Birmingham Eccentric

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BIRMINGHAM MICH

TIMELY TOPICS.

Verily, the saying of the shard "What fools these mortals be," is being exemplified every day. For weeks the labor market of Chicago has been a seething cauldron of excitement, owing to strikes, lockouts etc. One of the principal demands of the strikers was for shorter hours, and this, in nearly every instance, the manufacturers granted. Now several hundred of the men who struck for eight hours, dissatisfied with the arrangement, are again on a strike—this time for a return to 10 hours. The manufacturers refuse this last demand, and say they cannot alter their business arrangements as suit every whim of the employes. Whatever may have been the grounds for a strike in the first place, one thing is certain: Having been given all they asked for, it is short-sighted policy for them to take this last step.

Rev. T. N. Niles made a sensation in the McKeesport, Pa., M. E. church while preaching before a G. A. R. post, by saying that Jeff Davis should be buried alive, and that every soldier's widow should kneel at her husband's grave and invoke the curse of heaven on Davis, the murderer of her husband" These words are not in accord with the spirit of a man imbued with the love of Him who prayed "Father forgive them," and left with his disciples the command "Bless them that curse you." It is no defense of the leader of the "lost cause" to say that a man who would at this time voice such a sentiment not only has not that charity "which suffereth long is kind," but is an unmitigated ass.

The news from the bituminous coal regions of Pennsylvania is to the effect that there is a great scarcity of miners, many having returned to Europe, while the unfavorable reports which other in this country have sent to their friends abroad, have had a very perceptible effect upon the immigration for the past few weeks. If the facts as to the over supply and the low wages in this country be published broadcast in all Europe it would have a very salutary effect upon our labor market, inasmuch as it would check the tide of cheap labor which for so long has been pouring in upon us.

Tobacco blindness is becoming a common affliction. At present there are several persons under treatment for it at one London hospital. It first takes the form of color blindness, the sufferers so much smoked themselves into this condition be ng quite unable to distinguish the color of a piece of red cloth held up before them. Sometimes the victim loses his eyesight altogether. Although smoking is to a large extent the cause of the malady, and so gives it its name, heavy drinking is also partly responsible.

The editor of the Wallowa Chieftain, published in Washington Territory, thus appeared to his readers: "For the first time, in issue Chieftain's editorial woodpile has got down to chips. Any subscriber who is long on wood and short on money can bring a load of the first named article to this office. The wood should be dry, and must be cut into two-feet lengths."

Alfred Poole a Denver purchaser of unclaimed express and freight consignments, recently bought three boxes each about two feet square solidly constructed and very heavy. The purchase was made at a venture, but on opening the boxes a man found himself owning a brick of solid gold worth about $12,000. The amount paid for the three was $6.40.

Nothing is known at the war depart ment in regard to the reported action of Gen. Miles in offering rewards for the capture of the renegade Apaches, dead or alive. If such is the case, it is an act that will not be sanctioned by the war department. Such a course would not be considered civilized warfare, even with blood-thirsty savages.

There is said to be in one of the German wards of Springfield, Mass., a liquor club called "Wissenschaftlichekartoffelpfannenkuchenverein." One of the by-laws requires that a member must spell the name of the club after every drink. If he spells it correctly he is sober enough and thirsty enough for another drink.

According to the Washington Post, Senator Palmer, who has no children of his own, has partially adopted the son of his gardener under a rather peculiar arrangement. For six months in the year the boy lives like a prince at Mr Palmer's home, and for the other six he is at his father's, merely a workingman's son again.

Making it Binding.

"I am a lawyer's daughter, you know, George dear," she said after George had proposed and been accepted, "and you wouldn't think it strange if I were to ask you to sign a little paper to the effect that we are engaged to be married?"

George was too happy to think anything strange just then, and he signed the paper with a flourish and left with a bursting heart.

Then she laid her car against his middle vest button and they were very, very happy.

"Tell me, darling," said George after a long delicious silence, "why did you want me to sign that paper? Do you require explicit confidence in my love for you?"

"Ah, yes," he sighed with infinite content, "indeed I do; but George, dear, I have been fooled so many times."

Slates which roofed Carrick castle for 300 years are found to be perfectly sound. Yet the fishes of the sea whereof they were taken are all but idle.

Vice Chancellor Bacon, with whom that title vanishes into space, is now in the 82d year of his age and if the oldest judge on the English bench.

Descendants to the number of 519 survive Mons. Marianne Lovelille, who died recently at St. Michel de Lamaska, Can., at the age of 91 years.

A magazine agency reports the record of business failures during the first quarter of 1886 as better than for any similar period since 1882.

A newspaper of Castleton, Vt., boasts that not since 1850 have intoxicating liquors been openly sold or drank in that place.

The Sultan is a musician, and has composed a piece of music for the imperial band.

As many as 600 standard English works have been translated into Chinese.

STATE NEWS

State Semi-Centennial Programme.

The Michigan Semi-Centennial Commission, though their local Committee of Arrangements—James E. Pittman, B. Vernor and Fred. A. Baker—have just issued an official programme for the coming celebration at Lansing. The programme is very lengthy, and only its salient features are given.

The musical programme of the seven event, which will be very complete, has been prepared by Prof. H. B. Roney of East Saginaw. The following soloists and musical organizations will participate: Madam Dobbie Clemelli of New York; Mrs. Mary Tilden; the Detroit Quartette; Miss Minnie Heron of Bay City; Miss Helen R. Connor of Detroit; the Lansing Liederkranz; chorous of fifty Lansing voices; chorus of 100 voices from Lansing schools; Twenty-third Infantry Band, Fort Wayne; Cassopolis Band; Lansing Knights of Pythias Band.

On the Capitol steps Gov. Alger will preside. The program will be as follows: Address of welcome, Gov. Alger; "Michigan's Financial History"—O. Grosvenor; "Mineral"—Prof. Charles D. Lawton. These addresses will be interspersed with a special musical programme. Hon. H. Reynolds will receive Hall Henry Champlain will preside. The program will include the Declaration of Independence by Judge Thomas M. Cooley; the semi-Centennial hymn by Rev. Samuel Duffield; the ode "Land of the Lakes" by Judge J. Logan Chipman, and Judge Campbell's address on the judiciary of Michigan. There will be an exceptionally fine musical programme here.

In the Senate Chamber Henry Fralick will preside. Here a series of addresses will deliver his executive addresses and John T. Adams his address on the "Progress in the History of the State." More specially arranged music.

The banquet and basket picnic will be held at the fair grounds from 12:15 to 2 p. m.

At Agricultural Hall, Grand Star, at 2 p. m. S. T. Read will preside and Hon. Levi Bishop will read "Old Fish Culture;" President Edwin Willets will discuss the "Agricultural College;" Hon. Levi Bishop of the state board of corrections and charities, and Gen. Wm. Humphrey will make an address on the "Mechanical Progress of the State."

On the grand stand at the same time T. H. Hinchman of Detroit will preside; W. L. Webber of East Saginaw will talk on Agriculture; C. W. Garfield of Grand Rapids, on Horticulture, and Hon. John Robertson on Military History. There will also be an address on the "Agricultural Possibilities of the Upper Peninsula."

At Representative Hall in the evening Hon. "March of the Half a Century," by Mrs. K. R. Hill, of Vassar; "Beautiful Michigan," by Delos Cline, of New York; and "Hymn of the Fifty Years," by Mrs. C. C. Moots, of West Bay City, will be rendered. President James B. Angell will deliver an address of the University. In the Senate Chamber Hon. Thomas M. Cooley will talk of the railroads of the state and Prof. J. M. R. Hill of the Educational Normal and Common Schools.

A Disastrous Tumble

About 8 o'clock last Friday evening the floor and the basement timbers of the Valley City flour mill in Grand Rapids gave way under the weight of 1,000 barrels of wheat and heavy machinery. Five stories above came crashing down to the basement leaving the outside walls a mere shell.

The mill contained 1,000 barrels of wheat and 30,000 bushels of wheat, 20 tons of feed, and 150 barrels of flour were swept away by the water. The mill was recently completely refitted with the latest improved machinery and the most of it is destroyed or badly damaged, together with the large stock of other materials. The loss is estimated at from $80,000 to $100,000.

The heaviest stockholders in the company are G. G. Swedberg, Wm. Widdicomb, Wm. Rowe, and R. M. Lawrence. The mills were insured at the time, but the companies were warned by the cracking of the timbers and escaped.

Important for Pensioners.

Pensioners are notified that the United States Pension Agency has been removed to the house No. 36 Fort street west, formerly occupied by the Michigan Club. Here there are no stairs to climb and there are ample accommodations for the old, the sick and the maimed. By replacing one partition by an arch the first floor becomes practically one room, and Pension Agent McKinstry's desk so situated that he can, without leaving his chair, survey every clerk in the apartment. The floor is covered with a neat carpet; the walls are decorated with a light, pleasing paper, and everything, though perfectly comfortable, is arranged with a view of expediting business. The whole house is rented by the government, and if it does not it should purchase the upper floor could be utilized for clerks.

Whiskey Caused It.

A farm hand named Brockway, with some other persons went to Scenic, Kent county, the other night, where they drank freely. A quarrel ensued which ended in fighting, during which Brockway fell and by whom it is at present not certainly known. Brockway lived two miles to where he was found at home, and when about half way called to a neighbor named Hinkley and asked to be taken home, saying he had been hit by a person whose name he would not give. He was put into a stupor from which he has never rallied, dying the next night.

Brockway's death was caused by a blood vessel being ruptured. He leaves a widow and seven children, the eldest being 15 years old. A person named Lane is suspected of dealing the fatal blow. He has not been seen since, having settled with his employer and left town.

Sturgis Has a Tragedy.

Horace Hinkley, a saloon keeper of Sturgis, shot and killed George Allen, a notorious tough, the other night. Allen and Hinkley had quarrelled about a year ago and the trouble seemed to be settled when the latters life. He was the terror of the community and had served several terms in the local house of correction for various crimes. Allen had been drunk all day and had been hanging around Hinkley's place. He and Hinkley were quarreling, Allen running at him in a threatening manner when Hinkley opened fire with a thirty-eight calibre revolver and fired four times. Allen turned and fell on his face and died in a few minutes. Hinkly surrendered to Officer Bennett.

MICHIGAN ITEMS.

Robert Dunn, a well-to-do farmer living near Charlotte, suicided a few days ago. He has been despondent for a long time over the death of his wife.

The Methodists of Petoskey will build a new house of worship this summer.

Brakeman Dodge of the M. C. R. R. of Jackson, narrowly escaped death at Marshall the other morning. Caught between the freight house platform and a car and was about to loosen his hold, he fell between them, and had presence of mind sufficient to lie quiet till the cars passed. He escaped with two cuts on his leg and slight injury to one hand.

Frank Keyt, policeman at the Michigan Central depot at Niles, has been declared insane and taken to Berrien county jail, the asylum at Kalamazoo being full. Humphrey was a chioral user for years.

The T. A. & N. M. railroad company has contracted for 50,000 fence posts and 5,000 telegraph poles, to be got out in the vicinity of Elm Hall, Gratiot county, for the extension between St. Louis and Mt. Pleasant.

The Austin, Tomlinson & Webster manufacturing company of Jackson have effected a sale of 450 wagons to the government for the far west. This is the second order they have received within a year, the previous one being for 500. The wagons are to be examined in every part and piece by a government inspector before they are accepted. It will take about a month to fill this large order.

The work of President Ashley of the Toledo & Ann Arbor railroad is expected at Cadillac to locate the site for the depot, yards, etc., for extension of the road. It is thought that the Cadillac & Northeastern will be willing to make a union depot made of the present Cadillac & Northeastern depot.

Thomas D. Allen, for nearly 40 years a resident of Hillsdale, died there on the 31st ult.

Miss Mamie Glidden, 22, and Horace Madison, 23, were drowned in the St. Joseph river the other evening. Both were school teachers.

A farmer named Bobler, living near Milford had a tramp over night and in the following morning he made a criminal assault on Miss Bobler. She called for help that was called in he was given a severe beating and left for dead. He was not arrested. He gives his name as Hyde and says he will sue for damages. A warrant against him. He appears to be somewhat crazed, and says his home is Lamont, Ill. Miss Bobler was severely injured in her nervous system by the brutal assault.

Wool is beginning to come in quite freely. From 20 to 22 cents for washed and 15 cents for unwashed is the range of prices now paid.

It is said that the subject of the Michigan Central in building a branch to Petoskey is to get hold of a valuable land grant which it can get in no other way.

THE LABOR QUESTION.

General Assembly of the Knights of Labor,

A Detailed Report

The general assembly of the Knights of Labor began its session in Cleveland, Ohio, May 25. A full delegation was present, representing all sections of the country.

The convention was called to order by the chief executive.

Everything was done in secret and all the proceedings came to the newspaper press through a committee of knights appointed for that purpose.

In the afternoon the general assembly took a recess for the purpose of giving Mrs. Mary A. Woodbridge of Geneva, Ohio, recording secretary of the National Woman's Christian Temperance union, an opportunity to address them. She made a letter urging a strict compliance with the resolutions looking to the suppression of saloon keepers to the order, and commended them for seeking to obtain equal pay for equal work for women.

Grand Master Workman Terence V. Powderly, a Chicago manufacturer, read a paper on the formation of an employers' association. Its object would be to treat with labor unions in all questions between employer and employed.

The conference between the committee composed of trades unionists and the executive board of the Knights of Labor, which began its session in Philadelphia for a solution of the difficulties existing between the two orders.

But little was accomplished the first day of the convention, the session being occupied in approving credentials and other routine matters.

The first business of the morning session on the second day was the acceptance of the report of the committee on credentials. The new delegates were then admitted to the hall and the obligation administered. Delegates were admitted only from such districts as were represented at the general convention held last year in Hamilton, Ont., this being a special session of that general assembly, and districts since instituted not being eligible to membership in the existing body.

Mr. Powderly's address was then delivered extemporaneously, showing the necessity of special legislation to meet the new issues that have been thrust upon the order by its rapid increase in membership and power for good or evil, according as to whether wise counsels prevail or each locality be allowed to work according to its own pleasure. Particularly was he severe on the abuse of the name of the order in using it for strikes and boycotts. Not that all strikes and boycotts were unjustifiable, but that many were started without just cause or any hope of success. Besides boycotts and strikes, the convention had to deal with the matter of the trades unions and knights of labor. There was going to be no conflict between these organizations, however. Each had a mission to perform, although that of the K. of L. was higher and nobler, yet with wise legislation a plan of action could be evolved agreeable to all concerned.

A committee to watch national legislation is necessary, not so much to have new laws passed as to prevent new laws being enacted. Let labor unions and knights take care of itself. Whether or not the powers of the executive board should be enlarged is a matter for the special session to decide. Such enlargement is done immediately to hold in restraint and subject to discipline those who enter the order for the sole purpose of starting strikes and promulgating boycotts. "One thing can be said for this legislative body," said Mr. Powderly. "No delegate has bought his seat on this floor. Would that the same could be said of our national legislators."

The throwing of bombs is horrible, but is it not horrible to give corporate greed the power to kill by slow starvation men, women and children, to give railroads and other corporations the power to rob labor, regardless of all justice? Powderly gave the convention to understand that he was not willing to be placed in a false position, either as congressman or governor. "So long as I am at the head of the K. of L. I shall decline any and all overtures from any and all parties, for to do otherwise will be to be accused of using the order for my own aggrandizement."

In closing he recommended the appointment of committees to take under consideration the subjects of strikes and boycotts; the relation of the knights to trade organizations; the changes that are necessary in the laws of the order, and the financial state of the order. This was immediately done. The committees on the same subject at the last session of the order in Hamilton in so far as possible are being chosen.

At the close of his address Mr. Powderly appointed standing committees of five upon each of the following subjects: Laws, grievances, the relation of Knights of Labor to other organizations. A special committee of five was appointed to whom was referred the address of the President and Secretary of the National Woman's Christian Temperance Union. A committee of five was also selected to take action upon the matter of the organization of the American Manufacturers' Union as proposed by Mr. Edwin Norton.

At 1 o'clock the convention took a recess until 8 o'clock Thursday morning, so as to give ample time to the committee to do the work laid before them.

At the appointed time on Thursday, the 27th, the assembly began its labors. The committee on laws presented a partial report embodying a number of propositions, only one of which was taken up. The first proposition was in effect that the executive board should be increased from five to eleven members. The great growth of the order since the original executive committee was decided on demands that the work be distributed among more committeemen. The morning was spent in discussing the proposition.

There was a general sentiment in favor of increasing the membership of the board, but the question as to whether it would be proper for the special convention to take action in the matter met with some difference of opinion. A number of delegates wanted the board constituted of one delegate from each state and territory, while others favored a large board made up in different ways. Nothing was said about remunerating the members of the board, and it is thought that they will be paid as at present, only for time actually spent in the work of the committee. After a three hours' discussion the report was referred back to the committee on laws without instruction. A committee on legislation was then appointed.

A paper named Lawrence Harman of Peoria, Ill., presented an elaborate plan for the general assembly to adopt to settle the settlement of all labor troubles by a special branch of the United States courts.

At this point the assembly again adjourned until the next morning, to allow the committee on the state of the order to prepare its report.

The grand labourmenant of the assembly proper, members of the trades union committee met, prominent among whom were P. J. McBride, secretary of the brotherhood of carpenters and joiners; P. M. Boyer, chief organizer of the International Typographical association, and A. Strasser, president of the International Cigarmakers' union. The session of the committee was for the purpose of hearing the views and the suggestions of the trades union representatives, and the details of the existing troubles and differences between Knights of Labor and members of unions.

Mr. Boyer had but little to offer, the Typographical Union having but few grievances. This organization has 30,000 members. "The strikes of Labor in proportion to the size of the membership than any of the other unions. Mr. Boyer remarked the great harmony between his order and the Knights. Most of the grievances of other unions were of a personal nature. The chief trouble between the carpenters and the Knights arose through a disagreement among the members of the latter order in New York and the unionists concerning minor points in the understanding and precedence and the recent lockout of the manufacturers. The carpenters had grievances to present, owing to the interference of individuals on both sides in different localities.

When the convention re-assembled on Friday, May 28, the executive board presented its report, embodying the address of the trades unions and the resolutions on which they wish to settle existing troubles. The address is as follows:

"The officers of the National and International Trades Unions desire to make the statement that they have no antagonism towards the Knights of Labor, and believe that as an order it has a legitimate mission in the labor movement of America. Through the development of industry and the aggregation of capital the tendency is to monopolize the business of the country. Hence the various trades have been affected by the introduction of machinery, the subdivision of labor, the use of woman and child labor, and the lack of an apprentice system so that the skilled trades were rapidly sinking to the level of pauper labor. To protect the skilled workmen of America from being reduced to beggary, and to sustain the standard of American workmanship and skill, the trades unions of America have been established. That they have accomplished their past history proves not only have they been a benefit in increasing the wages of workmen and in reducing the burdens of toil, but they have fulfilled the first moral duty of assisting their members when unemployed and in sickness, when disabled by accident or age, and providing for the widows and orphans of their deceased members, consequently the trades unions have become a fixed and permanent institution in America, not antagonistic to the welfare of the country, but calculated to enervate all branches of labor to a higher degree of intelligence and a larger share of social comfort. For this principle the thoughtful and far-seeing men of various crafts have founded unions of their respective trades, and to maintain and perpetuate these unions the members have sacrificed countless time and money and where at first many perished in the struggle for existence, time has proven not only their usefulness, but has demonstrated that they are destined to fulfill a higher mission, and their progress is in exact proportion to the intellectual development of their members. When they are founded on such grounds there need be no fear of their existence, nor need there be any antagonism between them and the Knights of Labor. At last our greatest fears have not been that the Knights of Labor would destroy trades unions, but that the capitalists of the country would use every opportunity to put one form of organization against the other and in the conflict destroy both. Within the past year the national and international trades unions have grown with giant strides. For example, we will cite a few instances. The International Typographical union has gained 9,642 members; the Cigarmakers' International union, 7,110; Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners, 13,461; National Bakers' union, 47,561; International Brickmakers' and Masons,' 9,578, Furniture workers', 5,633, Amalgamated Iron and Steel workers, 9,430; iron molders, 12,400; granite cutters, 2,622; coopers union, 15,451; coal miners, 20,000. Out of the twenty-two national and international unions that introduced an eight hour system of the ten that have declined, and there salaries range from $12 to $30 per week, the balance of the others devoting themselves to their duties without salaries. The International Brickmakers' and Masons,' 9,578, Furniture workers', 5,633, Amalgamated Iron and Steel workers, 9,430; iron molders, 12,400; granite cutters, 2,622; coopers union, 15,451; coal miners, 20,000. Out of the twenty-two national and international unions that introduced an eight hour system of the ten that have declined, and there salaries range from $12 to $30 per week, the balance of the others devoting themselves to their duties without salaries. The trades unions are economically managed, and the most rigid accountability is exacted from their officers in all financial and business transactions. As officers pledged by the most sacred obligations to promote the interests of their respective unions the chief officers felt it was their duty to attend the Philadelphia conference, and the results of that conference are such that for the future there is no danger that the Knights of America will not only grow, but become a more fixed institution."

THE TREATY.

The treaty itself, of course, is the most important part of the work and is the bone of contention, for if it is not ratified and agreed to by the Knights of Labor it will work radical changes in the management and organization of local assemblies. The treaty is as follows:

1. That in any branch of labor having a national or international organization the Knights of Labor shall not initiate any person or form any assembly of persons following said organized craft or calling without the consent of the nearest national or international union affected.

2. That no person shall be admitted to the Knights of Labor who works for less than the regular scale of wages fixed by the union of his craft, and none shall be admitted to membership in the Knights of Labor who have ever been convicted of scabbing, rating, blacklegging, or who is in other offense against the union that trades or calling unit exonerated by the same.

3. That the charter of any Knights of Labor assembly of any trade having a national or international union shall be revoked and the members of the same be requested to join the local assembly to form a local union under the jurisdiction of their respective national or international trade unions.

4. That any organizer of the Knights of Labor who endeavors to induce trade unions to disband, or tampers with their growth or privileges, shall have his commission forthwith revoked.

5. That whenever a strike or lockout of any trades unionists is in progress no assembly or district assembly of the Knights of Labor shall interfere until after the satisfaction of the trades union affected.

6. That the Knights of Labor shall not establish or issue any trade mark or label in competition with any trade mark or label now issued or that may hereafter be issued by any national or international trade unions.

The committee on Laws presented their report, the first proposition of which was substantially that the Executive Board of the Knights of Labor be increased from five to eleven members, or that six assistants be appointed to help the present board. Under the constitution no more than five members are permitted, and the scheme of having assistants is for the purpose merely of evading the constitution. After an hour's discussion the proposition was adopted without change. The six new members or assistants will be elected by ballot, similarly to the other officers, and those elected at the present convention will serve during the unexpired year that ends in October.

It was decided to establish permanent headquarters for the Executive Board in Philadelphia, and if deemed necessary the board may sit throughout the year instead of assembling at the call of the General Master Workman.

A resolution was carried that gave the General Master Workman authority to recall the commission of every organizer in the order. The accomplishment of this work is greatly due to the three general organizers—Richard Trevellick of Michigan; Bert Deany of Pittsburgh, and Carroll of Ohio. Deany is in the convention and the two others have been working outside. The subject of appointing competent organizers and the means to be taken for their selection was being discussed when the noon recess occurred.

At the afternoon session the discussion on the report of the committee on laws was resumed. Some sections of the report were adopted and others referred back to the committee. A committee of three was appointed to revise the constitution of the order and report at the Richmond convention in October.

A dispatch was read from Joseph L. Richstated Washington, saying that a man had appeared in that city announcing himself to be a representative of the Knights of Labor and saying that the Knights of Labor were not opposed to the sale of intoxicating and lutterior drinks. Referring and lutterior drinks to the committee on legislation, with instructions to investigate the question of regulating the sale of intoxicating beverages and report at the next meeting, being the matter to the attention of the proper committee.

T. V. POWDERLY,
Grand Master Workman.

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