

Ontario Workman.

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

VOL. I.

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Labor Notes.

The following is a list of the officers of the International Grand Lodge, K. O. S. C.: G. S. K., J. P. Wright, Baltimore, Md.; D. G. S. K., James Hennessey, Hopkinton, Mass.; G. K., Wm. Haines, Cincinnati; G. S., Michael P. Murphy, N. Y.

The labor reformers of Boston voted Wednesday night that no candidate shall receive the recommendation of the committee on nominations who was opposed to the furnishing of comfortable habitations for the poor, economy and retrenchment in expenditures, a more direct trade between the producer and the consumer, and free competition in all branches of business.

A committee of bricklayers of New York and Jersey City arrived in Boston, Monday, with a view of having the eight hour law enforced with reference to the work now in progress at Fort Warren. They were referred by the President to the Secretary of War, who has jurisdiction over the fort. The Secretary informed the committee that, so long as he held his present official position, the law should be enforced on all military works. The committee will, at his request, prepare a statement of the grievances for the action of the Secretary.

The following is the list of officers of the Machinists and Blacksmiths' International Union, for the term ending September, 1874: Pres., John Fehrenbach, Cleveland, O.; 1st Vice Pres., Lewis C. Willcox, Buffalo, N. Y.; 2nd Vice Pres., Richard Swann, New Orleans, La.; 3rd Vice Pres., Wm. H. Hardman, Altoona, Pa.; 4th Vice Pres., James W. Leveley, Toronto, Ontario; Treas., Fred. P. McFeeley, Middletown, N. Y.; Sec. of the Ins. Department, Wm. F. Upright, Syracuse, N. Y. Judiciary Committee: Duncan Dewar, Indianapolis, Ind.; J. J. Illingworth, Utica, N. Y.; Robert Ennis, Warren, Pa.; James S. Graham, Rochester, N. Y.; W. D. Ballantine, Savannah, Ga.; John Munce, Buffalo, N. Y.; S. T. A. Van Sciver, Norwalk, O.

The great lock-out in the Staffordshire Potteries, which is said to have affected 35,000 workpeople, has been brought to a close by a reference of the wages question to arbitration.

The *Guard*, of Sunbury, Pa., says: The bituminous coal miners of Centre county have struck for an advance of ten cents per ton. Sixteen mines are idle, and it is not known how long the suspension will last, as the operators seem determined not to yield the advance.

At a meeting of the South Staffordshire Iron-Masters' Association on Wednesday, it was resolved to communicate with the Coal-masters' Association, that, in the opinion of the meeting, the time had arrived when the whole question of wages, hours of labor, and prices of coal should be re-considered.

A special meeting of the United Tinplate Workers of Edinburgh and Leith was held in the Tailors' Hall, Potterrow, on Monday night, when a member of the trade gave an able and exhaustive report on the confederation of the united trades of Scotland, showing the benefit to be derived from a confederation numbering, it is expected, over 50,000.

All the laborers employed at the Dundalk Junction have been on strike in consequence of one of their number having been dismissed for refusing to carry a message from an engine-driver to the foreman of the locomotive department. They induced the porters to join in the strike, leaving without notice. The work was considerably interfered with, but men were speedily drafted in to supply their places.

KNIGHTS OF ST. CRISPIN.—On Wednesday evening last, a meeting was held at the Commercial Hotel, Orillia, to organize a society of boot and shoemakers, to be known as Knights of St. Crispin. Officers—John McGinn, S. K.; James Turner, K.; W. J. Handley, C. & R. Sec.; Francis Noble, Treas.; C. B. King, Financial Sec. and Dep.; James Kidd, U.; Jonathan Sloc, A. U.; Thos. Houlahan, I. S.; Charles Bristow, C. S.

EDINBURGH HORSE SHOERS.—On Wednesday evening a large meeting was held in Buchanan's Hotel, High street. The chief business was the consideration of the propriety of seeking an advance in wages. After the matter had been fully discussed, a resolution was unanimously adopted to the effect that a request be made for an advance in drivers' wages to 30% second fireman to 31s, and first fireman to 36s per week.

About 120 bricklayers and their laborers, chiefly employed at or near the West Hartlepool Rolling Mills, turned out on strike on account of their employers' refusal to entertain an application for the same system of diminished hours of labor recently conceded by the master builders of Middlesborough.

The strike of power-loom weavers at Barnsley continues, and threatens to end in a general lock-out, by which 1,500 persons will be thrown out of employment. At one of the factories—Messrs Taylor & Sons—some of the work people are stated to have been discharged on account of subscribing to the strike fund, and the result has been that a meeting has been held, at which the whole of the employees of the firm indicated have pledged themselves to join the Association.

The delegates of the iron workers of Edinburgh and Leith met on Thursday in the Waverley Rooms to hear a deputation from Glasgow express their views upon the present position of the trade in Glasgow. It was stated that there were between 6,000 and 7,000 workers out on strike in the iron trade, in consequence of the masters declining to agree to the 51 hours' movement. A motion was carried unanimously to the effect that the meeting approve of the Edinburgh and Leith iron workers giving their full support, morally and pecuniarily, to their brethren in Glasgow. During the evening several speeches were delivered upon the position of the workingmen of that country, expressive of their dissatisfaction with the present system.

The following are the officers of Jacques Cartier Typographical Union, No. 145, Montreal, for the ensuing year:—President, Theophile Godin; Vice President, Joseph Lacroix, Rec. Sec. Trefle Berthiaume; Cor. Sec. P. A. Crosby; Fin. Sec., Chas. Belleau; Treas., Jno. Thompson; Sergeant-at-Arms, Michel Parent; Marshal, Alphonse Mondeau. Board of Directors:—A. Foisy, chairman; N. Lamoreux, Joseph Trudel, J. B. Fortin, U. Rondeau.

A conference between representatives of the Clyde Shipbuilders' and Engineers' Association and the Iron Trades' Short Time League, was held on Tuesday in the Religious Institution Rooms, Glasgow, for the purpose of discussing the questions in dispute between them as to hours and wages. It may be explained that the men have been locked out since Friday last, and the masters suggested a conference. A similar conference was held in February last, when it was understood by the men to have been agreed that the men should get on the 1st of March last the 54 hours instead of the 57 without a reduction of wages, and that from the 1st November they were to work 51 hours without a reduction of wages. There is a dispute as to the meaning of the agreement, the masters holding that the wages to be given for the 51 hours are the wages which were paid for the 57 hours in February last, and the men maintaining that the wages to be paid for the 51 hours are the wages which they had been receiving for the 54 hours up till the lock-out last week. The masters in their conference yesterday intimated their willingness to give the 51 hours, to be divided at such periods of the day as the men chose, and to submit the question as to the exact meaning of the agreement in February last to arbitration. The delegates from the men replied that they had no authority to comply with such a request, but added that they would submit the proposal to a meeting of the men to be held that evening. The delegates of the Glasgow iron trades met in the evening, when the result of the conference was reported. It was resolved to submit the proposal of the masters for arbitration to the various shops on strike, and to report their decision to the masters. Letters were read from Dumbarton and Inverkeithing, stating that boiler-makers and engineers could find employment there.

The *Anthracite Monitor* of Dec. 7th, contains the following sensible appeal from Mr. John Siney to the miners of Schuylkill Co., Pa.: I have just one word of counsel for you. A basis is about to be arranged to govern the trade in this country during 1873. You have had an opportunity of listening to and reading the views of those who are regarded as authorities. If they and your good judgment convince you that you are entitled to better wages next, than you have received this year, then demand better wages and fight (within the law) for them, if need be. But if, on the contrary, you think it will be to our interest in the future to continue working on the present basis, do so. Do not be made too

bold by radicals or too cowardly by the advice of the weak-kneed. Ask what is your right, what the trade will afford, and you are in no danger of being defeated; as more than you should ask, or show to the operators and the carrying company that you have not the heart to assert and maintain your right to "a fair day's wages for a fair day's work," and the result may be an irretrievable calamity.—*John Siney.*

HOW TO PROTECT WORKMEN.

Some time since we incidentally touched upon the subject of the insecurity of the position of a workman in regard to his master. It is quite clear that some more thorough safeguards ought to be provided, whereby all possibility of defrauding the laboring man, mechanic or artisan of his wages, shall be removed. As the law stands now no such protection is afforded, and instances in which workmen are compelled by dishonesty, incapacity, or misfortune to lose their hard-earned wages are of daily occurrence. The recent failure of a contractor in Ottawa, is a case in point, the circumstances of which are well known. Now, it is evident that this state of things should not be permitted to exist. No classes of the community ought to be more thoroughly protected from the contingency of loss, than those who depend upon their work from day to day, for the means by which to sustain themselves and families. Their little, however small, is for the time being, their all, while their labor is of such a nature that it is a positive cruelty to deprive them of it. There is, we believe, a legal provision that in cases of failure, bankruptcy, or assignment, "servant's wages" shall be satisfied in full, in preference to all other claims; but this does not cover all the ground. It only protects workmen of the lighter occupations, such as clerks, book-keepers, etc., etc. What remains to be done is to provide such classes as carpenters, stone-masons, brick-layers and common laborers, and others usually working in the employ of men without capital—constituting themselves, indeed, the capital of the contractor—from the danger of loss by the failure of the contractor for whom they may chance to work. The legislature of the country should place in the hands of these men ample protection from such a danger. The best method of accomplishing this would be by borrowing a leaf from the book of our American cousins, and passing an enactment similar to the "Workmen's Lien," law of the United States. By this law, in events of the bankruptcy of the contractor—an event which cannot ever be foreseen with certainty, or even provided against by the most careful contractor, the workmen hold the building or work upon which they are engaged as security for the payment of their wages, and if the amount due them be not forthcoming, they are authorized to proceed and realize it from the building. It may be advanced that such a law would be unfair towards the proprietor or builder. This we do not think would be the case. With such a law before them, the builder would be more careful to see that the securities of his contractor were not "straw," and satisfy himself against any possible loss on this score. Another good effect of the passage of this law would be, that persons having contracts to give out would not be so anxious to have them taken up at such ruinously low rates as are now rather the rule than the exception; nor would unscrupulous contractors care to accept a job out of which there could be neither profit, nor a loop-hole through which to evade the performance of their obligations. We trust that the subject may engage the attention of some of our public men, and that either this or some other method may be taken to afford common justice to a very large portion of our citizens.—*Ottawa Free Press.*

MECHANICS' LIEN LAW.

We copy from the *Ottawa Free Press* the following communication on the subject of a Workmen's Lien Law:—
SIR,—In looking over the columns of your paper of Monday, the 9th inst., I find that you have again brought before the notice of the public, the necessity that exists for proper legislation to protect the workingmen against fraud on the part of employers.
I believe that the suggestion you make is the proper one, and that the enactment of a "Mechanics Lien Law" would ensure general satisfaction to proprietors, contractors, and employees.

And as I have every reason to believe that steps will be taken very shortly, by the workingmen, to have this matter laid before the Government, I trust they will be prepared to give it their most serious consideration, and I also trust that the press generally will discuss the subject thoroughly in all its bearings, in a fair and reasonable spirit, so that proper light may be thrown on it. For it is a fact that cannot be denied, that the workingmen of this Dominion, are becoming a power in the country, that will not allow themselves to be cast aside with impunity, and it is to be hoped that this, their first demand, which is both just and reasonable, will be received in a spirit worthy of the 19th century.

Thanking you for the great interest you take in the condition of the workingmen, and also for the able way in which you advocate their just rights.

I remain,
Yours respectfully,
MECHANIC.

Ottawa, December 10th 1872.

RELATION BETWEEN STRIKES AND HIGH PRICES.

Many editors are loud in denunciation of strikes. They express much sympathy for persons of fixed incomes, who when prices rise they have to make shift with less in proportion. Those with £1000 a year, we are told, can not live as well now and occupy so respectable a position in society as they could a few years ago on £800 a year. They have to stint to keep up appearances, and curtail in all directions. The universal demand of the laboring population for shorter hours and more pay opens the sorry prospect of increasing hardship. These large-hearted sympathizers and denouncers lose sight of the fact that the poor man can not make ten shillings go as far now as eight shillings a few years ago, and that his stinting implies absolute deprivation of the necessities of life. The fact is, that high prices are simply the result of the continuous diminishing of the value of money, the quantity of which is increased beyond the real wants of society; therefore high prices, in place of being the result of strikes and increase of wages, the reverse is the truth, and strikes are the consequence of high prices; therefore the latter have in every instance preceded the rise in wages, and where advances have been obtained, they are out of all proportion to the advance in prices.

So, for instance, in England at the present day, the coal-miners are held responsible for the present exorbitant prices of coal; but the fact is, in some districts they have hardly recovered from the reductions that were made as late as two years ago, and they were made on the plea that the stock on hand was unsalable at the old rates. Since the revival of trade, however, all the old stock produced at the lowest wages has been disposed of at the highest prices, and the recent advance of wages does in no case exceed 6d. a ton, or 2s. a week to the miner, while within the last two months coal has risen 5s. a ton at the pit's mouth, and 10s. a ton in the London market. The prices set down by the coal-owners of the North for the month of August are more than double the prices during the same month last year.

What the miner gets as his share in this wonderful prosperity is just 2½d. a ton more than he had last year. But the miners are determined not to produce any dead stock again if they can help it, to have the little advance taken off as soon as the present extraordinary demand subsides. They are bent upon working only eight hours a day, and the coal-owners must accede to their demand. Not long ago, the Staffordshire coal-owners consented to the eight hours' working day, and now they are quarrelling whether the men shall be in the pit at six in the morning or only at the mouth ready to descend.

The iron trade is in the same position as to prices as the coal trade, and it is the demand of the iron trade for coal, both at home and abroad, that has made coal so costly. For twenty years the average price of bar-iron did not exceed £6 a ton. Two years ago it rose to £8; it is now above £14, and other kinds of iron in proportion, and it is now asserted by a certain class of editors that the nine-hour movement is responsible for that. The increase of the wages of the iron workers bears the same relation to the selling price of iron as the increase of the colliers' wages bears to the selling price of coal. The iron-masters are reluctant to book orders even at the present high prices; they want more. However, there

is no alarm among the editors about the price of iron, because it does not enter so immediately into every-day life. We do not buy pots, kettles, and pans every day; but we like to put them on the fire every day with something in them, and the costlier these articles are the less we procure. The workingmen strike, and the moment they do so they are reproached with causing the increase in price of everything. It must be remembered, says an aristocratic print, that wages and prices go together, and that if the collier wants higher wages the town operative must pay more for his coal, and that with an increase in the wages of the agricultural laborer, meat and other provisions must become more expensive. Were cost of production the only limit of the selling price, such arguments would be incontrovertible; but then, *per contra*, low wages would make cheap goods. Were it not for unions and strikes, the colliers and iron-workers would not have obtained the paltry advances they have, and coal and iron would be just as dear as they are now.

(To be Continued.)

HOW TO READ.

Read slowly; read understandingly. One page read thoughtfully and with care is worth a whole book glanced through. It is that which we remember and digest that "maketh a full and a ready man." Cursory reading leaves no lasting impression upon the mind—it is gone as soon as read, and so many precious moments are wasted. The definition of each word should be distinctly understood—its orthography noted. To do this a dictionary should be before the reader, and each word, not clearly understood, should be looked out and its meaning engraven upon the memory before proceeding a sentence further.

An atlas should be near at hand so that the topographical points, when they occur, may be looked out and carefully fixed in the mind. A few pages carefully gone over, the reader should write out, in his own language, the ideas he has just read. A systematic course of reading is of the utmost importance. One book should be finished before another is commenced; the important points committed to memory. The book read through we should catchise ourselves beginning at the beginning and ending at the end of the book, to make sure that our memories, when we call upon them, will not prove treacherous. In this way much useful and varied information may be stored away in the mind, which at any time, we can draw upon for a safe and delightful passport through the world.

A St. Louis man was pointing out on a map of New York city the spot where he resided before coming there. "The people with whom you stopped were sorry to part with you, were they not?" inquired an acquaintance. "Of course they were," responded he, frankly; "and they wouldn't part with my trunk at all—they had an attachment for that trunk. Yes," he continued, musingly, "I suppose I own as many trunks as any man in America, and it is quite likely that I'll never see them again."

Another startling discovery has been made by a Paris medico, namely, a method of killing animals and human beings by introducing air into their eyes. The system has been tested by experiments at the Veterinary School of Alfort, which have proved perfectly successful, the operation only lasting a few seconds, appearing to cause no pain, and leaving no trace whatever of the manner of death.

An extraordinary fraud upon the underwriters and Her Majesty's Customs has just been exposed at Halifax. It is said that a vessel was loaded with bonded goods, and soon after her departure she was reported to have been lost. However, it appears that her cargo was previously transferred to another vessel, and it is alleged that this was a double attempt to defraud, first of all the underwriters, and then the Customs. Several Halifax firms are believed to be implicated in the transaction.

WHITE HART, corner of Yonge and Elm streets, is conducted on the good old English principal by Bell Belmont, late of London, England, who has gained the reputation, by strict adherence to business, of keeping the best conducted saloon in this city. The bar is pronounced by the press to be the "prince of bars," and is under the entire management of Mrs. Emma Belmont, whose whole study is to make the numerous patrons to this well-known resort comfortable. Visitors to this city will not regret walking any distance to see this—the handsomest bar in the Dominion.