKERS MENACING.

Trouble Expected at a Carnegie Mill—Its Record of Bloody Riots.

Trouble is expected at Duquesne, ten miles up the Monongahela river from Pittsburg, where the employes of the Allegheny Bessemer Steel company, of which Andrew Carnegie is the principal stockholder, quit work the other day because the company refused to recognize the scale of the Amalgamated Association of Iron and Steel Workers. The mill has been non-union since the strike of over two years ago, which ended in a victory for the employers. Recently the workmen reorganized the lodge of the Amalgamated association, and present

ted the union scale which was reported on Wednesday, and the members of the workmen's committee were discharged.

There are many foreigners employed at the mill and, at the request of the Carnegie company, Sheriff McCleary to-day sent up forty deputies. The mill property has come into the possession of the Carnegies since the last strike. During that trouble the mill property was besieged by the strikers for months, who never relaxed their vigilance—John Galloway, a non-union employe, shot William Dunn, a striker, and the few men who entered the works narrowly escaped being mobbed. A gang of Italians was run into the works from the river front one evening, which enraged the strikers when they discovered that they had been baffled. Many shots were fired, but no one was seriously hurt. That night the mob gathered at the mill gates and gave the superintendent ten minutes in which to surrender the Italians. The spokesman for the strikers stated that, if the Italians were not given up in that time, the fence around the mill would not be sufficient to protect the steel works. The Italians were sent out of the works and escorted by the strikers to the boundary line of the town and permitted to depart in peace. The situation is threatening.

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