

British Trade Unions 1707–1918

Edited by
W. Hamish Fraser



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INTRODUCTION

By the mid-1860s there were signs of a new confidence among trade-union leaders. In the trades councils that had been formed in many of the major cities, they found a forum to discuss the wider issues affecting the working class. The leaders also found themselves being courted by political figures and key individuals who were keen to get even greater commitment by trade unions to the campaign for further political reform that was gathering momentum. The size and efficiency of some of the large craft unions was being presented as evidence that at least some of the working class, the so-called 'aristocracy of labour', were capable of self-government and, therefore, deserving of the vote. Middle-class reformers began to see the labour aristocracy as potential allies in their campaigns against the continuing domination of the landed class. Trade unionists began to involve themselves in campaigns in support of the North in the American Civil War and for Italian and Polish independence, where they made contact with middle-class radicals. On the other hand, there was a wariness on the part of many trade unionists about political involvement, fearing that it would prove divisive and a diversion from the industrial struggle. But, persuaded by the arguments put forward by George Howell and the Reform League, increasing numbers began to believe that a political voice at Westminster was necessary.

Confidence also arose from the fact that in the London Trades Council there was now a coterie of highly capable leaders of some of the new large amalgamated societies. In William Allan of the Amalgamated Society of Engineers, Robert Applegarth of the Amalgamated Carpenters and Joiners, Daniel Guile of the Friendly Society of Ironfounders, Edwin Coulson of the Operative Bricklayers Society, and George Odger, the secretary of the Council, Sidney and Beatrice Webb identified an increasingly powerful 'junta', who saw themselves as the natural leaders of the trade-union movement. Although they were never as united or as powerful as the Webbs suggest and their initial reactions to various disputes could be different, none the less there was clearly a great deal of discussion and collaboration between these men and they achieved a national standing. Attempts to dictate to the rest of the movement led to tensions. Personal animosities and offended *amour propre* played a large part in the battles between

George Potter and the Trades Council. But it was also a struggle between smaller societies and older union tactics, which George Potter stood for, and the more conciliatory policies being pursued by the larger unions.¹

The same threats and pressures that brought about amalgamations also encouraged attempts by unions to get inter-union collaboration. The Glasgow Trades Council had taken the lead with a campaign to get amendments to the Master and Servant legislation. A well-attended national conference was held over four days in May and June 1864. The Sheffield Association of Organised Trades followed in 1866, after a series of bitter strikes, by calling a conference that established the United Kingdom Alliance of Organised Trades to provide mutual support during lock-outs. Unfortunately, it was swept away in the indignation aroused by a new outbreak of attacks on non-unionists by the Sheffield knife-grinders.

The outcry over the Sheffield outrages resulted in a Royal Commission on Trade Unions and Employers' Associations. There were fears that the outcome would be legislation restricting trade-union activities, which many of the press were demanding. The leaders of the largest unions were determined to seize the opportunity to get across to Parliament and to the public that trade unionism was changing. This was made more urgent by the fact that, hard on the heels of the events in Sheffield, the courts had found against the Boilermakers' Society in the case of *Hornby v. Close*, and declared that, because it had rules about who could be employed and on apprenticeship, it was 'in restraint of trade' in the eyes of the common law. This posed an immediate threat to funds of the amalgamated societies. Determined to get protection for their funds, they set up their own Conference of Amalgamated Trades to co-ordinate evidence to the Royal Commission. Once again, George Potter reflected widespread dislike of the attitudes of the big societies and called a very successful conference in March 1867, attended by unions and trade councils representing some 200,000 workers. The smaller unions that attended this conference were opposed to the idea of having trade unions register since it would expose their financial state.

The next conference, called by the Manchester and Salford Trades Council in 1868, is usually taken as the founding conference of the Trades Union Congress. It consisted of some thirty-four delegates, mainly from other trades councils and it backed the work being done by the Conference of Amalgamated Trades in front of the Royal Commission. Thanks to the carefully developed strategies of the London leaders working through their middle-class allies on the Commission, the positivists, Frederic Harrison and the Christian Socialist, Thomas Hughes, the evidence before the Royal Commission proved to be a showcase for the large societies. Harrison and Hughes managed to whittle away the more hostile comments in the final report and then refused to sign it, producing their own minority report, which gave a set of proposed legislation on which the unions could campaign.²

With the threats to their future from courts and possible legislation, by the end of 1866 trade unions in all parts of the country were participating in political reform demonstrations. The extent of their involvement convinced many politicians that a reform measure of some kind had to be pushed through. The fact that the Reform Act of 1867 went further than most had expected and gave the vote to a substantial proportion of the skilled urban working class meant that unions had a new influence. None the less, there was still much hostility to overcome.

The government was slow to act, but, in 1871, a Trade Union Act was passed giving protection to the funds of registered unions, and also apparently freeing them from the liability of charges of conspiracy in restraint of trade. But it did not, as had been hoped, remove special offences of workmen. The criminal offences of 'molestation' and 'intimidation' remained, and the Criminal Law Amendment Act of 1871 added to these the crimes of 'persistently following' and 'watching and besetting'. It further strengthened the case for political involvement, and a Parliamentary Committee of the Trades Union Congress was set up to act as a watchdog over Westminster.³ The miners' unions in particular, struggling as always to maintain a nationwide organization, looked to the state for legislation to improve conditions. The activities proved effective and Disraeli's Conservative government amended the Criminal Law Amendment Act with the Conspiracy and Protection of Property Act of 1875, that protected unionists from charges of criminal conspiracy during disputes, as long as their actions were not in themselves criminal. The 1875 Employer and Workman Act, putting both on the same footing in breaches of contract cases, replaced the hated Master and Servant legislation, and the 1871 Trade Union Act was amended to cover all unions not just those that would have been deemed unlawful before 1871.

By the early 1870s, a number of the larger employers had come to appreciate the value of trade unions, recognizing their leaders as people with whom it was possible to negotiate compromise settlements. The talk of conciliation and arbitration that was widespread in the 1870s, really meant an acceptance of collective bargaining by employers. Boards of conciliation and arbitration were established in the hosiery industry of Nottingham and the iron industry of the North-East. The exceptional conditions of economic boom in 1871 and 1872 helped this process. It also gave opportunities for new groups of workers to unionize, in many cases for the first time. Most spectacular was the rapid spread of unionism among the agricultural workers of the Midlands and East Anglia, where Joseph Arch, a Primitive Methodist lay preacher, organized the National Agricultural Labourers' Union in 1872 and it briefly recruited 70,000 members.

As the economy turned downwards in the second half of the 1870s, with a deep agricultural depression setting in, the farm labourers' unions struggled to survive. A sliding scale, linking wage adjustments to fluctuations in prices, once seen as a way of avoiding disputes, was imposed on defeated Welsh miners as a way of

keeping wages down. Most miners' county unions struggled and national unity broke down. Even the powerful Amalgamated Society of Engineers haemorrhaged members to an alarming extent and expended huge sums on unemployment and strike benefit. Employers began to collaborate to try to hold back union advances and to counter the influence that unions appeared to be having on government. Most of the union advances that had been won were pulled back by the employers. There was a readiness to sit out disputes. The Clydeside shipyard workers strike in 1877 ran on for six months before the strikers accepted defeat.

1. S. Coltham, 'George Potter, the Junta and the *Bee-Hive*', *International Review of Social History*, 9 (1964), pp. 391–432; 10 (1965), pp. 1–85.
2. Royden Harrison, *Before the Socialists: Studies in Labour and Politics 1861–1881* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1965), pp. 251–342.
3. H. W. McCready, 'Britain's Labour Lobby 1867–75', *Canadian Journal of Economics and Political Science*, 22 (1956), pp. 141–60.

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To the Trades' Unionists of the United Kingdom.

FELLOW WORKMEN,

As a Trades' Unionist, like yourselves, I desire to speak freely and frankly to you on behalf of Manhood Suffrage.

During the last few weeks you have been called upon to witness a General Election. About 1,000,000 of our fellow countrymen have had the "privilege" of recording their votes in the election of the "Law Makers" of Great Britain.

Out of this number only about 100,000, or one-tenth of the whole, belong to the *Working Class* of our population. Besides which there are about 6,000,000 of the adult males without *any vote* or direct voice in the great council of the nation.

Yet these "Law Makers" enact laws binding upon us all; they impose taxes we all have to pay; aye, and spend these taxes most improvidently. Yet we have no voice to advise, no power to check, any extravagance in the expenditure, or mismanagement in the government, or injustice in the laws.

The privileged classes in this country tell us that we have "no rights without duties;" this we admit. But *they impose duties* and *withhold the rights*: of this we complain. We obey the laws in common, let us have a voice in their enactment. We pay taxes (far greater than the rich in *proportion* to the *means we have*, or our *property to be protected*), yet are denied any voice in the *adjustment* of our *taxation*, or in the spending of our revenue.

The consequence is, that our laws are partial; being made by a class, for a class; and the taxation most oppressive upon those least able to bear it.

As Unionists we have just reason to complain, inasmuch as there are laws not yet repealed which bear heavily upon the workmen. For example, those relating to Masters and Workmen. How often do we find some case which startles us by the manifest cruelty and injustice of the sentence. For if the case had been reversed, the employer defendant instead of the em-

BRICKLAYERS' TRADE CIRCULAR.

ployed, it would have been dismissed. (*See evidence before Committee of the House of Commons this Session.*)

How often have we found some of our greatest and most combined efforts rendered nugatory by some antique piece of legislation in the shape of an unrepealed Act of Parliament, or by some action taken by the *Home Office*?

Is it not fresh in your recollection that the government lent soldiers to a private contractor at Chelsea to enable him to resist his workmen's demand? Have they not done so at Plymouth? Did they not do so at Aldershot? And in how many cases have they given assistance where the men could not bring positive proof, although they have felt morally certain? Scotland Yard provided "pickets" in blue coats for a large number of buildings in London during the Builders' Strike and Lock-out. Yet we were condemned if we sent a private citizen (without citizen's rights) simply to inform workmen in the most friendly and civil manner that a trade dispute existed.

Bearing all this in mind, let us now demand our enfranchisement; *not as a class*, but as subjects in the eye of the law, and as citizens of our common country, which we all love, all support, and all protect. You spend thousands of pounds annually to obtain some trifling advance in wages, and some small reduction in time; and are compelled to fight for its maintenance over and over again, because no voice is heard in Labour's right in the "*Commons*," or people's House.

Men stand there and vilify our class, our motives, and our actions, because they know we cannot be present to rebut their charges.

Let us once be able to maintain by the force of intellect and truth our rights as workmen, in that house, and depend upon it we shall rise in the social scale, and show that we can discharge our duties as well as exercise our rights.

But they tell us that we are incapable of self-government, and unfit to be trusted!! This we deny. Our own organizations prove our power of government, our self-restraint, our financial ability and economy, and our law-making capabilities *likewise*. They show more, they prove that we understand justice, and are earnest in the protection of every member, whether he be assailed by an employer, or by a fellow-workman and brother Unionist. Your combinations are the most perfect in organization and the most powerful in influence of any in the kingdom. Let us use them for our rights as citizens, and you will soon see the rights of labour respected and the workman benefitted thereby.

We seek *not* to over-balance political power by the substitution of one class influence for another. We seek it for all men without distinction; for, on the principle of Manhood Suffrage, protected by the ballot, class legislation as well as class representation will be no more.

Support, then, *The Reform League* in your various localities, and our next parliament will merit your gratitude and respect, by passing a Reform Bill at once comprehensive and just to the People.

I am, fellow workmen,

Yours in unity, GEORGE HOWELL,

Secretary of the Reform League,

8 Adelphi Terrace, Strand, W.C.

P.S.—All information concerning rules, addresses, cards of membership, &c., and the formation of Branches in your respective localities, will be supplied by the Sec. as above, to whom subscriptions also may be sent.

MR. POTTER

AND THE

LONDON TRADES' COUNCIL.

THE Council held a special meeting on Wednesday, March 29th, at the Bell Inn, Old Bailey, in compliance with a request from the Operative Bricklayers—Mr. Mildred in the chair.

After the minutes had been confirmed, a letter was read from the Tinplate Workers, stating that they had voted £5 towards paying the expenses of the movement to obtain an alteration in the Masters' and Workmen's Act; also, letters from the iron trades now on strike.

The secretary said he had received an important paper from the Operative Bricklayers' Society; also, a verbal communication from the Amalgamated Engineers, on the conduct of Mr. Potter, in calling trades' delegate meetings on his own responsibility. He (the secretary) would read the paper on the subject.

TO THE LONDON TRADES' COUNCIL.
March 21st, 1865.

Sir and Gentlemen,—An announcement having appeared in the *Beehive* newspaper of March 4th and 11th, that a meeting of trades' delegates would be held at the Sussex Hotel, Bonverio-street, Fleet-street, on the 15th inst., to consider the lock-out in the iron trade, &c., and feeling the irresponsible character of such meeting, we forward to you the following resolution, viz.:—"That in the opinion of this Executive Council, the conduct of Mr. G. Potter in calling a delegate meeting of the trades, without first consulting the London Trades' Council, of which he is a member, is deserving of the severest condemnation, and calls upon that council to censure such assumption of undelegated power." It furthermore adds, that if the Trades' Council is prepared to allow its functions to be thus set aside with impunity by one of its own non-official members, it no longer deserves our confidence and support.

By order of the Executive Council,
W. CHASE, Chairman.
E. COULSON, Gen. Sec.

Mr. Howell would inform the council that he attended as special delegate of the Bricklayers' Society, numbering 4,000 members. He was instructed to ask the council whether it was intended to allow Mr. Potter, or any other person, to call delegate meetings on questions affecting the interests of trades' societies? If so,

then he considered it time that the council ceased to exist, and handed its functions over to Mr. Potter to deal with them as he might feel disposed. He thought, when the council was established, that there was a guarantee against speculators interfering with the special character of trades' delegate meetings, and he would say that many things had been done by the council which secured for the societies the esteem and good-will of the most intelligent persons of the age; and he had hoped to see the same course continued. He would like to hear an expression of opinion on the subject.

Mr. Allan, secretary of the Amalgamated Engineers, said he was deputed by the engineers' executive council to appear before the meeting to express the indignation of that society at the wanton insult offered by Mr. Potter to the London Trades' Council. He had been on several councils in his time, but he never heard of one of the members calling a delegate meeting without consulting the other members of the council, and he thought that any one who would so act was not worthy the respect of those with whom he had been elected to do business. He would like to know from the secretary if he had received any communication from Mr. Potter on the subject.

The secretary said he had not.

Mr. Allan continued by saying that he had received letters from the men on strike, complaining of a delegate from the Trades' Council having been in their neighbourhood without calling on them for such information on the subject as would be useful to the trades of London, and prevent false reports being circulated.

Mr. Cope had stated his views on the subject at the delegate meeting, and felt that great mischief would result if Mr. Potter was allowed to continue the irresponsible course he was pursuing.

Mr. Coulson said that the bricklayers' executive considered that the conduct of

MR. POTTER AND THE LONDON TRADES' COUNCIL.

Mr. G. Potter, in convening a trades' delegate meeting on the iron trades' dispute, without consulting the London Trades' Council, or without the authority of any trade, was an unwarrantable liberty, and an insult to trade societies, which placed them in a false position; and it had appeared in the Press that the trades of London had specially sent a delegate down into Staffordshire to learn from the lock-outs the particulars of their dispute, which was without any foundation and entirely untrue. Therefore, it was highly essential that Mr. Potter's position should be clearly laid before the public, and he would move the following resolution:—

That this meeting regrets and condemns the course taken by Mr. G. Potter in calling a meeting of trades' delegates on the dispute in the iron trades without first consulting the London Trades' Council, of which he is a member; and consider that meetings so called by any unauthorised person or persons are dangerous, as resolutions may be passed in them pledging societies to principles that would be prejudicial to their influence and material prosperity, and place the trades' societies in a false position before the public.

This was seconded by Mr. Cope.

Mr. Applegarth, in supporting the resolution, regretted the absence of Mr. Potter, but as he had been informed of the nature of the business of the evening, and having waited till half-past 10 o'clock, it was no fault of the council that he was not present. He willingly accorded to every man the right of convening meetings or taking whatever steps he thought fit to assist the oppressed, so long as he acted in his individual capacity, and did not lead the public to attach more importance to such actions than they really merited. But he altogether deprecated the idea of any irresponsible and unauthorised individual arrogating to himself the right which belonged to a properly authorised and responsible body, such as the London Trades' Council, and more especially when such had been done by one of its members. One of the evils resulting from such proceeding was evidenced at the dissolution of the London committee appointed to receive subscriptions on behalf of the men resisting the "Discharge-note." After all legitimate expenses were paid, a gift of £8 in one instance, and £5 in another was awarded for "services rendered" during a few weeks, whilst, in hundreds of instances, far more onerous services have been rendered gratuitously. The committee were awarded 2s. 6d. per night for their services, when frequently we hear of men almost starving in defence of a principle on 2s. 6d. per week. He contended that

such proceedings, if not discountenanced and repudiated by the Trades' Council, were calculated to abuse the public mind still further against our societies, and afford just grounds for those grave accusations so frequently made against their leaders.

The resolution was unanimously carried.

Mr. Danter, President of the Amalgamated Engineers, considered the conduct of Mr. Potter as unworthy of the confidence of any respectable member of society; in fact, it appeared that Mr. Potter had become the aider and abettor of strikes. He thought of nothing else; he followed no other business; strikes were his bread and cheese; in short, he was a strike-jobber, and he made the *Beehive* newspaper his instrument for pushing his nose into every unfortunate dispute that sprung up. He (Mr. Danter) did not know the precise position in which the trades' unions stood with the *Beehive*, but they should take care that men of Mr. Potter's stamp should not commit them to any paper that made capital by trading on their misfortunes. He would move the following resolution:—

That the visit of Mr. George Potter to Staffordshire was undertaken without the knowledge or sanction of the London Trades' Council; and this meeting is of opinion that the only object he had in view was to promote the interests of the *Beehive* newspaper, and deem it our duty to make known the fact, and thus disabuse the minds of the men locked out, and likewise the public generally.

Mr. Applegarth seconded the motion, which was unanimously carried.

Mr. Applegarth proposed, and Mr. Cope seconded,

That this council expresses its surprise that the following resolution, which was unanimously adopted at the delegate meeting convened by the Trades' Council, March 23rd, should have been left out of the report of said meeting in the *Beehive* newspaper.

This was also carried unanimously.

The following is the resolution referred to:—

That the London Trades' Council be appointed a committee to receive subscriptions on behalf of the men engaged in the dispute in the iron trade.

Mr. Phipps, delegate of the North Staffordshire men, attended to give the latest information he had officially received from the executive. The delegates present considered that the information respecting the interview between the masters and men would be known more fully in the course of a day or two, therefore the meeting was adjourned to Friday night for the further consideration of the question, also the progress made regarding the Masters and Workman's Act.

G. ODEK, Secretary.

1, Nassau-street, Marylebone.

MR. POTTER AND THE LONDON TRADES' COUNCIL.

THE STRIKE IN NORTH STAFFORDSHIRE.

MEETING OF LONDON TRADES' COUNCIL.

A numerously attended delegate meeting was held at the Bell Inn, Old Bailey, on Thursday, April 6, "to consider the conduct of the men on strike in reference to Ld. Lichfield's proposal to submit the question to arbitration on condition that the men return to their work and draw wages on account until the dispute was amicably settled." The "council," who are the regularly appointed representatives of some of the most influential and nationally organised trades in the kingdom, added to the circular convening the meeting the expression of their opinion, that "the present position of the men on strike was one of the most serious character possible, and demanded from every trades' unionist a frank expression of opinion."

Mr. Mildred (joiner) took the chair, and in opening the proceedings briefly referred to the causes which had led to the meeting, as stated in the circular, and said that he had before him a large number of certificates from the various trades who had sent delegates to that meeting, which showed that it was a real and *bonâ fide* meeting of representatives of organised trades. He then called upon the secretary to read the correspondence.

Mr. Ogder then read a letter from Mr. G. Newton, secretary to the Glasgow Council of the United Trades, which stated that so far as his inquiries had gone, he found that the conduct of the men who refused to submit to arbitration on the terms proposed by Lord Lichfield was held to be entirely wrong, and indeed that they had dealt a severe blow to the hopes of those of the Glasgow trades who wished to have all such disputes settled by arbitration. The trades of the United Kingdom had long wished to have the stamp of Royalty affixed to an act constituting courts of conciliation and arbitration. It was painful therefore to have the cup of hope rudely dashed from their lips by these strong-headed men in North Staffordshire. Could they now pronounce arbitration a cure for strikes when in a very dangerous case the patient had refused it? The writer regretted that the men of North Staffordshire, who professed their inexperience in such matters, had not acted on the wholesome advice tendered to them to refer the whole case to arbitration. At the same time a curious question suggested itself to his mind—the possibility of any man, or any number of men, having a desire to perpetuate the unfortunate state of affairs in the iron

trade. Was it true that George Potter, on the day after the first meeting in the Sussex Hotel, went down among the men and told them they would be liberally supported, and that one trade was ready to advance £500 for the purpose? He believed that in fact the men in North Staffordshire had been misled and deceived; and he hoped that from the meeting of the London Trades' Council there would go forth such an expression of opinion on the conduct of the men in refusing arbitration on fair terms as would amount, if not to a denunciation, at least to an utter and complete repudiation thereof, as a breach of faith and a disgrace to the working classes of our common country. Mr. Dronfield, secretary to the Association of Organised Trades of Sheffield and the neighbourhood had written to say that resolutions had been unanimously passed at a meeting of the executive of the association held on the 5th inst., 1st. That this Executive Committee approves of the action of the London Trades' Council in protesting against any member calling delegate meetings on his own authority, as not only dangerous but calculated to place the trades generally in a false position. Secondly, That in the opinion of this Executive, the resolution passed at the London Trades' Council of delegate meeting, recommending the North Staffordshire men to submit their case to "unconditional arbitration," was wise and proper under the circumstances; and further, that the men have acted most unwisely in not accepting the arbitration, or resuming work under the terms named by Lord Lichfield—this Executive having from the first recommended "arbitration." Mr. Dronfield added that "the more he saw the more he was convinced that the men were not alive to their own interests, or must have been very badly advised, otherwise they would have resumed work, and drawn wages on account until the question was settled by arbitration, inasmuch as they had failed to establish their claim to the advance sought." A letter from the chairman of the Amalgamated Society of Carpenters and Joiners enclosed a resolution cordially approving of the action taken by the London Trades' Council with reference to the unwarrantable proceedings of Mr. Potter with respect to the dispute in the iron trade. Mr. Ogder having read these letters, briefly recapitulated the past proceedings of the council in this matter, the effect being that Mr. Phipps and other representatives of the North Staffordshire men had agreed to leave the question entirely in the hands

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of the Trades' Council, on the simple condition that the question should be referred to arbitration, entirely unlogged with any conditions, because it was believed that the proposal of conditions on one side would open the door to the proposal of conditions on the other, and thus the whole question of arbitration would fall through. The contrary course had been taken by the men on strike, and the result they all too well knew. The men had declined to arbitrate on what he called fair and reasonable terms, and he held that the resolution they had passed, pledging themselves to give these men support if arbitration was refused by the masters, ceased to have any effect.—(Hear, hear.) He believed that if the men had accepted the terms proposed by Lord Lichfield they would have been now in work, that the evils of protracted strike would have been avoided, and, above all, that the stigma likely to be cast upon the trades generally, by a refusal of fair and reasonable arbitration, would not, as he feared it would, be cast upon the trades of this country. For one—while not afeard of strikes when absolutely necessary, and justified by grave and substantial reasons—he had long desired that all such disputes should, if possible, be referred to impartial arbitration; and that, he believed, was the general feeling of the organised trades of the country which had their centres in London. (Hear.)

Mr. Howell (bricklayer) expressed his deep regret that arbitration had been refused by the men in North Staffordshire. He was convinced that every trade had more to gain by arbitration than fighting. (Hear, hear.) Of course he did not mean to say that there were not occasions when they must stand up for great principles or essential questions, but in point of fact English society as a whole, was a series of compromises, of mutual concessions, and the submission of any particular claim to arbitration did not in fact preclude further and ulterior action, if the claim itself was founded in reason and justice.—(Hear.)

Mr. Stronach (printer) expressed his entire concurrence in the opinion that arbitration was by far the best mode of settling all industrial disputes.—(Hear.)

Mr. Applegarth (joiner) then moved, "That this meeting views with deep regret the refusal of the men in North Staffordshire to agree to the proposal of Lord Lichfield to resume work, drawing wages on account pending the whole question being submitted to arbitration; but, believing the men to have been ill-advised, and deceived by false promises of support, we most earnestly call upon them

to accept the proposal of Lord Lichfield, feeling as we do that to accept such an offer is a duty equally incumbent on them as trades' unionists as to those depending on them for support."

Mr. Bockett, delegate from the London and Westminster Bookbinders, seconded the resolution. He cordially agreed in the principle of arbitration, and could state that if that principle had been adopted it would have prevented the loss of at least £5,000 in his own trade, which consisted of only 400 or 500 members.

Mr. Harris (carpenter) and Mr. Nightingale (carpenter) differed from the mover and seconder of the resolution. They thought the men were quite right in refusing to resume work unless at the old prices. How could they tell what amount they would be allowed to draw on account?

Mr. Cremer (Amalgamated Society of Carpenters and Joiners) cordially supported the resolution, and believed that no more fair or reasonable proposal than that of Lord Lichfield could possibly have been made. As a sincere trades' unionist, he deeply regretted that the refusal of arbitration should have come from the men. In any case, he believed that the men could not have been damaged by the reference.

Mr. Benney, Mr. Clarke, Mr. Hancock (bricklayer), and other delegates having spoken in support of the resolution.

Mr. Harris moved, as an amendment, "That this meeting strongly approves of the conduct of the men of North Staffordshire in not accepting Lord Lichfield's terms to draw wages on account pending arbitration, because such a course would have tended to show that the men were going in at a reduction."

Mr. Nightingale seconded the amendment.

Mr. Allan (secretary to the Amalgamated Engineers) said he certainly could not support the amendment.—(Hear.) Nothing astounded him more than to hear any trades' unionist repudiate arbitration. When in his own trade they had disputes—and all present knew upon how extensive a scale these had occurred in the body he represented—their great object had been to secure fair and impartial arbitration. In the builders' lock-out the most strenuous efforts had been made to secure a settlement by arbitration, and he was surprised to find delegates connected with these trades now repudiating arbitration. He thought that some of those present did not clearly understand the meaning of drawing wages on account. Whatever the men might

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draw did not in the least prejudice their claims, whatever they were. If those claims were bad, undoubtedly the decision of the arbitrators would be against them, and justly so. He believed that the scale on which the puddlers were to be paid was based on a fallacious principle in itself; but, nevertheless, it was a fair and open bargain between the men and the masters, and as a working man and as a representative of the working men, he said that any mutual arrangement of that kind ought to be honourably carried out. The question was branching out widely; the South Staffordshire men and the ironworkers farther North had withdrawn, leaving the North Staffordshire men standing alone; but in Scotland the masters threatened a reduction in the iron trade, and it was deeply to be regretted that the course pursued had tended to place the men in a false position, as well as to exhibit trade societies in the light of opponents of arbitration, which he was certain that meeting would agree with him in saying they were not.—(Cheers.)

Several other delegates addressed the meeting in support of the original resolution, many of them explaining that their views had been altered by what they had heard since entering the room as to the real nature of Lord Lichfield's proposal.

Mr. Applegarth replied in a speech which was loudly cheered, and Mr. Harris having withdrawn the amendment, the resolution was unanimously agreed to amidst cheers.

Mr. Heslop, of the Amalgamated Engineers, then moved, "That this meeting tenders its best thanks to Lord Lichfield for the able and impartial manner in which he conducted the trust confided in him in relation to the strike and lock-out in the iron trade, and hopes that the conduct of the men in refusing his suggestion will not deter him from using his good services in so noble a cause.—(Cheers.)"

Mr. Hughes seconded the motion, which was carried unanimously, amidst great applause.

Mr. Howell moved, and Mr. G. Winspring (Amalgamated Engineers) seconded the following resolution:—"That the two resolutions passed this evening be forwarded by the secretary to Lord Lichfield and to the executive of the men on strike, with their earnest wishes that Lord Lichfield's efforts will be renewed, and become successful."

The resolution was unanimously agreed to.

Mr. Phipps, delegate from North Staffordshire, who, with Mr. Billington, had entered the room shortly before the reso-

lution was put, said he really could add nothing to the statement he had made at the Sussex Hotel on the previous evening.

In answer to a question put by Mr. Allan, Mr. Odger, secretary to the council, explained that the so-called delay on their part in calling a meeting together was caused by a deep conviction that the interference of them and of outside parties, in the initiatory stages of a dispute between masters and men, was not by any means judicious. If the men could not of themselves adjust the dispute, an appeal either for advice or assistance might fairly be made, and he had no doubt would have been answered at once. It might be that the letters sent to Mr. Potter were such as to induce him at once to go down to the districts in which the dispute took place and to summon a meeting as he had done, but after all it would have been very easy for him to have communicated with the secretary of that council, and if that had been done, the whole of the organised trades of the country—not of London alone—would have been brought to bear on the question, and thus the resolutions passed would have had money at their back, which he feared would not be the case with resolutions passed elsewhere.—(Hear). Mr. Phipps had, no doubt, done his duty well to his constituents, but if he stopped in London six months he would not so well advance the interests of his trade as by going down to his own district and inducing his fellow-workmen to agree to arbitration.—(Hear). As the secretary of that council, he warned the trades in the country against putting forth resolutions passed by meetings called by irresponsible persons, and supported by those who did not present any credentials of their claim to represent trade societies.—(Cheers.)

This statement led to an animated debate, in which Mr. Odger repeated the charges against Mr. Potter made at the meeting in the Sussex Hotel, Bouverie-street, April 5th, namely, that upon Mr. Connolly's own acknowledgment Mr. G. Potter and T. Connolly (mason), had been hired by Mr. Brassey, contractor, and received £10 for their services to go to Birkenhead and advocate his election as M.P. during the Masons' Strike against the Hour System, when at the same time Mr. Brassey was supplying the stone for the erection of the buildings the men had struck from; and many other places Mr. Potter had gone for a consideration. And during the first two years that Mr. Potter had been manager of the *Beehive* the whole of the transactions that passed between him and Mr.

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Troup, the Printer and Editor, no receipts or vouchers had been produced, whilst Mr. Potter had represented the "Bee Hive Company" as having sunk £1,500, and being £1,100 in debt, without invoices or vouchers to prove that these debts were correct, or in what way they had been incurred. Further, Mr. Potter had been accused publicly by Mr. Facey, on the authority of Mr. Tilling (printer), of receiving 20 per cent. on the money that was paid for printing during the contest for the Nine Hours and Lock-out in the Building Trades in 1859, amounting to a very large sum. When accused of this reprehensible act he (Mr. Potter) promised to take steps to clear his character; but although his friends had offered to pay all his expenses, he had failed from that day to this to keep his promise, and, therefore, the charge against him had never been disproved. And at the starting of the *Bee Hive* Mr. Dell advanced to Mr. Potter, on behalf of the Trades Societies, a loan of £120, upon the condition that he (Mr. Potter) should consult with the London Trades' Council and the leading representative men; but he neither consulted the Trades' Council or Bricklayers' Society; neither was any public meeting called of the trades for their advice or sanction to bring out the *Bee Hive*, and appoint directors; but, on the contrary, Mr. Potter collected men together who made themselves directors, and Mr. Potter's salary was fixed at £2 2s. per week before any of the shareholders had met in general meeting. Mr. Potter's desire was not to do business legitimately, but to arrogate to himself all power and all control. And the majority of those who made up Mr. Potter's meetings were carpenters and painters, who have no influence in the building trade, men who had no delegated authority, but, whipped up for the occasion by a special notice from Mr. Potter. He would here state that it was Mr. Potter's practice, whenever he wanted a majority, to bolster up his position, to issue circulars to his known supporters (of whom a complete register was kept) urging them to attend and vote for him. The speaker held in his hand one of the circulars with Mr. Potter's signature, and challenged Potter to deny the fact that it was by such means that he swamped the votes of elected delegates. He reiterated his offer to submit these charges to the investigation of any fair and impartial committee of the trade delegates. He proposed, further, to put these charges in writing in time for Mr. Potter to prepare himself fully to give an answer. Mr. Potter was present at the

Sussex Hotel when he made this offer. No answer was made, and therefore, he said, judgment went by default.

Mr. Cremer wished to explain, with respect to the constitution of the trades' council, that it had 15 members, all of them elected annually by organised trades, numbering directly 45,000 members, and indirectly, at least 100,000; what they did bound the bodies they represented, whereas the meetings at the Sussex Hotel were meetings which were composed of persons not merely not delegates, but even of persons not members of any trade society whatever. They were packed meetings, convened by private circular for personal purposes; but the council of the trades and the delegates who had come with their credentials, he contended, really represented the trades of London.

Mr. Allan moved "That this meeting highly approves of the proceedings of the London Trades' Council in the course it has adopted throughout in relation to the unfortunate dispute in the iron trade in North and South Staffordshire, and, further, that we in no way recognise the proceedings of the meetings convened by Mr. Potter, and held in the Sussex Hotel in the name of the trades of London."

The resolution was unanimously carried, and the proceedings closed at midnight, with a vote of thanks to the chairman.

MEETING OF THE TRADES' DELEGATES WITH LORD LICHFIELD.

A meeting of delegates from the London trades was held on Tuesday evening at the Bell Inn, Old Bailey, for the purpose of hearing from Lord Lichfield "an explanation as to the proposal for arbitration he had made to the puddlers of North Staffordshire, with a view of bringing the strike to a close, and as to how his proposal was received, both by the masters and the men." About 150 delegates were present, and a special deputation was also present from the North Staffordshire men; Mr. Mildred, carpenter, in the chair.

Mr. Odger stated that Lord Lichfield had called on him respecting the resolution passed at their previous delegate meeting, and said he felt happy to think the delegates had appreciated his conduct in the matter, and that they had looked more fully into the whole question than some others had done. (Hear, hear.) He told his lordship he thought there was some misunderstanding regarding the course he had taken in connection with the important question of arbitration, and he (Lord Lichfield) replied that if, by meeting the London trades, he could be

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of service in explaining the matter more fully than he had done, he would be happy to attend a delegate meeting for that purpose. At the council meeting on the previous Tuesday, he (Mr. Odger) explained what had transpired in the interview he had had with his lordship, and the council expressed regret that he had not invited him to attend at once, and there was much conversation about sending a deputation to him on the next day. He then said that if he should see his lordship again, and if he was equally willing to meet the council, he should certainly call a meeting, to which the whole of the members present said they hoped he would. On the following day (Wednesday) his lordship again called upon him, and expressed the pleasure he should have in meeting the delegates of the London trades, and explaining the whole matter. Mr. Odger then read some correspondence he had had with Lord Lichfield.

Mr. Potter said that in order that the meeting should hear both sides of the question, he had written to the North Staffordshire men to send delegates, and he was happy to say that two of the men Lord Lichfield met at Hanley were present as a deputation. (Hear, hear.) This meeting had not been sanctioned by the council.

Mr. Coulson said that the council that met on the previous Tuesday gave the secretary power to convene a meeting to meet his lordship, if necessary. (Hear, hear.)

Mr. Allan (Amalgamated Engineers), remarked that full permission was given. Mr. Odger called upon him, and he advised him to the effect that the sooner the meeting was called the better, so that no misunderstanding should exist amongst the men. This was a perfectly legal meeting, and he was glad there were delegates present from North Staffordshire, as there could be no objection to them. (Hear, hear.)

Mr. Guile said that, as a lover of unity, he would move that this meeting be considered legally constituted.

Mr. Odger said the Council instructed him last Tuesday night to call this meeting, and therefore he should have been wanting in duty if he had not done so.

After some further discussion on this point, which was not conducted in the most orderly manner possible,

Mr. Daunter, the chairman of the council, begged most distinctly to state that Mr. Odger had full power from the council to call a meeting of the London trades' delegates, whenever he could get Lord Lich-

field to come to it. (Cheers.) Therefore, he would propose that, as his lordship was present, they should proceed to hear him at once. (Loud applause.)

Lord Lichfield, who was very warmly received, then went on to detail at some length the reasons which had induced him to interfere in the matter. Both the masters and men had agreed to accept the principle of arbitration, but the masters were only willing to arbitrate provided the men would resume work at the reduction, and the men refused to arbitrate unless they were allowed to resume work, pending the arbitration, at the old prices. A middle course suggested itself to his mind, and that was, to refer the wages question to arbitration, the men, pending the proceedings of that arbitration, to draw wages on account. He proposed, this, in the first instance, to the masters, by whom, after several objections, it was accepted, with the addition that he (Lord Lichfield) should appoint the arbitrators, whose names should be finally sanctioned by both parties. He then submitted his proposal to the men, by whom, he regretted to say, it was rejected, and who, in his presence, affirmed their previous resolution not to consent to arbitration unless allowed to resume work at the old prices. He endeavoured to induce the men to reconsider their determination, but in vain; and all his efforts had been fruitless. It had been said he had failed from his not having made the men fully acquainted with his proposal, but this he begged to deny. They thoroughly understood him, and he well understood them. (Cheers.) His lordship then proceeded at length to express a strong opinion as to all trade disputes being settled by arbitration, which would do much to prevent the ruinous system of strikes and lock-outs, and thought some legislative enactment should take place in furtherance of such object, towards the accomplishment of which he was willing to lend his aid. His lordship sat down amidst great applause.

Mr. Edwards, one of the deputation from North Staffordshire, after thanking his lordship for the interests he had taken in this question, and the London trades for the subscriptions towards the men on strike, said the men had made a great many concessions since the struggle commenced, and were willing to do so again, but all they had done had been to no purpose. The men had never refused to let their case go by arbitration, but they thought they ought not to resume work upon the reduction. The men had been orderly from the very commencement of

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the strike, but the masters had been using every means to entrap the men by drink and otherwise to get them into difficulty.

Mr. Waddell, another of the deputation from North Staffordshire, did not blame the masters, but it was the managers and others they had about them that did all the mischief. He personally had nothing to say against his lordship's proposal, and the men were proud that they had his interposition. If they went into work at the reduction, it might be three months before the question was decided by the arbitrators, and he for one was not going to work for that time without knowing how much he was to obtain for his labour. (Hear, hear.) If the men had been asking for an advance of wages and agreed to arbitrate, they would not expect to receive those advanced wages pending the arbitration proceeding, and, therefore, they ought not to be called upon to go in at the reduced wages offered by the masters whilst arbitration was going on. They, however, had offered to divide the proposed reduction with the masters, and, instead of being reduced 1s. per ton, to resume work at the reduction of 6d. per ton, but the masters would not consent, and the men had now fallen back on their old resolution and not to go to work except at the old prices. (Cheers.)

Mr. Potter rose to move a resolution to test the meeting on the subject matter of the dispute. The lock-out on the part of the masters was a complete and signal failure, and, after being in existence for four weeks, it was abandoned by the masters. And now the North Staffordshire men were again receiving support from the Brierly Hill district, and they would not, he thought, require extraneous aid. He then moved, "That this meeting regrets that the offers of the North Staffordshire men to resume work either at the terms they left off, or at the rate of 10s. per ton pending arbitration, were not accepted by the employers; but after having heard the statement of Lord Lichfield and the special deputation from the men on strike, this meeting is further of opinion that the terms and mode of settling the present dispute in North Staffordshire should be left to the masters and men in that district, and that this meeting pledges itself to support the men by all the pecuniary means in their power until a settlement is effected." (Cheers.)

Mr. Davis seconded the resolution.

Mr. Howell felt persuaded that if arbitration was to take place it must not be shackled with conditions. (Hear, hear.) The question was what middle way could

be suggested whereby neither party would concede the point at issue. The men had more to lose by refusing the arbitration than the masters could possibly gain. ("No," and hear.) As an amendment he would move, "That this meeting of the delegates of the trades of London, having heard the statements of Lord Lichfield and the North Staffordshire delegates with reference to the present state of affairs, strongly advise the men on strike to submit their case to arbitration on the terms proposed by his lordship." (Cheers.)

Mr. Guile, in seconding the amendment, made a powerful speech in favour of arbitration.

Mr. Allan, secretary of the Amalgamated Engineers, said the latter part of the resolution was useless, because Mr. Potter had told them the Brierly Hill Executive had now received the men into the union again, and would grant them support. He had not come from the society he represented to pledge them to support the men in North Staffordshire, and he had no doubt others had come with no such instruction. (Hear, hear.) He saw in the *Beehive* newspaper of a week since a statement that Mr. Potter had given evidence before a Parliamentary Committee on arbitration; but from the blue-book containing the minutes which he had before him, he found Mr. Potter did not give evidence at all at that committee. There were certain persons who got the credit of doing their best to bring about courts of arbitration; but so soon as they had the opportunity of rendering good service, they did their utmost to pass resolutions to prevent anything being done to bring forward such a consummation. (Cheers and hisses.)

As it was now getting very late, Lord Lichfield said a few parting words, and on the motion of Mr. Applegarth, a hearty vote of thanks was accorded to him for his attendance. The noble lord briefly responded, and quitted the room.

After a very noisy and personal discussion about things in general and nothing in particular, Mr. Odger stated that he thought it would be better not to pass any resolution at all. They had met simply to hear Lord Lichfield, and having done that, the business of the meeting was at an end. (Cheers and dissent.)

Another noisy discussion ensued, and ultimately Mr. Stoner moved "That this meeting do now adjourn." To this there was considerable objection, and after a time the chairman vacated the chair, and the meeting broke up in the greatest confusion, without either the amendment or resolution having been put.

Trades' Societies and Lock-Outs.

REPORT
OF THE
CONFERENCE
OF
TRADES' DELEGATES
OF THE
UNITED KINGDOM,
HELD IN THE
TEMPERANCE HALL, TOWNHEAD STREET,
SHEFFIELD,
ON JULY 17TH, 1866, AND FOUR FOLLOWING DAYS.

*Specially Reported for the Committee, by MR. J. FARRELL,
of the "Sheffield Daily Telegraph."*

WITH
A REPORT OF THE PUBLIC MEETING,
List of Delegates who attended the Conference, the Trades
they represented, &c.

SHEFFIELD:
LOXLEY BROTHERS, PRINTERS, ATLAS OFFICES, FARGATE.

—
1866.



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REPORT, & C.

FIRST DAY.

THE Delegates assembled in the lower room of the Temperance Hall, at twelve o'clock, for the appointment of officers and the transaction of routine business of the Conference, including order of procedure, limitation of the time for Delegates speaking on propositions, Committee for preparation of the same, and other business of an ordinary character, involving considerable discussion on general details.

The credentials of the various Delegates were examined by the officers, and it appeared that 138 Delegates were present, representing in the aggregate nearly 200,000 members.

[For List of Delegates, see end of Report].

In consequence of the number of Delegates present being much larger than was anticipated, the room engaged by the Committee was not sufficiently commodious; it was therefore resolved that for the future the Conference should meet in the large room.

RESOLUTIONS PASSED :—

“That Mr. C. Bagshaw, President of the Association of Organised Trades of Sheffield, be appointed Chairman of the Conference.”

“That Mr. M. Lawrence, of the London Protective Tailors' Association, act as Vice-Chairman.”

“That Mr. W. Dronfield, Secretary of the Organised Trades of Sheffield, be appointed Secretary of the Conference, and that Mr. W. H. Wood, of the Manchester Typographical Society, act as Assistant-Secretary.”

“That Mr. W. Broadhead, of the Sheffield Saw Grinders' Society, be appointed Treasurer.”

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Mr. T. Holland, of the Filesmiths' Union, offered his services as doorkeeper, and they were accepted.

With a view to printing the deliberations of the Conference for general circulation, it was decided that a special report be taken of the proceedings, the selection of the Reporter to be left in the hands of the Secretary.

"That the Representatives of the Public Press be admitted to the Conference."

"That the Meeting continue open until the preliminary business is arranged, and then adjourn for the day."

A Committee of seven was formed to draw up standing orders for the government of the Conference, preparation of resolutions, &c., consisting of Mr. C. Bagshaw, Sheffield; Mr. M. Lawrence, London; Mr. W. Dronfield, Sheffield; Mr. W. H. Wood, Manchester; Mr. W. Broadhead, Sheffield; Mr. J. Dixon, West Yorkshire; and Mr. G. Newton, Glasgow.

"That the Delegates meet each day at ten a.m., and continue until five p.m.; an adjournment for dinner taking place from one to two p.m."

"That each speaker be allowed fifteen minutes on any one question, and only to speak once; the mover of the resolution to have five minutes to reply."

"That the mover of any resolution submit the same to the Chairman, in writing, signed by the mover."

"That the Minutes of each day's proceedings be printed for the Delegates, the first day's to contain the list of Delegates, number of members, and the towns represented."

SECOND DAY.

THE names of the delegates having been called over, the meeting proceeded to the business of the day.

The minutes of the previous day's deliberations were then read, when it was

RESOLVED—"That the minutes as read be confirmed and adopted, as a faithful record of yesterday's proceedings."

Mr. Hinchliffe, of the Sheffield Joiners' Society, desired to be admitted to the Conference, alleging that, although not yet accredited, a meeting, to be held this evening, would authorise his attendance.

RESOLVED—"That Mr. Hinchliffe be admitted, but not allowed to vote until his credentials are forthcoming."

Credentials were received from the following Trades, viz.: the Scissor Grinders—Messrs. R. Holmshaw and J. Gale; Nottingham United Operative Brickmakers—Mr. Charles Oakland; and also from the General Council of Operative House Decorators and Painters, London—Mr. G. Shipton; and a letter was read from the Iron Workers' Association, Gateshead, announcing the appointment of Mr. J. Kane.

Letters were read from the Trades' Council of Edinburgh, Cardiff Trades' Committee, the International Working Men's Association, &c.

RESOLVED—"That the correspondence be received."

MR. SWEETING asked how it was intended to regulate the voting. If every delegate had a vote irrespective of the number of members represented by him, Sheffield would have a preponderance, there being no less than 62 delegates from Sheffield.

THE CHAIRMAN: Have you a proposition on the matter? It is quite right that you should ask the question.

MR. FOX hoped there would be no discussion on the point. He was sure that every delegate present had a desire to arrive at the same good end.

MR. LEIGH moved "That every delegate be allowed one vote on each subject, irrespective of the number of members represented by him." The mere fact of a delegate representing 5000 members did not prove that he had five times the brains

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of the man who only represented 1000. Though he and his colleague only really represented 1400, they had the interests of 7000 operatives at heart, and it was not right that they should have more than one vote each, on any subject that might come before them.

MR. T. BANKS seconded the motion.

MR. B. BAILEY, who believed that their motives were all alike, supported the proposition.

MR. ALLEN: I am willing to extend to every delegate present an equal amount of power, yet I feel called upon to lay before this meeting a matter which is causing me some little anxiety. I quite agree that a delegate representing 100 members should have as much power at this Conference as the delegate who represents 1000, and I believe we shall all aim at one point, and that is the general support of the oppressed. According to the prospectus that was issued, the meeting was to be composed of persons representing trades' societies, members of societies that have for their object the protection of labour. Whether such is the case or not, I am not prepared to say; but I desire some information on the subject, and the information I shall elicit may remove the anxiety to which I have alluded. I find the society of Engineers represented, and the letter introducing him expresses sympathy and good wishes. I accept them; but it occurred to me, whether the delegate could take upon himself to say that the different branches of the extensive society to which he belongs would render support to the objects of the Conference. That brought to my mind the society or association from which I find a letter has been received—the International Association of Working Men. Am I to understand that this International Association consists of the members of some particular society formed for the protection of trade? If they are, then we must respect them as such; but I should like the point to be cleared up for the information of the delegates generally. What are we to understand when they call themselves members of the International Association? Are they members of a trades' society? And if members of a trades' society, are they organised as a trades' society belonging to the British dominions? Can those who represent them here, tell us this? If we form ourselves into an association of labour, we certainly must have a fund for the protection of labour when it is oppressed.

A DELEGATE rose to a point of order.

THE CHAIRMAN said that the question before the meeting was whether every representative should have one vote.

MR. ALLEN: If they are representatives of trades' societies, I do not object to them; but can we depend upon them contributing to the funds of this society when it is established, if it requires support?

MR. ODGER: There is no delegate here who can commit his society now to any amount of money; therefore our friend's question is purely an invidious one. It is not in my power to commit either of the trades I represent as connected with the

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London Trades' Council to any amount of money whatever. I am sent here to do my best to further the object you have in view; but not to commit these trades to any amount of money towards your object, nor do I know that that question is before the chair at this moment, but whether a delegate shall have one vote or not, according to the number of members he represents. If the last speaker had confined himself to the legitimate question before us, he would have concluded his remarks long since, and we should have been dealing with the next order. He has provoked a discussion. I presume he will take the conduct of every delegate to amount to this—that his society is well disposed towards you, and that on his return, when you have completed your business, he will use his best efforts to get his society to endorse and to support you pecuniarily. The International Association is supported by working men generally. It is a *bona fide* society, extending itself throughout Switzerland, France, Belgium, Italy, and a great number of places in Germany. If the International Association must now declare whether they will give more money or not, it is an invidious, unfair, and partial proceeding, and I hope the friend who has suggested it, will withdraw it, and allow the business to proceed in a proper manner. Whatever plan is drawn up, the delegates cannot pledge themselves to bind their societies to it.

The proposition as to voting was then put and carried.

LOCK-OUTS.

Mr. GEORGE NEWTON, Glasgow, moved, that—

“Whereas, within the last few years, great and disastrous Lock-outs have been frequently resorted to by the employers of labour, as a means to compel the workmen to implicitly obey their wishes, and whereas these Lock-outs are alarmingly on the increase, and are therefore likely to produce unparalleled injury to the trade and commerce of the country, and consequent suffering and misery on the children of labour, it is desirable to enquire into the causes which give rise to these Lock-outs, with the view of providing a remedy for so serious an evil.”

On the meeting of the special committee, last night, to endeavour to sketch a few resolutions to submit to you to-day, we were met at the threshold of our labours with one vast difficulty, and that arose from the fact that we were not in possession of the views of the delegates as to the nature of Lock-outs, their causes, or any other consideration in reference to them; and it seemed desirable to frame a resolution so worded as to raise a general discussion on the matter, with a view to elicit the history of Lock-outs in past times, and, as far as possible, to obtain your opinions thereon, so that, in submitting any subsequent resolution, the committee may be guided by that historical information, and by the views of the parties present. The resolution says, mainly, three things. The first is, that “within the last few years, great and disastrous Lock-outs have been frequently resorted to.” He might point, in

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support of that, to the great Lock-out in London, the Lock-out, last year, in the Iron trade, in Staffordshire, and the immense disturbances in Sheffield, the Lock-out on the Clyde, and the Lock-out in the Staffordshire Potteries. All these show that Lock-outs have been frequently resorted to, and are very disastrous. I am probably not aware of half the Lock-outs that have taken place; but as there are so many present from so many quarters, we shall no doubt receive a vast amount of information in relation to the matter. That they "are alarmingly on the increase" is true, for there is scarcely a movement by workmen but the opposing weapon of Lock-out is resorted to; and it becomes us to consider whether we can arrive at the correct cause, and make a proper diagnosis of the disease, and then probably the cure will follow. Let us examine ourselves, and see if there be any wicked way in us that contributes to this unsatisfactory state of things, and if we discover that we are not blameless, then we ought, first of all, to set our house in order, and to avoid, as far as we are concerned, any such contingency arising in the future. Then let us examine the opposite side of the camp, and see how they stand; and if we find that they have not done all that they ought to have done with a view to prevent these serious evils, let us undisguisedly, and in plain language, point out where we consider they have erred, and, by increasing public opinion, in a healthy way, against—tyranny come people call it, but perhaps a milder word would be better—against the unwise policy used, it will do much to repress it in future. A great many Strikes, and perhaps Lock-outs, too, have arisen from a stubborn refusal, on the part of both sides, to look the question honestly and fairly in the face. The habit has been to look only on their own side of the question; the proneness of human nature to be selfish has shewn itself in a very remarkable manner, and we have found out that we are all selfish more or less, and very apt to be blinded by that selfishness. In approaching this question in future, it will be well to divest ourselves of the operation of this feeling; for no word can be too strong to designate the position of men who are entire slaves to feelings of selfishness. If we approach this question with improved feelings—I do not say that the men are always wrong—but it will be found that we have not acted in all cases with that wisdom which was best calculated to secure the objects we have had in view. The misery and suffering which accrue from vast Strikes and Lock-outs, I think, warrant any body of men in taking serious steps with a view to prevent their recurrence. There can be many justifications advanced on behalf of Strikes; and a Strike is a simple matter, easily understood and easily defined. A Strike is a resolution of men only to work on such conditions, and does not affect those who are not pledged to that resolution. A Lock-out, on the other hand, is a resolution that amounts to this—that if Tom Jones does not do this or that, Harry Robinson shall have no bread to eat. I cannot on any pretext whatever justify a Lock-out, because it compels men to suffer who

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have no hand in the affair. (Cheers.) I think it would be very impolitic in me to set the bad example of occupying a great deal of time. There are, no doubt, many here, who are perfectly competent to speak on the point; and if they direct their attention to searching out the causes, and giving us historical information of the causes, and the effects thereof, this day will not be spent in vain if it is entirely devoted to the discussion of this great and important question. I hope you will divest yourselves of every feeling but that of sound justice. Don't indulge in sentimental nonsense. It is a matter of business, and not of sentiment. Discuss it in a business like spirit, and I have no doubt great good will result from the deliberations of this day. (Cheers.)

MR. T. SWEETING, London, seconded the motion.

MR. PETER HALL, Sheffield, asked if it would be considered a Lock-out if the employers gave the legal month's notice. In the trade to which I belong, the Spring Knife Cutlers, one firm is almost equal to a town, and when we are locked out there, we are virtually locked out of all the others.

MR. THOMAS SMITH, Sheffield: There are various ways of locking out. I say it is a Lock-out to give the men a month's notice and to drive the trade away. I think, myself, that the men are themselves the cause of Lock outs in many cases. My honest conviction is this, that if there was a proper understanding between master and man, many matters might be settled that are not settled. I think there ought to be mutual arrangements. The masters have the capital, and the men the labour, and their interests are inseparable. There ought not to be any collision whatever between capital and labour; and I have no doubt that if the File Trade dispute had come before the Organised Trades in the first instance, it would not have been a Strike or a Lock-out. These are my honest convictions. I should like to see some means adopted for getting a better understanding between masters and men. I have had the honour of waiting on manufacturers in my own, the Saw trade, and I must say, we have been received and treated as gentlemen; and if this mode of procedure was adopted on all occasions of difference, I have no doubt that Strikes and Lock-outs would be prevented, and that three-fourths of the Strikes and Lock-outs which have taken place never would have occurred. (Applause).

MR. G. AUSTIN, Sheffield: Mr. Smith has not properly defined the question of Lock-outs. My opinion is this: that if, in consequence of a dispute arising between the masters and men in a given department, the masters deprive the other branches of the trade in the factory of employment, that is a Lock-out. (Hear, hear). Mr. Smith has made some allusion to the dispute in the File Trade. This is not the place to call to account anything that has been amiss in the conduct of that dispute. Probably had different steps been taken at first, the Lock-out might have been prevented, and that remark will apply to a good many cases in which Strikes and Lock-outs have been resorted to.

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Mr. A. McDougall, Sheffield: The simplest way of answering the question, "What is a Lock-out?" is to give an illustration. A short time ago, the Iron Workers of the Clyde asked that the hours of labour should be reduced from 60 to 57 hours per week. The employers stated that compliance with the request would involve them in a loss of £300,000 a year in machinery alone, and they asked how that money was to be made up to them. Several of the delegates endeavoured to answer the question, but failed to do so satisfactorily. The employers were willing to comply on these terms: that the wages be reduced in the same proportion as the hours; but that the workmen refused, and the employers then said, "We will lock you out for three months." They closed their doors against all the men in their employ, refusing the services of those who were ready to sell their labour on their own terms; and that I think, meets the question of "What is a Lock-out." Employers have the power legally to close their doors, and in the case of what they regard to be an unreasonable demand, they immediately put into practice what by law they had power to do.

Mr. R. JOYNSON, Potteries: I feel a deep interest in this question, and I hope its discussion will tend to do good throughout the whole of the kingdom. If we inquire into the cause of Lock-outs and Turn-outs, I think we shall find they are traceable to a great variety of circumstances. The principle reason, I am sorry to say, so far as I have seen, is that the workmen generally have been too ready to resort to Turn-outs. (Hear, hear) I feel sure there has not been that readiness to argue and reason the question in dispute, and to refer it to arbitration that there ought to have been; and until we have a better feeling amongst workmen generally, and until it is felt that recourse to Strikes ought not to be had on any account, except as a last resource, and unless the odds are a hundred to one in our favour, they will continue to occur. The amicable settlement of disputes has, in my opinion, been too much neglected by workmen generally. They have not considered the peculiar circumstances under which they have been placed, not considered the odds against them, and they have been crushed in consequence.

Mr. H. ROBERTS, Manchester: I think it would have been better if the last speaker had confined his attention to the question before the meeting—Lock-outs—and not given us a dissertation on Strikes. I would compliment the proposer of the motion for the manner in which he introduced the question, and I hope that every speaker will adhere to facts. In the business which I represent, Lock-outs are invariably resorted to by the masters, whenever the men ask for an advance of wages. If the legal notice be given to the men, I cannot conceive that it can strictly be termed a Lock-out; but I cannot conceive that the doing of what they are compelled by law to do, at all really affects the question.

Mr. W. BROADHEAD, Sheffield: This great assembly has

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met for the purpose of enquiring into the cause of Lock-outs. I think the cause is obviously to compel implicit obedience on the part of the workmen, and to destroy Trades' Unions by the expenses which a Lock-out entailed upon them. Lock-outs are alarmingly on the increase, and I can see no better mode of suppressing them than by the trades of the country being prepared to fight the Lock-outs unitedly, instead of dealing with them in sectional detail. Lock-outs have found their way into Sheffield, and it was here that the subject of this Conference was first mooted, because it was seen very clearly that if some steps were not taken in the matter, it would be impossible for any individual trade to stand. It requires the aid and assistance of all the trades to fight this great battle. (Hear, hear.) It is true that manufacturers in Sheffield, and in other parts of the country, say that it is not their intention to destroy the Unions. They said so in the recent struggle in the File Trade. But there was a struggle in the File Trade in 1836, and there was then no Lock-out. (Hear, hear.) It was not seen necessary then to lock out all the branches because one branch struck for an advance of wages, and why should the necessity have arisen in this case? In 1836, the branches with which there was no dispute continued at work, and if work could not be found them they were employed in other occupations, so that they might live. (Hear, hear.) It was not so on the recent occasion. (Hear, hear.) The Lock-out system has been introduced, in the first place, throwing the men on the trade's fund, and, by so doing, swamping their efforts and their means of getting assistance. This is the great object in all Lock-outs; and this being apparent, I think it is our duty to take steps for the purpose of bringing together one vast body for the purpose of resisting these endeavours, when they take place. (Hear, hear.) Lock-outs frequently arise out of Strikes, it is true; and it should not be the object of this assembly to promote Strikes, or to find assistance beyond what is seen to be necessary; but our great point should be to resist Lock-outs whenever they are had recourse to.

MR. W. BURNS, London: It has been said that there is a disposition among the working-men to rush too hastily into Strikes. There are some men present who have been concerned in some of the greatest Strikes and Lock-outs that have taken place; and I appeal to them to say whether the utmost efforts have not invariably, in the first place, been resorted to for the purpose of bringing about an amicable settlement. (Hear, hear.) We don't want to strike if we can help it; but what we want is, a fair amount of remuneration for our labour, so that we may live as hard working honest men ought to live. The best way to prevent Strikes and Lock-outs is to have a fund of £50,000 or £100,000. If we had such a fund, our differences would be readily settled by arbitration. In the trade to which I belong the masters tried to make us like slaves, and work for them upon their own terms. We waited upon them, but they would listen to nothing but unconditional surrender,

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and as we could not agree to that, we were locked out for sixteen weeks. But we beat them, and made a proposition to them as to a three months' notice, to prevent the necessity of resorting to such an extremity again.

MR. J. DAVIES, Hyde: The people of the locality in which I reside will coincide with me, when I say that the generality of our masters resort, in many cases, to conduct that is low and mean. For instance, a man makes himself rather conspicuous in trades' society business. He has the good of his trade and his fellows at heart, and the masters take advantage of him. In the cotton manufacturing districts we have a great many petty evils to contend with. Supposing there is a dispute amongst the spinners, and that some of the spinners have members of their families working in other departments of the factory, if the spinners turn out, the other members of their families are locked out; and that practice, in some cases, leads to great hardships. If we could amalgamate all the trades into one general society to protect each other, it would be a great advantage.

MR. W. HARRY, London: In my opinion, Lock-outs frequently arise from the workmen demanding an increase in their wages, or a decrease in their hours of labour. It has been admitted by political economists of the present day, and also by those of the past, that man has a perfect right to appraise his own labour. The shopkeeper has a right to place his value upon the article of which he disposes, and the workman ought to have the same right with respect to his labour. When this right is about to be exercised, the employers in many instances deny the right, although the workmen know very well that, from the state of trade, the demand can easily be conceded. In order to resist the demand, the masters close their shops, and that is a Lock-out. What is it that enables masters to do this? If we look from one end of the land to the other, we find that non-society men are in the predominant. In some trades, I admit, the bulk of the men are connected with the Society; but the masters see that they have only a particular section to deal with. How would the case stand, if the bulk of the trades were associated together in the manner which, I hope and trust, will be agreed upon by this Conference previous to its closing? The masters would find, then, that there was not one section only to deal with, and they would see that the organization was so perfect and sensitive, that they could not prick one part but it would pass through the entire system like an electric shock. (Hear, hear.) That is what we must endeavour to realize.

MR. T. WEST, Nottingham: The trade I belong to was locked out in 1860. We had a new, or partially new class of work, and the employers would not give us what we thought was the value of the work. Three large firms locked the men out, though out of the number not one-sixth was engaged on the new work. An endeavour was made to come to an arrangement; but the masters at the time declined. It is quite clear to me that the objects of Lock-outs are to destroy the working

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man. We ought to have a National Council to inquire into these matters, and, if possible, to settle them by arbitration. Lock-outs are selfish in the extreme, and always aimed against the working man.

MR. P. SHORROCKS, Manchester: The system of Lock-outs is not a newly invented one, but dates as far back as Strikes. A Lock-out is a Strike on the part of the masters against the men, and is in opposition to an effort of the men to improve their position. It was so in the great Preston Lock-out. There is now a large Lock-out in the Iron Trade of the north. In this morning's paper I find the following on the subject:—"At Walker, as in the surrounding districts, the puddling furnaces and the rolling mills are inactive, and some 400 or 500 men are idling about the streets. Upwards of 100 of the employés of the Walker Iron Company occupy houses belonging to the firm, and the company have served notices to quit upon them." This is a diabolical proceeding, to throw them out of house and home because they will not take a reduction of ten per cent. Working-men must unite. Without this, it will be impossible for us to get the full market value of our labour. There is a want of union amongst ourselves. (Hear, hear.) We want union, not only in individual trades, but a union of all trades together to resist Lock outs. I commend the men of Sheffield for taking up this question in the spirit they have done, and if it is carried out, they will get the thanks of the working-men of the whole country for it. (Hear, hear.) I think the Conference ought to pass a resolution of a conciliatory character, such as this:—"That this Conference recommend to all parties concerned in a Lock out or Strike, to inquire into the question thoroughly before proceeding to so disastrous and lamentable a proceeding as a Strike or Lock-out, and if necessary, to refer the subject to a third party for settlement."

MR. ELI DYSON, Manchester: Lock-outs mean capital against poverty; or capital against labour. It is a common thing to talk about freedom; but I say the working man is not free only so far as capital will allow him to be. We certainly have not the power that we ought to have. When the capitalists are in prosperous circumstances, they never let us know, and they think we have no right to participate in their good fortune, though the expenses of living are daily increasing. Until we are able to fight capital with capital, we shall do no good. There must be a combination of all the unions, and then we shall be able to meet and overcome Lock-outs.

MR. E. MEMMOTT, Sheffield: A Lock-out means no work; no work means no wages; no wages means no bread. I consider Strikes and Lock-outs a very clumsy, awkward, and stubborn way of settling disputes. Prevention is better than cure; and I see nothing so well calculated to prevent Strikes and Lock-outs as a combination of all the trades for mutual assistance. A great Lock-out is impending in the North, because the masters want to take ten per cent. off the wages of

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the men. Without entering into the question of whether that reduction is justifiable or not, I may say that Mr. Stevens, in the American House of Representatives, said "that the reason why England could send her iron over there so cheaply as she did was because the rate of wages in England was one-third what it is in the United States." It is said that food and clothing are very dear in the States; but if the workmen get three times as much wages as they do in England, they can afford to pay high prices. Besides, there is no disguising the fact that prices are becoming very high in England, but wages are not advancing in a corresponding degree. (Hear, hear.) Let us become one united body throughout England, and support each other when the time of need arrives.

MR. T. BANKS, Preston: I believe the term Lock out originated in 1822, in consequence of a step taken by the Preston manufacturers. In 1836, another Lock-out took place. I will give you the cause of it. Bolton, Chorley, and Preston are rival places in the cotton trade for fine counts—fine and middling. At Bolton, the spinners were receiving ten shillings, twelve shillings, fifteen shillings, and in some cases twenty shillings a week more than the spinners of Preston, and an effort was made to obtain more equal terms for the Preston operatives. A strike was threatened, and the masters offered an advance of ten per cent., and at the firm where I worked, 12½ per cent. was offered. The leaders urged us to stand for the Bolton prices, and to accept nothing less. A Lock-out took place. We were out seventeen weeks, and at the end of that time we were obliged to succumb for want of funds. On that occasion I consider we acted wrongly. They offered us part; and I think we ought to have taken it for the time, and then agitated for the difference. (Hear, hear.) In 1847 a reduction, I think of ten per cent., took place in consequence of bad trade. We tried to prevent it; offered to work short time, but nothing would do but a reduction of ten per cent. We submitted, on this understanding, that when trade revived they should give us the ten per cent. back again. We naturally expected they would keep their word. Things improved; the panic passed away; and '49 was a brisker year than any of its predecessors. We reminded the manufacturers of their promise, and asked for the ten per cent.; but it was no use. We went struggling on, working and agitating till something like 1853, and then we were determined to have the ten per cent. We were all prepared to give in our notices, and it had the desired effect. We got the ten per cent., and enjoyed it for about five weeks, when there came a great talk about the Russian war, and trade began to slacken. The masters wanted to take the ten per cent. off again, and as we would not let them, there was again a Lock-out. In the year 1853, 25,000 of us were locked out—spinners, minders, weavers, carding hands, throstle hands, and so on. That lasted 36 weeks, and on that occasion we were right, because we were still under Bolton and other districts. The whole country responded to our call; London, alone, sending

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no less than £4000. During that 36 weeks not less than £100,000 came to Preston for our relief, and that shows what trades can do when they are united. Not only were we able to continue the Strike, but when it ended we were a thousand pounds better off than we were at the commencement (Cheers.)

MR. GEORGE ROSS, Glasgow: Various causes have been given of Lock-outs, and various causes may be given; but the very fact that they have existed, and are at this moment existing around us, is a sufficient reason on the part of the working men of Great Britain to make a strenuous effort to remedy the evil. They are an evil to society at large, and to us as individual members of society. I cannot, however, agree that working-men are the great cause of Lock outs. I do not pretend to believe that working-men are infallible; but I admit that they are equally guilty of errors as other people. Nineteenths of the Lock-outs have been caused by the tyranny and selfishness of employers. It is quite true that the Lock-out on the Clyde was brought about because the great body of the workmen refused to accept the employers terms; but, as I understand, the question is one of hours and not of wages. The employers have not acted honestly with the men in the matter, and I hold that the evil lies with the employers in nine cases out of ten. The great question of Lock-outs must be settled, not by the mere system which has hitherto been adopted, of being dependent on eleemosynary aid; it must be by combination, and by such a combination of the working men of Great Britain as shall effectually do away with both Strikes and Lock-outs. If such a combination were honestly carried out, the moral power we may wield, and the influence we may be able to bring to bear upon the public at large, will tend greatly to lessen this great evil. A great fund has been spoken of; but if a proper organisation took place, the money could be advanced when required. While we as a National Association would not interfere with the local working of any institution connected with us, or with their Strikes or trade disputes, we would be prepared to find means through these trades by a regular levy upon the members in proportion to the number registered, so as to meet a difficulty. A levy might be made in proportion to the wages received; and if that principle were adopted, trades receiving support might receive it in proportion to the wages they received, and on which they paid. If they were taxed at 2½ per cent. on their wages, the income from the members represented by the delegates present, would be about \$5000 weekly; and if that could have been collected during the Lock-out in the File Trade, the disaster would have been of shorter duration, and would have had a more satisfactory termination. (Hear, hear.) That, I think, is a very fair, and a very equitable principle, and its adoption would, at least, stem the torrent of starvation, if it did not stem the torrent of selfishness and tyranny on the part of the employers; and it would stem the torrent of pauperism, and the torrent of terrorism held over our heads in these Lock outs. (Applause.)

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Mr. W. DRONFIELD, Sheffield: In consequence of the position I hold in connection with the Trades' Societies of Sheffield, I think it right that I should give you my views on this important subject. I fear that a false impression has been, or may be, created by remarks that have been made by previous speakers on the late disastrous Lock-out in the File Trade. I do not in the least blame the men for the part they took in that dispute. I conceive that there was not the slightest necessity for the masters to lock out the whole of the branches of the File Trade because a certain portion of the men took the course they did. I do not now say whether the course taken in the first instance was right or wrong; but I do say this, that the cause of the Strike was the refusal of the masters to meet the grinders, who had given notice for an advance. I have said before, and I do not hesitate to say again, that where men are fit to work for an employer, they are fit to confer with an employer. (Hear, hear.) The grinders sent in a respectful request to be allowed to discuss the revised list with their employers, and the employers refused to meet them, and steps were taken to lock out the whole of the branches, numbering no less than 3,500 persons. Had the masters agreed to meet the grinders in the first or second instance, they might have been brought to see that the demand was unreasonable, and that it was not to their interest to persist in it. But the masters resorted to the too prevalent system of locking the men out. We are all very well aware that Lock-outs have increased greatly of late years, and I hope this Conference may hit upon some scheme by which these evils may be counteracted. I believe the best remedy is, to create a better feeling between employer and employed. I agreed with Mr. Newton when he said the men were not always in the right. We are all liable to err; but I do not think the men are more unreasonable than the masters. If it can be shown that their demand is unreasonable, they are not so unreasonable as to persist in the demand. The File Trade had not much money to fall back upon, but they found (thanks to the trades of the town and of the country generally) a great deal of money to support them during the sixteen weeks that the Lock-out lasted. The concentration of trades will have a tendency to render these Lock-outs unnecessary. I hope we shall not provoke counter action on the part of the masters; but if it comes to that we must be prepared to meet it. (Hear, hear.) I believe the working-men are sufficiently strong to be able to meet whatever is brought against them, and that their only great fault is apathy. The question of mutual support is one of great importance, and it should be the object of this organisation to devise plans to resist Lock-outs, and to promote a better understanding amongst the trades generally. Let us be prepared to assist those who are less fortunate than ourselves. We do not know how soon it may be our turn. All trades are liable to a serious Strike or Lock-out; and I hope the gentlemen now assembled will impress this strongly upon their constituents, and prevail upon them to give in their adhesion. We

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shall, I hope, have the question of arbitration brought before us, and I will only now say upon that point that, so far as I know at present, employers, as a rule, always object to arbitration. I do not know the reason, unless they are afraid to meet the men, and submit the matters in dispute to an impartial person. We always urge arbitration in Sheffield, and, as far as our own association is concerned, we know it has prevented many Strikes since its establishment, by acting as mediators between masters and men. I should like this Association to be on that model; and I would advise you not to attempt to do too much in the first instance, but do the thing slowly and surely. (Applause.)

MR. S. MEEKIN, Basford: Though I have never been personally concerned in a Lock-out I can see very clearly that the general cause of Lock-outs are the masters themselves. When a man demands a proper amount of remuneration for his labour, they are determined, in many cases, not to give it; and I am exceedingly glad to see that there is now to be a powerful Association to meet such cases.

MR. W. WILLBOND, Nottingham: From my own experience, and from my observation in other trades, I am quite sure that Lock-outs have been caused chiefly by employers refusing to receive deputations, and to show that conciliatory disposition towards workmen that workmen have shown towards them. I have known means resorted to by the men to conciliate matters, but I have not seen that disposition shown by the masters before they have resorted to a Lock-out of the men. The great object of the masters is to suppress the power and influence of Trades' Unions, and, if possible, to suppress them. The best preventative would be to form a National Union of Workmen. If such a union were formed, I think the masters would pause before they resorted to the abominable system of Lock-outs.

MR. W. LEIGH, Hyde: Strikes are in many instances the first cause of Lock-outs. Before we resort to Strikes, we ought to use every endeavour to obtain an amicable settlement of the differences. I don't think there is an employer in Sheffield who would lock his men out, if he did not think he was going to punish them; and one of the best means of depriving the weapon of its sting would be, so to organize as to be able to allow to the men locked out as much as they would earn were they at work. Give the men twenty-five shillings a week while they are walking about the streets, and I don't think the employers would lock them out. In one case, eighteen shillings a week was agreed upon for the men, and so much per head for their families, and, in four days' time, the Strike was brought to a close. I am in favour of a general organization of the trades of the country, and, if possible, that the association should be international.

MR. W. H. WOOD, Manchester: I should have refrained from offering any remarks, but I have not yet noticed that any gentleman has mentioned what I regard as the real source from

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whence emanate Lock-outs and Strikes. If we trace the question to its true source, I believe we shall find that masters are competing against each other for the production of their work at the cheapest possible rate, and it is this system of competition which I conceive to be the real foundation from which all our grievances flow. My idea is, that in order to check this system of competition, we should seek to promote, as much as possible, the equalization of wages over the length and breadth of the country, and not confine our labours to our own country alone, but extend our ramifications everywhere—America, Europe, and the most distant of Her Majesty's dominions. I have had opportunities, as Secretary of the Manchester Branch of the Provincial Typographical Association, of consulting with employers, and I have ever found that they have been ready to listen to us in the most courteous manner, whenever we have had grievances to lay before them, but I have noticed that we have always been met with this great difficulty—we have to contend with other employers who pay a less rate of wages than we are paying at the present time, and we should do our work at a disadvantage if we grant your request and compete with them in the market. To meet this state of things, it is to our interest to form an extensive organization, to bind ourselves together in one bond of unity, and to endeavour to bring about the equalization of wages, and to place them on a footing more just and satisfactory than that they occupy at the present time. We must not close our eyes to the fact that working men occupy a very different position to what they have done in times past. Employers of labour, as a general rule, are but working-men grown wealthy, and they understand all the machinery by which we seek to obtain advantage over them as capitalists. There is no secret in the working out of our system by which we seek to compete with capital, and, therefore, we must lay our case clearly before them, and, in a business-like manner, ask whether they are not prepared to redress such grievances as we believe we are labouring under, and come to what I believe to be the only sure preventative of Lock-outs and Strikes—Courts of Arbitration and Conciliation. In the adoption of rules for the guidance of this Association, we must discard all selfish motives, and adopt rules upon a broad and expansive basis, so as to meet with the acceptance of the general body of Organised Trades. (Applause.)

Mr. B. ORAN, London: Attempts are sometimes made by the masters to reduce our wages, and, when we resist, they turn us out. In my trade, they attack us in the depth of winter, when they think we can least bear the pressure, and when they think they can the more readily obtain an advantage. It is no use fighting for one branch. We must fight for all; and all must be put upon a footing on which they can live. Get a fund in hand, for when men are well organized, and have funds of their own, the masters will not dare to interfere as they have done. A levy of four shillings a man would yield £40,000. I don't ask this to be done, but I suggest it for your consideration.

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Mr. G. ODGER, London: The resolution submitted to us is a very appropriate and justifiable one. A more judicious resolution could not be devised for the consideration of the question. It pledges you to no specific action in endorsing the principle for which we are all here assembled, and we should stand apart from our duty, if we were to waste much longer time in discussing the resolution as it is. The form of carrying it out will be another thing. Lock-outs, their cause and their remedy, are the three points of the resolution. A gentleman, who addressed the meeting this morning, wished us to understand that Lock-outs should be discussed as apart altogether from Strikes. I wish they could; but Strikes are part and parcel of Lock-outs. Lock-outs are the weapons with which the master too often very successfully fights us. What have working men themselves done to avert Lock-outs? As far as I could gather, Mr. Newton said he believed they had done their utmost to avert them; but in some cases, no doubt, they had made mistakes; and I presume there is not a man in this room who is not prepared to admit that his society, either in its private character, or when advised by another, has committed some mistake or another in its time; and it has been a most redeeming feature in this Congress to hear so many speakers address the chair in the calm and dignified manner they have, and tell us of our faults, as well as speak in our praise. While, I say with Mr. Newton, that we have done the best we could in most instances, I am afraid the Strike in the Staffordshire Iron Trade was an exception. The London Trades' Council declared against them, and did all they could to induce them to accept the arbitration offered to them by the Earl of Lichfield. The men, I believe, were animated by pure motives, and with everything justifiable on their part; but they took a different view than we did, and a mistake was the result. They have paid dearly for that mistake. Mistakes find their own remedy, and the sufferings that come from them are sometimes exceedingly painful. There is a special point in this case, and that is, that the men are to receive so much reduction in their wages when iron declines so much per ton. If we have an agreement with a number of employers that under certain conditions our wages shall rise and fall, it is highly essential that they shall be fully complied with; but if we find them prejudicial to us, we can give notice that after a certain time, we shall not consider ourselves bound by that condition, and go on working peaceably till that time. It is sometimes said "our stocks are swollen, and work slack," and that is given as a reason why wages shall be reduced. Of all reasons in the world that is the most shallow, because it is in direct opposition to everything that is moral and just, though it is consonant with the laws laid down by political economists. I have yet to learn that some of the principles of political economy cannot be shaken by practical fact. If we are to decline our wages as work gets slack and slacker, and still more slack,

what will our wages be when depression comes upon the trade? It must result in what we cannot live upon, and that is a piece of degradation, not only to the individual, but to the nation. It is an anomaly that because work declines, wages should decline. There are more men on the market wanting assistance, and if anything should happen, it is that more money should be paid for the little work that is done. It is a fact, that within four years, the Revitting Trade has gone to one-half the price at which it commenced. Leicester had a monopoly, because of its cheapness. Why should the wages fall, while the masters have a monopoly in the market? For the simple reason, that they were continually introducing men who were not shoemakers at all, but became useful for the rougher part of the work, putting the more experienced workmen to the more particular parts of the work; and the men having no combination on their side to resist the first encroachment, wages gradually declined. The men of Leicester formed themselves into an association, and the masters immediately re-acted upon the men, and the result has been one of the most cruel and unjustifiable oppressions on the part of the masters that has been known in the country, and the poor fellows are comparatively defeated. We are told that we must accept Lock-outs as a legitimate result of Strikes. I am quite prepared to accept that. The masters say, if you use your weapon of Strikes, we will push our Lock-outs. I do not suppose it will come to the Kilkenny cat business. For the last twenty years at least, trade has undergone a remarkable change. Moral suasion is the thing aimed at by the bulk of trades' unionists at the present time. Glasgow and Sheffield have acted with us as to the Masters' and Workman's Act, and Arbitration, and we have manifested to the world, I think, that we are desirous of using moral force, instead of anything of a harsh character, and we have a right to expect to be received in a friendly spirit. The men offered moral suasion in the dispute in the File Trade, and the masters declined it. Having done that, they were responsible for a great deal of the sorrow and suffering that followed, and I hope that in future, disputes will be settled in a less disastrous manner, when the opportunity is offered. (Applause.)

MR. G. TROUP, London: I represent the London Working Men's Association, and we decline to give assistance in cases of Lock-out or Strike, where the men decline arbitration. We assisted the Sheffield File Trade. We were very desirous that the North Staffordshire men should leave their case to arbitration; but they were rather afraid to do it.

MR. W. LINDSEY, Preston: If the trades had been amalgamated on the occasion of the last Lock-out at Preston, we should have been able to keep the masters from getting the men they did into the town, and by that means would have saved much suffering.

MR. JAMES CARLISLE, Brierley Hill: Now that so much has been said as to the cause and history of Strikes and Lock-outs, I think it would be as well if we turned our attention to

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the devising of means for preventing them in the future. In my opinion, the best thing we can do will be to engender a good and friendly feeling between employer and employed, to remove all feelings of bitterness, and to let the things of the past be forgotten.

MR. G. FOX, Sheffield: I wish to protest against the remarks that have fallen from some of the speakers. It has been distinctly asserted that it was the masters, and they alone, who had brought Lock-outs into operation. That opinion seems to have been entertained by the Committee who framed the resolution, which says—"Whereas, within the last few years, great and disastrous Lock-outs have been frequently resorted to by the employers of labour as a means to compel the workmen to obey their wishes." From the information I have derived from this meeting, and from the information I gathered from the newspaper reports, I believe, as a general rule, it is not the masters who have originated Lock-outs; but they have been caused by the men in different ways, ways not in accordance with their best interests, or with the best interests of their employers. There is a very prevalent opinion amongst working men that when there is a great demand for their labour they should immediately Strike, and endeavour to obtain an advance of wages, and to increase them to the highest possible point. Taking only one view of the question, that seems quite right. When there is a great demand for labour, and when manufacturers are selling the labour at a great profit, it seems only right that working-men should, in some way or other, participate in the fruits. But there is the other side of the question that ought not to be lost sight of. If working-men are to receive the highest wages when trade is the briskest, they must naturally expect that at another time, when the pressure is not so great, they must receive less.

MR. C. WILLIAMS, Liverpool: I believe that Lock-outs as a rule, and I speak advisedly, arise from the action of my brother operatives. That is the result of my experience and observation. There are isolated cases in which the employer takes unwarrantable action, and closes his place against those who are willing to gain a living for themselves and their families. One grand national organization will enable us to meet these cases, and there are no means so well calculated to prevent them as the working-men being banded together in one consolidated union, having one interest in view. They will then be able to resist any encroachments that may be made wantonly by any employer. In Liverpool, we are far better than we were in that respect. We have organized a United Trades' Protection Association, and we tax the members by a monthly levy. The employers know it, and feel very delicate indeed about producing Strikes and Lock-outs.

MR. G. SHIPTON, London: All the moral suasion in the world will never have the weight and influence with the employers as such an association as that spoken of by Mr. Williams exercises. The trades of the country are now ripe for amalga-

mation, and as the want of organization has led to Strikes and Lock-outs that have resulted in great suffering, I hope this movement will have a successful issue. I should like some resolution of a substantial character to be brought forward—a resolution for the formation of a powerful organization—and any such resolution I shall be very happy to lay before the body I now represent.

MR. J. CONSTANTINE, Halifax: It has been suggested that we may provoke counter action on the part of employers, a sort of federation of employers to resist movements for the advance of wages and the reduction of the hours of labour. If such a federation be formed, the weakest must go to the wall, and if we adopt the same weapons as the masters, there can be no doubt as to what the result will be. I think that the only safe method of dealing with Lock-outs is a complete federation of the whole of the trades, and I hope that will be adopted.

MR. J. NORMANSELL, Barnsley: I have been locked out about twenty-four months in six years. There can be no doubt that the greatest portion of the Lock-outs originate in consequence of the operatives resorting to Strikes. I can speak more particularly in reference to the miners of South Yorkshire, for whom I am secretary. We have had some serious Lock-outs in that district. In 1860, we had one of no less than 4000 or 5000 men, and that was in consequence of the miners at three collieries striking for an advance of wages, and for the abolition of old customs that were considered to be oppressive to the workmen. The most disastrous Lock-outs have followed disputes in which the men were compelled to strike. In 1864, about 3000 of us were locked out, because the miners employed by one firm were on strike for an advance of wages. I don't think there would have been the Lock-out in the File Trade, if the grinders had not given notice for an advance. I do not say that Strikes are wrong, for had not the men of South Yorkshire struck, they never would have attained the position which they now occupy. In South Yorkshire, we have from 4000 to 5000 members, and they are in a better position than the miners of any other part of the United Kingdom. (Hear, hear.) Before we agree to support Lock outs we must have something to say about the Strikes which cause them, for we know very well that the men in some of the districts would rush into a Strike in order to bring about a Lock out which would be followed by support from this Association.

MR. J. ALLEN, Liverpool: My definition of the word Lock-out is this—that it is an unhallowed act of injustice on the part of the employers, and that it carries to the hearths and homes of the poor that poverty and misery which should alone visit the criminal. We are told that Lock-outs are brought about by the men resorting to Strikes; but, before the men are blamed, we ought to know whether the Strikes were justifiable or not. If unjustifiable, they do not justify Lock-outs. If a Strike is unjustifiable, let those who commit the error be visited with the punishment, and not those who had no voice in the first step,

and who are by no means accountable for, and receive no benefit from, the Strike. The Lock-out on the Clyde cannot be justified by the employers. During the thirty-six weeks of that Lock-out, disorganized as the trades were, £100,000 were paid in for their support. If that could be done then, when a proper organization is formed, it could be done in a fortnight. If men would associate themselves together, and work in their own shops, and on their own tools, and with their own capital, it would go far to let the masters see that the men were taking up the right end of the cudgel, and were able to lace them with the other. I would give to the employer everything that was just, and I would demand the same for the working man. Are we to be told that if a Strike takes place for an advance of wages, it is unjustifiable, and that it leads to a Lock-out? In that case we become the mere slaves of capital. I would suggest that we should contribute monthly or quarterly so much per member, and oftener if necessary.

Mr. G. SHIPTON, London: I hope that the proposition will be cordially adopted, and that the next motion, which will provide means for successfully resisting Lock-outs, will meet with the same reception.

Mr. J. HUMPHREYS, Wolverhampton: The society to which I belong have adopted the principle of Courts of Conciliation or Arbitration, as a means for the settlement of trade disputes, and the prevention of Strikes or Lock-outs.

Mr. J. RUSHFORTH, Sheffield: One effectual remedy for Lock-outs will be found in each individual trade thoroughly organising itself. The trades can meet in a conciliatory spirit, and they can use their efforts for the prevention of Strikes and the promotion of good feeling between masters and men. Any National Association will stand very little chance of success, unless each individual trade thoroughly organises itself, and depends in a great measure upon its own resources and its own efforts.

Mr. NEWTON replied: I am glad that this discussion has taken place. Much valuable information has been elicited, and without discussion we never can have that perfection of knowledge indispensable to the progress of society. I deny that the resolution conveys any aspersion upon the employers; but we cannot say that it is the workmen who Lock out, because they don't. If any statement is true, it is that the employers resort to Lock-outs as a means of compelling obedience to their wishes. The whole blame, therefore, of Lock-outs must lie at the doors of those who keep the keys.

The resolution was then adopted unanimously.

ORGANISATION.

Mr. J. HUMPHREYS moved—

“That in the opinion of this Conference an Organisation composed of the Trades' Societies of the United Kingdom be formed for the purpose of enabling the Workmen to effectively resist Lock-outs, and that it be remitted to the Committee to prepare resolutions in accordance with the expressed opinions of the Conference.”

The arguments that have already been advanced show that such an Organisation ought to be formed. There is nothing in the resolution that pledges us to any detail, and it will, therefore, not be necessary for me to occupy further time in moving the proposition.

MR. THOMAS BIRTWISTLE, Accrington, seconded the proposition.

MR. W. HARRY moved as an amendment, "That this Conference having the most sincere desire to avoid Strikes and Lock-outs, and the evils necessarily attendant thereon, do earnestly recommend to society and non-society men the necessity of forming themselves into one general Organisation, to be governed by an Executive Council, elected by the majority of those belonging to the General Labour Protective Association."

MR. W. GILMORE, Potteries, seconded the amendment.

MR. G. ROSS, Glasgow, proposed "that non-society men be excluded until the constitution was appointed."

MR. W. H. HEY, Halifax, seconded Mr. Ross's amendment. If non-society men had not the ardour to support their own trades' unions, why should that Association support them?

MR. W. BROADHEAD contended that it was utterly impossible to accept non-society men as members of that Association. Let them join their own trade societies, and then there would be a guarantee that they might be controlled like others. Without that, it was an utter impossibility.

MR. E. MEMMOTT, Sheffield, and Mr. T. MAUDSLEY, Manchester, having spoken,

MR. A. STANSFIELD, Sheffield, said he thought the recommendation as to non-society men a very good one. Their object was to get non-society men to be society men; and if they agreed to combine for the protection of labour, they of necessity became society men.

MR. W. H. MARKHAM, London, set his face dead against the admission of non-society men. If Mr. Harry's amendment were submitted to the society which he (Mr. Markham) represented, he did not think there would be one hand in the 10,000 held up in its favour,

MR. E. GREEN, Sheffield, thought that a scheme for promoting emigration would be the best for the prevention of Strikes and Lock-outs. The moment an employer saw that his men were about to leave the country, he would open his gates.

MR. W. LEIGH, Mr. P. HALL, Mr. E. GRAYSON, Mr. J. ALLEN, Mr. J. TEASDALE, Mr. W. H. WOOD, and Mr. BURNS having expressed their opinions,

MR. ODGER suggested that as the delegates appeared to be opposed to Mr. Harry's amendment it should be withdrawn.

MR. HARRY adopted the suggestion, and Mr. Humphrey's proposition was carried.

After making some arrangements for the Public Meeting, the Conference adjourned for the day.

PUBLIC MEETING.

A public meeting was held in the Temperance Hall, on Wednesday evening, to hear addresses from the delegates to the Conference. There was a large attendance. MR. BAGSHAW occupied the chair, and called upon the speakers to confine themselves as much as possible to the immediate subject before them, as, owing to the number of speakers, only fifteen minutes could be allowed for each address.

STRIKES AND LOCK-OUTS.

MR. R. JOYNSON, Potteries, was first called upon, and he besought the courtesy of the meeting, as this was his maiden speech. They ought, he said, to give some reason why a Conference had met at Sheffield this week, and he apprehended that the principal reason was, that they wished to do their part in solving what had been a great difficulty for years and years past—namely, reconciling capital and labour. Because they called these conferences, they were not to be looked upon as parties who were wishing to set class against class. (Cheers.) If their feelings and objects were rightly interpreted, it would be found that they were wishful to reconcile classes—to make better fathers and better citizens. He thought that Strikes were in themselves a very great and serious evil. He recollected—and it was almost as far back as he could remember—a Strike in the Potteries in 1836 and 1837, and one incident in that Strike in his own experience was this: One morning, his mother was giving her children their breakfast, but there was no butter on the bread, and he asked how it was. She stood and looked at them a moment, and then said, “It is because the gates are shut.” Now, a system that would bring about such feelings as were in his family at that time, and to a much greater extent in other families, a system that would bring about a condition of things like that, was a system that they ought to inquire into, and, if possible, find some remedy for. (Cheers.) This was their object in meeting in conference this week, and he thought they ought not to be left alone in this matter—it ought not to be left to the working-men, as a class, to try to solve this very great and important problem. (Hear, hear.) The masters were in duty bound as much as, nay more, than them, to help in solving the problem. In connection with the Strike to which he had referred, he should not be doing his duty if he did not return thanks again to the friends at Sheffield, for the earnest support they gave to the

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Potteries at that time. (Cheers.) This was a rather unpleasant point for him as an individual to touch on, because he believed that the Potteries did not return that kindness in the way that they ought to have done—he meant some part of the Potteries—for many did their duty, and returned, he thought, the money to double the extent that, individually, they were bound to do. (Cheers.) The attempt that the men were making at that time was, from various causes, a failure; and they knew that when a defeat took place it was like the rout of an army. He hoped Mr. Odger would excuse him if he spoke a little upon his subject—the means to remedy the Strikes they complained of. They ought to be careful how they entered on Strikes. Every effort ought to be used to avoid them, by reason, by arbitration, by every means it was possible to conceive of; for a Strike was a calamity they should dread. He hoped that because they, as working-men, were trying to better their condition, and raise a fund for that purpose, they would have more discretion than to be puffed up when the fund was created. He hoped the fund would not have the effect of making them rush into Strikes without great caution, but that they would be particular in guarding against them; for they must bear in mind, that if they had thousands and thousands of pounds, it was as necessary to avoid running into Strikes as if they had nothing in hand. (Hear, hear.) Therefore, he hoped that this fund would not cause parties to be reckless, but that they would use the same discretion and means to avoid Strikes as if they had no funds to fly to. Although he said as much as this, he apprehended that, bad as Strikes were, there were some evils that were worse. He should not like to see the time when the citizens of England would submit to bad treatment from their employers. He should like to see the employed, while willing to use every means to avoid a conflict, having an independent spirit, and, when no other course was left, they must resist an injustice—that was, a plain and direct injustice—to the uttermost of their power, come from whatever quarter it might. (Cheers.) He would just relate some little experiences, to illustrate a mode of preventing Strikes; but, first, he would remark, that if the masters were too stubborn to enter into this question with the men, that feeling of disregard would drive the men into certain things that, in the end, would be more injurious to the masters than trying with the men to settle it amicably. He meant to say, that if Strikes and Lock-outs continued as they had hitherto done, the inevitable result would be, that the men would have to look to manufacturing goods themselves, and to see if that would stop them. (Cheers.) This would inevitably come to pass in time, but it would be a work of time. In 1859 there was a dispute in the potting trade. The usual time of making agreements in the Potteries was November, and a certain portion of the hands thought that an advance was required, and they named it to their employers, who objected. The thing went on till December, when it was proposed to refer the matter

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to arbitration. The master potters chose five arbitrators on their part, and the men chose five on theirs, and on the 12th of December, 1859, they met at Tunstall. Before they went to any business, an umpire was mutually agreed upon, and the result of the inquiry was, that the men gained nine points, he believed, out of the ten they asked for, and the thing was amicably settled, and a Strike averted. Well, three years later, there came on another case, in which one single firm was concerned. The masters and the men appointed three arbitrators on each side, and an umpire was fixed upon, and the result of this inquiry was against the men. He believed the men themselves were satisfied in their minds, when the case came to be properly investigated, that they had not a sufficient reason to ask for the advance that was proposed. (Cheers.) These two cases would show that, when an earnest effort was made, these things could be settled; for whether the decision went in favour of the one party or the other, each side was substantially satisfied. (Cheers.)

Mr. WILLIAMS, Liverpool, was the next speaker, and, after complimenting Mr. Joynson upon the success of his first speech, he proceeded to consider the question of Lock-outs. Every evil, he said, must have a cause, and a Strike or a Lock-out was an evil in society. It was all very well to saddle certain wrongs on the wrong horse, and all very well to try to escape blame. He admitted that there were many evils connected with his brother unionists, but, while admitting that, he maintained that there was greater tyranny among the capitalists. (Hear, hear.) He would not run away from the evils that were among themselves: they were indifferent about the welfare of themselves, and indifferent about the prosperity of their trade. He said, "Away with the sympathy that is only in words. Give me the Quaker's sympathy; give me co-operation; give me the earnest work of a good hard-working son of toil." He regretted as much as any man when a contest began between employers and employed, and was quite aware that it was detrimental to both parties; but, while he admitted this, he said that, in a great many instances, it was the only alternative the working-man had to free himself from serfdom and slavery. (Cheers.) The remedy was a great national organization. Let this be brought about, and Lock-outs would be a thing of the past, and their children would read of them in the page of history with amazement that their progenitors should be so long in ignorance of the power they could wield. (Cheers.) It was easy for the capitalists to make out a case for themselves. They were patronized—he hoped the press would excuse him—he did not know much about the local press of Sheffield, but where he came from, the press flattered, they pandered to, the employers. They would not report the men faithfully. If the men gave a good reason for a certain object that they had in view, the press invariably cooked it. (Laughter and cheers.) They tried to turn public opinion against the men. Well, in the trade he was particularly connected with, the men offered to

their employers six months' notice for an advance of 6d. a day. The masters wanted to cut up a chicken as they liked, but the men were well united together and organized; they understood themselves; they wanted to improve themselves socially, morally, and politically; and they won. (Cheers.) Then the masters said, "You can go back to your society, and say we are compelled to give it you because your union is so strong." (Cheers.) Ten years ago, it would have been—"If you don't go to work—if you offer to attempt to take us in detail—we will lock you all out, and starve you." He advised them to cooperate. England was a noble country, and had great institutions; but there were great improvements wanted, which would give the men the power of commanding respect, to show to the world—and more especially to the capitalist employer—that they were not the machines of labour; that they had other duties to perform than eating, drinking, working, and sleeping; that they were composed of the same material, and had the same intellect, as the masters, and that they wanted time to cultivate that intellect. (Cheers.) The farmer might as well leave his field unsown, and then call upon God to give him a harvest, as for working-men to say they wanted improvements without working for them. He called upon them as honest hard-working sons of toil, to band themselves together for the great object of emancipating themselves from the serfdom and slavery they had suffered under for a series of years, and to rise in their might, put on their strength, and do battle with all the evils that afflicted society. (Loud cheers.)

Mr. JOHN NORMANSELL (South Yorkshire Miners) said, the interest which he represented knew well the suffering entailed by Lock-outs, he himself having been locked out about twenty-four months in six years. In 1864, the Lock-out in South Yorkshire lasted 19 weeks; there were 2000 in the Union at the time, and as the Strike was only at one firm, and 2000 could very well keep four hundred men out for an advance, 3000 men were locked out, the relief given averaging 5s. 6d. per week. But the men stood it, and the employers were compelled to withdraw the Lock-out, and the men resumed employment just as they came out with the very men on Strike still remaining out. It had been well said, that if food could be found, Lock-outs would cease, for employers generally hoped to succeed by depriving those who were contending of the necessaries of life. Nothing had benefitted the trade in South Yorkshire so much as the Lock-out of 1864. Then they were only 2000 strong, and 3000 were locked out; therefore, there were 1000 locked out who had nothing to do with the Association. But now there were no less than 4000 financial members on the district books, and about 1000 more on the lodge books. This had taught them a lesson which they would never forget; they did not know their duty to other trades before. Within the last six months they had had a Lock out on, and the men, who had families received about 15s. per week on the average. They had been locked out six months, and the society had been

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able to support them with a very slight levy—3d. per week—and had been able to contribute to their Sheffield friends £400; to the glass cutters, £25 or £30; and grants to other trade societies similarly situated, and they had not sunk more than £100 in the whole time, though they had 400 men on their funds. (Cheers.) The men of South Yorkshire had suffered, so much from Lock-outs, and it had done them so much good, that they were quite willing to go heart and soul with their friends here to organize a National Association, but he thought an International Association would be a step too far. Prevention was better than cure, and it would be foolishness for them to sit there and deliberate on such a great question, and never go into the cause of it. They knew that Strikes had causes, but they ought to know what the cause was; and if there was a Lock-out in any trade, the Board of this Association ought to know why the Lock-out had come about, or there would be some dispute as to the contributions to be paid. (Hear, hear.) Mr. Normansell then went on to show that the South Yorkshire Miners had got, by their organization, the system of weighing established, instead of measuring, and so justice was done to the miner on the pit banks. In Lancashire they had not this system, and the men worked twelve hours, while the South Yorkshire men worked eight hours, and got more money. The Lancashire men had been trying to get their grievances righted by law, and their masters said they were contented because they did not Strike. It was his firm opinion that it was Strikes that had shown the world and the capitalist that they must do something for the working classes, otherwise there would be nothing but tumult throughout the length and breadth of the United Kingdom. He did not condemn Strikes, but he would have a just cause for a Strike, then Strike hard enough. (Cheers.)

COURTS OF CONCILIATION OR ARBITRATION.

Mr. GEO. ODGER, Secretary of the London Trades' Council addressed the meeting on the subject of Courts of Conciliation and Arbitration. He did not, he said, know of any subject more affecting the working-man than this. A great deal had been said about Strikes and Lock-outs. With the principles of Strikes he had no sympathy, but he looked upon them as a sad necessity—as a two-edged instrument which was dangerous to use, and which ought to be avoided. Strikes were to the social world what wars were to the political world. (Hear, hear.) They became crimes, unless they were prompted by absolute necessity. Such being his sentiments, the meeting would not be surprised to learn that he had devoted the greater portion of the past few years of his life in endeavouring to induce his fellow-workmen not to resort to force, in the slightest degree, to obtain the ends they desired. They had, he thought, so far as obtaining a good wholesome opinion was concerned, been

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successful. It was true the great object was not yet attained. It was true they could not look around, and see or hear of any of the great effects of those principles of conciliation. The work had to be done, and a great deal of time had to be spent, before it becomes palpable and feasible. Then it behoved all those who were prepared to fight the great battle in the path of progress to wait patiently. The speaker then read the following letter, which had been addressed to him by Lord St. Leonards:—

“Boyle Farm, 16th July, 1866.

“SIR,—Since my last interview with you—I have been in communication with many persons in relation to my bill, and I find that the masters no longer desire the bill. They act, I think, under a mistake, inasmuch as the bill is not compulsory, but is simply permissive; although, of course when accepted, orders could be enforced. I stated to the House of Lords when I introduced the bill, that I should not offer it for a second reading unless both the masters and operatives desired the measure. As the masters do not desire it, I have put it down for Thursday next, when I shall state what has passed and withdraw the bill for this session. I have ascertained that both masters and operatives are anxious for a Court which could settle future wages. My bill provides for no such thing. I think that it would increase the present evils. An order for fixing future wages might be acceptable at the time it was made, but when the time arrived when the demand and the supply of labour showed to the operatives that their wages ought to be increased, I fear that the order would not be obeyed, and measures to enforce it would add to the present difficulties. But it appears to me that as both parties desire such a provision, power might be given to the New Court to establish by consent of both parties a rate of wages in any given trade for a limited time, for example one year, and that might lead to a better understanding than now prevails. The operatives as well as the masters cannot lose sight of the alarm which exists in the public mind at the vast spread throughout the land of Strikes and Lock-outs.

“Your faithful servant,

“ST. LEONARDS.”

He then explained the interest which his lordship took in the welfare of the working-man. He had taken up the question with the full intention of getting it settled; and he introduced a bill into the House of Lords. He then discovered that the masters were opposed to arbitration. (Hear, hear) The workmen might use all the moral suasion they had, but it was hard to get the masters to admit a principle, in fact, far more difficult than getting the men to admit one. He hoped that their employers would come to the conclusion that arbitration was better for both parties. His own opinion was, that it would be far more beneficial to them than to the workmen. The questions which arose affected labour and capital, and were questions of a most difficult character, and of the highest importance, and any system for the advantageous adjustment of those questions should be gladly accepted by all parties. The speaker then referred to the objects of the bill, and expressed his regret that Lord St. Leonards should be compelled to withdraw it. Great praise was due to his lordship for the manner in which he had taken up the question. It showed to the working-man that there were those who took an interest in his welfare, and who were ready to help him in his struggles to gain for himself those rights to which he was entitled. There were,

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he had no doubt, men who thought that Unionists, as a rule, liked Strikes. Such expressions were made use of with sinister motives, and were readily published in the newspapers. Such reflections on the working-classes were undeserved, and those who uttered them were capable of much worse. (Applause.) He would advise those who read articles in the newspapers, or in pamphlets, denouncing Trades' Unionists as a class, to do them the justice to enquire into the accuracy of those articles before accepting them as truth. (Hear, hear.) He concluded by again impressing upon those present the necessity for Courts of Conciliation and Arbitration. Such courts would have the effect of keeping up the wages of those who were creditably paid, and be the means of lifting up those who were ill-paid to a degree more befitting that of a human being, and also be the means of preventing their employers keeping them in that position which appeared to them suitable to their avaricious bargaining. (Applause.)

MR. J. HUMPHREYS, Wolverhampton, spoke on the same subject. After the speech of Mr. Odger, it would, he said, be almost unwise for him to go more into the question. The system which he was advocating had been in operation, and had worked well as far as it had gone. Birmingham and Coventry had adopted the system of arbitration prior to their adopting it, but it had failed. He then alluded to the masons' "discharge" note, and to the great indignation it caused; then to its withdrawal by the masters, and their agreement to conciliate. The workmen were invited to meet them, and they did meet them, and, at the meeting, a board was appointed as arbitrators, and an umpire was appointed to the satisfaction of both parties. Since that time there had not been a single dispute. (Applause.)

MR. GEORGE ROSS, Glasgow, after expressing the pleasure he felt at being present, said thorough unity would secure the interests of the workmen of the United Kingdom. (Applause.) He had, he said, at one time been opposed most strongly to the bill, the subject of which they were discussing, but he felt now that he ought to support it, and he hoped there would not be a single man who would oppose it. (Hear, hear.) Unless it were to be permissive, and at the option of the employers and the employed, let them not have anything to do with it. (Hear, hear.) He felt sure that Courts of Conciliation and Arbitration would be of the greatest possible advantage to them in settling all those vital questions which affected the different trades from time to time. If the movement only brought the masters and workmen to see it, it would do a great deal of good. He would not, he said, refer the dispute of a builder to a shoemaker, or the dispute of a shoemaker to a builder; but would refer each dispute to arbitrators in the trade in which the dispute arose. In conclusion, he earnestly entreated those present to exert themselves individually to obtain those Courts of Conciliation and Arbitration, and he was sure of success. (Applause.)

THE LAW OF MASTERS AND WORKMEN.

MR. GEORGE NEWTON, of Glasgow, the Secretary of the Masters' and Workmen's Executive, next addressed the meeting. In his opening remarks he said there were scarcely any matters which more deeply concerned the social relations and private character of the people than did those which had been referred to. He entered at some length into the subject, premising that as far as employers were concerned, their share in the contract only involved civil obligations, whilst, on the other hand, on the workmen's part, it was considered in a far different light, breach of contract leading him to be treated as a felon of the deepest dye. Many attempts had been made to reform the criminal population of the country; they had been pitied, had had places built for them (whether as a testimony to their superior genius or not he could not say)—(laughter)—but certain it was they had been fed and clothed, and that perhaps in a manner excelling that of the average of working-men; and this with a view of reforming those who cut throats and robbed the people of the country, whilst at the same time those who built up the nation's wealth, and contributed so much to the industry and commercial greatness of the country, had until lately had no time or attention spent upon them; their manacles were preserved for them, and when they were sent to prison, it was always with hard labour. After further alluding to the injustice which he considered the working classes suffered, the speaker proceeded to explain that the three statutes enacted in the reign of the Georges provided that it should only be required that employers or their agents should state upon oath that the servant had been guilty of breach of service, and a warrant could be at once issued for the apprehension of the man. One of the highest judges of Scotland had declared that it was illegal to summon a man in such cases; and they could only be proceeded against on warrant. Then, on a case being proved, the sentence must be hard labour, and actually on a man being sentenced to thirty day's imprisonment only, the sentence was declared illegal, because hard labour was not included. There had been some talk of improving the condition of working-men; but he certainly did not think a prison, where they would be herded along with murderers, assassins, and thieves, was a fit school wherein to teach them frugality, temperance, or moderation. (Hear, hear). The speaker went on to describe the measures which during the past three years had been carried on with a view of bringing about a change, but he remarked that notwithstanding the "pressure" which had been brought to bear, the committee appointed by the House of Commons for gaining information on the subject had not yet issued their report, and though that report would shortly be issued, it would be requisite that all the influence which could be brought to bear should be called to aid in prosecuting the movement, so that the House should be induced a remand, but his application was not granted, and he was

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to pass some suitable measure. He urged the men of Sheffield to take the matter into their serious consideration, and by their pens, their pence, and their voices, to get the law altered. It was high time that the workmen should be raised above the position of serfs, and that they should be freed from the tyranny and oppression to which they were now subjected. Such a state of things might be in keeping with ages of ignorance, but as education spread and knowledge was diffused, such things ought to be banished. In the course of his remarks the speaker adverted to the injustice of masters sitting upon the bench to adjudicate in cases relating to workmen, and he called upon his fellow men to be alive to their own interests. With regard to the part which Lord Elcho had taken in aiding the movement for bringing about a better state of affairs, he spoke in terms of the highest commendation.

MR. WM. DRONFIELD said, he congratulated Sheffield on being the first place in which such a large number of trades' delegates had ever assembled—representing about 200,000 members. He repudiated the idea that they were acting in a spirit of antagonism to the employers, but urged that it was their wish to devise some good means of preventing Strikes and Lock-outs. He then proceeded to speak on the subject introduced by the last speaker, and further explained the present state of the law relating to masters and workmen. In adverting to the steps which were being taken for the purpose of, if possible, bringing about a removal of the grievances complained of, he called upon all working-men to do their utmost to aid the movement for their benefit which had been so ably inaugurated and carried on by their Glasgow friends in conjunction with London, Sheffield, and other places. He had pleasure in stating that Sheffield had taken an active part in the agitation—upwards of forty petitions to the House of Commons from the different trades of the town and neighbourhood having been numerous signed, most of which had already been presented to the House by Mr. Roebuck, and others. In addition to signing these petitions, the trades of Sheffield had subscribed liberally towards the expenses of the agitation. Mr. Dronfield further stated that at the last Borough election this question was brought prominently before the candidates, and that at least one of their members—Mr. Roebuck—had promised them his assistance in getting an alteration of the obnoxious law of which they complained. As an instance of the glaring acts of injustice which were perpetrated even in this neighbourhood under the existing state of things, he said that there was a delegate on that platform who had on a certain occasion been dragged from his home, and taken in search of a magistrate. He had to be taken about six miles before a magistrate could be found, and then when they had arrived at the house, he could not get a fair hearing. His solicitor, who had been hastily summoned, without time having been afforded for his friends getting up any defence, applied for

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obliged to submit to the severe indignities which the law so unjustly allowed. The speaker held that those cases ought to be treated as civil contracts both with regard to master and man, and urged the duty of working-men being alive to their own interests in the matter. (Applause.)

CO-OPERATION.

Mr. W. HARRY, London, was next called upon to speak upon the subject of Co-operation. After remarking on the importance of Co-operation, he enlarged on the benefits which the working classes might derive from availing themselves of those advantages which they would obtain from associating together, so as to make the most of their resources. He contended that the working-men of the present day did not do their duty, and urged them to individual effort. He considered that if they did not do their best to ameliorate their condition they had no right to complain, and he reminded them that they must none of them by any means assent to any oppression. He also contrasted the condition of the people of the time of Alfred the Great, when they only worked eight hours per day, and those of the present day, when some of the working-men of London actually worked fifteen or sixteen hours per day.

Mr. H. ROBERTS, Manchester, showed that the principle which was brought to bear in joint stock companies, railway companies, and other associations in which capitalists combined, was just as applicable to the wants of working-men; and urged them to avail themselves of the privilege of associating together so as to get the full benefit of their labour. He considered it an imperative duty to advocate the principles of Co-operation, and in the course of a sensible speech, adduced arguments in its favour. Men could do far more in many ways unitedly than individually, and the old maxim of the bundle of sticks, "United we stand, divided we fall," was as true as ever. He believed education was doing much for working men; but he considered that they ought to avail themselves of the advantages of the press, and have a daily newspaper of their own to act as their organ—just as the present newspapers were the organs of the employers. He hoped the day was not far distant when the advocates of trades' societies and measures for the advancement of the working-classes would have an organ of their own, for he considered that the capitalists only wielded the power of the fourth estate. With all deference to individual opinion, he thought that at present working-men were not fairly represented. But it was necessary that they should be, and for this reason he urged that they should have a daily press of their own. (Cheers.) The speaker further adverted to the other objects of the meeting, and called upon all present to weigh well the important matters laid before them.

The meeting terminated about half-past ten o'clock, with a cordial vote of thanks to the chairman, for the able manner in which he had presided.

THIRD DAY.

The minutes of Wednesday's proceedings were confirmed.

Credentials were received from the following delegates:—
Operative Millers' Friendly Society, Sheffield,—Mr. J. Allen;
Branch of the General Union of Carpenters, Sheffield,—Mr. T. Hinchliffe.

Mr. Clare, filesmith, of Warrington, and Mr. J. Holmes, of Leeds, were admitted to the meeting on application, the meeting resolving that all well-known members of Trades' Unions be admitted (with the permission of the Chairman) to listen to the deliberations, but not to take part in the proceedings.

A letter from Mr. T. J. Dunning, of the London Bookbinders' Society, was read, and ordered to be received. In speaking of Lock-outs, Mr. Dunning said:—

“There is great necessity for the subject of Lock-outs to be widely ventilated, for they are indefensible on any principle of economics, of justice, or even of the usage of civilized existence. They take us back to the law of the strongest, the principle of savage life, which exchange the principle of civilized existence was established to repress, and, if possible, to set aside. A Lock-out on an extended scale is a conspiracy against common rights, as utterly indefensible as an act of robbery, or, at the very least, of revengeful deprivation on other people, because you cannot get your work done at your own price. It is enacted, in grave reality, and with deliberate intention, on the principle of the following burlesque lines, and with equal burlesque of justice and moral honesty:—

‘As when two dogs, erst fighting in the street,
One of those dogs another dog doth meet,
With angry tooth he bites him to the bone,
And this dog suffers for what t’other dog had done!’”

MR. CUTTS, of Sheffield, announced that the Amalgamated Society of Engineers had just forwarded the sum of £1000 to the Sheffield File Trade, to assist in the payment of the obligations arising from the recent Lock-out.

RESOLVED,—“That the thanks of this Conference be tendered to the Amalgamated Society of Engineers and all other bodies who have responded to such application.”

The Committee presented the following

PREAMBLE:—The Conference having at great length considered the question of Lock-outs, with the view of ascertaining the cause thereof, and providing such remedies as seem called for to obviate such in future, as far as possible, and, in cases

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where they do occur, to make such provisions for the wants of the suffering workmen as will neutralise the hitherto painful effects thereof—

Find—That these social perturbations arise from a spirit of opposition engendered in employers by the efforts of workmen to obtain a greater share, than hitherto has been granted them, of the wealth and comfort accruing from the industrial pursuits of the mass of the people of this country.

That, whilst in many instances the demands of the workmen have undoubtedly superinduced these Lock-outs, it is painfully apparent that, in a vast number of cases, they are resorted to by the employers, as a means of constraining workmen to act in such a manner in reference to Trades' Unions, rate of remuneration, hours of labour, and kindred questions, as they, the employers, choose to dictate.

That Lock outs are an outrage on the most clearly defined and generally accepted principle of social and political economy, and are calculated seriously and permanently to injure the trade and commerce of the country.

That the time has come when all classes of society should direct their earnest attention to the question, with the view of preventing the recurrence of these disastrous events, by the adoption of such wise and conciliatory measures as will obviate their necessity in future, and that it behoves all workmen to make special provisions for the support of such of their number as may still be exposed to the evil effects thereof, and that this can only be effectively accomplished by a National Amalgamation of all Trades.

MR. G. NEWTON: The Preamble is our first business, and as it is merely an expression of the opinions delivered by the delegates yesterday, and framed with the view of giving the result of Lock-outs, their history, and cause, there will be very little discussion upon it, and I move its adoption. It is very certain that if workmen were always content to work for what employers chose to give them, there never would be any Strikes or Lock-outs. There will, therefore, be no difficulty about finding No. 1. The second finding is this: "That whilst in many instances the demands of the workmen have undoubtedly superinduced these Lock outs, it is painfully apparent that, in a vast number of cases, they are resorted to by the employers as a means of constraining workmen to act in such a manner in reference to trades' unions, rate of remuneration, hours of labour, and kindred questions, as they, the employers, chose to dictate." The honesty of this finding, I think, none can dispute. We admit that we are ourselves to blame not unfrequently, and that the employers are also to blame, which, I believe, is also in consonance with the views expressed by the delegates yesterday, and with the facts of the case. I don't see that there can be any dispute about the next finding; and the last sums up the

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whole, declaring that it is the duty of all classes to direct their attention to this important matter, with a view to putting an end to Lock-outs, and recommend that conciliatory measures be adopted with the view to prevent them, and provides, in conclusion, that if it be impossible to prevent them, it is the duty of workmen to make provision for those of their fellows who suffer by them.

MR. W. H. WOOD seconded the proposition. After leaving the general meeting last night, the committee went immediately to work, in order that we might be prepared to lay a very clearly defined series of resolutions before you for consideration, and I may add that we did not arrive at our conclusions until we had lengthily discussed their merits. It was a quarter-past two o'clock before these resolutions were prepared for the printers, so that you can easily understand that your committee have not been lying on a bed of roses since your deliberations yesterday. The judgment and discrimination manifested by my colleagues in the preparation of these resolutions, I must say, astonished me, and I cannot refrain from congratulating the meeting upon the unity of feeling manifested.

MR. H. MITCHELL, Sheffield, thought the question as to whether the association should be "national" or "international," ought to be discussed.

The CHAIRMAN replied that the subject would be brought forward in the next resolution, and could then be discussed.

MR. HARRINGTON, Sheffield, supported the proposition.

MR. McDUGALL: The question before us is a natural and an important one. The Committee appear to have overlooked that it is a question that affects the United Kingdom. We have representatives from the northern parts of Scotland, and though it is all very well that we should remember ourselves, we must not forget our neighbours.

The CHAIRMAN: The first resolution will meet your wishes.

The VICE-CHAIRMAN: It meets exactly what you intend to say.

MR. McDUGALL: I will move that, instead of "by an amalgamation of all trades having their seat of government in the United Kingdom," the following words be employed:—"By an amalgamation of all trades in the United Kingdom."

MR. WILLIAMS: Perhaps you would like it to be the United Kingdom and Ireland? In my opinion a national institution embraces every nationality.

MR. ROSS: I feel a difficulty in rising to speak to the amendment, but I feel honestly called to do so.

The CHAIRMAN: Do you intend to second it.

MR. ROSS: Yes, I have pleasure in doing so. If the institution is simply to be a national one, it will apply to England alone, and exclude the part I represent. (No, no.) I am from the North, and that is my opinion. If it is so altered as to include the United Kingdom, or any term is employed implying that, I shall be prepared to support the proposition.

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MR. RUSHFORTH thought the alteration ought to be made.
MR. BROADHEAD: I don't see that we need carp about this. The resolution applies to the United Kingdom, and there has been no such idea as to keep out Scotland or any other part of the kingdom.

MR. NEWTON: I am amused with the idea. If I had said association of English trades, there might have been something in it. This is a nation made up of England, Wales, Ireland, and Scotland. It is all stuff that "national" does not include every corner of the empire.

MR. SHORROCKS: I think some opinion ought to have been expressed in the Preamble with regard to masters who are owners of cottage property, turning the men they have locked out on to the wide world without shelter. It is a very serious matter, and a degradation to England, and if the committee could draw up something that would call forth an expression of indignation against such conduct, it would meet with universal approval.

MR. HARRY supported the amendment. Though they all lived under one government, the laws of Scotland were different to those of England.

The **CHAIRMAN** announced that the Preamble would be altered as suggested in the amendment.

MR. NEWTON: Being a Scotchman myself, it is not likely I would give the go-by to my own country, if I knew it.

MR. CONSTANTINE moved that the word "national" be altered to "international." He thought that alteration would be better than that just proposed.

MR. SHAW seconded the amendment.

The **VICE-CHAIRMAN**: The committee took that matter into consideration. We are only now seeking to form an association of all the trades of the United Kingdom. Every attempt in this country hitherto has failed, and let us try to effect that before we seek to spread ourselves to the continent. If we can succeed in this country, then the motion to unite with other countries will be in good order; but until we have formed a union of our own, how can we ask other countries to join us? We may keep up a friendly intercourse with societies in other countries; but to call ourselves international, when we don't know that we shall be national, is going too far. (Hear, hear.)

MR. ODGER: The original proposition might be adopted, and then our friend, if he should feel disposed, or I myself, may propose a resolution to the effect that this association, after it is formed, sympathises with the objects which the International Association has in view, and will do its utmost, or something of that sort, to assist the International in developing its principles throughout Europe, and all over the world, if it be so needed. That will not be committing yourselves fully to the International Association, but merely an expression of opinion. I would suggest the withdrawal of the amendment, and that you allow the proposition to pass, with one little alteration. The second paragraph says, "that these social pertur-

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bations arise from a spirit of opposition engendered in employers by the efforts of workmen," and so on, so that we seem to take upon ourselves the onus of creating these Lock-outs of which we so much complain. I would have it read, "that these social perturbations arise, in many instances, from the spirit of opposition," &c. The next paragraph puts it correctly, "that whilst in many instances"; but this paragraph says they arise altogether. I think the committee will agree to make that little alteration.

MR. CUTTS: I think it would be unwise to go so far as to embrace an international confederation. It is our best policy to have a national alliance at present, and if, in future years, we can see how to form it into an international association, so much the better. We have a great deal of work to do yet, before we have a thoroughly effective national association. I do not see how it would exclude the Amalgamated Engineers, for although they have branches in all the colonies and in other countries, still they are part and parcel of one association, and, consequently, if they joined it, would be embraced in this confederation.

MR. E. GREEN: It would be very much to our benefit to have an international organization; but the proposition is premature. I hope we may ultimately see our way to form an international association.

MR. W. DRONFIELD: The trade to which I belong would be as much benefitted by the introduction of the word "international" as any other, for printers work all over the civilized globe. I might, therefore, be in favour of its introduction, but I think it would not be politic at present to introduce it. We should get too much entangled in the affairs of the working-men of other nations. It would be very proper to keep up a correspondence with trade societies throughout the world, so far as we know them, for the purpose of rendering information to them, and receiving information from them; but to attempt, at the outset of the association to extend our ramifications throughout the world, would be attempting a scheme that it would not be possible for us to accomplish. I think we had better go slowly and surely, and not attempt more than we can accomplish. The less complex we are, the more support shall we get from the trades of the United Kingdom. Though I am in favour of the laudable work of promoting a feeling of brotherhood throughout the world, I am for the present opposed to the introduction of the word "international."

MR. BURNS coincided with Mr. Dronfield.

MR. MEMMOTT: Will the branches of a trade society, having its chief seat of government in this country, be allowed to enter this association, though they are in the colonies, or in other parts of the world?

The CHAIRMAN: Certainly.

MR. J. ALLEN: It might be all very well to make our society international, if we could do so conveniently and advantageously. We know what difficulties have had to be over

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come in this country during the last thirty or thirty-five years to get trades well organized, and we have not succeeded yet. We are now about to form the whole into one, and it will take time to do that. Let us get established on a firm basis, and then we may introduce the subject to our friends in every quarter of the globe. (Applause.)

MR. ODGER'S suggestion was met by the introduction of the word "occasionally" after the word "perturbations" in the second clause of the Preamble, and

The Preamble was agreed to.

TITLE OF THE ALLIANCE.

MR. G. ROSS moved—

"That it be a recommendation of this Conference that the principle of a national amalgamation be formed of the Trades' Societies of the United Kingdom, to be designated 'The National Alliance of Organised Trades.'"

MR. G. HOUSLEY seconded the proposition.

MR. McDUGALL moved as an amendment "That it be a recommendation of this Conference, that an amalgamation of the Trades' Societies of the United Kingdom be formed, to be designated 'THE UNITED KINGDOM ALLIANCE OF ORGANISED TRADES.'"

MR. R. YATES seconded the amendment.

MR. C. WILLIAMS moved, "That this Conference assembled feel it their duty to recommend that an amalgamation of the Trades' Societies be at once formed, to be designated, 'The United Kingdom Trades' Protective Association.'"

MR. J. TEASDALE seconded.

The CHAIRMAN announced that Mr. McDougall's suggestion had been adopted by the mover and seconder of the original proposition.

MR. T. HINCHLIFFE suggested that the proposition should read thus: "That it be a recommendation of this Conference that a grand amalgamation be formed of the Trades' Societies, to be designated the 'Alliance of Organised Trades;' that the various Trades' Societies be invited to join such organisation and render such pecuniary and moral support as may be necessary."

MR. ODGER: I hope, when the resolution of the committee is passed, that we shall all feel the responsibility that it involves. It will be one of the greatest farces that ever was played in this country, if, after a Conference such as this is—one of the largest of the trades that ever assembled, perhaps, and I must say, as far as I can judge of it, one of the most intelligent, and, at the same time, business like, I ever attended in my life, no practical good followed. I don't object for one moment to any sentence I have heard expressed in this assembly. We have men congregated here from different parts of the country, and we have heard the opinions and remarks of these different men, and it is a proof of the progress that men

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are making, that they can sit quietly and listen to these various remarks, and, in the end, have but little difference, and adopt a resolution expressive of the conclusions which have been arrived at. I have seen in my time several conferences having the same object in view that this has, but they were not attended with success. There was a national association formed some years ago, and no doubt there was some ability manifested by those who had charge of that association, but it fell away in time to nothing, and though there is a remnant of it, it is a perfect myth, so far as its recognition by societies at large is concerned. That society was instituted by men of mark and intelligence, men of integrity, and men well able to do the work. It was presided over by the late Mr. Thomas Duncombe, a man of sterling integrity and industry, and had for one of its advisers the late Mr. Wakley, coroner for Middlesex, and member for Finsbury. There were others also connected with it who were well known for the efforts they had made to remove abuses. There was an effort made to form a society of this sort at Derby. It was initiated by Mr. Potter, and there was an assembly of many delegates from the principal towns and large trades. There was a committee, an executive, and everything of that sort, but the association died from the want of energy and want of funds; in fact, I heard it distinctly stated by a member of the committee, that after its formation they never once met. This is a sorrowful thing to have to contemplate; but it is a fact, and facts must be looked in the face, or we may make another mistake. (Hear, hear.) Somehow or other it seems that when the rules and regulations were drawn up, and the preliminary work finished, the members fell back into their local habits and customs, and lost sight of the great principle involved in their society. But I think from what I have seen, that such is not your intention. The carrying out of the programme will involve an immense amount of deliberate labour; there will have to be brought into exercise energy and persistent perseverance, and unless that is done, we shall add one more failure to the many that have gone before. That would be a disgrace to us. (Hear, hear.) As a proof of what I am stating, let me call your attention to the support which the aggregate bodies receive at the present time. The Trades' Council of Glasgow never had a shadow of the support which its energies and perseverance merited. From all the members who are in union with the London Trades' Council at the present time, we don't get £30 a year to carry it on with. I am stating facts to you, so that you shall know there is work to do besides merely carrying resolutions. When trades are in trouble in London, they come to us to assist them, and there is nothing that is more agreeable to me than to talk matters over with them, and to try to get them such assistance as is necessary; but while I can point to societies ever ready to subscribe with vigour to persons on strike, as a rule, they are not prepared to carry out any grand scheme by which Strikes can be averted. In a confer-

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once with Mr. Bright, and another with Mr. Gladstone, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, I was enabled to show our trades' report, containing our aggregate expenses, and, notwithstanding their smallness, we were called, in the *Standard*, I think, a set of "bloated trades' delegates." The support given to large bodies, such as I represent, is ridiculous in the extreme, and the reason for the lack of support is this—that when men meet in their own societies, they interest themselves immediately in their own concerns, and neglect the calls for their immediate sympathy and support. I cannot say that feeling arises from any bad motive on the part of the men. The very fact that our societies give money to the extent they do, is the best possible proof that there is no motive of an improper character in this state of things. If I go to my society at the next meeting night, perhaps I may be disposed to throw aside, until the next meeting, the consideration of this national association. Next week, there is probably some other thing in the way, and the subject is deferred again, and the executive become disheartened, and the result is overthrow. If you do not give prompt attention to whatever is sent to your society by the executive, you may depend upon it the carrying of this resolution will be perfectly useless, and worse than useless, because it will entail heavy preliminary expenses, and in the end, will throw some amount of discredit upon those who have initiated the affair, and are prepared to carry it out, if you would only do your part of the work.

MR. ROSS replied: I think it is a misconception on the part of Mr. Williams to introduce the word protective or protection, because I hold that we are already protective associations. If this institution were formed under such a heading, it would presume that we are not already protection societies. I maintain that we are so, and that we are here in that capacity, and that there is no necessity for such a term being applied. One word in reference to a remark by Mr. Odger about the character of the Glasgow Trades' Council. I was a member of that body, holding, perhaps, an important position, and now a movement is going on in Scotland to associate Dundee, Aberdeen, Greenock, and Glasgow, and to establish a true representation of the trades of the different localities. Our own trade, though falling away from the Trades' Council of Glasgow, has again come forward, and has given the liberty to its branches to become connected with it; and I hope that the movement will extend itself throughout this country. I don't think this great association will materially alter the position of Trades' Councils, any more than it will alter the position of our private Trades' Societies.

MR. ODGER: I said the Glasgow Trades' Council never received that support which it merited.

MR. ROSS: Almost every trade in Glasgow supported it. The original proposition was carried.

SUPPORT FOR 'LOCK-OUTS.

MR. ODGER moved—

"That the various Trades' Societies of the United Kingdom be invited to join such organisation, for the purpose of resisting Lock-outs in any trade so connected, and in rendering pecuniary and moral support to such branches as are necessitated to seek the same."

You will have applications, no doubt, from some of the most prosperous trades, and applications from some of the most impoverished; and it will be well to consider frequently the advisability of withholding encouragement in cases that are likely to result in Lock-outs, when there are so many trades in the country whose remuneration is of a frightful and degrading character. If we understand one another upon that point, we shall be able to show to the world that we are equal to the work we undertake. Take such a trade as the shoemakers. There are certain branches of that trade, in certain parts of the country, very well paid. Take, for example, the West end of London, where I work. There the wages are good; but two miles into the city you find the same trade getting labourers' wages. It has been my desire to lift the worst paid branches of the trade up, instead of always making efforts to push the best paid trades further on. (Hear, hear.)

MR. W. FINLINSON seconded the proposition. MR. W. BURNS and MR. E. GREEN supported.

MR. WILLIAMS said the Protection Society of Liverpool, always gave the preference of its support to those trades which received the least amount of money for their work, and there was not a trade society in connection with the association but what had made great progress.

MR. T. SMITH quite approved of assistance being first rendered to ill-paid trades. Where the manufacturers saw a trade down, they tried to give it another shove deeper down. If the funds of that Association were judiciously spent, many poorly paid trades would be benefitted.

MR. JOYNSON said, that whatever that Association promised, or led others to believe they would do, they ought faithfully and sincerely to carry out. I am therefore compelled, he proceeded, at this moment to state the position in which I am placed. The society to which I belong passed a resolution to the effect that a delegate be sent to this Conference, and another to the effect that the delegate shall attend the Conference to hear the proposals for future action, give a faithful report of the business transacted, pay a proportionate share of the real necessary expenses, but he shall not commit the society to any extent, or in any form, but merely bring the proposals for the future government of the society. Of course, other societies are prepared to go much further than that; but it would be wrong in me not to explain the position I am in.

The CHAIRMAN: You are just in the same position that we are all in.

MR. W. BROADHEAD: I stand in that position; and I presume there is not a delegate present who is not in the same

position. All our deliberations will be subject to the approval of the various trades we represent. The advice which has been given by Mr. Odger is both sound and good. It too often happens that apathy follows efforts like this. Associations of this character frequently attempt too much at the outset, and, in some cases, aid and assistance are asked in an unreasonable fashion. Trades should be careful before rushing into any contest, and should not be misled by the idea of the vast assistance that this Association can lend. Persons should not expect too much; but we should all put our shoulders to the wheel, and be determined to do more than we promised at the outset.

Mr. W. LINDSEY: I beg to call the attention of the Conference to the fact that Lock-outs only are named in this resolution, and I wish to ask whether or not assistance will be rendered by this organization, if formed, to trades seeking an advance of wages, by strike if necessary? I look upon this as an important question. Lock-outs in the trade to which I belong are comparatively unknown, and, for the sake of the society I represent, and the satisfaction of the Conference generally, I should like the question I have put answered.

Mr. HARRY: I had drawn up a resolution on the point, and as I think it makes up an omission, I will move it. "That the various Trade Societies of the United Kingdom be invited to join such organization for the purpose of resisting Lock-outs, and all attempts made on the part of employers to reduce wages, and to render such moral and pecuniary support to such societies as may need the same."

Mr. G. AUSTIN: seconded the amendment. He alluded to double-handed trades, and a better equalization of the wages, in some cases the second-hand receiving barely sufficient to support life. The labourer ought to be paid a sufficient sum of money to enable him to bring his family up respectably, and to provide a suitable education for his children.

Mr. W. LEIGH supported the original proposition. He thought the latter part of the proposition included all that was embodied in the amendment.

The VICE-CHAIRMAN: You will observe that we came here not to form a trades' combination for the advancement of wages either one way or another, but to resist these great evils of Lock-outs and to discourage Strikes. We do not wish to create a fund to assist societies who have neglected their own interests; but we have met to see if, by a large association, we can take this weapon of Lock-outs out of the hands of our employers. If an employer locks out his men to force them, by reducing them to starvation, to submit to his terms, we must assist to keep them respectably. By that means the sting will be taken out of the Lock-outs, and all that a Lock-out can come to will be an improvement in the health of the men locked out. (Hear, hear.) If there was anything indicated by the discussion yesterday, it was that we were not to encourage Strikes, not to devote ourselves to the support of societies that have neglected themselves. If the Sheffield File Trade had had respectable

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support when locked out, the masters would have had to take them in; but when the masters saw that the men had not enough to keep soul and body together, they had the glorification of knowing that the men must ultimately give way.

The CHAIRMAN said, the amendment being withdrawn, the only resolution before the meeting was the second on the paper.

Mr. J. DIXON said he noticed that Mr. Odger and other friends had an idea that they should try to get some increase in the wages of those who were badly paid. For his own part, he thought the resolution was comprehensive enough, and ought to be passed. If they tried to influence the employers who were lowering wages, they would be actually involving in fresh conflicts a body of men who had gone through Strikes, at more suffering than he could tell, to get into a good position, and it was hardly fair to call on them to suffer a second time in behalf of men who perhaps were obliged to take lower wages because they had not joined the Association to better their position—men who, in some way or other, were wanting in looking out for themselves. Besides, such a policy would compel the Alliance to embrace Strikes in all directions, while the only object they had in view was Lock-outs. He wanted to begin at the beginning. He hoped the foundation at this Conference would be a plan to protect them from Lock-outs; but he should like this to be only the foundation, and for them to improve it, and lay one stone fairly on another. If they began at the top of the tree, it was possible that Strikes, in different ways, would break them up at the commencement. But they had not had half the discussion upon the question that there was in it.

Mr. J. ALLEN did not think Mr. Odger intended to give the meeting the impression that they ought to support Strikes, as well as Lock-outs, or that the meeting should take up the question of badly paid trades as a single matter, but merely to refer these trades to their own society, and get them in the Association; and then, that where appeals from oppressed or low-paid classes were made, they should have priority over appeals from the societies of men in better circumstances—that was to say, that when a case of great distress came before the authorities of the Alliance for consideration, and also one from men in better circumstances, the case of those who were worst off should first of all be taken into consideration. If this was Mr. Odger's view, he agreed with it fully; and he believed that such were the objects of most trade societies. There were some that embraced three or four branches of a trade, and all the branches were not paid alike, and when distress prevailed, and appeals were sent in, the object was to bring the lower-paid up to the higher-paid—to elevate the men's position, and bring them on a footing as nearly as possible. If they held that the organisation was to support Strikes in general, as well as to resist Lock-outs, they would have to ask, in every instance—"Are these Strikes justifiable?" And to whom were

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they to apply for information? Why, to the heads of the respective societies. Let each society confine the business of its members to themselves, and elevate the position of the lowest paid branches belonging to it, and when this was done, this organisation would have no trouble with it, except the efforts of the society to advance wages, or what not, as the society thought right and just, should produce a Lock out. In that case, let this Association take the Lock-out, and leave the society to manage the Strike. Strikes might often be prevented by moral influences, perseverance, and judicious management; but it was sometimes better for the working-classes to accept a Strike than forego it through fear of the evil consequences to follow. In many instances they were bound to accept a Strike; for if they did not accept it in the first instance, they would have embargoes laid on them, until, in the end, they would be reduced below the pitch that a Strike at the first would have brought them to. Moral aid, combined with pecuniary aid, was very grand; and if there was a man in the meeting who had a right to advocate the principle of moral intervention between societies he thought it was himself, for he found that, within the last five years, one of the greatest societies, and a supposed protection society, had infringed upon the society to which he belonged to the tune of £1500. He hoped and trusted that when this Association was properly organized, they would exert a moral influence on all the trades with which they had to deal, confining them to the limits of their own trades, and not allowing them to overstep that line and interfere with other trades, as had been the case. Societies, whether large or small, should consider whether it would not be a benefit to them to join this Association, for they were but men, and the day might come when the greatness of the greatest would be brought down; and small societies should consider it their duty to support the Association, and teach that duty to all within the pale of their unions. He prayed that the Association might go on offering pecuniary and moral aid until, in the end, they all became one, and stood on one platform on an equal footing as men, for they were no more than that.

Mr. J. CARLISLE said the ironworkers did not earn £3 a week, and he should not be doing his duty if he let that statement go forth uncontradicted. In the branch he represented they never worked more than five days a week, and one day a fortnight besides they did no work. Having said so much, he thought they were getting far away from the subject. A resolution passed the day before stated that it was desirable to inquire into the causes which gave rise to Lock-outs. He believed the opinion they arrived at was unanimous, that Strikes were the cause. Was he to understand that they turned their backs on the cause, and began to deal with the effect, or should they not in the first instance deal with the cause? He said it was their duty to deal with Strikes, because they were the next great evil to Lock-outs, and the fruitful source from which all Lock-outs sprang. Mr. Lawrence

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told them that when members knew they had the support of the Conference they would be rushing into Strikes. Then what were the Standing Judicial Council and Executive Committee for, if not to inquire into the justice or injustice of a Strike or Lock out? That once ascertained, he contended that the duty of that Council was to render effective aid to any body of men on Strike or Lock-out; and if the Conference brought its influence to bear on Strikes, they would not be so bad as they would be if the Conference turned its back entirely on them.

MR. H. MITCHELL, Sheffield, said he agreed to some extent with what had been advanced as to raising the worst paid branches; but at the same time it was just possible—indeed, likely—that trying to raise the low paid would cause the well paid branches to be Locked out, and they should have the support of the Conference. He rose to propose an amendment. The word "Locked-out" was what he objected to, because he believed that it would prove a barrier to some just cause. They should try to avoid that; and at the same time he should not like to add the word "Strikes," which might induce them. He proposed the following simple resolution:—"That the various Trade Societies of the United Kingdom be invited to join such Organisation for the purpose of enabling them to receive such assistance as they may be necessitated to seek."

MR. HOLDEN, Sheffield, seconded the amendment.

MR. J. KINGDOM, Bristol, proceeded to speak upon the changing condition of the world, the more extensive intercourse of thought, and the more powerful action of mind upon mind. The intelligent and well disposed of all parties seemed to be brought nearer together, and were exerting an influence now, which, though it might be said to be feeble in its infancy, would, nevertheless, in his opinion, be felt throughout the world. Public opinion, that helm which directed the affairs of nations, peoples, and empires, had received a new direction, and was tending upwards and onwards, shaking off—as that meeting was evidence—the errors and the prejudices of the past. Both mankind and the laws and principles by which they were governed seemed about to be redeemed from slavery through the moral and intellectual—

THE CHAIRMAN interrupted the speaker, and called upon him to keep to the question.

MR. KINGDOM said he was arriving at it, and continued to speak in the same strain for some time. He read extracts from a paper written by him at the request of the Cordwainers' Society of the city of Bristol, when Locked-out and on Strike seven months ago. The extracts were similar in nature to the speech, and as the meeting manifested extreme impatience, the Chairman at length said he could not allow the time to be so taken up, and Mr. Kingdom sat down.

MR. P. CASEY, Barnsley, thought that if they could agree to something clear and short, it would be better than a resolution of this description. They had already, in the first reso-

lution, agreed to recommend that a National Amalgamation be formed. They should in their next, in his opinion, state the object of the Association rather more clearly than it was stated at present. For instance, in the second resolution there were three points, the first of which was, that the various trade societies of the United Kingdom should be invited to join such Association. That, in his opinion, had no business in a resolution stating the object. An invitation could be issued by a committee in some other form, better than in a resolution. The Association was for the purpose of resisting Lock-outs in any trade so connected, and that was the whole point of their assembling there. The third part of the resolution related to rendering pecuniary support to such trade societies as were necessitated to seek the same. He was afraid the Conference could not carry this out so successfully as a national amalgamation ought to do. From the discussion already passed, it seemed to be the opinion of some that they should leave Lock-outs entirely out, but he believed that if they did so, the Association would not last to assemble for another Conference. The gentleman who spoke just before dinner clearly showed that they had met there for the purpose of devising means for resisting Lock-outs, and for nothing else; and he thought that this rendering pecuniary and moral support, &c., was putting it too vaguely, and would lead them into other questions in which they could not give general satisfaction, and this would be the very means of breaking up the Association. Thinking so, he proposed this in place of the second part of the resolution:—"That the object of this Association be to render support to all its members who may be locked out from their employment, for the purpose of breaking up their local trades' associations, or compelling them to submit to a serious sacrifice of principle."

Mr. T. SWEETING perfectly agreed with the whole of the resolution. It appeared to him there was everything contained in it that they were met for, and he thought the committee had acted very wisely in so wording it. He certainly objected to some of the remarks made by Mr. Odger with respect to first taking into consideration the low-paid societies. He knew very well, that in the shoe trade in the East end of London, scarcely one out of ten belonged to any association at all, and it might be that the low wages they got was one reason why they did not; but another was that in the West end, where they got better paid, they had not been down to the East end to get these men to join. If they got better paid, it was their duty, in his opinion, to help their brethren to get better paid, and endeavour to organize them, because all large trade associations, notwithstanding that they might get a larger amount of wages, paid a larger contribution to their own society, and unless the shoemakers paid a larger amount than now—sixpence a week—it was not to be expected they could do more. It was their duty to pay larger contributions to their own society to fully organize their own trade. He considered that

low contributions meant a very poor association, and ever would; and he hoped his brethren in Sheffield, who were numerously represented there, would not be offended if he told them that their contributions to some of their associations were not sufficient, and he hoped that, to thoroughly organize themselves, they would endeavour to pay more.

Mr. DRONFIELD thought the question was really, whether they should embrace both Lock-outs and Strikes in the Association; but so many matters were talked of to-day that should have been talked of yesterday, that it was difficult to say what was before the meeting. He understood the last speaker to say that the trades of Sheffield paid low contributions. In reply to this he might say, for the information of the delegates, that there was not a town in the kingdom where such high contributions were paid, and he was at a loss to know where Mr. Sweeting had got his information. As to embracing both Lock-outs and Strikes, he thought it was foreign to their purpose. Their resolutions all through had gone on the basis of supporting men who had been locked out, and if they got on the question of Strikes as well, they would be defeating the object they had in view when they called the Conference. Messrs. Mitchell and Holden misunderstood the object of the Conference and their position. If this amendment was carried, they would not get the support from the country that they wanted, to make this a national organization of the trades. It was no use going into the question of Strikes, and Lock-outs had been discussed over and over again. If they embraced both, the Association would not be so successful as it would if they confined themselves to Lock-outs. He quite endorsed what had been said by some speakers, that if they at all endeavoured to interfere with Strikes in the way of giving pecuniary support—for it was no use to talk about moral support—if they led trades to believe that they would get the support of the trades of the country on all occasions of Strike, Strikes would be precipitated by the action of this organization, and it would be a complete failure in a short time. Let them confine themselves to the iniquitous and obnoxious system of Lock-outs, and they would act wisely in so doing. The committee had drawn up the resolutions with the intention of confining themselves simply to Lock-outs, believing that that was the object for which the Conference was assembled. He might say, in reply to Mr. Casey, that these were not rules or orders, but resolutions; and the first part of the resolution was quite in place. There was a further resolution on the sheet, that a committee should be appointed to draw up rules for the government of the Association. This was simply an expression of opinion, and he held that it was correctly worded as far as it went. He urged the meeting to confine itself merely to Lock-outs. This had been his belief throughout, and he had not seen anything to induce him to alter that opinion.

Mr. McDOUGALL did not wish that a statement made

by Mr. Allen, that all Lock-outs sprang from Strikes, should go forth to the public as a fact. There was at present a Lock-out in Scotland among the Ironstone Miners. They were threatened with a reduction of sixpence a day from their wages—but he saw from a paper that they were beginning to work again—and they were Locked out. There was also a Lock-out in Greenock, among the Joiners, brought about without entering on a Strike—without an intimation of a disagreeable feeling on the part of the men employed.

THE CHAIRMAN here called the speaker to order, and said they should never get business done if these matters were gone into.

MR. BAILEY thought it was the duty of other branches to get the wages of the low paid branches raised. But if they paid in a certain sum to the Association, they were entitled to the full benefit whether they got good wages or not. The question of Lock-outs had been fully discussed yesterday. He thought there had been sufficient said on the question, and that it should come to a vote.

MR. ODGER replied: As to the remark of Mr. Sweeting, as to the efforts to bring men into the societies, he could only say they had done it over and over again. Another remark was, that societies were responsible for bad pay in their own want of exertion. He begged him to reflect that some men were born into a bad trade, and how had they the same chance of receiving good wages that those had who were born into a well paid trade? To him the idea was perfectly preposterous. If an iron shipbuilder or a carpenter had a son, and brought him up to the business, was it any credit to the man that he was well paid; while, suppose a child was born into an unfortunate trade, was he responsible for it? Not for a moment. Efforts of a greater character were required to raise up the ill paid trades than were required to sustain the wages of those that were well paid. He had been misunderstood with regard to his meaning by many speakers. He never meant anything that was not consistent with the words of the resolution. The words applied simply to Lock-outs, and his remarks as to giving prior consideration to those poor trades pertained to that, and that only. Whatever that support, it was not yet exactly determined in what form it was to come; but in whatever form it came, if there should be two applications, one from a poor and another from a well paid trade, the better paid trade being better off, and probably better capable under existing circumstances of looking after itself, he would merely give first consideration to the most severe case; not to say that they ignored the other case—nothing of the sort; but as they must consider one first, to consider the worst extreme case first. This was perfectly just. With regard to the contributions paid, he believed that in his trade they paid as much contributions to real trade purposes as any society in England; but they must understand that the bulk of those societies that paid large contributions had large benefits which

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were not for trade purposes at all. If he paid one shilling a week to a society, and absorbed sixpence out of that for out-of-work money, that was not a legitimate trade purpose. He gave the men who paid it credit for paying it; but it was purely a benefit purpose. If, however, he paid threepence a week for legitimate trade purposes, he paid as much to sustain his trade as another man who paid one shilling, if ninepence out of it went for benefit purposes. Therefore he wished them to dissect the contributions, and ascertain what they went for, and see if those who paid much received benefits in the shape of incidental funds, or out-of-work funds, or large sick perquisites, or anything of that sort, for if these were allowed to obtain in opposition to legitimate trade funds, they might call Odd Fellows' or Foresters' societies, trade societies.

The second amendment was then put and lost, three hands only being held up for it.

The first amendment was lost, fourteen hands being held up for it.

The original resolution was then carried *nem. con.*

ENTRANCE FEE, ANNUAL' SUBSCRIPTIONS, &c.

MR. DRONFIELD moved the third resolution, which was as follows:—

“ That all Trades' Societies connecting themselves with this Alliance shall be required to pay an entrance fee of one halfpenny per member; and that an annual subscription of one penny be contributed by each member to meet the requirements thereof, such subscription to be paid half-yearly.”

He hoped the meeting would adopt this resolution, believing with the sub-committee, who drew it up, that it was the best under the circumstances. They had said all through that they thought the organisation should not attempt too much. If they wanted to make it a grand national affair, they must make it as cheap and simple as possible. They wanted to embrace the whole of the trades, not sectional trades, for if they were to succeed, they must have this, and nothing else; and if they wanted to make it a success, they must keep it at a low figure. The present organisation in Sheffield had been a greater success than any other that preceded it, because its contributions were not too high, and it did not aim at too much. He wanted this Association to do the same, and more if possible, to embrace the larger trades, and devise the best and simplest means of arriving at it. The calculation had been made of what would be produced supposing all the trades there represented were comprised. The question was, had they a fair right to expect that the number of men represented at the Conference would join the Association. He thought they had a right to expect as many, and probably more. He hoped they would reach 200,000, and with that number a contribution of one halfpenny per man would amount to £416 13s. 4d., a penny contribution £833 6s. 8d., and so on. Of course, this was only for working expenses, paying the

executive and officers, printing rules and reports, and all expenses such as delegations, &c. He did not want to press the subject further, but to call their attention to the amount of money that would thus be realised from 200,000 members.

MR. W. LEIGH seconded the motion. If the entrance fee were large, men would not pay it. Some would be in favour of getting a large sum for the purpose of raising a fund; but he knew that there was an objection to accumulate funds in localities where the contributors did not reside. It was therefore better to have as small an amount as was necessary for the working expenses. The smaller the amount the better for the organisation.

MR. S. MEAKIN, Basford, spoke, but with such indistinctness that he could not be reported.

MR. HUMPHREYS, understanding that this provision was merely for incidental expenses, wished to ask how the principal expenses of the Association were to be borne. He saw no provision for them.

The CHAIRMAN: We will enlarge on that further on.

MR. WILLIAMS said his own opinion was, that the sum proposed in the resolution was a very reasonable one, and if only well taken care of, and judiciously expended, it would hurt no one, but do many a vast amount of good. In Liverpool they paid a penny per month per member for all the trades in connection with their protective institution. He liked the word "protection." He had not the least hesitation in taking up the resolution and sending it round the United Kingdom for the approbation of the lodges he represented.

MR. SHORROCKS proposed to add the words "in advance" to the resolution.

To this the mover and seconder agreed, and the words were added.

MR. BURNS, London, thought they ought to make a bold stand at once, by endeavouring by every means in their power to raise capital sufficient to prevent Lock outs for the future. He could not see what a halfpenny subscription would do, but to pay the expenses of the committee of management, and so on. He wanted something further than this, and so did the body of men he represented. They wanted something like this. Take the Sheffield Lock-out. Had there been sufficient to meet it, and sent down, he felt convinced it would have prevented it altogether. Take the builders' Lock-out. Had they had the means at once promptly to have met it, capital would have thought twice before locking out once. It was a question of starvation for them,—could they starve the men sufficiently. They knew what the men had in hand as well as they did themselves, and could calculate how long it would last, and saw when the Strike must cease. If the men had the means, Lock-outs would be prevented, and the masters must come to terms. He believed that their only course was not to go childishly to work. Trades' Unions knew what they had gone through, and wanted to prevent it in future;

and if a bold step were taken, it would be prevented. Of course, he was not anxious to go and pay a great amount of money; but he thought that if a levy of 5s. per member were made throughout the trades, payable at a small sum, 3d. or 6d. per week, it would not take long to raise a fund, and the committee should have full power over it, to support the trades that required help. His experience of many years told him that a plan of this description would be preventive, and it was with that view that he made the following proposition:—"That we recommend to the various societies represented at this Conference that a levy of 5s. per member be made, in order to raise a fund to support any society belonging to this organisation, whose members may be locked out by their employers, either for requiring an advance or opposing a reduction of wages, or an encroachment on their rights or the privileges or customs of their trade, the same to be paid at 3d. or 6d. per week, as the members of the society may decide, to be paid to the proper officers of the society, who shall forward the same to the secretary of the organisation, with the number of members, and amount sent."

MR. B. ORAN, London, seconded the motion. If it were carried out, they might depend upon it they would not have the trouble of using the fund. The brickmakers were as badly paid a people as any, and if they got this fund, they would be in such a position that no masters dare lock them out; they would be afraid of them.

MR. WALTER SPENCER, Nottingham, quite agreed with the Secretary as to going slowly and surely at the onset; but he thought a halfpenny and a penny were too little; and as a further amendment, to carry out the object, he proposed—"That all Trade Societies connected with this Alliance shall be required to pay an entrance fee of one penny per member, instead of one halfpenny, and that an annual subscription of twopence be contributed by each member, to meet the requirements thereof, instead of one penny, such subscription to be paid half-yearly in advance."

MR. MARSDEN, Sheffield, seconded the amendment.

MR. W. H. WOOD was very sorry there was so much difference of opinion on the question of admission, and he should like, first of all, to ask Mr. Burns whether he would guarantee that his constituency would pay 5s. for an entrance fee on the number of members he was stated to represent?

MR. BURNS: Yes, they will.

MR. WOOD was sorry to say that, even with the small number he represented, he should not be placed in the same happy position. He should therefore like to lay before his constituency a reasonable proposition, and such as would meet with their acceptance. Such an amendment as Mr. Burns had proposed would act as a strong deterrent to prevent associations from joining this proposed Alliance. In fact, if they took it as a general rule, it was twelve and a half per cent. upon the capital of the trades associations throughout the country. The

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great bulk of the trades' organizations, the largest and most powerful, could only command £3 per man in their trade funds, and if they took five shillings from each individual member, they took one-eighth portion of the property, of the wealth of the organizations; so that he could see it was totally impossible for the great bulk of the Trades' Unions of the country to accept such a proposition. He should therefore support the motion of the committee. They must learn to creep before they ran; and they would perceive, from a subsequent resolution of the committee, that in the event of their wanting extraordinary assistance to meet extraordinary claims, the committee had made a suitable provision, and they would entirely depend on the members composing the Association as to what extent they should go. He thought the delegates had not treated the special committee in the way they ought to have done. The last resolution passed, after exhausting a couple of hours in its discussion, was carried almost unanimously. These resolutions had been calmly and dispassionately deliberated upon in a small assembly, far more qualified to inquire into the claims of a resolution than a larger one, and it would be treating the committee with a little more respect if members would come prepared to inquire thoroughly into the questions submitted.

The CHAIRMAN said the committee all felt extremely obliged to the delegates for giving their ideas, and would be perfectly repaid if they gave the meeting satisfaction in giving the delegates every opportunity of expressing those ideas.

Mr. MEMMOTT thought Mr. Burns was too sanguine. He believed that if every member represented at that Conference had the well-being of the working classes at heart as much as Mr. Burns had, a great amount of money would at once be raised for the defence; but while he thought Mr. Burns's proposition was too strong, he also thought that the proposition of the committee was a little too weak. He considered that they might very well adopt the amendment doubling the sums named by the committee. This was a very small amount, and would raise a large sum of money. He was much obliged to the committee for the care they had exercised, and the time they had occupied in framing the resolutions.

Mr. T. SMITH quite endorsed the resolution. The scale was a very just one, and if they put a higher figure on, it would debar many from joining. They were indebted to the committee for the able manner in which they had brought out the resolutions. He wanted all societies throughout the country to be members, and to benefit each other. His trade suggested to him that the scale should be low, and then they would go hand and heart with the Conference. His trade would subscribe the amount, and if they found they wanted more means at the next Conference they would then be able to get it.

Mr. G. TROUP said the Working Men's Association, at a meeting held in St. Martin's Hall, had an intention of taking such steps as the committee had done, and for which he felt

grateful to them. He hoped, however, he should not be considered to be disrespectful to the committee if he said that if the meeting adopted the resolution they had better never have met. They would be exposing themselves to the laughter of their opponents. Did they think that the employers of the country cared anything for their halfpennies and pennies? Suppose that 120,000 persons joined the Association—and he told them that they had not 120,000 persons represented there that day, or not much more—the payment would amount to £750 a year, equivalent to the cost of the Sheffield Lock-out for three days. If the committee proposed this to meet the working expenses let them say so, and put it into the resolution, and let them propose means for attaining the objects desired in another resolution, and not bring the delegates there like a mountain to produce mice. As to halfpennies and pennies, it was just impossible that the object they had in view could be accomplished in that way at all; they would be 140 Mrs. Partingtons keeping back the Atlantic with a broom. He had been engaged endeavouring to understand the dispute between wages and profits for twenty-five years, and what he thought they were met together for was, simply to extend the area of the combat. He had no objection to tell them further, that, unless they went further than the proposition, they would be beaten to a certainty. He rejoiced in the meeting as a step to the final result which he expected to see, if he lived long enough, of the working classes endeavouring to get capital of their own, and getting profits and wages themselves. He wished to tell them, that when they had found a proper association to resist Lock-outs, he should regard it chiefly of value as a means of promoting co-operation. He did not think, with one large Association, the capitalists would have a superior power to theirs; but they would not give themselves the trouble to attend to an Association on the halfpenny and penny scale. He could name capitalists who could sign a cheque to pay such sums as they were likely to raise that way for a thousand years. It was quite absurd to think of accomplishing the matter in that way. He had been quite delighted at the tone of the meeting: in many respects it was the best meeting of representative men he had ever been at. He liked its temper and conciliatory character, but he was not altogether sure that he liked its penitence. There had been many speeches like calling past sins to remembrance. Some of the speakers seemed to sing penitential psalms, as if they had committed great sins, and would commit them no more. He thought many of the working-classes should know what were the benefits and profits derived from the misery—and there was a great deal of misery—and suffering in past struggles. He wished to bring this to their remembrance before he sat down. They talked of the expense of Strikes. There was one trade represented there—8000 of them in England—and he could count to-morrow the cost to them, and the result had been an increase of £187,200 every year in the wages paid. The builders in London had a very memorable Strike; but it affected the wages by 2s. 6d. a week.

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The CHAIRMAN: You cannot talk about Strikes now. Keep to the question.

Mr. HUMPHREYS observed that the final gain to the building operatives amounted to £652,000 a year in London, and the gain to them in point of time was fifteen days a year. He stated this, because he wished to say one word more. He thought many Strikes were founded on good principles, had a good design and object, and had brought out a very glorious result; and it ought not to be forgotten in these latter times of conciliation that this was the case.

The CHAIRMAN: I say you are not speaking to the question.

Mr. HUMPHREYS said he wished to propose an amendment, namely—"That the societies connecting themselves with this Association be required to pay at the rate of one penny weekly, or one shilling per quarter, to a Lock-out fund." This would produce, from 240,000 members, £52,000, and he thought this would not be felt to be a heavy burden, if they really were in earnest in making themselves independent of the Lock-outs. If they did not think safety, guardianship, or protection from Lock-outs was worth a penny a week, or if they could not persuade the working-men that it was worth that, they did not fear Lock-outs very much, or value safety very highly.

The CHAIRMAN explained that these speeches really related to the next resolution, and that the proposed levy was not for the purpose of opposing Lock-outs, but for working expenses.

Mr. REANEY rose to speak, but was silenced by cries of "vote."

Mr. THOMAS BANKS concurred in the proposition made by the committee, because, at the commencement of a new era like the present, they might depend on it there would be a difficulty in many localities in getting the resolutions adopted by their constituents. Mr. Troup had made a very serious allegation against some of the delegates present. They had put down on paper something like 200,000 members represented, but he said they could not depend on more than 120,000. If this was a fact, a levy, no matter for what object, could not be depended upon either. Mr. Troup's criticism on some speakers had been better unsaid. Whether he (the speaker) was a psalm singer or not, he was sent there to do his duty, and he would do it, irrespective of what Mr. Troup or anybody else might say. In trade matters he had had some experience, and that was the reason why he agreed with the resolution of the committee, to begin with a very low levy, and one easily adopted in all the localities. They wanted the Association forming; it was not yet formed. Though the levy was small, it would be enough at any time to check capital in any future Lock-outs, if they were thoroughly united. The trades in the various towns were bound in honour to agree to what was transacted there. If there had been such an Association a short time ago, the result at Sheffield would have been very different. Let them get the thin edge of the wedge in, and capital would be deterred from locking out in future.

Mr. M. LAWRENCE wished distinctly to state that time was being wasted. How long would they be if they discussed

every question at a quarter of an hour each? They would get to the end of the week, members would want to go home, and the business would not be properly finished. There were errors committed in the report of the numbers represented, owing to different sections of societies being represented, and the total number being put down to each member; but he thought the extreme number to be deducted on this account was 20,000. One great error had run all through the discussion. When the preamble was proposed, members went and discussed the first and second proposition, and on every proposition they discussed the one following. The committee had made a better provision for the support of a Lock-out than any that had come from the meeting yet; these were all for increased pay, and that would only drive men away, and make the numbers of the Association less. For every man prepared to pay 6d. a week, they would get 20,000 ready to pay the committee's terms. As Mr. Odger had said, when a Strike or Lock-out was on, the men knew what money was wanted for, and that it went to its object, and its object alone. The amount now asked for was only as a preliminary to carry the Association on. Was it possible that working men could vest funds without having the protection of the law? It was this want of legal protection they were cursed with; it made members distrustful of giving large contributions, but they knew members were always ready to contribute in time of need. If they had 200,000 men in the Union, and placed a case of Lock-out before them, it would take a very small levy, and their sympathies would come out. He believed that instead of 200,000 members, they would have half a million before the end of the year, if they went on a broad basis and a fair free principle, and that the trades' delegates would be able to assemble and represent as large a constituency as the House of Commons. It was a waste of time to discuss the raising of money for Lock-outs now; let them take it on the next resolution.

MR. GEORGE SHIPTON hoped to represent 50,000 men by that time twelve months. He thought the resolution as it stood embodied everything they could expect to go forth to their constituencies. He was prepared to do his best with the body he represented for the resolution as it stood, and he had every confidence that when the time came for a levy, the men would be only too proud and happy to pay it.

MR. J. BRIGGS, Accrington, said he would guarantee that if they once got this to meet the low paid trades, his 6000 would be 30,000.

MR. W. BROADHEAD, as one of the committee, rose for the purpose of supporting the committee's proposition. He endorsed what had been so fully expressed, that they would make the Association a larger success by making the contribution low. The observation of one speaker would not only apply to the trades represented, but to the other trades throughout the country. The Committee put the resolution forth as nothing further than working expenses. He had had sufficient

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experience to know that the most certain means of getting aid was not to go for a large sum. If the resolution was passed, it would give such universal satisfaction throughout the country, that the Association would increase year by year, as other societies had done that had adopted a similar principle, until, in time, it would be able to meet any difficulties that might come upon it. He felt that they would make a very great mistake if the resolution was not adopted.

MR. ALLEN said it was a question whether, after all, they should not have a fund to fall back upon in case of a Lock-out. He was aware that sometimes levies were longer in coming in than they could wish them to be, and the men locked out might be in great difficulties before the money came to hand. He would suggest to the committee the advisability of looking over the resolution again, and adding that a fund of so much be left in their hands, to stand by when called upon until the returns from the various societies were got in.

The CHAIRMAN: That is the next resolution. (Cries of "Vote, vote.")

MR. DRONFIELD then replied. He said he avoided saying much at first, in the hope that the delegates would see the necessity of passing the motion at once. All through, they had gone on the assumption that the payments should be as light as possible, and he was astonished that any one should propose 5s. levies. How could they get the Amalgamated Engineers to pay for each of their 30,000 members? The brickmakers might do it, but the trades generally would not. It was a waste of time to discuss questions that could not be carried out. It was a much more reasonable proposition to double the payment proposed by the committee, and for his own part he could adopt Mr. Spencer's suggestion, but having moved the committee's resolution, he intended to adhere to it. They did not want the members, in addition, to have this levy to pay; he contended that it should come from the trade fund. Executives, as a rule, would not pay even a small levy from the general fund, and the members thought it hard they should have to pay a double rate. He believed if any town in the kingdom would pay, it was Sheffield; but many would not. The committee went on the assumption that the sum asked for was for preliminary expenses, and for granting assistance while the trades paid their levies. The trades would grant money if the case was a deserving one.

The amendments were then put to the meeting and lost, the number of hands held up for each being respectively 2, 18, and 9. The original resolution was then carried *nem. dis.*

MR. NEWTON proposed the next resolution, and said that a good deal of the speaking upon it had been done already:—

"That in the event of the ordinary subscription failing to meet the requirements of the Alliance, the votes of the trades forming the same be taken as to the desirability of increasing the contributions to meet all necessary contingencies."

The resolution was by no means so full and explicit as the law

based upon it would be. It was unnecessary to be so tremendously precise. He believed a considerable saving would be effected off the steady income of the committee; but Lock-outs, as a rule, were gigantic affairs, and required much money to meet them. Now, supposing they had 200,000 members, and they took the average of wages as low as £1 a week, a levy of 2½ per cent. would realize £5000 a week. It had been very properly said that in the present state of the law, it was not advisable to collect a large amount of money and leave it in the hands of persons to meet contingencies, and from past experience many trade societies were extremely jealous of having their money put to anybody's credit but their own. If a society was solvent, the money was better in their own hands than in the hands of any central body. The resolution did not contain a description of the *modus operandi* by which the money should be got in, but he thought the plan suggested by Mr. Ross, yesterday, would be a very good one. The central committee, or executive, whenever a case came to be considered, should be informed of the whole facts, the number of persons likely to require support, and the amount of money required. With regard to the proportions of payment, they could scarcely expect the men who earned fifteen shillings a week to pay as much as those who earned thirty shillings. Before any appeal was made, it would be necessary for all trades to report their wages to the executive, so that the information would be at hand, and the circumstances of the parties Locked-out, so that the executive could see at a glance what was necessary, strike the per centage, and apply it.

The motion was seconded by Mr. H. MITCHELL.

Mr. SHORROCKS very briefly supported it.

Mr. ODGER stated distinctly and advisedly that the resolution would do no good whatever. What were these contingencies? Were they contingent upon the money referred to in the third resolution not being sufficient to meet the working expenses? He could not see that it was anything else.

THE CHAIRMAN: We say we shall not want half of that.

Mr. ODGER said the plain meaning of the resolution was, that if the committee wanted more money for the working expenses this resolution afforded it, and nothing else. He proposed that the resolution be handed back to the committee for further consideration, and that they prepare another resolution upon the subscription necessary to meet Lock-outs. He hoped the committee would not think for one moment that he was attaching any blame to them whatever—he thought they had an extraordinary piece of work last night, after the public meeting, to go and prepare these resolutions, and every one must be grateful to them for completing the work as far as they had gone. But here was an inconsistency when compared with the third resolution, and with the declaration that this resolution was meant to serve in obtaining funds to resist Lock-outs.

Mr. G. HOUSELEY, Sheffield, seconded the motion.

Mr. LEIGH thought that the third and fourth resolutions should have been thrown together, and the fifth ought to be—

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"That in the event of a Lock-out, the executive shall, on ascertaining the requirements, call for such an amount from each trade in proportion to their numbers, as will meet the necessities of the case." He thought the resolution should go back to the committee for consideration, or some would think that the whole amount they were to pay was the halfpenny for entrance money, and a penny per annum.

THE CHAIRMAN: We will withdraw the resolution, and carry out the wish of Mr. Odger.

MR. ROSS moved as an amendment:—"That in the event of a national levy being required to meet any contingency that may arise, the votes of the trades be immediately taken thereon; such levy to be equal to the then existing emergency, and to be an equitable per centage in proportion to the wages received by each trade connected with the Alliance; and the support received by any trade in difficulty to be also in proportion to the wages received previous to such dispute arising."

It was now five o'clock, and the amendment not being seconded, and the resolution withdrawn for reconsideration, the Conference adjourned.

FOURTH DAY.

The minutes of Thursday's deliberations were passed as read.

The resolutions of the special committee to be submitted to-day being likely to cause considerable discussion, it was resolved that the standing orders regulating time be altered from fifteen minutes to five minutes for each speaker, allowing movers of resolutions ten minutes to reply.

Credentials were given in from Mr. W. Crossley, of the Power Loom Weavers' Society, Blackburn, representing 5000 members, also from Mr. John Kane, of the Amalgamated Ironworkers, Gateshead, numbering 5000.

MR. G. NEWTON moved the first of the resolutions of the special committee. He said: The arrangement as to the time allowed to each speaker reminds me of an inverted pyramid; you have no time to explain your motion, and a lot of time to reply to other people's remarks, which might have been prevented. Certain suggestions were agreed to yesterday with reference to the scale of payment, and it was proposed that the fund should be organized on the per centage basis. Previous to going to their business, the committee were informed by several delegates that the principle of per centage was totally inadmissible, and some, who spoke from practical experience, said it was utterly unworkable, giving rise to dishonest practices in the returns of members, and the circumstances in which they were situated. The committee felt this difficulty, and being desirous of drawing up such resolutions only as were likely to meet with the approval of the majority of the Conference, they have drawn up the following, which I move:—"That any surplus funds over the expenses of management be

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reserved for the main objects of the Society, viz.: assistance in cases of Lock-outs, and in the event of such reserved funds being insufficient to meet the requirements of cases voted worthy of support by the Judicial Council, they shall declare what amount should be paid to the same, and submit it to the trades for approval or rejection." The proposition does not contain any specific proposal as to the amount to be subscribed. The wisdom of leaving out any such specific proposition will be apparent, when we consider that the circumstances of the Lock-out must, in every case, regulate the amount that may be required from the different societies. If you say that there shall not be more than a given sum asked for from the societies, then you circumscribe yourselves, and place it beyond your power to render that assistance which may be necessary under the circumstances. It becomes a matter of grave importance that the judicial committee shall be men of sound judgment, in whose probity the bulk of the trades have the greatest confidence, and who will be likely to secure that co-operation which is necessary to success. It may be well, I think, here to explain that the *modus operandi* which the committee have in view is this, that in any case of Lock-out occurring, immediate application be made to the executive committee, who shall convene the Council, and take the whole matter into consideration, and decide whether the case is one worthy of support, and if it is, to draw up a statement of the requirements of the parties, and send it forth to the societies connected with the Association to afford the assistance required. (Hear, hear.)

MR. T. P. BAILEY seconded the proposition.

MR. P. SHORROCKS proposed the following as an amendment:—"That any surplus fund over the expenses of management be reserved for the main objects of the society, namely, assistance in case of Lock-outs, and that, for the purpose of meeting any extraordinary expenditure, the Judicial Council shall propose a levy equally upon all members comprising the Association, subject to the decision of the majority of the societies comprising the amalgamation, all such levies to be paid weekly." This may call forth an amendment for assessment according to the wages earned; but I think that, considering how many trades are constituted, this would be altogether unfair. Although I represent Manchester, I am connected with the Executive Council of the Amalgamation, and there are towns that pay from 3½d. per hour upwards. Different wages are paid because of the difference in cloth. It would be next to impossible to average the wages in my trade.

MR. HIGGINBOTHAM seconded the amendment. The system of poundage on earnings was a very unfair one, resulting in unjustly taxing the industrious and frugal man, and lightening the burden of the idle and shuffling.

The VICE-CHAIRMAN: The amendment is perfectly unnecessary, and the object aimed at by it may be accomplished by adopting the original proposition. Every man who really wishes for equality of payments and receipts should vote for the proposition, and that will effect his purpose; but the meet-

ing ought not to be hampered with special resolutions without regard to the matter. Let us try to confine the discussion to the real principle, and not make mere verbal alterations. We can all write the same meaning in different words, and that is all they are trying to do.

MR. HARDY, MR. RISHWORTH, and MR. WILLIAMS having addressed the meeting,

MR. ALLEN proposed the insertion of the following words:—"That all members of this Association be placed on the basis of equality, both as to payments and receipts."

MR. E. GREEN thought that the original proposition was all that reasonable men could require. Nothing could be more plain and definite.

MR. BOND moved that a fixed sum of 2s. a year be paid by each member.

MR. WEST was afraid that the last clause of the resolution placed too great a restriction on the power of the executive. There ought to be power in the hands of the executive to call at once for support from the various societies, so that prompt action might be taken. He would move that the resolution should be "That any surplus fund, over the expenses of management, be reserved for the main objects of the society, and, in the event of a Lock-out taking place, the Council shall have power to make a levy upon all societies in connection with the Alliance, of not more than 6d. per member, each call to be paid immediately."

MR. W. SPENCER seconded the amendment.

MR. DAVIES supported the original motion.

MR. W. H. WOOD: The speakers generally seem to anticipate a Lock-out. My idea is, that when we become strongly organised, Lock-outs will cease to exist. Lock outs can only take place where there is a weak organisation. The existence of a powerful organisation will prevent Lock-outs altogether, and the provision which you made, yesterday, for the formation of a power to draw up the rules and settle the ordinary expenses of the Alliance, will be all that will be required for the present. When we have a Lock-out to deal with, then it will be the duty of the Council to ascertain the requirements of the Lock-outs, and to place before the members the amount required to afford the requisite assistance. Our object in not naming the amount is to simplify the matter in the first instance. It would be a total impossibility to exact subscriptions according to the rate of wages. It is impossible to obtain correct returns, and, therefore, we must go upon the common footing for the obtaining of subscriptions from all the members.

MR. ODGER: The resolution does not appear to me to be workable. In the first place, the judicial council considers what sum will be required to support the Lock-outs. That, according to the proposition, will have to be submitted to the trades for approval or rejection. Our object is to afford prompt support in case of Lock-outs; but how can it be prompt if the trades reject the sum submitted? (Hear, hear.) In that case

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the executive will have to consider the matter again, and send out another proposition. That would be almost as bad as the existing state of things. I would move as an amendment. "That any surplus fund over the expenses of management be reserved for the main object of the society, namely, assistance in cases of Lock-out, and that a subscription of one penny a month be paid, these funds to be held by the societies to assist cases approved of by them." A penny a month, surely, will not be an extravagant amount. If we cannot pay a farthing a week to resist these terrible Lock-outs that cost societies thousands of pounds, it is not worth our while meeting here to-day.

MR. T. SWEETING seconded the amendment, and

MR. J. CARLISLE supported it, though in his estimation it scarcely went far enough.

MR. THOMPSON said there must be money at the disposal of the executive, and Mr. Odger's amendment would provide all that was required at present.

MR. JONES also spoke in support of the amendment.

MR. AUSTIN suggested that the amendment should be in the following form:—"That any surplus funds over the expenses of management be reserved for the main objects of the society, viz., assistance in cases of Lock-out; and in the event of such reserved fund being insufficient, they shall declare what amount shall be paid to the same by the various trades in connection with the Alliance."

MR. STANSFIELD moved—"That the Conference strongly recommends to the members of all societies which may join this Alliance the desirableness of their setting apart a sum equal to one penny per month, to be held by each society under its own control, but at the service of this Alliance, to meet the difficulties contemplated."

After considerable discussion on the foregoing motion, amendments, and suggestions,

MR. NEWTON replied. He said, nothing has given me greater pleasure than to listen to the debate. Sound argument and earnestness have characterized the various speakers, and there has been indicated a strong desire to arrive at the best mode of conducting the operations of the Association, which is a very good guarantee I think that good results will follow. The various propositions which have been submitted, and which led to considerable confusion, don't differ very materially from this submitted to the Conference by the committee. I cannot accept Mr. Shorrocks's amendment, because it refers to "extraordinary expenses." I suppose he refers to the expenses of Lock-outs, and these are not extraordinary but the ordinary expenses of the Association. The committee feel unable to accept the proposition that the levy shall be on the per centage principle, their idea being that it should be equal upon all. (Hear, hear.) Mr. Odger proposes that in place of a special call by the judicial council, there shall be a regular payment of one penny per month. If that were adopted, the operations of the council would be confined to a penny a month, because there is no provision for an increase of the amount. It is, per-

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haps, as well that this matter, having been so extensively debated, should be left to the trades themselves for final determination. There must be some mistake about the proposition to subscribe according to the average wage. No such statement was made, but the intention is that the trades themselves shall report to the executive committee what is their average wage, and upon that they are to be assessed. There have been many arguments in favour of this, but the committee are assured that it would be repugnant to the feelings of the great body of the members. We have heard the absurd dogma, that "the best way to secure peace is to be prepared for war." This has been denounced by the wisest heads, and it is our duty to give a flat denial to such a doctrine. The best way to preserve peace is to conduct yourselves peaceably, and to menace nobody with your preparations. Was it the fleet of Great Britain or her fortifications that guard our shores, or the standing army, that prevented the threatened invasion from the other side of the Channel? Was it not the outburst of popular enthusiasm that brought out the volunteer corps which prevented and totally snuffed out the idea? (Applause.) The creation of a reserve force similar to that, which is no menace to anybody at all, will be sufficient to deter those who would impose upon us. The adoption of Mr. Austin's proposition would, no doubt, strengthen the hands of the judicial council and the executive very much indeed, but I fear it would be objectionable to many trades. I think no harm would come to our proposition if we accepted the suggestion of Mr. Banks that the last few words be taken out. If it be the desire of the meeting that they should be struck out, I am instructed to say that the committee will offer no objection. (Hear, hear.) It is argued that unless a large reserve fund be kept in the hands of the executive committee, it will be impossible to render effective aid in the time of disaster, and that the circumlocutory proceedings will take so much time, that suffering may occur before the fund can be forthcoming. I am not aware that any Lock-out has taken place in a day, or a week, or a fortnight, and it will be the business of the committee so to take time by the forelock that all these matters will be looked into, and the whole reserve force set in motion and ready to act the moment it is required.

On being put to the vote, all the amendments were lost, the original proposition being carried by a large majority.

THE GOVERNMENT OF THE ALLIANCE.

MR. G. NEWTON: I bring forward at once the remaining business with reference to our future organization. It has reference to the Government of the Association. I think we have taken all care to explain the general scope of the functions of the three constituent elements of government, and it does not seem to me that the remaining propositions require very much discussion. I move—

"That for the Government of this Alliance there shall be an Annual Conference, Deliberative and Legislative, with power of reviewing the pro-

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ceedings of the past year; also, a Judicial Council to consider all Lock-outs in Trades in connection with the Alliance which may be submitted to the Executive, and determine what action should be taken in reference thereto, together with an Executive Committee to carry out the resolutions of the Annual Conference and of the Judicial Committee, and to superintend the affairs of the Society generally."

MR. A. RIDDELL seconded the proposition, and after some conversation it was adopted.

APPOINTMENT OF A COMMITTEE.

MR. NEWTON moved—

"That a committee be appointed by this Conference to draw up a code of rules for the management of the Association; and that the committee call a Conference as early in 1867 as possible, for the purpose of finally adopting such rules, and inaugurating the Alliance."

MR. RIDDELL seconded the motion.

It was decided that the committee should consist of seven persons, and with that alteration the proposition was adopted.

A conversation took place as to the advisableness of at once appointing the committee, and it was ultimately resolved—
"That the subject of the appointment of seven members of the committee from seven distinct localities be referred to the special committee, such number not to include the Chairman, Treasurer, and Secretary."

It was resolved, on the motion of MR. M. LAWRENCE, seconded by MR. G. ROSS—"That the seat of government be held in Sheffield until the first meeting of the Conference, and that the executive be appointed from seven industrial districts of the country." It was further resolved—

"That MR. C. BAGSHAW, of Sheffield, be appointed to act as Chairman."

"That MR. W. DRONFIELD, of Sheffield, be appointed Secretary."

"That MR. W. BROADHEAD, of Sheffield, be elected Treasurer."

MR. W. HARRY moved—

"That this Conference do most earnestly recommend to the various societies the necessity of considering the following:—That should an endeavour be made by any Trade Society joining this Alliance to increase their wages, or to resist an attempt on the part of the employers to reduce them, they shall, subject to the approval of the executive committee, be entitled to all the moral and pecuniary support of this Association."

When they reached home, they would ask themselves what position they occupied. If they left things as they were, in the event of a great and mighty Strike taking place in any part of England, the Alliance would not be able to use one single halfpenny out of the funds subscribed. At present they were pledged only to support Lock-outs. The majority of trades suffered from Strikes which were brought about by attempts on the part of employers to reduce wages.

MR. AUSTIN seconded the proposition.

MR. TODD, MR. KANE, and MR. SHIPLEY supported.

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Mr. ROSS suggested that it should be withdrawn. They had met to consider Lock-outs alone.

The proposition was adopted.

It was resolved, on the motion of Mr. ODGER, seconded by Mr. FOX—

“That this Conference, although having declared its opinion in favour of paying to the support of the Association by levy, deems it judicious to send the amendment regarding fixed contributions to the societies for their consideration.”

The special committee having given in their financial statement, which amounted to £35 4s. 1d., it was resolved that the amount be obtained by a levy of one shilling per hundred members on the various societies represented, which, it was calculated, would cover all the expenses incurred up to publishing the full report of the proceedings.

RESOLVED,—“That the Special Committee, together with the Door-keeper, receive the sum of £1 each, and that the Assistant Secretary receive in addition for his services, £1 extra.”

“Also, that the sum of £1 be granted to each of the six Members of the Committee who undertook the promotion of this Conference.”

“Levies to be paid at once by all prepared. Those who are not prepared, to pay within one month.”

FIFTH DAY.

The minutes of Friday's proceedings were confirmed.

In accordance with the resolution of yesterday's Conference, the special committee recommended the following seven delegates to form the committee to draw up rules, &c., for the government of the Alliance:—

Mr. J. ALLEN, Boiler Makers and Iron Ship Builders	9000 members.
„ THOS. BANKS, Preston Associated Trades	1682 „
„ M. LAWRENCE, London Operative Tailors	7000 „
„ JOHN NORMANSELL, South Yorkshire Miners	4000 „
„ GEO. ROSS, Associated Carpenters and Joiners of Scotland	5000 „
„ C. WILLIAMS, Operative Plasterers' Association	5000 „
„ W. H. WOOD, Provincial Typographical Association	2500 „
CHAIRMAN, TREASURER, and SECRETARY, Sheffield	5000 „

Number of members represented.. 39,182

Mr. GEO. NEWTON moved the adoption of the list. The matter had been considered in various aspects, with a view to the proper industrial division of the country. The small number of seven totally precluded the possibility of having the committee organised on a scale that might be called just in respect to the representation of the parties present. The Chair-

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man, Secretary, and Treasurer represented 5000 members, so that, taking the division of the parties over the country, the committee will be found to be pretty fair. Messrs. Allen, Banks, and Williams were all located in Lancashire, that great hive of industry in the country. There were about two millions of people there, all pursuing industrial occupations, and no other part of the country could claim such a number. Mr. Lawrence would represent London; Mr. Ross would represent that part of Her Majesty's dominions called Scotland; and Mr. Wood would represent the important city of Manchester. The Conference would regret to hear that Mr. Banks wished his name to be struck out; but the sound judgment he had shown was a sufficient warrant for the retention of his name.

MR. J. HIGGINBOTHAM seconded the proposition.

MR. MITCHELL moved that Mr. Humphreys be substituted for Mr. Allen.

MR. FOX seconded the amendment.

MR. FINLINSON moved the substitution of Mr. Kane's name for that of Mr. Williams.

MR. ROSS wished his name to be struck out, and that of Mr. Newton to be put in its place.

MR. JONES moved that Mr. Thomas Sweeting be elected in the place of Mr. Allen.

After considerable discussion,

MR. NEWTON replied. He observed: All that had been said in opposition to the list was stated by him at the outset. There were only seven members, and it was perfectly impossible for all the trades to be represented. They wanted men who had a knowledge of the working of societies and trades' disputes, and who were capable of drawing up rules to meet the necessities of the case, men who had given their attention for years to the matter, who were thoroughly known, and not likely to allow any interest to swerve them in the framing of rules; men who had the objects of the Conference at heart, and who would do all they could to make the Association as wide spread as possible.

All the amendments were lost, and the list proposed by Mr. Newton was adopted.

It was resolved, on the motion of MR. CARLISLE, seconded by MR. LAWRENCE, "That all Societies be permitted to send in suggestions to the committee respecting the formation of rules for the government of the Alliance."

THE NEXT CONFERENCE.

MR. G. NEWTON moved, and MR. JONES seconded, "that the next Conference be held in Manchester."

MR. G. SHIPTON moved, and MR. CROSSLEY seconded, "that it be held in London."

MR. CARLISLE moved—"That the next Conference of this Alliance commence its sittings in Manchester, on the first Monday in September next, and that no person be allowed to have either voice or vote in any question brought before the

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Alliance who is not a *bona fide* representative of a trade society.
After some discussion,

Mr. NEWTON, in reply, said: It is undeniable that London is the first city of the empire, and that there are a great many workmen there; and it is also undeniable that comparatively few are in union. When we go there, let us go with a compact, strong organisation. (Hear, hear.) There are very few great associations that hold their first or their second meetings in London. They generally allow a year or two to elapse, and finding their strength, they go there as a reality. The London people have a wonderful faculty for discovering that a great many things are not real; let this Association be in such a position that it will be impossible to conceive such an idea, and if weight is wanted to induce the non-unionists to join, a solid compact Association will be more likely to have that influence than one newly fledged. The time suggested for holding the Conference is out of all reason. I don't know where our iron friends have learned the knack of making resolutions, but they must have a wonderful facility. I could not do it in the time if I had it all to myself, without any discussion at all.

The amendments were lost, and the original proposition adopted.

COURTS OF CONCILIATION OR ARBITRATION.

Mr. W. DRONFIELD: I have very great pleasure in introducing the next business to the Conference, inasmuch as it will give me an opportunity of expressing not only a few opinions of my own, and the action of the Trades' Societies I represent, but also of making a few remarks on what has been done by a very important body—the National Association for the Promotion of Social Science. The bill that was before the House of Lords was introduced by Lord St. Leonards in May, 1865. That bill, so far as I have been able to understand it, and so far as I have been able to gather from the discussions that have taken place upon it, was a very simple and unpretending bill; but such as it was, Lord St. Leonards felt compelled to withdraw it for the present session, owing either to the opposition of employers, or to their not supporting it. Lord St. Leonards found, on the contrary, that the workmen generally were in favour of the establishment of some such courts; and I think it a somewhat significant fact, that should not be lost sight of by the representatives of labour, that the employers, as a rule, are opposed to the establishment of courts that would have a tendency to put a stop to strikes, whilst the men desire to get such courts established. To my mind, that gives the lie direct to those who charge us with being interested in strikes and lock-outs. (Hear, hear.) The bill of Lord St. Leonards provided that the courts should be of a permissive nature. In 1860, the Association of Organised Trades of Sheffield took an active part in promoting the passing of Mr. Mackinnon's bill, which passed the House of Commons,

but was rejected in the House of Lords mainly, I am told, through the influence of the landed proprietors and the opposition of the manufacturers, as expressed through the Chambers of Commerce. At the meeting of the Social Science Congress, held in Sheffield in October last, a paper was read, entitled "What are the best means of establishing a system of authoritative arbitration between employers and employed in cases of strikes and lock-outs?" That question, unfortunately, when it came on for discussion, turned out to be a very secondary affair indeed, the writer devoting the greater portion of his paper to arguments against Trades' Societies. Mr. Thomas Hughes, the member for Lambeth, had been put down for a special paper on that subject, but, unfortunately, he had not been informed that he was to read such a paper, and when the question came before the department (Economy and Trade), Mr. Hughes was not present, and did not hear the paper I have alluded to, or the one by myself. Professor Fawcett took a lively part in the discussion. He gave some very sound advice, and I believe that he is in favour of the establishment of Courts of Arbitration; but he wishes chiefly to promote a better feeling between employers and employed. Mr. Hughes declared that he was not aware he had been put down to read a paper on the subject, and expressed himself to the following effect:—"Of course, there is nobody who will deny—at least I suppose so—that arbitration is in itself a far better thing than war. If you can find any tribunal that will be satisfactory to the two sides—to the masters and to the men—and if you can manage to give to it some power of enforcing its awards on such matters as are referred to it—if you can find such a tribunal, it would be a great advantage, for no man in his senses, or, at any rate no man in his senses who had not some personal interest to lead him wrong, would deny that it was far better that trade, questions should be submitted to such a tribunal than that they should be fought out to the end, between masters and men, by the only means by which it is possible they can be fought at present, by strikes and lock-outs." I hope this Conference will fully endorse the sentiments of Mr. Hughes on that point. (Hear, hear.) Professor Fawcett said, "You may attempt to establish arbitration, where the decision of the court will be compulsory; but then the difficulty is, to get the men to be bound by that decision." As far as I know, the men are quite willing to go in favour, and have gone in favour, of the establishment of Courts of Arbitration. (Hear, hear.) It so happens that the gentleman who read the paper on the other side of the question was decidedly opposed to the establishment of Courts of Arbitration, contending that, if established, they would be ineffective for the purposes aimed at, and would not be a success in other ways. I do not intend to read you much more on the question, but would call your attention to one significant fact—that whilst the paper I read on the question of Trades' Societies, which was really in defence of them, is omitted from the authorized report, the paper on the opposite side (the writer of which is opposed to Courts of Concilia-

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tion, and also to Trades' Unions,) occupies several pages of the report in question, a great portion of which is devoted to arguments against Trades' Societies. An important discussion followed the reading of the papers, in which several of the representatives of the trades of Sheffield took part, yet not a word they said is recorded in the official volume of the Society. Do you think it is fair on the part of gentlemen professing to seek truth, that, when they issue their report, they should give a one-sided version? ("No.") It is a most disgraceful thing, and I hope the trades of the country will not forget the matter. (Hear, hear.) Hitherto, I have had a very strong impression that it was the duty of the working classes to take part in such proceedings as those of the Social Science Association, but if we cannot get justice done to us—if we cannot get our views represented—if, when we express ourselves, either by writing papers, or in attempting to reply to the attacks made upon us, we are ignored in the official documents of the Society, it is no use our spending our time and our money, or the money of our constituents, in going to such places. (Hear, hear.) As to Courts of Conciliation, I think the Delegates would do well to urge upon their members to take every opportunity that presents itself, to bring the question fairly and fully before the House of Commons, through the medium of the representatives of the various constituencies in Parliament. We had a long discussion with our Borough Members on this subject, and I hope you will give your attention to it, and your support to any bill for the purpose of establishing Courts of Arbitration, fully believing, as I said in my paper, that the establishment of such courts would tend to lessen the number of strikes in the country, a thing which we, as the representatives of labour, are most deeply interested in; and I hope we shall not be deterred by trifles, but use every legitimate means of obtaining the establishment of a court that will give us a fair representation, and a medium for the settlement of those unfortunate disputes that are so frequently taking place. (Applause.) In conclusion I beg to move—

"That this Conference highly approves of the establishment of Courts of Conciliation or Arbitration, and exceedingly regrets to find that, owing to the opposition of the employers, Lord St. Leonards has withdrawn his bill for the present session; and the Delegates present hereby pledge themselves to use every exertion to obtain the establishment of such courts."

Mr. G. ODGER, in seconding the motion said: There is a little misapprehension existing with regard to the actual state of the feeling that exists with the masters on this question. Lord St. Leonards, in a letter to me, gives us good hopes that Conciliation or Arbitration Courts will ultimately be established. It has been represented that Lord St. Leonards said in his letter that the employers were not favourable to such a bill. That is not true. What he said was, that the employers were not favourable to the bill then before the house, which is a marked difference. It is only fair that the employers should have credit for what they do that is creditable. I am not sorry that the employers opposed that bill, and for this

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reason, that it was a very small one, merely giving power for these Courts of Conciliation to decide disputes upon wages already determined, but in no sense whatever to interfere with wages not determined. That you will admit was very simple, not at all embodying the great principle we desired to see taken up by these Courts when established. In his letter to me, Lord St. Leonards says, after speaking about the want of support for his bill, "I have ascertained that both masters and operatives are anxious for a Court which could settle future wages." Now you see here is the great principle admitted, which is far preferable to the previous bill, and I have no doubt his Lordship will be disposed to take the matter up again in order to effect a beneficial settlement of it. He further goes on to particularize what he thinks would be the mischievous effects of attempting to establish such Courts. He thinks that when there was a great demand for labour the men would make an effort to raise their wages, and if they were not able to do so, he fears they would violate the law, and that much mischief would follow. He suggests that they might be established for a limited time, so that if the men found they were not so conducive to their interests as they were led to hope, they would be enabled when the time came to withdraw them. He also suggests twelve months duration, and that in the event of their being established, no trade should be compelled to have them, except on the application of the workmen themselves, and the mode of proceeding would be as follows:—Notice of the application would have to be inserted in the papers circulating in the town in which the trade existed; voting papers would then have to be sent to the various workshops, so that the workmen might say whether they would have such Courts or no, and then a public meeting would have to be held, at which the result of the votes would be given. In the old bill, the Courts once established would be permanently established, and we could not get rid of them; but by this they could be tried, and if they were liked, retained, if not, abandoned. I believe Lord St. Leonards to be so earnest in the matter that he will be disposed to frame another bill of a more comprehensive character, with every probability of success. Some of the leading members of the House of Commons looked upon the bill with suspicion, and thought it likely to produce dissatisfaction and discord instead of harmony and good will. With these views, they did right not to push the matter too far; but finding that the Courts are to be established on a principle not committing the men to them for more than a given period, it is very likely that those members who did not look upon them with satisfaction before, will now be disposed to give their entire concurrence. I have no doubt this Conference, met to consider the great difficulty of Lock-outs, will have its influence, and that the masters, finding that the mischievous element is becoming more mischievous on account of its dimensions, will see the necessity of something of this sort being done. I believe, also, that by getting these Courts established, this Alliance will be able to watch over every

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interest connected with its members, and that instead of discord we shall be instrumental in promoting peace and goodwill.

The proposition was adopted without discussion.

It was resolved—

“That the remaining resolutions on the business paper be simply proposed and seconded, no opening remarks being made by either mover or seconder.”

This was adopted in order to close the proceedings of the Conference by one o'clock.

The following resolutions were unanimously adopted without discussion:—

Moved by MR. G. NEWTON, and seconded by MR. J. CARLISLE—

“That this Conference regards the statutes which empower Justices of the Peace to send workmen to prison with hard labour, for breach of contract of service, as a grievous injustice, and wholly unsuited to the present state of society, and resolve to use their best endeavours to procure the repeal or amendment of the same by subscriptions, petitions to Parliament, and such other means as may be requisite.”

Moved by MR. W. H. WOOD, and seconded by MR. KANE—

“That this Conference recommend every trade represented to encourage, and, if possible, adopt the principles of Co-operation, with a view of enabling working-men to obtain a more equal share of the benefits resulting from their labours.”

Moved by MR. J. CONSTANTINE, and seconded by MR. W. HARRY—

“That this Conference, fully appreciating the efforts made by the International Association, to unite in one common bond of brotherhood the working-men of all countries, most earnestly recommend to the various societies here represented the advisability of becoming affiliated to that body, believing that it is essential to the progress and prosperity of the entire working community.”

Moved by MR. G. ROSS, and seconded by MR. G. FOX—

“That the cordial thanks of this Conference be tendered to the local daily press, for the full and impartial reports of the proceedings of the Conference.”

Moved by MR. G. TROUP, and seconded by MR. J. CARLISLE—

“That this Conference deeply regrets the omission of a fair report of the arguments and statements of the Members and Friends of Trades' Societies in the Transactions of the Social Science Congress, recently issued.”

A resolution, proposed by MR. G. ODGER, and seconded by MR. W. HARRY, was passed, to the effect that the Conference urge all Trade Societies to be cautious in making demands for increased wages, until the commercial panic has passed away, and the war on the Continent has somewhat abated.

A further resolution was also adopted, moved by MR. G. ODGER, seconded by MR. R. BAILEY, recommending the trades of the country to assist the Sheffield File Trade in paying off the heavy debt incurred during their late Lock-out.

Votes of thanks to the Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Secretary, Assistant-Secretary, and other officers of the Conference, brought the proceedings to a close.

LIST OF DELEGATES, TRADES REPRESENTED, &c.

SHEFFIELD.

Association of Organised Trades (5000 members): Charles Bagshaw, Spring street; William Dronfield, Princess street, Moor; George Austin, Oaks' green, Attercliffe; Henry Cutts, 11, Cambridge street; George Fox, 32, St. Thomas street; Joseph Mallinson, Stannington; including the following Trades belonging to the Association, with their special Delegates :—

Bone Scale Cutters: John Gill, Compass Inn, Orchard street;
 British Plate Filers: J. Sanderson, Dove & Rainbow, Hartshead;
 Cabinet Case Makers: Mr. Jackson, 95, Arundel street;
 Common Scythe Makers: Peter Bingham, Albion Inn, Little Sheffield;
 Copperplate and Lithographic Printers: A. McDougall, Red House Inn, Fargate;
 Edge Tool Forgers: James Reaney, Henry Mitchell, Grapes Inn, Trippet lane;
 Edge Tool and Wool Shear Grinders: Samuel Stacey, J. Higginbotham, J. Turner, Grapes Inn, Trippet lane;
 File Grinders: Joseph Rolley, James Rippon, Moseley Arms, Westbar;
 File Hardeners: E. Memmott, J. Smith, Three Tuns Inn, Orchard street;
 Filesmitths: T. Holland, E. Grayson, H. Howe, I. Chatterton, W. L. Fodd, G. Martin, R. Brownhill, 11, Cambridge street;
 Fork Makers: H. Richardson, 68, New Hereford street;
 Joiners' Tool and Brace Bit Makers: James Cann, J. Parker, Royal George Hotel, Carver street;
 Railway Spring Makers: J. Hardy, Robert Marsden, J. Rishworth, White Lion Inn, Wicker;
 Razor Blade Grinders: Henry Womack, Thomas Gledhill, Star Inn, Gibraltar street;
 Razor Scale Pressers: J. Vickers, T. Shaw, Star Inn, Gibraltar street;
 Saw Grinders: Wm. Broadhead, W. Peace, Royal George Hotel, Carver street;
 Scissor Forgers: Joseph Thompson, Star Inn, Gibraltar street;
 Scissor Grinders: Joe Gale, 135, Milton street; R. Holmshaw, Star Inn, Gibraltar street;
 Surgical Instrument Makers: Mr. Widdowson, Boot and Shoe Inn, Pinstone street;
 Work Board Hands, Scissor Trade: Wm. Simpson, Star Inn, Gibraltar street.

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Bricklayers: G. Housley, Spring Place, Marshall street, or Black Lion, Snig hill	300
Brickmakers. W. Owen, E. Elms, Nags' Head Inn, Old Haymarket	200
Cordwainers: W. Bishop, Dog and Partridge, Trippet lane..	60
Operative Millers' Friendly Society: John Allen, Stannington	
Pen and Pocket Blade Forgers: W. J. Holden, — Harrington, Black Lion, Snig hill	280
Pen and Pocket Blade Grinders, John Broomhead, Samuel Spooner, Black Lion, Snig hill	560
Saw Makers: Thomas Smith, Moseley Arms, Westbar....	400
Spring Knife Cutlers: Peter Hall, Moseley Arms, Westbar; Edwin Green, 28, Brunswick road	1800
Stove Grate and Fender Grinders: E. Platts, King William Inn, Russell street.....	40
Table Blade Forgers: Joshua Walker, B. Furniss, Burns' Tavern, Townhead street	500
Table Blade Grinders: Jonathan Wragg, Robert Lowe, Thomas Roberts, Moseley Arms, Westbar	430
United Carpenters' and Joiners' No. 1 Lodge: Thos. Hinchcliffe, 110, Wellington street, or White Lion, Barker Pool	
Wire Drawers: H. Bond, 23, Bramber street, Occupation road	86

OTHER PARTS OF THE COUNTRY.


Alliance Cabinet Makers' Society, London: Mr. Mayle, Alliance Hall, Old street road.....	1030
Amalgamated Carpenters and Joiners: W. Harry, 7, Richard place, First street, Chelsea, (London General Office, 8, Northumberland street, Strand, W.C.).....	7000
Amalgamated Iron Workers: John Kane, 36, Ellison street, Gateshead	5000
Amalgamated Journeymen Tailors' Association, Manchester: A. Stansfield, Old Green Man, New Church street, Sheffield	8000
Amalgamated Trades of Preston: W. Lindsey, Wellington Inn, Glovers' Court; Thomas Banks, 4, Edgar street; and Alfred Bailey, 130 North road	1682
Associated Carpenters and Joiners of Scotland: George Ross, 9, Scotia street, Glasgow	5000
Associated Trades: John Davies and Wm. Leigh, Hyde..	1400
Association of Organised Trades, Derby: William Brown, London road, and John Sharpe, 15, Quarm street.....	700
Barrow-in-Furness Brickmakers: J. Hunter	133
Bleachers' and Trimmers' Society: Samuel Meakin, Lincoln Terrace, Old Basford, near Nottingham	160
Boiler Makers and Iron Ship Builders: J. Allen, 5, Camden street, London road, Liverpool; P. Jones, Birkenhead; Thos. Sweeting, London; A. Rogers, Wallsend, near Newcastle on-Tyne; A. Riddell, Glasgow.....	9000
Brass Founders: Richard Yates, Manchester.....	160

Brickmakers' Society, London: William Burns, 12, North street, Whitechapel road, and B. Oran	1000
Bristol Associated Trades: John Kingdom, St. John's Bridge, Bristol	1265
Carpenters and Joiners: Joseph Head, Bowling Green Hotel, Greengate, Barrow-in-Furness,; Charles Peach, Bull's Head, Queen street, Derby	404
Carpenters' General Union. John Teasdill, 3, Fleece square, Meadow lane, Leeds	65
Coopers' National Association: Thomas Metcalf, Victoria Crescent, Horninglow road, Burton-on-Trent; James Crawford, 88, Rose street, South side, Glasgow; and Andrew Nicoll, 239, Attercliffe road, Sheffield	3000
Deal Cabinet Makers, London: W. H. Wire, 28, Northampton street, Essex road, Islington	400
Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire Miners: William Ball, Wood house, near Sheffield.....	2000
East Lancashire Power Loom Weavers: Thomas Birtwistle, 11, Free Trade Terrace, and James Briggs, Accrington..	6000
Engineers, Machinists, and Millwrights: John Constantine, 8, Brunswick street, Halifax	290
Flat Pressers: R. Joynson, 13, Marsh street, Hanley	300
Flat Pressers' Society: Henry Pope, Burslem.....	80
Friendly Society of Ironfounders of England, Ireland, and Wales: W. H. Markham, (London General Office, 200, New Kent road, S.E.)....	10,669
Glass Bottle Makers of Yorkshire Trade Protection Society: W. Lindsay, High Town, Castleford.....	700
Halifax Trades' Council: W. H. Hey and Joseph Atkins, Moorfields, Skircoats	700
Hollow Ware Pressers: J. J. Pope, 94, Well street, Hanley, Staffordshire	700
Hose, Shirt, and Drawers' Society, Leicester: T. P. Bailey, Red Cow Inn, 142, Belgrave gate ..	1500
International Association of Working-men: George Odger and M. Lawrence, London	12,000
Iron Workers: James Carlisle, Mill street, Brierley hill, Staffordshire	3500
Joiners' Society: Richard Bowles, 151, Upper Kent street, Leicester	240
Lancashire Cotton Spinners: Thomas Maudsley, 57, Jersey street, Ancoats lane, Manchester	4000
London Trades' Council: George Odger, 115, St. Martin's lane	60,000
Manchester Tailors' Society: P. Shorrocks, 6, New York street, Ardwick.....	800
Manchester Typographical Society: W. H. Wood, 29, Water street, Manchester.	
Masters' and Workmen's Act Executive: G. Newton, 125, Castle street, Glasgow.	
Nottingham Joiners' Society: William Hicking, 7, Curzon street	300

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Nottingham Operative Lace Makers: Wm. Willbond, Outgoing lane, Alfreton road, Radford, Nottingham.....	1000
Operative Potters' Society: George Newton, 125, Castle street, Glasgow.....	500
Operative Tailors' Association, London: Matthew Lawrence, 70 Davies street, Berkeley square, London, W.....	7000
Organised Trades of Nottingham: T. West, Trinity street	1100
Ovenmen and Kilnmen, Potteries: W. Gilmore, 22, Navigation street, Burslem, and Joseph Adams, Railway Terrace, East Vale, Longton, Staffordshire	1000
Painters' and Plumbers' Society: John Rigg, 33, Clive street, Barrow-in-Furness.....	30
Painters' General Council, London: George Shipton, The Merlins' Cave, Margaret street, Cavendish square	4000
Painters' Society, Nottingham: Walter Spencer, 5, Lark Dale Terrace, Goldsmith street	108
Plasterers' National Association: Charles Williams, 35, Doulby street, London road, Liverpool	5000
Power Loom Weavers: W. Crossley, Back lane, Blackburn	5000
Provincial Typographical Association: Henry Roberts, 30, Braitherton terrace, Peru street, Salford, Manchester	2000
Rotherham and Masbro' Stove Grate Fitters: Joseph Norburn, Dalton Parva, near Rotherham	20
Self-Acting Spinners and Minders: C. Shepley, Bolton ..	400
Small Wire Drawers: John Shaw, Halifax.....	146
South Yorkshire Miners: John Normansell and Philip Casey, Nelson street, Barnsley	4000
Tailors, Shoemakers, Bricklayers, and Plasterers: William Finlison and Samuel Heydock, Victoria Inn, Church street, Barrow-in-Furness	225
Thick Iron and Steel Wire Drawers: Ely Dyson, Manchester	100
United Operative Brickmakers of Nottingham and District: C. Oakland.....	110
United Trades' Protection Association: J. Lewis, Liverpool	3000
United Trades of Warrington: John Ashton	642
Warrington Filesmiths: Mr. Clare	700
West Yorkshire Miners' Association: John Dixon, Drighlington, near Leeds	2500
Wolverhampton Trades' Council: Joseph Humphreys, Chapel street, Dudley road	509
Working-men's Association, London: G. Troup, <i>Bee Hive</i> Office, Bolt Court, Fleet street, E.C.....	400

CHARLES BAGSHAW, CHAIRMAN, Sheffield,
 WILLIAM BROADHEAD, TREASURER, Sheffield.
 WILLIAM DRONFIELD, SECRETARY, Sheffield.

 All Communications to be addressed to the Secretary, Princess street, Moor, Sheffield, and Post-Office Orders made payable to the Treasurer.

LOXLEY BROTHERS, PRINTERS, FARGATE, SHEFFIELD.

BRICKLAYERS' TRADE CIRCULAR.

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THE TAILORS' STRIKE AND THE SYSTEM OF PICKETING.**THE DECISION OF THE JUDGE AT THE CENTRAL CRIMINAL COURT, AUGUST 21st.**

The following defendants who had been convicted of conspiring to injure and molest by means of picketing were then placed at the bar. They were George Druitt, Matthew Lawrence, John Adamson, Samuel Partridge, Alfred Bayley, William Glinden, Zolu Maurice, Robert Knox, Edward Ormerod, Alfred Shermer, Thomas Geary, Thomas Flood, Christopher Winterton, Robert Drüler, George Templing, and Robert Newbury.

Baron Bramwell then left the Court for a short time, and upon his return he addressed the defendants, and said that they had been found guilty of the offence of conspiracy, and it was now his duty to pass sentence or to say what should be done in consequence of that verdict. Before he did so, he asked them to listen to a few observations he should make to them as an impartial man, one who was neither an employer of labour nor a receiver of wages, and to whom the only difference that it could possibly make would be that he would have to pay a few shillings more for a suit of clothes, and he thought they would believe that this was a circumstance not likely to bias his opinion. He would tell them in the first instance that he was perfectly satisfied that they had broken the law— if it was possible to carry out this system of picketing without annoyance or molestation to others, it was not in itself possibly illegal, but it was impossible to do so. He was perfectly satisfied that it was utterly impossible to carry out effectually the system of picketing without molestation and annoyance, and without a breach of the law. The jury had, in his opinion, returned a true verdict, and he was perfectly satisfied with it; and if the defendants themselves only considered the question fairly and dispassionately, he thought that they must see that reason and justice were against them in the course they had taken. In the first place, what right had they to dictate to any other man in what way he should employ his talents and his labour? The men of Sheffield seemed to

consider that they had a right to put compulsion upon others in their trade, and though he did not for a moment suppose that the parties concerned in the present proceedings would think for a moment of going to such fearful extremities as the persons to whom he had referred, still it was an exemplification of the results that were likely to follow from combinations of such a character. What right had they to demand that all their fellow workmen should throw their labour into one common stock? They might depend upon it that such a proceeding was wrong. If all the journeymen tailors were to be allowed to combine and carry out this object, the shoemakers and the men belonging to every other trade might do the same, and so might all the masters, and what would be the consequence? Did they think for a moment that if this was done it would be for the benefit of society at large? Certainly not. The aggregate of the happiness of mankind was created by each man being left to his own discretion, and to do what he pleased in reference to his own affairs. For more than forty years some of the best men in the country—men whom, he was assured, they (the defendants) admired—had been exerting themselves in removing restrictions from every branch of trade and commerce, and there was nothing like class legislation at the present time, and no set of men engaged in any branch of trade or commerce had any exclusive rights; and yet the defendants were actually trying to legislate among themselves in an entirely contrary direction. They were endeavouring to put restraints upon trade, and to re-establish those corporate guilds which might have been found of use in ancient times, but which certainly were not so in the present times. They must be aware that even among those public men who were their best friends, they had no sympathy; and no man of eminence or distinction, or any known friend to the working classes, had said a word in their favour, or had expressed an opinion that they were doing right in the course they had taken. He had consulted with the learned Recorder, and also with the experienced alderman who sat by his side (Alderman Lusk), as to the course that should be taken. They had done wrong—they had broken the law, but it was only fair to them to say that it was possible that they might have acted under an erroneous impression as to what the law really was. Ignorance of the law was of course no excuse, but it was a reason why the punishment that was inflicted should be lighter. He had therefore come to the conclusion that the right way to deal with them was not to pass any sentence at all, but to take their word that the act should not be repeated. This, however, would not apply to one of the defendants—Knox—who appeared to have been guilty of some acts of personal annoyance and violence, but, with regard to the remaining defendants, he should take their word that what they had done, and which they now knew was a breach of the law, should not be repeated. With regard to the remaining defendant, Knox, he had heard that such acts as he had been guilty of were entirely repudiated by those with whom he was supposed to be acting; and he hoped the observations of his own counsel, and the stinging terms of reprobation they had made use of, with reference to such conduct, would have due effect upon him. He felt called upon, however, to treat him differently to the other defendants, and the sentence upon him would be that of imprisonment and hard labour for three months.

The remaining defendants then entered into their own recognisance, in the sum of £100, to appear and receive judgment if they should be called upon to do so, and they were then discharged.—*Star*, August 24th.

THE
AMALGAMATED SOCIETY
OF
CARPENTERS AND JOINERS.

BY
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AMALGAMATED SOCIETY OF CARPENTERS AND JOINERS.

I DO not propose in the present paper to deal with the abstract economical questions connected with Trades' Unions. The elucidation of those abstract questions is indeed far from complete, and the public mind has much to learn, and much more to unlearn, with regard to them. But what seems most wanting at the present stage of the controversy is, a clearer conception of Trades' Unions, not as they may be or as they ought to be, but as they are. There are few educated people who have not acquainted themselves more or less with the line of reasoning by which it is sought to demonstrate the folly and futility of combinations among workmen. That reasoning is largely based on hypotheses, and the delusive semblance of scientific exactness which it wears has led the educated public to overlook the very hasty and one-sided observations on which those hypotheses are raised, and to dispense with anything like a careful verification. Mr. Harrison's acute and searching criticism of the vulgar economic doctrines has already led to a sensible modification in the supercilious self-confident tone of the anonymous writers who are in the habit of lecturing workmen so loftily on their infatuated attachment to their unions. But the general public has not the patience to follow these discussions. Its attitude towards the unions is determined, partly of course, by its blind reliance on the authority of the pseudo-economic school, but far more by the gross and systematic misrepresentations propagated by a press devoted to middle-class interests. So long as unions are believed to encourage or tolerate tyranny, outrage, and idleness, and to discourage industry, providence, and independence, they will continue to be regarded with a dislike bordering on horror.

How are these misconceptions to be removed? They are strengthened from time to time by statements appearing in newspapers, many absolutely false, many exaggerated or uncandidly coloured, a few too true. The question is, whether the facts, or alleged facts, so adduced, are fair specimens of the practical working of unionism, and the natural result of the system, or whether they are—when authentic—as exceptional as the appearance of clergymen in police courts. To collect and examine these cases during the last five or ten years, with anything like completeness, is of course impossible. Any number of isolated examples, pointing in a different direction, might be objected to as exceptional, and would be of no avail to rebut the sweeping charges made. I have thought it well therefore to take a single society, to describe its origin, growth, and present state, to give

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a faithful account of its rules, to describe and illustrate its organisation and policy. Although most people are forward enough to express strong opinions about unionism, the ignorance on the subject is, if I may judge from my own observation, profound. It might have been supposed that employers, at all events, who are constantly coming into collision with their workmen, would be rather better informed. But so repugnant is it to their pride and obstinacy to seem to recognise the societies, that they deliberately prefer ignorance where knowledge is within their reach. The information contained in this paper will, I am satisfied, be to most readers entirely novel, and, since Trades' Unions are to be the topic of the session, ought not to be without interest.

I have selected for description the Amalgamated Society of Carpenters and Joiners, because it exemplifies all the modern improvements in organisation which are giving a new signification and importance to the Unionism of the present day, and because I happen to have watched its development more closely than that of other societies. I have before me its rules, forming a small book of fifty pages, a complete set of its reports, annual, quarterly, and monthly, and specimens of all forms used in transacting its business. I have known its general secretary, Mr. Applegarth, for several years, and have always found him trustworthy. He has been often fiercely attacked by the *Beehive* newspaper, the organ of Mr. George Potter, and if any story to his discredit had been going about, I could not have failed to hear it. The best proof of his good character and his ability is the confidence of his society, which has five times elected him its general secretary. I must apologise to him for making these remarks, which he might justly consider more offensive than complimentary. But in the eyes of the educated public, there is a heavy presumption against the character of a "paid secretary of a union;" and it will be evident that I have derived much of my information from him.

The Amalgamated Society of Carpenters arose out of the great builders' lock-out of 1859-60. At the time of that struggle the masons alone of the building trades were organised into a single society, extending throughout England, and providing not only for trade purposes, but for the ordinary benefits. Its head-quarters were then at Bristol. I remember thinking that its machinery was too cumbrous, that there was in it too much of check and countercheck for the exigencies of a campaign. Still, its solidity was remarkably exemplified. The London masons locked out were supported regularly and punctually by their society, and could have continued the struggle for an indefinite time; but the other trades, split up into numerous local societies, were soon reduced to extremities.

The lock-out of 1859-60 proved that unions established for trade purposes only, or confined to a particular locality, must inevitably

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fail whenever a serious crisis occurred. Impressed with this experience, some members of the carpenter's trade determined to found a union on the same principle as that of the Amalgamated Engineers, whose society, then in the tenth year of its existence, had increased and prospered to an extent hitherto unexampled. They sent out circulars, canvassed the various small societies throughout the country, and meeting with sufficient encouragement, started the new society in June, 1860. The main distinctive features as contrasted with the old societies were three:—(1) It consisted of branches scattered throughout the country; (2) it provided all the usual benefits offered by friendly societies; (3) it guaranteed a certain weekly payment to every member out of work *from whatever cause*.

The chief advantage of the first of these principles has been already explained. Nothing short of a lock-out extending over the whole country, and carried out by small as well as great masters, could cripple the funds of the society. But there are other merits less obvious, though not less real. The policy of this, and I believe of all amalgamated societies, is to promote a virtual equalisation of wages and working hours in different districts, regard being of course had to such circumstances as cost of living, housing, &c. A local union aims at raising the wages and shortening the hours of its own particular district. If it is successful, a rush of labour to that locality is the natural result. Thus the high remuneration of carpenters in London causes a perpetual influx from the rural districts. It may be said that this displacement would naturally produce a proportionate rise of wages in those districts. Here, however, as is so often the case in Political Economy, abstract reasoning only misleads. The country carpenter, or small builder, whose apprentice, having served his time, has made for London, simply takes a new apprentice from the weltering mass of agricultural labour lying at his door, or within a mile or two of it; and finds himself under no compulsion to offer higher wages for journeymen. I have watched the process in a country village. Again, an attempt by the London men to obtain better terms may be defeated by importing the low-paid artisans from rural districts. Thus, in 1860, the agents of the London builders scoured England and Scotland in search of men, and brought them up in droves to the metropolis. But when wages, in proportion to cost of living, shall have been equalised all over the country, passionate or obstinate employers will find it impossible to effect this reckless and mischievous displacement of labour.

The importance of the second principle will be best understood by looking at the character and working of the old-fashioned unions in which it is not adopted. The men combine purely for "trade purposes." The subscription is insignificant, sometimes only a penny a week. The members probably belong to the Oddfellows or Foresters

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for the benefit purposes, and their financial tie to their union being so weak, they join it or leave it with equal carelessness. Nevertheless, small as the subscription is, a fund will in course of time be accumulated. There is nothing to do with this fund. There it is, eating its head off, so to speak. The men become impatient to use it; so a demand is made on the employers, irrespective perhaps of the circumstances of the trade. A strike follows. The members live on their fund for a few weeks, and when it is exhausted they give in. Such societies may be called strike-societies, for they exist for nothing else, and are of little or no use. Nevertheless there are many of them still existing. Some may perhaps have a somewhat higher contribution to meet certain contingencies not provided for by ordinary friendly societies, such as loss of tools; but practically all unions with small contributions are strike societies.

Now the improved union of modern times combines with "trade purposes" all the usual benefits. A member of the Amalgamated Carpenters losing his tools* by fire, water, or theft, receives their full value. If sick, he receives 12s. a week for twenty-six weeks, and after that, 6s. a week as long as illness continues. When he dies his wife receives £12 for his funeral. If his wife dies before him he receives £5 for her funeral,—£7 remaining for his own. If he sustains an accident incapacitating him permanently from following his trade, he receives £100 to set him up in some little business. When fifty years old, if through failing strength he is unable to make full time or wages at his trade, he is entitled to superannuation allowance—8s. a week, if he has been twenty-five years a member; 5s. if twelve years. Under certain circumstances assistance is given to emigration. The last and most important benefit is that of "donation," which will be explained presently.

To secure these benefits the contribution is, of course, proportionately heavy. There are two classes of members: those who are entitled to all benefits, and those who are entitled to all except sick benefit. The former pay 1s. a week, the latter 9d. All pay 3d. a quarter to a "contingent fund." The second category was established to suit those men who were already Oddfellows or Foresters. But it is much more economical to depend upon one society combining all benefits, than to contribute to a friendly society for sick and funeral benefit, and to a union for tool and accident benefit and trade purposes. The advantage of the former course lies in concentration of management and consequent lessening of working expenses. It may be asked whether it has been ascertained by proper calculation that the scale of contribution will enable the society to make good the benefits it promises. The Amalgamated

* A carpenter's tools are much more valuable than those of most trades. A full set costs about £20.

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Carpenters simply copied the rules of the Amalgamated Engineers, who had submitted their calculations to an actuary, on starting their society in 1850, and had found them work well for ten years, although during that time they had passed through the ordeal of a gigantic strike and lock-out. But it must be admitted that when such an element as that last mentioned is included among possible contingencies, the most careful calculations may be baffled. The chances are evidently not such as an actuary can compute. If at any time the Executive Council should find that from labour disputes on an unprecedented scale, or any other cause, the funds have sunk so low as to make it doubtful whether all calls can be met, it would take steps to have an extraordinary levy made throughout the society, by which the funds might be raised to a proper level. No doubt a levy at a time of depression might press hard on the members. But such is their attachment and loyalty to the society, such a stake have they invested in it, so closely is their comfort and security bound up with it, that there is not the smallest doubt that they would meet the call rather than submit to the alternative—the break up of the society. On the other hand, it must be said that neither this society nor that of the engineers has ever approached such a crisis, and that the executive is always watchful to prevent too many labour contests in any one year.

The third principle—that which guarantees a weekly payment to every member out of work, from whatever cause—may be regarded as the backbone of this and similar societies. It does for the workman what the capitalist will do for him when society is better organised—secures him something like steadiness of income and employment. Any member who has been out of work more than three days, under circumstances satisfactory to his branch, is entitled to 10s. a week for the first twelve weeks, and to 6s. for twelve weeks more. He may not draw more than £9 12s. in this way in any one year. This is called “being on donation.” The donation, while large enough to keep a man from absolute want, is not so large as to be a premium upon idleness in a trade in which the wages vary from 21s. to 36s. a week. Moreover, it is the business of the secretary of every branch to know if any work is to be had in the neighbourhood, and to send to it members on donation. Any member knowing where work is to be had and not informing his branch secretary, is fined: while, on the other hand, he or any other person reporting work, and so taking a member off donation, receives 6d. Similarly the branch secretary has to inform the general secretary in London whether employment is brisk or slack in his district. If the Manchester secretary informs the general secretary that he can place a dozen carpenters in his town, the latter glances over his reports, and writes (say) to Birmingham and Worcester, where work is slack, and

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there are consequently several members on donation, and desires them to send so many men to Manchester. Any man declining to go would have his donation stopped. It is better both for him and for the society that he should be earning 30s. at Manchester than idling on 10s. donation at Birmingham or Worcester. He receives his railway fare from his branch secretary, unless the Manchester employer pays it—which is often the case, for the employers or their foremen generally apply to the branch secretaries to find them men. If a man so required to migrate alleges any reasonable excuse, such as illness in his family, the branch secretary will pass him over. In case of dispute, he can appeal first to a meeting of his branch, and secondly to the Executive Council in London: for nothing is left in this society—or, indeed, in any that I am acquainted with—to the arbitrary discretion of that bugbear of employers and journalists, the “paid secretary.” Experience proves that this system works admirably. Secretaries and private members are alike vigilant to keep down donation. The sense of comfort and security it inspires cannot be estimated by those who, having never known what it is to depend for their bread on payment by the day or the hour, draw foolish comparisons between the precarious intermittent wages of an artisan and the steady salary of a bank clerk or curate. On the other hand, employers and the public are gainers by the prompt transference of labour to the districts in which it is needed. All these arrangements would be organised by the capitalists if they understood their social function. They have had centuries to learn their duty. But they have not learnt it or done it, and in modern times they have digested their negligence, incompetence, and selfishness into a theory. The despised and ignorant workman, the drunken venal being known to Mr. Lowe, has therefore been obliged to take the supervision of industry on a large scale into his own hands, and to do for the capitalists what they are too selfish and mutually distrustful to do for themselves.

The next thing to be described is the organisation and government of the society, local and central. Each branch is a completely organised body in itself, choosing its own officers, collecting, holding, and disbursing its own funds, and generally managing its own business. A branch may not consist of less than seven or more than three hundred members. There are at present one hundred and ninety branches, comprising 8,256 members. Presidents and committee-men are elected quarterly, stewards half-yearly, secretary, treasurer, referee, and trustees annually. There is a general meeting every fortnight to transact business. On election nights, or at specially summoned meetings, members absent without written excuse are fined 3d. The committee sits when summoned, and its minutes must be read and confirmed at the next general meeting of the branch. The treasurer

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is, if possible, a householder, and gives security to his branch. He can only hold so much money as the branch each fortnight authorises, the rest being banked by the trustees. He can only disburse money on written order from the secretary. There are many other elaborate checks on malversation.

* The central authority of the society is vested in a general council consisting of sixteen members and a president, six of whom, with a chairman, are elected by the London branches, and the rest by the country branches. Half the council retires every six months. But as the country council-men could not attend frequent meetings in London, the ordinary management is vested in the six London members, who are called the Executive Council, and a chairman elected annually by the London branches. Most general societies show considerable jealousy of London, and provide that the seat of government shall be changed from time to time. The head-quarters of the masons, I believe, are seldom or never in London; but the Amalgamated Carpenters are sensible of the advantages of a real centralisation. Although the reports show that disputes have frequently arisen between the Executive and various branches, I do not find that as Londoners the former have given any dissatisfaction.* It is the duty of the Executive Council to see that the branches conform to rules, to decide appeals, to authorise the opening or closing of branches, to order one branch to transmit money to another (as will be explained presently) to lake legal proceedings on behalf of the society when necessary, and, lastly, to authorise strikes. The Executive communicates with the branches through the general secretary, the only officer of the society whose whole time is devoted to its service. He is elected annually by universal suffrage of the whole society. His office is the head-quarters of the society, and his business is to act as secretary to the Executive, to transact all correspondence with branches, to compile and issue the annual, quarterly, and monthly reports, to arrange the transmission of members on donation from one place to another, and to keep a register containing the name of every member and such information about him as is necessary. In short, the working of the society as a whole depends on his industry and activity. He has a salary of £2 10s. a week.

Though each branch is a complete union in itself, the funds belong to the society as a whole. Consequently, if Plymouth, owing to slack trade or a strike, or any other cause, has exhausted all its own funds, the Executive directs Exeter or Lambeth, whose coffers are full, to remit the requisite sum to Plymouth; and at the end of the

* A delegate meeting was found necessary last year for a general revision of the rules. It was held in Manchester, many of the London branches magnanimously voting for the provincial town. Bristol, however, expresses its "disgust and intense dissatisfaction at the innovation."

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year a general "equalisation" of funds is arranged by the general secretary throughout the society; branches more or less rich remitting to branches more or less exhausted, until each branch has the same amount per member to begin the new year with. Thus no large fund is ever deposited at head-quarters. The general office draws what it wants for its own working expenses each month from any branch that is most convenient. If a branch squanders its funds in a manner not authorised by the rules, the Executive compels it to make good the deficiency by a levy on its members. If a branch gets its accounts into confusion, or gives any cause for suspicion, the Executive can order a special audit, or send a deputation to investigate. If a branch disobeys rules or resists lawful requisitions of the Executive, that body can expel it.

Every precaution has been taken to prevent arbitrary action on the part of officials. The Executive can decide where the rules are silent: but it cannot alter or suspend a rule. The rules may be altered by a meeting of delegates specially deputed for the purpose by their districts. Two such delegate meetings have been held since the foundation of the society. In cases of great emergency, the *General Council* can take a general vote of the society through the branches as to the alteration or suspension of a rule, without calling a delegate meeting, which is a slow and costly proceeding. If any branch, by a majority of two-thirds, disputes a decision of the Executive, it has an appeal to the society. The case on each side is printed and circulated through the branches, and the vote of the majority decides. Similarly if any individual is aggrieved by an official, he may appeal first to the branch committee, then to the general meeting of his branch, and lastly to the Executive in London, whose decision is final. From a dozen to twenty such appeals reach the Executive in a year.

The fortnightly meetings of the branches are, as a rule, well attended. They are necessarily held in public-houses, but from the large majority of them drink is excluded, the members preferring to pay a fixed rent for a room. When society business is concluded, and the meeting has been formally closed, it is not unusual for the members to remain sitting, with the same chairman, to discuss social and political questions.* To belong to such a society is an education far more efficacious for all political and practical purposes than any training gone through by the majority of the wealthier classes. The business of the society is conducted by some 1,600 officers. All these must accustom themselves to keep accounts according to a uniform pattern, and to perform their other duties with method and regularity. Office is a burden, to decline which when it comes to a member's turn involves a fine. Thus all the members acquire a familiarity with the management which makes usurpation or maladministration very improbable. Of course this large governmental

* In the Shoemakers' and Tailors' Societies this is still more common.

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staff is not kept up without expense. The nation, or those who rule it, may be content to entrust parliamentary and judicial functions to unpaid volunteers; but carpenters cannot afford to have their business bungled or neglected. They pay their officers to do it, and so acquire the right to fine them heavily for neglecting it. The pay is indeed of the smallest. Branch secretaries receive from 6s. 3d. to £2 11s. a quarter, according to number of members; treasurers, from 15s. to £3 5s. a year; sick stewards, who visit sick members twice a week, 6d. a week for each; all who attend a committee, 6d., &c. The working expenses of the society are certainly not light. They have been reduced in the last five years from 38 to 19 per cent., which, I am assured, is below the usual rate of friendly societies. It must be remembered that the collection and disbursement of money is just as troublesome when the sums are small as when they are large. In the former case, therefore, the working expenses will necessarily bear a larger proportion to the gross receipts and expenditure. Moreover, many of the branches are at present very small. Thus Middleton has only seven members, yet it pays as much for room rent as Bradford with 125 members.

I will now explain the action of this society in case of a strike. On this point it has been found impossible to have a code of rules. For such is the monstrous state of our law as made by an upper and middle class Parliament, that any society which can be proved to contemplate spending any portion of its funds in supporting a strike is denied the protection of the tribunals. An officer who has robbed it in the most impudent manner, when brought before a magistrate, has only to show that its rules operate "in restraint of trade," and he will at once be discharged. Thus the English plutocracy, while not daring any longer to make combination of workmen criminal, endeavours, with unexampled baseness, to cripple their action by encouraging fraud and embezzlement. Such being the state of the law, the society of which I am giving an account is obliged to be very circumspect. The only rule which applies to a strike is the following:—

"Any member or members leaving his or their employment under circumstances satisfactory to the branch or Executive Council shall be entitled to the sum of 15s. per week." (Rule xviii. clause 7).*

By wording the rule thus vaguely, and interpreting it according to a well understood usage, the society has hitherto escaped outlawry. It has on several occasions successfully invoked the protection of the tribunals. Last August the secretary of the Birkenhead 1st Branch was convicted of embezzlement and forgery at the Chester assizes. Baron Pigott sentenced him to five years' penal servitude, observing

* The *Builders' Trade Circular* of January 24, thinks it honest to quote this rule in inverted commas, as follows: "Any member withdrawn from his employment (to maintain the existing privileges of the trade)" &c.

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that "it appeared to him that the prisoner was one of those who thought that because he was entrusted with the business affairs of a society composed of working men, he could rob them with impunity; but it was due to the public as well as to the society which had been robbed of funds subscribed for such laudable objects, that proof should be given to the contrary." Whether, after the late judgment of the Court of Queen's Bench, in the case of *Hornby v. Close*, the Amalgamated Carpenters will continue to enjoy the protection of the law, remains to be seen. The rules of the Boiler-makers' Society, on which that case turned, were indeed much less circumspect than those of the carpenters, for they contained the damning word "strike," and fettered the discretion of the Executive by certain explicit provisions. But I fear there would be no great difficulty in proving that the carpenters' rule quoted above points to the "restraint of trade." Although it empowers a branch to decide on the circumstances under which a member has left his employment, yet the Executive has for some years claimed the exclusive right of determining all cases where more than one or two individuals are involved; in other words, where it is a question of striking; and this interpretation of the rule was formally endorsed by the delegate meeting at Manchester last year. Whenever, therefore, a branch desires to resist any innovation on the part of its employers, or to make a demand on them, it is required, before taking the smallest step, to submit its case to the Executive in London. The wisdom of this provision is manifest. The Worcester or Chester branches might be misled by a little local prosperity into advancing pretensions not justified by the general state of trade, or of the finances of the society. In times past many a strike has been thus ignorantly brought on. But the Executive Council have before them complete and circumstantial tables, compiled every month from the branch returns, and showing the exact state of trade all over the country. The following is a specimen from the report for November, 1865.

Branch.	Number of Members	State of Trade.	Members on Donation.		Members on Sick Benefit.		Superannuation.
			10s.	6s.	12s	6s.	
Sheffield	160	Good			1		
Oldham	30	Good. Setting on					
Birmingham	168	Bad	6		2		
Colchester	9	Very good					
Aldershot	7	Men wanted					
Torquay	80	Unsettled					
Poplar	31	Dull					
Droylsden	25	Improving					
Sunderland	60	Moderate					
Coventry	30	Steady					
Scarborough	94	Slack	1		2		
Plymouth	167	Strike and Lock-out					
Dartford	23	Setting on occasionally					

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And so on through the 127 branches of which the society then consisted. To look at labour on this large scale, with a view to provident arrangements for its employment, is the province of masters rather than men, did the former but understand and recognise their responsibility to society. I will not assert that the London master builders do not provide themselves with similar statistics, but I very much doubt whether any one of them troubles himself about anything else than obtaining the men necessary for the works he has in hand. If the President of the Board of Trade wanted such information at an hour's notice, I wonder whether it would occur to him that the only place where he could get it is in a little office up two pair of stairs in Northumberland Street, Strand.

The answer of an Executive to an application depends mainly on these returns. The branch anxious to fight may be told that its demand is unreasonable, or that its grievance is not one the society can recognise, or that other branches are more aggrieved and must have their turn first, or that its case is a good one, but that the society has a heavy strike on hand or impending, somewhere else, which may press heavily on the funds. If on the other hand the case appears good, and the society has its hands free, the branch is authorised to address a letter to the employers. When the men are not resisting an innovation, but are preferring a new claim, the Executive requires the branch to give at least three months' notice; for the society steadily discountenances all attempts to take the employers by surprise. Its aim is to introduce everywhere a "code of working rules" signed by the representatives of masters and men, and not to be altered without three or six months' notice on either side. This system is in force in Manchester and many other towns.* If the concession demanded is refused, the branch strikes on the expiration of the notice, and the men out of work receive fifteen shillings a week from the society. But arrangements will have been made beforehand for drafting off all the men who can be easily moved to other localities where hands are wanted, so that the burden on the funds may be lessened. A fairer application of the strictest rules of the political economists could not be desired. When the strike is at an end, many of the men drafted off, especially those who

* The *Times* of February 7 says, "In many trades it is unsafe, indeed it is hardly possible to take a contract, for an edict of the union may at any moment suspend the work. Of course this is a natural proceeding. The master's difficulty is the workman's opportunity; and if men have a right to strike, they have a right to choose their own time for striking." That the *Times* should concede this "right" to workmen is only natural. The plutocracy of which it is the organ would be only too glad to eliminate all moral considerations from economical questions. But whatever workmen may have done, or may still be doing, in their struggle for life with capitalists steeped in the anti-social doctrines of the *Times*, they have a higher ideal; and in proportion as they become solidly organised, and are in a position to deal calmly as well as firmly with their employers, they aim at moralising the relations of labour and capital, as is shown by the policy of the Amalgamated Carpenters described above.

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have left families behind them, will find their way back to their old abode. A branch striking without the approval of the Executive, or remaining on strike after the Executive has called on it to give in, has no right to use the funds of the society for that purpose. Last year the Plymouth branch having disbursed £20 out of its treasury to men on strike after the Executive had required them to go to work, was compelled to refund the money by a levy on its members, Branches generally take a pride in carrying a strike through on the funds in their own treasury, without drawing on other branches, though if the struggle is protracted the latter course must be adopted.

Two or three illustrations of the policy of this society as to strikes will probably be interesting.

In December, 1864, the Birmingham and Midland master builders announced that they would not for the future take on any man who could not produce a "discharge note" from his last employer. The men very naturally fired up at this tyrannical innovation, and struck work till the notice should be withdrawn. The Executive of the Amalgamated Society disapproved of the strike, considering that the men should have taken no notice of the announcement, and should simply have declined to receive the discharge note when it was tendered. If all or most of the carpenters of the district had been members of the society no difficulty could have arisen. Any member declining the discharge note, and so failing to get fresh employment from Midland masters, would have been quietly removed by the society to some other part of England. By this masterly inactivity the scheme of the employers would have become ignominiously inoperative. But only 211 of the Birmingham carpenters belonged to this society; and as the rest of the men rushed hotly into a strike, the Executive had no choice but to let the society men do the same, and pay them the usual strike pay. The resolution of the Executive was couched in the following terms:—"That, while sanctioning the Birmingham strike, we at the same time feel convinced that the members have acted injudiciously in striking before the time expired for the discharge note to come into operation." However, prudent or imprudent, the action of the Birmingham men was attended with immediate victory: the discharge note was unconditionally withdrawn. The strike, however, was not immediately brought to a close, the men being stimulated by unwise advisers to make further demands. Therefore the general secretary of the Amalgamated Carpenters went down to Birmingham, without waiting for directions from his Executive, and urged the men to be satisfied with their victory and resume work. By taking this step he drew down upon himself much vituperation, but the Executive approved his action by a majority of five to two; and in the following summer he was re-elected to his office, after a sharp contest, by a majority of 1,814 votes to 612.

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In 1865 the London carpenters struck for an advance of a half-penny an hour. Here, again, the Amalgamated Executive objected to the strike on the ground that the general interests of the trade would be better served by endeavouring to raise wages in the west of England, where they ruled very low. There would have been no difficulty in getting the amalgamated men to acquiesce in this view, because they are accustomed to a large and far-sighted policy. But only 2,000 of the London carpenters belong to this society, and the strike was directed by a temporary committee elected from the whole trade, in a hit-or-miss way, at disorderly meetings called by no recognised body. It is easy to imagine the vexation of unionists when they see an agitation of this kind, which has been got up by self-appointed agitators working chiefly upon the non-unionist mass, ascribed by ignorant and reckless journalists to the "dictates of the union," or the "tyranny of paid secretaries." The Executive of the Amalgamated Society had again no choice but either to let its members do as others did, or play into the hands of the employers. It of course adopted the former alternative, and the advance was gained.

From the attitude of the Executive on these occasions of successful strikes, it may be gathered what policy is pursued in less hopeful cases. It is time the public ceased to swallow the nonsense that is talked about "paid leaders of unions." It is for the interest of masters, men, and society at large that the workmen should be represented, not by noisy irresponsible agitators, seeking to fill their pockets in the scuffle, but by men who have been elected in calmer moments, with proper formalities, by a well-defined constituency, and whose great anxiety is to husband the funds of their society, and to carry it through a struggle, when unavoidable, as rapidly and economically as possible.

The Amalgamated Society does not attempt to lay down any rule about work, wages, or hours. Every branch negotiates these matters for itself. The Executive would permit a strike against the introduction of piece-work only where it had been forbidden in a code of working rules mutually agreed on between masters and men, as at Scarborough. In London piece-work is perfectly recognised. Similarly where a code has limited the number of apprentices, resistance to an alteration might be authorised. But no branch is ever urged from head-quarters to enter on a conflict; for there are always far more applications for permission to strike than can be granted. The power of the Executive, in short, may be summed up as the right of veto on strikes. Subordination to this power is what the *Saturday Review* calls "submission to the Vehm-gericht of Unionism."

If the space conceded to me permitted, I could add copious illustrations of the action of the society. Two more must suffice. Recently a clerk of works at Dorking, being in want of men, and knowing

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there was a lock-out at Manchester, applied to the secretary of the Dorking branch to obtain him some men, promising to pay railway expenses. The men were fetched, but as some of them left after a short time, the clerk of the works represented to the Executive that he had been a loser by paying the travelling expenses; upon which the money was refunded to him. At Sheffield, last May, the masters' association sent for a deputation of the Amalgamated Society (which has its largest branch in that town), and voluntarily offered an advance of 2s. a week on condition that a code of working rules was established. The men closed with one offer as gladly as the other. The code regulates hours of work and wages during winter and summer, and time for walking, or lodging-money, when work is beyond a certain distance; provides that extra rates shall be paid for over-time, and requires four months' notice of alteration on either side. It is signed by the president and secretary of the master's association, and by the secretaries of the amalgamated society, the general union, and a local society. Every workman has a copy of it. At the same time a committee of masters and men was appointed to settle all disputes, an arrangement which has hitherto worked very satisfactorily. Times are altered since the London master builders in 1859 passed the following resolution:—"That no deputations of trade unions, committees, or other bodies, with reference to any objects referred to in Article 3 [the regulations of any establishment, the hours or terms of labour, the contracts or agreements of employers or employed, or the qualification or terms of service], be received by any member of this association on any account whatever; it being still open to any workman, individually, to apply on such subject to his employer." I doubt if such a resolution will ever be passed again by any body of employers. The affectation of not recognising unions and their officers has been found to be as stupid as it is insolent. When the agricultural labourers begin to combine, as I venture to predict they will within the next five years, it is to be hoped that the landlords and farmers will be wise in time.

The Amalgamated Society has now been nearly seven years in existence. The subjoined table will show how rapid has been its progress.

Year.	Branches	Members.	Surplus.		
			£	s.	d.
1860	20	618	321	7	2½
1861	32	650	593	12	0½
1862	38	949	849	8	10
1863	53	1718	2042	11	3
1864	81	3279	4566	10	0½
1865	134	5670	8320	13	7
1866	190	8256	Accounts not yet made up.		

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The Amalgamated Society, however, is not the largest in the trade. The "General Union" is a much older society, dating from 1827 (three years after the repeal of the combination laws), and extending, as its name imports, throughout the kingdom. This society in August last had 140 "lodges," and 9,490 members, being an increase of 40 lodges, and 2,504 members on the previous year. It was formerly a society merely for "trade purposes," or, at most, for some small benefits, and each of its lodges had its own code of rules. Since 1860 it has been gradually assimilating its constitution to that of the younger society. But its regular contributions and benefits are still on a smaller scale; it has not yet adopted the principle of equalisation; strikes are authorised or prohibited by the cumbrous process of a vote of the whole society; while a special fund for trade purposes and certain benefits is deposited at the seat of government, and permanently kept up to £500 by means of levies. Thus a member of the General Union, in addition to his regular contributions, pays an uncertain sum for trade and other purposes. The Amalgamated Society has never been obliged to resort to a levy, and the responsibility of permitting strikes lies, as we have seen, with the Executive. I have no doubt that the latter is the wisest plan. The necessity of framing rules on this delicate subject is avoided, and power and responsibility rest with competent men who are thoroughly acquainted with the state of the trade throughout the kingdom.

There are many other societies of carpenters, but all comparatively insignificant. In 1860 there were some forty of them in London alone. I cannot ascertain how many there are now; but they are being gradually eaten up by the two great societies which, notwithstanding past jealousies, will themselves, no doubt, sooner or later coalesce. At present, however, the non-unionists must vastly outnumber the unionists. There are probably 13,000 or 14,000 carpenters in London alone; while the General Union and Amalgamated Society together number less than 17,000 members for the whole kingdom. But combination on sound principles dates, in this trade, from the formation of the latter society in 1860. Both are now increasing at a prodigious rate. To all appearance they will include a majority of the trade in six or seven years; and those not included will be chiefly men who are too old for admission, incompetent workmen, and men who have been expelled.

The limited space at my disposal unfortunately prevents me from giving many other interesting particulars respecting this admirable society. I can fancy, however, that some will think my sketch must be very incomplete, because it has not thrown any light upon the violence and intimidation commonly supposed to be essential to a trade organisation. I simply affirm that nothing of the kind exists in this society. If any one can impugn this assertion, let him do so.

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The Executive has often announced that it would prosecute any member guilty of violence as promptly as it would prosecute a master. Last year it offered £25 out of its "Contingent Fund" for the discovery of the perpetrator of the Sheffield outrage, although it was not a carpenters' matter.

Since the foregoing part of this paper was written, the fears expressed respecting the effect of the decision in the case of *Hornby v. Close* have proved only too well founded. That decision was given on January 16. The *Builders' Trade Circular*, of January 24, exultingly pointed out that the principle thus established would apply to the Amalgamated Society. A month had not elapsed, when the society had occasion to prosecute an officer of the Hull branch. The magistrate looked at the rules, pronounced them to be framed with a view to strikes, and dismissed the case. Just as these remarks are going to press, a similar case, followed by a similar decision, is reported from Bradford. Thus eight thousand carpenters, the flower of their trade, find themselves proclaimed fair game for swindlers. The excitement throughout the society may be imagined. No wonder that out of the 2,000 London members, some 1,500 marched with Mr. Beales to Islington on the 11th of February. The society took no part in the December demonstration. For my part, I am not sorry that they should learn what their liberty amounts to under a Parliament chosen by the upper and middle classes.

EDWARD SPENCER BEESLY.

ADDENDUM.—The income of the society in 1865 was thus expended:—Donations, £347 6s. 10½d.; tool benefit, £114 4s. 11½d.; sick benefit, £1,369 15s. 5d.; funeral benefit, £257 10s.; trade purposes, £1,941 8s. 1½d.; accident benefit, £200; grants to distressed members from Contingent Fund, £121 10s.; grants to other trades from ditto, £69; property, £234 9s. 10d.; working expenses, £2,078 6s. 3d. Balance, £3,754 3s. 6½d.

APPENDICES.

APPENDIX A.

I find that the statement on page 14 about Sheffield is not quite accurate. The following extract from Mr. Applegarth's evidence before the Trades' Union Commission contains a fuller account of the facts:—

190. (*Mr. Harrison.*) You have spoken of the customs of the trade. Are there many towns in which a code of rules agreed upon between the employer and the employed is in force?—(*Mr. Applegarth.*) Yes.

191. Does the society desire to extend that, or do you consider that a beneficial state of things?—We are doing all we can to extend it; we believe that nothing can be more advantageous than for the masters and men to meet and agree upon certain conditions, and we think that it should be a matter left to themselves.

192. Have you any evidence that that has acted beneficially upon the state of the trade, that any town, for instance, has been the better for it since it has been enforced?—Yes. There is a very remarkable instance at Sheffield. Our society has been in existence since March, 1862, in that place. They were receiving then 26s. per week, and working 58½ hours for that, and receiving the same rate of wages in winter as in summer. After our branch had increased there, the men began to think that they were not so well paid as men in other towns, and they applied to the masters for more. It was not settled without a dispute, they had a strike of some few weeks, and then they got what they desired, including a code of working rules. Since that they have had many meetings with their employers, and the employers were well satisfied with the conduct of the men, and expressed themselves so. It happened that the masons and other branches of the building trade had asked for the Saturday half-holiday, and our men thought it is not fair that we should work longer than they do on the Saturday, so they went to the employers, simply instructed by a resolution of our branch, to ask them if they would be prepared to grant the half-holiday. The employers said, "Yes, we will," and a short time afterwards granted it. They said, "what is more; we have a suggestion to make to you carpenters."

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We are well satisfied with the manner in which you have met us during the last few years on trade affairs, but there is one thing that we should like to suggest to you, and that is, that we should have a board composed of an equal number of masters and men, and that any little grievance on the part of either one or the other should be submitted to this board so composed, thus preventing our getting into a large dispute; "we will agree to appoint a number of masters if you will appoint an equal number of men." The men went back to those who had sent them, and they gladly accepted that proposal, and there has been no such thing as a strike since that board of arbitration was established; there is not a town of England where, taking into consideration the working hours and the wages and price of provisions, the men work on better conditions than they do in Sheffield.

193. (*Chairman.*) Do you mean that the men are paid higher and that provisions are cheaper?—I mean that taking into consideration the amount of wages received, the number of hours they work for that amount of wages, and the price of provisions, there are no men in the trade better off. I think that the manner in which the employers met the men may be attributed to this fact. When I left Sheffield some five years ago they were receiving 26s. per week the year round. The employers felt this was unfair, as the time worked was so much shorter during the winter, and they said to the men, "You ask for more wages, but you have an advantage in getting the same rate in the winter as in the summer." The men said, "We will agree to 2s. less in the winter time than we receive in the summer." This showed a desire on the part of the men to deal fairly with their employers, and they have benefited by so doing, for at one of the last interviews they held with their employers, it was agreed, on receiving proper notice, to give the men an additional 2s. per week if the state of trade would warrant it; this the men had not asked for.

 APPENDIX B.

I have extracted from the last Yearly Report the following tables, which will doubtless prove interesting. Table II. shows the full amount paid by the society to its members since its formation, and for what purposes the sums were paid. Table V. shows the advantages gained in reduced working hours and increased wages.

TABLE II.—Amounts paid each year for the various benefits since the formation of the Society, in June, 1860, and the balance at the end of each year.

Year.	No. of Members.	Donation.		Tool.		Sick.		Funeral.		Accident.		Trade Privileges.		Benevolent Grants.		Grants & Loans to other Trades.		Balance at the end of each Year.		
		Yearly Amnt.	Per Member.	Yearly Amnt.	Per Member.	Yearly Amnt.	Per Member.	Yearly Amnt.	Per Member.	Yearly Amnt.	Per Member.	Yearly Amnt.	Per Member.	Yearly Amnt.	Per Member.	Yearly Amnt.	Per Member.	£	s.	d.
1860	618	£ 25	£ s. d. 0 0 9 ³ / ₄	£ 10	s. d. 0 4	£ 11	£ s. d. 0 0 4 ¹ / ₄	£ 17	s. d. 0 6 ¹ / ₂	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	£ 321	s. 3	d. 2 ¹ / ₂
1861	650	247	0 7 7	40	1 2 ³ / ₄	92	0 2 10	23	0 8 ¹ / ₂	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	593	12	0 ¹ / ₂
1862	947	267	0 5 8 ¹ / ₂	39	0 9 ³ / ₄	249	0 5 3	73	1 6 ¹ / ₂	.....	.....	7	0 1 ³ / ₄	.....	.....	.....	.....	894	8	10
1863	1718	435	0 5 0 ³ / ₄	101	1 2	571	0 6 7 ³ / ₄	95	1 1 ¹ / ₄	30	0 4 ¹ / ₄	10	0 1 ¹ / ₂	.....	.....	.....	.....	2042	11	3
1864	3729	211	0 1 3 ¹ / ₂	88	0 6 ¹ / ₂	1031	0 6 3 ¹ / ₂	212	1 3 ¹ / ₂	.....	.....	762	4 7 ³ / ₄	.....	.....	.....	.....	4566	10	0 ¹ / ₂
1865	5670	347	0 1 2 ³ / ₄	114	0 4 ³ / ₄	1370	0 4 10	257	0 10 ³ / ₄	200	0 8 ¹ / ₂	1941	6 10 ¹ / ₂	121	0 5 ¹ / ₄	69	0 3	8320	13	7
1866	8002	1335	0 3 4	362	0 11	2246	0 5 7 ¹ / ₄	423	1 0 ³ / ₄	360	0 10 ³ / ₄	2525	6 3 ³ / ₄	271	0 8 ¹ / ₄	109	0 3 ¹ / ₄	13052	4	3 ¹ / ₂
		2867	1 5 0 ¹ / ₄	754	5 4 ³ / ₄	5570	1 11 9 ³ / ₄	1100	7 1 ³ / ₄	590	1 11 ¹ / ₂	5245	18 1 ¹ / ₄	392	1 1 ¹ / ₄	178	0 6 ¹ / ₄			

SUMMARY OF THE ABOVE:—

Donation	benefit.....	£2867	being	£1 5 0 ¹ / ₄	per Member for 6 ¹ / ₂ years.
Tool	"	754	"	0 5 4 ³ / ₄	" "
Sick	"	5570	"	1 11 9 ³ / ₄	" "
Funeral	"	1100	"	0 7 1 ¹ / ₄	" "
Accident	"	590	"	0 1 11 ¹ / ₂	" "
Trade Privileges	.....	5245	"	0 18 1 ¹ / ₄	" "
Benevolent Grants	.....	392	"	0 1 1 ¹ / ₂	" 2 years *
		16518			
Grants and Loans to other Trades	.....	178	"	0 0 6 ¹ / ₄	" "
		16696			

* This fund was established in 1864.

TABLE V.

Advantages gained in Wages and Working Hours during 1866.

TOWNS.	No. of members in each town.	Amount per member per week gained.	Weekly amount gained by the members in each town.	TOWNS.	No. of members in each town.	Amount per member per week gained.	Weekly amount gained by the members in each town.
	s. d.	£ s. d.			s. d.	£ s. d.	
Ballymena.....	17	5 2	4 7 10	Wood Green.....	21	2 4	2 9 0
Maldstone.....	57	4 2	11 17 6	Ealing.....	24	2 4	2 16 0
Leek.....	16	3 10	3 1 4	Greenwich.....	80	2 4	9 6 8
Halfax.....	117	3 9	21 18 9	Forest Hill.....	25	2 4	2 18 4
Newport.....	10	3 9	1 17 6	Barrow-in-Furness.....	24	2 0	2 8 0
Sowerby Bridge.....	11	3 8	2 0 4	Exeter.....	57	2 0	5 14 0
Droydsden.....	29	3 7	5 3 11	Heywood.....	40	2 0	4 0 0
Luton.....	14	3 7	2 10 2	Hull.....	258	2 0	25 16 0
Birmingham.....	265	3 6	46 7 6	Lymm.....	10	2 0	1 0 0
Brentford.....	9	3 6	1 11 6	Newcastle-on-Tyne.....	97	2 0	9 14 0
Hereford.....	63	3 5	10 15 3	Oldham.....	42	2 0	4 4 0
Richmond.....	12	3 2	1 18 0	Royton.....	16	2 0	1 12 0
York.....	147	3 2	23 5 6	Saltburn-by-the-Sea.....	16	2 0	1 12 0
Ashford.....	8	3 0	1 4 0	Wellington.....	6	2 0	0 12 0
Algburth.....	15	3 0	2 5 0	Dublin.....	126	2 0	12 12 0
Bath.....	47	3 0	7 1 0	Lisburn.....	15	2 0	1 10 0
Birkenhead.....	114	3 0	17 2 0	Londonderry.....	18	2 0	1 18 0
Bootle.....	12	3 0	1 16 0	Portadown.....	13	2 0	1 6 0
Chatham.....	12	3 0	1 16 0	Scarbro'.....	200	1 11	19 3 4
Devonport.....	41	3 0	6 3 0	Tunbridge Wells.....	16	1 9	1 8 0
Doncaster.....	35	3 0	5 5 0	Hastings.....	42	1 8	3 10 0
Dorking.....	51	3 0	7 13 0	Brighton.....	39	1 6	2 18 6
Follestone.....	17	3 0	2 11 0	Rochester.....	24	1 6	1 16 0
Harrogate.....	10	3 0	1 10 0	Lynn.....	18	1 5	1 5 6
Sarbiton.....	24	3 0	3 12 0	Darlington.....	86	1 3	5 7 6
Liverpool.....	298	3 0	44 14 0	Barnet.....	20	1 2	1 3 4
Liscard.....	25	3 0	3 15 0	Crewe.....	7	1 2	0 8 2
Malvern.....	76	3 0	11 8 0	Twickenham.....	21	1 2	1 4 6
Middleton.....	12	3 0	1 16 0	Woolwich.....	66	1 2	3 17 0
Portsmouth.....	30	3 0	4 10 0	Lowestoft.....	10	1 2	0 11 8
Rotherham.....	8	3 0	1 4 0	Sheffield.....	252	1 1	13 13 0
Stafford.....	30	3 0	4 10 0	Bradford.....	172	1 0	8 12 0
Seaforth.....	16	3 0	2 8 0	Colchester.....	20	1 0	1 0 0
Southampton.....	14	3 0	2 2 0	Cambridge.....	27	1 0	1 7 0
Torquay.....	132	3 0	19 16 0	Shipley.....	35	1 0	1 15 0
Whitby.....	23	3 0	3 9 0	Stockton.....	61	1 0	3 1 0
Stone.....	9	2 11	1 6 3	Worcester.....	124	1 0	6 4 0
Wolverhampton.....	29	2 8	3 17 4	Burton-on-Trent.....	12	0 9	0 9 0
Manchester.....	458	2 7	59 3 2	Wallsend.....	26	0 9	0 19 6
Bridlington Quay.....	17	2 5	2 1 1	Hartlepool.....	6	0 6	0 3 0
Rugby.....	18	2 5	2 3 6	Jarrow.....	13	0 6	0 6 0
London.....	1808	2 4	210 18 8	Belfast.....	80	0 3	1 0 0
Croydon.....	39	2 4	4 11 0				
					6509		750 15 1

The advantages gained in increased wages and reduced working hours, which in the preceding table has been reduced to a money value, are as follows:—In 48 towns an advance of wages has been obtained, in 11 towns a reduction of working hours, while 26 towns have obtained both. In all, in 85 towns the members have received advantages in wages varying from 3d to 5s. 2d. per member per week, with reductions of working hours, varying from half-an-hour to 5½ hours. These advantages will be better understood from the following summary:—

No. of Members.	Average amount per member per week gained.	Average amount per year per member gained.	Total amount of gain per week.	Total amount of gain per year.
6509	2s. 3½d.	£6 0s. 3d	£750 15s 1d.	£39,038 0 0
Deduct cost to the Society.....				£2,600
Amount of wages lost by members during suspension of work				2,500
				5,100 0 0
Leaving a net gain of				£33,938 0 0
For the first year, and £39,038 per year after.				

R E P O R T

OF THE VARIOUS PROCEEDINGS TAKEN BY THE

LONDON TRADES' COUNCIL

AND THE

CONFERENCE OF AMALGAMATED TRADES,

IN REFERENCE TO

THE ROYAL COMMISSION

ON

TRADES' UNIONS,

AND OTHER SUBJECTS IN CONNECTION THEREWITH.

LONDON :

J. KENNY, PRINTER, 40 PARKER STREET, LITTLE QUEEN STREET, W.G.

—

1867.

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ADDRESS TO THE TRADE UNIONISTS OF THE UNITED KINGDOM.

FELLOW WORKMEN,

The following pages contain an account of the proceedings of the London Trades' Council, and other Trade Societies in London, in reference to the Sheffield and Nottingham outrages, and the decision of the Judges in the Court of Queen's Bench in the case of *Hornby v. Close*; which declared that the Friendly Society of Boiler Makers, though its rules were deposited with Tidd Pratt, pursuant to 18 and 19 Victoria, cap. 63, s. 44, had not the protection for their funds which is implied in that section of the Act. The first step taken was the appointment of a deputation to visit Nottingham and Sheffield, with a view of ascertaining, if possible, if any, and to what extent, connection existed between the trade societies and the outrages. The deputation consisted of Mr. Danter, specially appointed by the Council of the Amalgamated Engineers, of which society he was at the time President, and Mr. G. Odgers, Secretary of the London Trades' Council. We think it necessary to state that this deputation was appointed on the 20th of October, 1866, and proceeded immediately on their mission, and presented the subjoined report some time before the Royal Commission to enquire into the internal working of trades' unions had been asked for:—

SHEFFIELD AND NOTTINGHAM OUTRAGES.

Report of deputation appointed by the Trades' Council of London, and the Council of the Amalgamated Engineers, to visit Nottingham and Sheffield, with a view to ascertain whether the outrages recently committed in those towns were in any way traceable to the Trade Societies:—

“Fellow Workmen,—Soon after our arrival in Nottingham, we visited Mr. Dalton, the proprietor of the eating house where the outrage was committed. We found that the reports in the local and other newspapers were not in the least degree exaggerated regarding the brutal treatment Mrs. Dalton had been subjected to. She had been struck on the nose by some cowardly scoundrel with such force as to break the bone in two or three places, and to blacken both her eyes, whilst in the laudable act of protecting an aged man called Thurkettle, and others who were lodging in her house, from the dastardly attack of three ruffians who had forced their way into an inner room, and assaulted every one there in a most fiendish manner. The lodgers referred to were non-unionists, who had been brought into the town to work by the ‘Master Builders’ Association,’ to fill the places of unionists who were on strike. As the men arrested were members of the Bricklayers’

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Labourers' Society, a strong suspicion existed that the society had induced the outrage. We then had a long interview with the Bricklayers' and Labourers' committees, who not only disclaimed any knowledge of the affair, but added, that nothing could have done their cause more harm, either morally or pecuniarily, than the outrage had done. A general meeting of the two societies was called, to enable us to put what questions we thought proper to the members. It is our bounden duty to state that nothing transpired to give us the slightest suspicion of the societies being implicated in the outrage, for which the members expressed their extreme regret, and have started a subscription amongst the societies for the sufferers. We also obtained an interview with the Master Builders, who received us in a courteous manner, and who have offered a reward of £10 for the apprehension of the instigators of the outrage. We then proceeded to Sheffield, and had several interviews with both unionists and non-unionists. We have thought it advisable to give a few of the statements made by workmen on rattening. Mr. John Wilson, who for years past, both in public and private, has been one of the most determined opponents of the doings of the Sheffield Trades' Unions, said that he had been a member of the trade society about three years; he was not so now. The trade was the Pen Bladegrinders. He had been a collector and one of the committee part of the time, and was sure that rattening was encouraged by some of the societies; that it was a disgrace to those who countenanced it, and that it damaged trade societies in the estimation of those who otherwise might be disposed to think favourably of them. He had known a great number of men who had been rattened, and could prove that they were compelled to pay large sums of money before they could get their things returned to them. He believed the principles of trades' unions to be sound, and should have no objection to join a well-regulated trade society. He would never rest satisfied until the rattening, which he must admit had very much diminished of late years, should be entirely done away with.

"To those who are not acquainted with the term 'rattening,' we beg to offer this explanation:—

"When a workman has given offence to the society connected with his trade, either by working against the rules, or not paying his contributions, it has been the custom, in Sheffield, with a few of the societies, say three or four, to take away, at night, the bands or nuts from his wheels, to prevent him working until the contributions are paid or the rules complied with. We should state also that several respectable working men informed us that rattening had been admitted by some of the employers, and tacitly countenanced by others, as the best mode of making the men comply with the rules and regulations of their societies.

"We were introduced by Mr. Wilson to Mr. Thomas Cawthorn, who said he was 64 years of age, was formerly a member of a trade society, but was not so now; had himself taken workmen's bands away to make them comply with the rules, but had never received any pay for anything of the sort. It was a regular custom for bands to be taken; some of the men agreed to have their bands taken if their contributions were not paid by a certain date.

"Mr. Taylor was a member of the saw-grinder's society six years. In

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1862 he lost the whole of his bands and tools whilst in the employ of Mr. George Taylor. The reason for this was—his lad was asked by the employer to carry some work to him (Taylor) which was contrary to rule. A man who worked in the shop informed the society, and then his bands were taken away. He went on working. On the following Monday morning, the secretary, Mr. Broadhead, called for his contributions, which he (Taylor) refused to pay until he got his bands returned. This the secretary would not agree to. Three weeks afterwards he lost his nuts. The master became uneasy about the affair, had a watchman put on, and requested an amicable settlement with the society. Taylor refused at first to move in the matter ; but the master, having seen Mr. Broadhead, informed him that he must pay the money. He then went to Broadhead, who told him to pay £2 down ; his contributions he could pay by instalments. This he complied with, and asked for a receipt, but was told that it was against the rules. The tools he was to have back the next morning. The next day the proprietor of the wheel brought him a note, saying he would find his nuts and bands in the hen roost where he settled his grievance. He went to Broadhead, who said, 'Have you got your things?' Taylor said, 'No ; they are in your hen roost.' Broadhead and he then went to the hen roost, and there they found the things. He then returned to his work. Three weeks afterwards a general meeting of the society was called. He attended, and was very much abused and threatened for having placed certain letters which he had received from Broadhead in the hands of Mr. Wilson. He left the room, intending to have no more to do with the society, although he continued to pay to it some time afterwards. A man who had worked with him, and had been taken away from his work in consequence of the bother, called for some tools he had left behind. Taylor told him he could still work there if he liked. The man said he could not unless the society was settled with. To this Taylor objected, and the man said, 'If you don't mind you will have your head blown off.' Taylor then said, 'If any one interferes with me or mine I will blow Broadhead's brains out.' He had not received any harm from them since.

"We have had four interviews with Mr. Fearnough, the man whose house was blown up. The conversation on each occasion lasted for some time ; the substance of it amounts to this : He was a saw-grinder by trade, but had never been a very regular member of the society, although, taking one time with another, he had belonged to it about ten years. He would have been more with the society but could not agree with the officials. They did not act fair. He was always having rows with the secretary. Broadhead did not like him. At last he got behind with his contributions ; then they took his bands away, while he was working at Butcher's wheel. He did not trouble the society about it, but went and bought new bands. This was on the 25th of last November. The new bands cost him £5. He went on working till the 1st of January, when he told Green, a fellow-workman and a member of the society, that he should like to join the society again. Green spoke to Broadhead about it, and the result was a meeting of Broadhead, Green, and himself, at Green's house. He spoke to Broadhead in a friendly manner, and asked what he owed to the books of

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the society. Broadhead said about £13 or £14. Fearnough then wished to have the £5 which he had paid for his bands taken out of it, but was told that he must pay £6 down and the rest in instalments, and when the whole of the money was paid he could have his old bands returned. He was sure that he did not owe the money, as he had only been three months out of the society. It was put on by Broadhead, who was at the bottom of it all. Since then he had done all in his power to 'beat' Broadhead. He knew Broadhead had vengeance against him, and he had sworn vengeance against Broadhead, and, if it cost him his life, he would beat him before he had done with him. He was not surprised at being blown up, he expected it long ago. He liked the trade society, and would join it again if Broadhead was out of the way.

"We felt it to be our duty to visit the Council of the 'Organized Trades' of Sheffield, for the purpose of putting such questions to them as we thought consistent with the responsible position in which we were placed. The result of which is, that Mr. Broadhead unequivocally admits that rattening, to the extent of taking away bands and tools, and detaining them until fines and contributions are paid, has been the custom of some of the societies ever since they have had an existence. He states that it has very much diminished during the time that he has been secretary, and that he has checked it as much as he possibly could; and feels certain that the denunciation of it by the trade societies will prevent any further repetition of it in any way whatever. At the same time he repudiates, in the most emphatic matter, any connection, of the most remote character, with destruction of property, or injury to the person of any human being.

"In conclusion we say, that we have not been able to trace any complicity in the Hereford-street outrage to the trade societies, or to any one member of them, and hope that the guilty person or persons will speedily be brought to justice. We feel it to be our duty also to caution the men of Sheffield against lending their countenance to the abominable practice of rattening, which is calculated to demoralise those who are concerned in it, and to bring disgrace upon all trades' combinations.

"ROBERT DANTER, President Amalgamated Engineers.

"GEORGE ODGER, Secretary London Trades' Council."

The report of the deputation should be sufficient to convince any one who may have any doubt on his mind as to the opinion of the London Trade Societies regarding outrages, that not only were those societies free entirely from them, but that they condemned, in unmistakeable terms, the system of rattening, which they found existing in Sheffield. Not only did the Societies do this, but they opened a correspondence with the Executive of the Organised Trades of Sheffield, as to the best means to be adopted for the purpose of bringing the perpetrators of these horrible crimes to justice. We found that that Executive had met, within three days of the

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perpetration of the Hereford Street outrage, expressed their abhorrence of the deed, resolved on calling a Delegate Meeting of the whole of the trades at which a reward of £100 was offered for the apprehension of its perpetrators. This sum was afterwards supplemented to £1000 from the Government, and £25 from the Amalgamated Society of Carpenters and Joiners, and other sums, amounting in all to £1,140. From this time commenced an active communication between the Sheffield and London Trades, which has continued up to the present time, and still continues. On the 29th of October the Sheffield Town Council resolved on sending a deputation to the Home Secretary to urge for the appointment of a commission of enquiry in reference to the Hereford Street outrage, and the following correspondence will show the reader the precise means which were employed to bring about the enquiry:—

**THE SHEFFIELD TOWN COUNCIL AND DEPUTATION TO
THE HOME SECRETARY.**

At a meeting of the Sheffield Town Council, held in the Council Hall, the Town Clerk read the following letter from the Home Office:—

“ Whitehall, 6th November, 1866.

“ Sir,—I am requested by Mr. Secretary Walpole to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 3rd inst., and to inform you that he will hold himself in readiness to receive the deputation from Sheffield on Tuesday, the 13th inst., at Two o'clock.

“ I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

“ The Mayor of Sheffield.”

“ BELMORE.

Ald. Saunders wished to point out that the resolution passed at the last meeting of the Council referred simply to an enquiry “into the cause or causes of the explosion in Hereford Street.” Now, he saw by the advertisement with regard to the deputation that they were to solicit the Secretary of State to inquire also into the working of the general system of trades' unions. He wanted to know whether the deputation from this Council were going to exceed their powers by asking for any such general inquiry, because that would be a question open to very grave discussion—(hear, hear)—and it was not justified by the resolution of the Council. The Mayor: The deputation of this Council must confine itself entirely within the resolution. (Hear, hear.) It must not go beyond that, and I believe it will not. (Hear, hear.) The Town Clerk read the following letter:—

“ Amalgamated Society of Carpenters and Joiners, Northumberland-st., Strand, W.C.

“ London, November 6th, 1866.

“ Sir,—I am directed to respectfully inform you that Mr. R. Danter, Chairman of the Amalgamated Society of Engineers, Mr. G. Odger, Secretary of the London

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Trades' Council, in conjunction with myself, have been authorised by the Executive of the Organised Trades of Sheffield to make the necessary arrangements for a deputation of representatives of trades from Sheffield and London, to accompany the deputation appointed by the Sheffield Town Council to wait on the Home Secretary, and to support the application for a commission of inquiry, in accordance with the resolution of the Sheffield Town Council, passed on the 29th ult.

I am, Sir, yours respectfully,

"R. APFLEGARTH,

General Secretary of the above Society.

"To the Town Clerk, Sheffield.

"P.S.—We shall feel obliged if you will kindly inform us of the time named by the Home Secretary at your earliest convenience."

To that letter the following reply was received :—

"Sheffield, 8th November, 1866.

"Sir,—By direction of the deputation appointed by the Town Council to wait on the Home Secretary in reference to the Hereford Street outrage, I beg to forward to you a copy of a resolution passed by them at a meeting held this day.

"I am, Sir, your obedient Servant,

"JOHN YEOMANS, Town Clerk.

"R. Applegarth, Esq."

At a meeting of the deputation appointed by the Town Council to wait on the Home Secretary in reference to the Hereford Street outrage, held at the Council Hall, Norfolk Street, Sheffield, on the 8th day of November, 1866, the Mayor having laid before the deputation a letter received by him from Mr. R. Applegarth, dated London, November 6th, 1866,—Resolved—

"That in reply to that letter Mr. Applegarth be informed that the Home Secretary has fixed Tuesday, the 13th instant, at two o'clock, to receive a deputation from the Town Council, the Cutlers' Company, the Chamber of Commerce, and the New Hereford Street Outrage Committee, and that it would not be right or proper to take any other deputation with them to that interview, or, in fact, any other persons except the Members of Parliament who may be asked to introduce them. This deputation submit that it is for the Organised Trades to apply to the Home Secretary."

The following letter was sent to the Town Clerk, in reply to his announcement that a deputation of the trades' societies could not accompany the employers' deputation to the Home Office :—

"November 9th, 1866.

"Sir,—I am instructed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter, and copy of resolution, and to assure the deputation that the representatives of the trades are aware of the fact that the proper course to obtain an interview with the Home Secretary is to apply to him for that purpose. But seeing that application had been made for an interview, they did not think that any formal objection would be made to a deputation from the trades attending with the deputation from the Sheffield Town Council, as their object is ours. We thought that the one interview would serve the purpose, and a commission be more likely to be granted when applied for by employers and workmen at the same time.

"I am, Sir, yours respectfully,

"R. APFLEGARTH.

"John Yeomans, Esq., town clerk, Sheffield."

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The advice of Mr. Thomas Hughes, M.P., was sought in regard to the matter. The hon. gentleman recommended the representatives of the trades to endeavour, by all means, to obtain an interview with Mr. Walpole, in conjunction with the manufacturers, if possible; if not, as a separate body. The desire was general amongst the leaders of the great trade societies in London that a Royal Commission should be issued, in order that, if possible, the truth might be sifted from the mass of conflicting statements that were being put forth on both sides. The delegates resolved to lose no time in the matter, and at once communicated with the Home Secretary in the following terms :—

8, Northumberland-street, Strand,
November 13th, 1866.

“ Sir,—I am instructed to respectfully request you to grant an interview to representatives of trade societies, who are deputed to urge the appointment of a Commission to inquire respecting the late diabolical outrage in New Hereford Street, Sheffield, as proposed by the Sheffield Town Council. We think it right also to inform you that the representatives of the trade societies, desirous of avoiding any unnecessary intrusion on your time, applied through the Town Clerk to the deputation appointed by the Sheffield Town Council to accompany them at the time named by you to receive them. This they declined, for what reason we are at a loss to know—the more so as we considered the Commission of Inquiry asked for to be on public grounds, and in the interests of truth and justice. We have not been able to communicate with you as early as we could have wished, as our deputation is composed of trades' representatives of Sheffield and London; and for that reason we have had to confer and decide as to the course we should pursue in an emergency for which we were not prepared.

“ On behalf of the deputation, I am, Sir, yours obediently,

“ R. APPELGARTH.

“ The Right Hon. S. Walpole.”

The following reply was promptly received :—

WHITEHALL,
14th November, 1866.

SIR,

I am directed by Mr. Secretary Walpole to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 13th instant, and to inform you that he will be happy to see the deputation, on whose behalf you have applied, at the Home Office on Saturday next, at two o'clock.

I am, Sir,
Your obedient servant,

BELMORE.

Mr. R. Applegarth,
8, Northumberland-street, Strand, W.C.

INTERVIEW OF THE TRADES' DELEGATES WITH
MR. ROEBUCK.

On Thursday, November 12th, the Sheffield delegates, Messrs. Dronfield and Austin, accompanied by Mr. Odger and Mr. Applegarth, had an interview with Mr. Roebuck, at his residence in Ashley-place, to apprise him that the Home Secretary had fixed the time for the interview.

The delegation took the opportunity to explain to the hon. member the action taken by the Organised Trades in the Acorn-street and the New Hereford-street outrages. On both these questions Mr. Roebuck, upon receiving information of the course that had been taken, expressed an opinion that the executive had acted very properly, and had taken the most efficient means to free themselves from any suspicion of complicity with the incendiaries. The hon. member entered fully into an explanation of his views in respect to the proposed Commission, similar to that which we are given to understand he made to the Home Secretary when he accompanied the employers' deputation. He pointed out that such a Commission as he had mentioned in a letter to Mr. Dronfield could only be issued by the authority of Parliament. A most comprehensive investigation was, in his opinion, required, and in order to carry that out the commissioners must have full powers; whereas, if a commission were to be issued with the limited powers with which the Home Secretary could invest it, the attendance of witnesses and the production of books and papers, &c, would be purely voluntary, and no indemnity could be given. He did not think for a moment that the Home Secretary would grant such a limited commission, but that he would bring the whole subject before Parliament. The hon. member further remarked that in his view such a commission was necessary in the interests of the working classes themselves, to relieve them from the suspicions that attached to them. For his own part, he felt considerably relieved by the information which had been afforded to him by the deputation. He alluded to the part he had taken in 1824, in the repeal of the Combination Laws, with the late Mr. Hume, and the predictions that were then made of reckless and lawless conduct on the part of the working classes. Those predictions had been to a great extent falsified; but he regretted that such outrages as those which had occurred at Sheffield and other places continued to afford grounds for unfavourable comment. The deputation furnished the hon. member with a large amount of information, and he said that he should not fail to make use of it.

REPORT OF THE INTERVIEW WITH THE HOME SECRETARY IN REFERENCE TO THE ROYAL COMMISSION.

On Saturday, November 17th, the representatives of the London and the Sheffield Trade Societies had an interview with Mr. Walpole, the Home Secretary, on the subject of the proposed Commission of Inquiry into the incendiary explosion in New Hereford-street. The deputation were extremely desirous that the fullest publicity should be given to everything that took place at that interview, and they requested several reporters to accompany them. The representatives of the press were met, however, by "an express order" from the Home Secretary

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that they should not be admitted. Mr. Roebuck informed the reporter that personally he had not the least objection to the publication of the proceedings, and Mr. Applegarth and Mr. Dronfield sent in a special request that the reporters might be admitted; but the "Minister" was possessed with the idea that the presence of reporters would be injurious, and he refused to withdraw the order.

Mr. Roebuck had taken a lively interest in this deputation, and he acceded to their request that he should accompany them to the Home Office with great readiness. Mr. Hadfield was equally anxious to assist them; and the hon. member came up specially from Manchester on Friday night in order to attend with the deputation. Although deeply engaged just now with the preparations for the forthcoming reform banquet, the hon. member said that this was too important an occasion for him to hesitate for a moment whether he should come up to the metropolis or not.

The deputation consisted of Mr. William Dronfield, Secretary to the Sheffield Association of Organised Trades, and Mr. Austin, Secretary of the Railway Spring-makers' Society, as the representatives of the Sheffield trades' societies; Mr. R. Applegarth, General Secretary of the Amalgamated Society of Carpenters and Joiners; Mr. Powell, Assistant-Secretary of the Amalgamated Society of Engineers; Mr. Odger, Secretary of the London Trades' Council; Mr. Coulson, Secretary of the Operative Bricklayers' Society; Mr. Lawrence and Mr. Mackay, of the West-End Tailors' Society; and Mr. Cope, of the West-End Boot-Closers' Society.

Mr. J. A. Roebuck, M.P., introduced the deputation to Mr. Walpole. The hon. member said that on Tuesday he had the honour of introducing a deputation of employers; and he now had the honour of introducing a deputation of workmen. On this, as on the previous occasion, he had felt that the subject was too important for him to speak upon it without due preparation. He had read a paper on the subject on Tuesday, and he had now prepared another, which, with the permission of the Home Secretary, he would read. The purport of his paper was, that trades' unions were desirous of the fullest possible investigation into these outrages, they having the fullest confidence that the charges of complicity which had been brought against them could not be sustained. The unions courted the fullest investigation into their conduct, because they believed that these outrages not only injured them, but were detrimental to the town of Sheffield and the country at large; and in order to remedy the evil, they were present to request that a Commission of Inquiry might be instituted, which should trace those crimes to their true source. Since the interview on Tuesday, the hon. member said he had given the subject his most serious consideration, and he had come to the conclusion that it would be in all respects desirable to limit the period over which the inquiries of the proposed Commission should extend. He thought that the time should be limited to ten years. Charges might be brought against the unions by employers which might concern workmen who were dead, or had left the country; and on that ground he thought such a limitation of time as he had suggested would be desirable. He wished the Home Secretary distinctly to understand that this suggestion was purely his own, and that he alone was responsible for it.

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In conclusion, Mr. Roebuck alluded to a point of great practical importance in the working of the Commission. The workmen, he said, had to labour hard for their daily bread; and whilst they were desirous to have the most comprehensive assistance, and would be willing to give every assistance in their power, yet they were poor men, and attendance upon such an inquiry would entail great expense, and probably that would be the means of deterring many from giving all the information in their power. Under these circumstances, and seeing that the question was one of national interest, he thought that the nation ought to defray the expenses of the witnesses. The suggestion seemed to him to be so reasonable and fair that he could not doubt of its acceptance by the Government. Mr. Roebuck then introduced

Mr. Dronfield, who said he had the honour to appear with his friend Mr. Austin as the representatives of the Association of Organised Trades of Sheffield. They were appointed to wait upon Mr. Walpole for a twofold object; in the first place to explain to him the action which that association had taken in reference not only to the late diabolical crime committed in New Hereford Street, but the Acorn Street explosion; and, secondly, to state what their views were in regard to the proposed commission. In the outset, he wished it to be distinctly understood—and the feeling was shared by all his friends present with him—that he most heartily detested and abhorred such crimes, and protested against trades' unions being stigmatised as having in any way connived at or countenanced them. They did not for a moment contend that their trades' societies were perfection. Like all other societies, they were capable of improvement, and if it could be pointed out where a change was requisite, they would be only too glad to adopt any practicable suggestion. Shortly after the incendiary explosion in Acorn Street, in 1861, the delegates of the organised trades met and passed resolutions strongly condemnatory of the outrage, and also authorising the executive to issue a document setting forth their views on the question. That document was very widely circulated; a copy was sent to the editor of every newspaper in the kingdom as far as their number could be ascertained. He handed a copy to Mr. Walpole, along with copies of every other document that had been issued upon the subject by his association. At a public meeting that was held in the Mechanics' Hall, a committee was formed to consider the best means that could be adopted for the suppression of these crimes. That committee was composed indifferently of unionists, non-unionists, and manufacturers; and at its first meeting representatives of twenty-two trades were present, representing the principal trades of the town. The gentleman who was appointed as secretary (Mr. John Fisher) shortly afterwards left the town in order to enter the ministry; and the committee appointed him (Mr. Dronfield) as Mr. Fisher's successor. Mr. Edwin Round, then a member of the Council, was appointed chairman; and the committee held numerous meetings, at one of which the chairman and others were appointed a deputation to wait on Mr. John Brown, who was then Mayor, and such other members of the Council as were manufacturers, as might be thought desirable. From the reports which that deputation gave, and the correspondence which he had with Mr. Brown, it appeared that the manufacturers were not willing to co-operate with the

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committee, and after an existence of some nine or ten months, the committee collapsed, after passing this resolution :—

“The committee appointed at the public meeting held on the 19th March last, to take steps for the suppression of outrages, having frequently met in conference with a number of trades’ representatives and after a correspondence with the Mayor (John Brown, Esq), as well as a personal delegation with his Worship and various manufacturers, regret that their labours have proved so ineffectual. That under the circumstances in which the committee are now placed, they can see no other course left than to settle their few liabilities, and to dissolve forthwith.”

Speaking of the Acorn Street outrage, he thought it only proper to call Mr. Walpole’s attention to the fact that after Thompson (the man charged with the offence) was acquitted at the assizes, he was expelled from the Fender-grinder’s Society, and he (Mr. Dronfield) was informed that Thompson was now employed by the firm the man worked for whose house it was alleged Thompson had blown up. Mr. Dronfield also referred to the third annual report of the Organised Trades, in which there was an address to Lord Palmerston upon the Acorn Street murder, explanatory of the action taken by the Organised Trades in reference thereto. He then referred to the late unfortunate and diabolical outrage in New Hereford Street. That occurred on the 8th of October. On the following day the chairman of the Association of Organised Trades waited upon him, and they resolved to call a special executive meeting in order to take steps in reference to the crime. At that meeting, which was held on the 11th, the following resolution was unanimously passed :—

“That this executive cannot but regret the recent outrage in New Hereford Street, and hereby enters its strong protest and utter detestation at the perpetration of such diabolical acts, by whomsoever committed, not only on account of the heinousness of such offences, but also because they tend materially to damage the trades’ society of the town and country generally, and to retard the progress of trades’ union principles; and are prepared to recommend the delegates, at a special meeting to be called as early as possible, to offer a reward for the discovery of the villain or villains who committed the said outrage.”

It would be seen by a comparison of dates, that the representatives of the workmen had actually taken steps before the manufacturers themselves, inasmuch as their meeting was held on the day preceding the meeting in the Council Hall. A special delegate meeting was held in the following week; resolutions strongly condemnatory of the outrage were passed; the executive were authorised to offer a reward of £100 (to be raised by levy upon the members); Mr. Broadhead, the secretary of the Saw Grinders’ Union, offered £5, the union itself offered £10, and the Amalgamated Society of Carpenters and Joiners, through Mr. Applegarth, added the further sum of £25, making, in all, a total of £140 as the reward offered by the

trades for the discovery of the criminal. Hundreds of placards conveying this offer had been posted in Sheffield, and sent to the neighbouring towns; and it was important to observe that the executive did not request that information should be given to them, but to the Chief-Constable of Sheffield. From this narrative he trusted that the Home Secretary would see that the trades had taken prompt action, and they hoped he would be convinced, as well as others, that they were earnest in their endeavour to bring the criminals to justice. They were desirous that a Commission should be appointed, in order to give them the fullest opportunity of removing the stigma now cast upon them. That stigma was detrimental not only to the trades themselves, but also to the town generally, in whose prosperity no body of men had a deeper interest than the working classes. In conclusion he explained that the deputation, having been refused permission to attend with the representatives of the Town Council and the outrage committee, for reasons they could not at all understand, had felt bound to request the honour of a separate interview. They were the more surprised at the refusal they had met with because the object aimed at by the Town Council was one of which they highly approved; and they felt that they were not asking too much to be allowed, as the representatives of a large body of working men, to form a part of that deputation. After thanking the Home Secretary for the attention with which he had heard his remarks, Mr. Dronfield gave way to

Mr. Austin, who began by expressing the detestation in which he held such crimes as that which formed the subject of this conversation, and by saying that he had been appointed, in conjunction with Mr. Dronfield, to ask for a commission of inquiry into the outrage, in the terms of the resolution passed by the Town Council. His principal reason for desiring that a commission might be granted was that the responsibility of these crimes had been cast upon the trades' unions, who, he felt, were not responsible for them. Instances could be adduced which would show that outrages in Sheffield were not always attributable, either directly or indirectly, to trades' unions. Mr. Austin concluded by asserting that he had adduced sufficient instances to prove that in regard to several of these violent outrages there was not the shadow of a pretence for accusing trades' unions.

Mr. R. Applegarth said: I regret extremely that I have not the opportunity of speaking before the gentlemen who were here on Tuesday last, because I believe that they may have made statements concerning us, and we may entertain opinions concerning them, which may be grounded in misapprehension; and if we had spoken in each others' presence, we might have found out our error, and they might have been convinced that some of their facts—or presumed facts—were not worthy of your consideration. I regret exceedingly that those gentlemen are absent. I also deeply regret that the press are excluded. I regret it the more because an accusation is being continually hurled at trades' unions that they are afraid of giving information of what they are doing, and that they are essentially secret organisations. To counteract that charge, our invariable rule is to make our proceedings as public as possible, and on all such occasions as this we ask reporters to accompany us. I think that no better guarantee of our good

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intentions could be adduced. Sir, it would be a waste of words to say that I am opposed to trade outrages. No honest man could say anything else; I am as anxious, with the union to which I belong, for an inquiry as any one can be. The following resolution was unanimously adopted by the Council, and ordered to be forwarded to Mr. Thomas Hughes, M.P. for Lambeth:—

“That the Executive Council of the Amalgamated Society of Carpenters and Joiners regard with pleasure the notice of motion of Mr. B. Cochrane, ‘that he would call the attention of the House to the dangerous increase of Trades’ Unions, and move for papers,’ and trust that nothing will occur to prevent the hon. gentleman persevering in his intentions, and that it may lead to a thorough searching inquiry into the operations of trades’ unions. To such inquiry we should be willing to render every assistance in our power.”

Seeing that the inquiry is likely to take a wider scope than that suggested by the Town Council, and as Mr. Roebuck has intimated that he should desire to see a searching investigation, extending over the last ten years, by a Parliamentary Commission, and seeing, further, that these serious crimes are imputed to unionists, I think it is only fair that the representatives of the unions should claim to have a voice as to the scope of that inquiry, and the direction in which it should go. And I may here observe that it will be in the highest degree undesirable to conduct that inquiry as though the unions were on their trial “at the bar.” The great bulk of the unionists repel with indignation the suspicion of complicity in such crimes, and if they are put, as it were, on their defence, and not asked to come forward as assistants in an inquiry to further the public good, they will refuse to do any such thing. If the object of the inquiry is not to attack trades’ unionists solely, but to search out the causes of these outrages and outrages wherever they may be found, then I may venture to say that the unions will be happy to render all the assistance they can to find out who the offenders are. But don’t let it begin with the assumption that the unionists are solely to blame. I have again, sir, to express my regret at the absence of the employers, because what I am about to say affects them very deeply. It has been the practice for many years to attribute to trades’ unions all the heart burnings and disputes, and latterly these outrages, that arise; but I believe these are attributable to many diverse causes. In the first place, Sir, your own experience of the world will have taught you that there are men, as well as institutions, who still adhere to the same old style of doing business, and who persist in applying the rules that were applicable 20 years ago; and we don’t claim that trades’ unions are altogether an exception to this rule. We are free to admit that, on investigation, it may be found that there are some unions which have at the present time rules and regulations (commonly called “restrictions”) that would be more applicable to the state of things that existed 20 years ago than to our present circumstances; but I believe that they will be exceedingly glad to alter those rules if upon due inquiry they should be convinced that they are not in accordance with the spirit of the age. This being admitted, it may be that these sad crimes are to some extent attributable to those causes; but while admitting this, we desire to make known our feeling on another matter that I cannot better explain than by giving an

example. In one of the largest firms in the saw trade in Sheffield, a friend of mine was employed, and he signed an agreement to serve for twelve months. The terms of the agreement were, that he was to take 20 per cent. off the "statement" price,—that is, he was to deduct 20 per cent. from the list of prices at which the men of his trade were supposed to be working. This secret compact was drawn up by the master and signed by both sides. It was agreed that the man should have all the circular saws to hammer—the best class of work, at which he could make very good wages, even after deducting the 20 per cent. That agreement was kept for some time until another man came to work, and my friend found the best work leaving him, and it was being given to the new comer, who he suspected would of course be deducting a larger per centage. At a meeting of the trade society, at which both these men were present, a complaint was made that some men in the town were dissatisfied because they were working at ten per cent. off the "statement." Some one cried out, "That is not much to complain of, when other firms are knocking off 30 or 40 per cent." As soon as that was heard, loud cries of "name" were raised, and the name was given. The meeting was a very stormy one; and when my friend went to work next morning, he was asked by the manager to point out on the "statement" where 40 per cent. was being deducted. He replied that he knew nothing about it. The other man came in and he was asked the same question. He instantly pointed out the items, and the manager struck him and knocked him down. The man, the friend of mine, who was taking off 20 per cent. complained when he found that the work for which he had bargained was being put into another man's hands.

Mr. Walpole: That would be a violation of the agreement, would it not?

Mr. Applegarth: In a moment you will see the value of that agreement. In answer to my friend's complaints, he was told, "Well, it amounts to this; you are not taking enough off," but he refused to take off any more. He refused, in the presence of his employer, to take out any more work, and his employer used personal violence to him in the office. He said he should seek to enforce the agreement, and the manager and the master both laughed, and coolly informed him that the document was worthless because it was not stamped. He charged them with having acted dishonestly, gave notice, and left the place. Now, Sir, I don't say that this is a general practice, but there are undoubtedly such cases constantly occurring. They engender, naturally, bad feeling between master and man, and are just as likely to lead to these sad outrages as any restrictive rules or regulations of trades' unions.

Mr. Odger thought that if the inquiry should extend over only five years the ends of justice would be met. He thought that the difficulty of obtaining witnesses to give evidence in reference to charges which may be ten years' old would be very great indeed. Mr. Lawrence and Mr. Mackay warmly supported the proposal to have a commission, and expressed their hope that it would be a thoroughly comprehensive and impartial one, conducted without reference to the opinions or the prepossessions of either one party or another.

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Mr. Walpole said that, after his interview with the employers' deputation he named the matter to his colleagues in the Cabinet. They had had a very long conversation on the matter; and he thought he might venture to say,—although the deputation would not, of course, expect him to give a definite answer,—that in all probability the Government would be ready to grant a commission. If it were granted, both sides might rest assured that the inquiry would be thoroughly comprehensive and impartial towards both employers and workmen. He was glad that this deputation had waited upon him, and promised that the information they had given should have the fullest consideration on the part of the Government.

Mr. Hadfield: I am strongly of opinion that the inquiry should be thoroughly comprehensive and impartial. I have a gentleman in my mind now whom I should be glad to propose as a member of the commission. Would a Member of Parliament be competent to act?

Mr. Walpole: At the proper time I shall be glad to receive any suggestion from Mr. Hadfield.

Mr. Lawrence: I hope the commission will be issued as soon as possible.

Mr. Dronfield: I understand it cannot be issued until Parliament shall have met.

Mr. Roebuck: Precisely so. It must come before Parliament, and no doubt there will be a long debate upon it.

Mr. Walpole signified that the matter must come before Parliament.

Mr. Roebuck then tendered the thanks of the deputation to the Home Secretary, and the interview terminated.

REPORT OF THE DEPUTATION OF THE SHEFFIELD TOWN COUNCIL TO THE HOME SECRETARY.

(Obtained from a local paper; and is the only report of the doings of the Masters' Deputation with the Home Secretary.)

The Mayor read the following report of the deputation appointed by the Council to wait upon the Home Secretary, praying for a Commission to inquire into the recent outrage:—

“The deputation appointed by the Town Council on the 29th October last, to wait on the Home Secretary, and confer with him on the necessity of granting a Commission of Inquiry in reference to the attempt made to blow up the dwelling-house of Thomas Fearnough, in New Hereford Street, consisting of the Mayor (John Webster, Esq.), Ald. W. E. Laycock, Ald. John Brown (the Master Cutler), Ald. Robert Jackson (the President of the Chamber of Commerce), and Councillor Robert Thomas Eadon, met by appointment John Arthur Roebuck, Esq., M.P., and George Hadfield,

Esq., M.P., and deputations from the Cutlers' Company, the Chamber of Commerce, and the Sheffield Outrage Committee, at the Westminster Palace Hotel, on Tuesday, the 13th of November last, and proceeded from thence to the Home Office, and had an interview with the Right Hon. S. H. Walpole, the Home Secretary.

"The Mayor (John Webster Esq.) read the resolution passed by the Council on the 29th October last, and urged upon the Home Secretary the necessity of Government granting a Commission of Inquiry.

"The Home Secretary listened to the representations made by the Mayor and the deputations from the Cutlers' Company and the Chamber of Commerce, and accepted various resolutions; and then promised that the subject would receive the closest attention on the part of the Government, but until he had laid it before the Cabinet he could not be expected to give any more definite answer,

"J. WEBSTER, Mayor."

Ald. Saunders regretted, and he thought it was a regret which was generally felt, that there should be such an abstinence of explanation in regard to what the deputation did when before the Home Secretary. (Hear, hear.) He could not for one moment conceive—in fact, it was only just and reasonable—why the arguments which were placed before the Home Secretary by the deputation should not also be placed before the public. It now almost seemed as if the deputation were afraid of letting the public know what were their opinions or arguments and reasons for asking for investigation into the late outrage. The course which the deputation had taken was a very unwise one; because if what they said to the Home Secretary was true, it was only right that those who were impugned should know what their statements were—(hear, hear)—in order that they might be prepared to refute them. On the other hand, if what they said was not true, it should not have been said to the Home Secretary at all. This was the first time he had taken any part in a discussion with regard to the late outrage, and his object in now rising was to say that the secret and under-hand way which was adopted by the deputation of going to the Home Secretary and making *ex parte* statements, was not honourable and straightforward. He should have liked for the deputation from such a public body as the corporation, to have gone with the working men's deputation, as the commission was asked, not for any individual or class, for the good of the town generally. He considered that a great example was set to the deputation from the Council and the other deputations that accompanied them by the deputation which went to the Home Secretary from the working men, as they boldly spoke out their sentiments, which were published to the world, and consequently the town knew what they had said upon a subject which so much affected it. (Hear, hear.) In that respect the Council and the manufacturers' deputations had been set an example. He personally and deeply regretted that a fuller and a much more general explanation of what was said before the Home Secretary had not been made known.

The Mayor thought that the remarks of Ald. Saunders were somewhat out of place. (Hear, hear.) The deputation which was appointed by the

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Council went to the Home Secretary for one particular and express purpose—to lay before him the resolution passed by the Council, and to ask him to consider whether under all the circumstances it would not be advisable to comply with their request, and to issue a commission for a full inquiry into the late outrage. When, as their representative, he laid the matter before the Secretary of State, he made no accusations against any one; he impugned no man's conduct. He simply said this, that so far as such outrages were concerned, the arm of the law in Sheffield was paralysed, and that the police authorities could not make any discovery of the perpetrators, or the instigators, if there were any, of such crimes. (Hear, hear.) There was no doubt that a great crime was committed when Fearnehough's house was blown up, but he did not express an opinion to the Home Secretary as to by what man or by what class of men the deed was done. What he said was that a great and fearful outrage had been committed; that it was one which ought to be inquired into; and that the Town Council, through him, had asked that such an inquiry should take place. (Hear, hear.) He fully agreed with Mr. Roebuck and other gentlemen that the inquiry should be one by a Parliamentary Commission, an opinion which he expressed at the time the resolution appointing the deputation was passed. With regard to what had been said by Alderman Saunders about the deputation making *ex parte* statements, all he could say was that the deputation went to the Home Secretary for the express purpose of making *ex parte* statements—in fact, they could not do otherwise. They did not go to the Secretary of State to argue with him as to the persons who committed the crime, but all that they did, as he had before explained, was to ask the assistance of Government to find out the perpetrator, and, if possible, to adopt means for the prevention of such outrages for the future. (Hear, hear.) As to what was said by the members of the other deputations they had nothing whatever to do, but he could safely say that they made no charges against any one, and only expressed it as a matter of opinion, and not as a matter of fact, that the general impression in Sheffield was that such outrages proceeded from trades' unions. (Hear, hear.) The deputation from the Council did not even go so far as that; all that they requested was that a commission should be appointed. The statements which were made were purely *ex parte*, and they went to the Home Secretary to make them. Those who had set them an example, which it was said they should follow, did precisely the same, the only difference being that they published what they said, whereas the deputation from the Council did not. (Hear, hear.) He really did not think that what he said was deserving of publication, as he simply stated what was the request of the Town Council. In conclusion the Mayor moved that the report be entered on the minutes of the Council.

Mr. Ironside seconded the motion, at the same time remarking that he quite agreed with the remarks of Alderman Saunders, for wherever there was secrecy there was corruption. For the good government of the town everything ought to be open and above-board. (Hear, hear.) The affair was a miserable one, and the sooner it was forgotten the better.

The motion was carried.

IMPORTANT DECISION OF THE COURT OF QUEEN'S BENCH IN REFERENCE TO TRADE SOCIETIES' FUNDS.

On the 16th of January the following important trial took place, and decision was given affecting materially the funds of Trades' Societies in the Court of Queen's Bench, before the Lord Chief Justice, Mr. Justice Blackburn, Mr. Justice Mellor, and Mr. Justice Lush.

HORNBY, APPELLANT, V. CLOSE, RESPONDENT.

This was an appeal from decision of magistrates at Bradford, dismissing an information under the Friendly Societies' Act against the treasurer of a society of working men, on the ground that the objects of the society, being partly those of a Trades' Union, were not within the Act. The information was for wrongfully withholding a sum of £24 belonging to the society. The society was the Leeds branch of "the United Society of Boilermakers and Iron Shipbuilders of Great Britain and Ireland," instituted in 1834 (as stated on the title-page of the rules), "for the purpose of mutual relief of its members when out of employment, the relief of their sick and burial of their dead, and other benevolent purposes, as inserted in their Rules," or (as the preface stated it) "for the relief of their sick, the burial of their dead, and support of their members when thrown out of employment through depression of trade, and for other benevolent purposes. The preface continued,— "There are but few among the working classes who are provident enough to realize out of their hard earnings a sufficiency to meet the demands of nature for even a few weeks when out of employment, and how much more serious is the consideration when a family is dependent on such individual? It is but too often in such cases that the domestic hearth, hitherto cherished as the greatest blessing and comfort of life, becomes a source of anxiety and care. To provide for the common wants of nature, to stay the cry of his beloved offspring for bread, the household goods on which his gentle partner and himself used to delight, one thing after another is sacrificed, and at length, when all is gone, then comes the heart-rending separation of a once happy family to seek food and shelter in a Union workhouse. To prevent these evils, or at least to obviate them in some degree, is one of the principal objects proposed to be attained by the society. These views can be carried into effect by uniting together while in employment and subscribing a small sum per week, which, under wholesome laws and economical management, will be capable of affording at least some assistance to those who occasionally have the misfortune of being put out of employment." Such, however, being the professed and perhaps the original objects of the society, the rules which, it is to be observed, had been revised and remodelled in 1862, contained several which were relied upon as showing that the present objects of the society were, in part, those of a Trades' Union Society—"Rule 28, Piece-work :—1. That in districts where members are compelled to work piece-work, and it be proved to the satisfaction of the executive committee that the firm is

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reducing the prices below the usual and reasonable prices, they shall allow the men resisting the reduction 7s. per week for two weeks ; and, 2, That any member or members in a shop, either on piece-work or day work, where a dispute arises connected with our trade or society, no member or members shall be allowed to call at such shop or shops after being made acquainted with such dispute, or, for doing so, to be fined 10s. And that any member of this society encouraging any holder up or labourer to violate the rule by allowing him to practise with his tools, or otherwise instructing him in other branches of the trade contrary to these rules, shall, on proof thereof, be fined for the first offence 5s., &c., and for the third expelled the society.”

“Rule 29, Disputes on day Work and benefits:—Should a dispute arise in any shop, the members of that shop shall make it known to their branch, which, if it only affects the interests of two or three members, such branch to have power to settle it, and grant to members wishing to travel 12s. per week, &c. But should a general dispute arise in any shop which cannot be amicably settled by the branch, it shall be referred to the executive committee, who shall give their instructions on the subject. All members losing their employment through such disputes, after being sanctioned by the executive, shall receive the sum of 12s. per week so long as they shall remain out of employment ; and this rule to be applied to all disputes except the settlement of piece-work prices.”

“Rule 42. Any member using his influence to obtain employment for a non-member shall be fined for such offence 10s.”

Such being some of the present rules of the society, the attorney for the party summoned contended that it was not a society within the Friendly Societies' Act, 18th and 19th of Victoria, cap. 62, and further that it was a society established for purposes illegal and contrary to public policy, as being a restraint of trade, and depriving the workman of the free exercise of his own will in the employment of his labour ; and also in restraining him from getting employment, or continuing in employment, or obtaining employment for a non-member, and that the society was an organisation for or tending to the encouragement of strikes. The magistrates—the charge against the defendant being fully proved as laid in the information, were called upon to determine on the legal objections thus raised, and determining them in his favour, dismissed the information, from which decision this was the present appeal on the part of the society, their contention being that the society was established for some of the purposes mentioned in the Friendly Societies' Act ; and that it was not established for any purposes which were illegal, and that, therefore, the magistrates should have convicted. To render the argument and the judgment intelligible it is necessary to state that the 44th section of the Act provides that a case of any Friendly Society established for any of the purposes mentioned in section 9 (which are those of an ordinary benefit or friendly society) or for any purpose which is not illegal, having rules certified by or deposited with the Registrar, disputes arising among the members may be summarily heard and determined by magistrates under the jurisdiction established by the Act.

Mr. Mellish (with whom was Mr. Macnamara) argued the case on behalf of the Society. His argument in substance was, first, that the objects of

the Society were not illegal—(1) because the rules were not certainly a restraint of trade; (2) because even if a restraint of trade—though not enforceable, yet they were not illegal; (3) that they were not unlawful at common law; (4) that they were not rendered unlawful by anything in the Act. The Society, therefore, he insisted, was not illegal in the sense of being criminal; and, in the next place, it could not be denied that some of its objects came within the scope of the Act. The learned counsel cited and commented upon the great case of *Hilton v. Eckersley* (6 *Ellis and Blackburn's Reports*), which was affirmed in a Court of Error, and in which it was held that a bond given by a cotton-spinner, binding him to observe the regulations as to wages, and sanctioned by a majority of the Society, could not be enforced against him. In that case, however, he pointed out that Mr. Justice Earle dissented, and that Lord Campbell disclaimed holding that the combination was illegal in a criminal sense, and, though the judgment was upheld in a Court of Error, the Court expressly said—we do not say the combination was illegal in the sense of being criminal or punishable, and in this case the rules referred to were not those on which the information was founded. In the course of the argument

Mr. Justice Blackburn observed, that he could not help thinking that the trades' unions element was the main object of the Society; at all events, it was plainly a main object.

Mr. Justice Mellor observed that it could hardly be doubted that it was a main inducement to many of the men to joining it that it had this element in it.

The Lord Chief Justice said, at least the Society had the twofold object of the Friendly Society and the Trades' Union Society, and the rules as to the latter seemed to be in restraint of trade, and so not legal, even if not criminal.

Mr. Mellish urged that the main object, or, at all events, a main object, of the Society was still benevolent, and that the addition of these rules as to the terms of work did not so alter its character as to render it illegal. At the close of the argument,

The Lord Chief Justice at once said:—We cannot hesitate for a moment in saying that we thought the magistrates were right in holding that the Society did not come within the operation of the Friendly Societies' Act so as to give them jurisdiction. Supposing the main purpose of the Society were within the Act, as being benevolent, it would not merely by reason of one or two rules going beyond that object cease to be a Society within the Act. But here we find that the very purpose of the Society is not merely to carry out the objects of a benevolent society, but those of a trades' union. Under that term may be included every combination by which men bind themselves not to work except under certain conditions, and to support one another in the event of being out of employment, in conformity with the views of the majority. I am far from saying that a trades' union constituted for such purposes would bring the members within the criminal law, but the rules are certainly such as would operate in restraint of trade, and would, therefore, in that sense be unlawful, and on the same principle upon which a Court of Error held (confirming the decision of this Court) that a

bond given by a master to observe rules which were in restraint of trade was so far unlawful that it could not be enforced at law, we think that these rules of a society of workmen having a like effect are in the same sense illegal. That is to say, if a civil action was brought on any contract or obligation arising out of the rules, they could not be recognized and enforced in such action. Therefore, upon the same principle, it was impossible to hold that the Society was within the Friendly Societies' Act; first, because the objects are not analogous to those of a friendly society; and next, because these rules, though they may not be illegal in the sense of being criminal, are so far illegal that they are not enforceable at law.

Mr. Justice Blackburn concurred. The magistrates, he said, had no jurisdiction unless the society was within the statute, and he thought it was not. The purposes of a trades' union were not at all analogous to those of a friendly society; and it was impossible upon any ordinary principles of construction to hold that sec. 44 applied to any society which was established for "a purpose not illegal." Such a literal construction could not be sustained; and it was obvious that the section only applied to societies the purposes of which were analogous to those of friendly societies. No doubt, a small degree of deviation from the purposes of a friendly society would not throw the society out of the scope of the Act. But, in the present case, it was manifest that the main object, or, at all events, a main object, of the society was to carry out the purposes of the trades' union. Further than that, he thought the rules referred to illegal in the sense in which the term was applied by the Court of Error in *Hilton v. Eckersley*, as against the masters—that is, illegal in the sense that they were not legally enforceable. The same principle must be applied to combinations of the men. He guarded himself carefully against being supposed to say whether the society was illegal in the sense of being criminal. He did not say that it was; he did not say that it was not. He left that point quite untouched. But he was clearly of opinion that the rules referred to were illegal in the sense that they could not be enforced; therefore the society did not come within the Act. Whether the illegality of some of the rules would taint the whole of them it was not here necessary to determine, because the objects illegal were not small and incidental, but constituted a principal, if not the whole, aim and object of the society.

Mr. Justice Mellor entirely concurred. He desired, he said, to express no opinion as to whether the rules referred to were illegal in the sense in which they would be criminal. But he thought that some of the substantial objects of the society were those of trades' unions, and were directed to the encouragement of strikes. He could not suppose that in the view of the members of the society the objects could practically be separated—they were too much mixed up together; nor could he doubt that numbers of men became members upon the footing of the illegal rules, and for the sake of the illegal objects. Those objects, the objects of a trades' union, were not analogous to those of a friendly society, because not really "benevolent," though some of the objects of the society no doubt were so. The objects of the society not being analogous to those of a friendly society, and not being legal in the sense of being enforceable, the society was not within the Act,

and the magistrates, therefore, rightly determined that they had no jurisdiction to deal with the case.

Mr. Justice Lush also concurred. One main object of the society, he said, if not the main object, was to form a trades' union. That being so, the purpose of the society was not analagous to those described in the Friendly Societies' Act; and, further, its rules were illegal, in the sense that they were not enforceable in a court of law.

Judgment for the respondent, approving the decision of the Justices.

APPOINTMENT OF A PERMANENT CONFERENCE.

Immediately upon this decision being made public the delegates who had been attending to the Sheffield affair, recognizing the difficulties that were approaching Trades' Unions, thought necessary to call a Conference to further consider the aspect of affairs, and accordingly Delegates from the undermentioned Trade Societies assembled at the General Office of the Amalgamated Society of Engineers, 54, Stamford Street, at Two p.m., on the 28th of January, specially deputed by their respective bodies.

There were present T. Hughes, Esq., M.P. for Lambeth (by special invitation); Mr. W. Allan, Gen. Sec., Mr. R. Danter, Chairman, and Mr. D. Henderson, of the Council of the Amalgamated Society of Engineers; Mr. R. Applegarth, Gen. Sec., Mr. T. W. Hughes, Chairman, and Mr. J. D. Prior, of the Council of the Amalgamated Society of Carpenters and Joiners; Mr. D. Guile, Gen. Sec., Mr. J. Hemley, Chairman, and Mr. T. Powell, of the Council of the Iron-founders Society; Mr. G. Odger, Secretary of the London Trades' Council; Mr. E. Coulson, Gen. Sec. of the Operative Bricklayers' Society; and Mr. Thomas Spelling, Secretary of the Vellum Binders' Society.

Mr. W. Allan having been appointed Chairman, and Mr. R. Applegarth Secretary to the Conference, a very animated discussion followed, during which an universal opinion was expressed that Trades' Unions, as at present constituted, paying vast sums of money for purposes truly laudable, and none of their objects being in opposition to law, ought to have the same protection as Friendly and other Societies; and that no means ought to be left untried to secure for the Trades' Unions of the country a Special Act for their especial protection. It was ultimately resolved:—

“That a Deputation, consisting of Messrs. Allan, Applegarth, Guile, Odger, and Coulson, be appointed to wait on the Home Secretary, to call his attention to the recent decision, and urge the enactment of a Law for the protection to which we feel convinced our Societies are entitled.”

Mr. Applegarth was instructed to communicate with the Home Secretary to request him to grant an early interview, and to the Executive of the

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Boiler Makers' Society to acquaint them with the proceedings of the Conference.

A vote of thanks was accorded to Mr. Hughes for his attendance ; to the Chairman for his services during the Conference ; and to the Executive of the Engineers for the use of their office ; and the first sitting of the Conference terminated.

The Home Secretary having been communicated with, replied immediately, stating that he would be happy to meet the deputation on Friday, February 1st.

INTERVIEW WITH THE HOME SECRETARY.

The deputation to Mr. Walpole, by appointment, waited on the right hon. gentleman, for the purpose of representing to him, and through him to the Government, the position in which trades' unions have been placed by the decision of the Court of Queen's Bench in the case of the Bradford boiler-makers, and of impressing on the Government the importance of putting them in the same position with regard to protection as friendly societies in general. The deputation consisted of Mr. William Allan, representing the Amalgamated Engineers ; Mr. D. Guile, the Ironfounders' Society ; Mr. R. Applegarth, the Amalgamated Carpenters and Joiners ; and Mr. George Odger, the Trades' Council. The deputation was introduced by

Mr. Thomas Hughes, M.P., who said he believed, and with great reason, that the decision of the Queen's Bench had placed trades' societies entirely outside the law. The deputation wished to lay their case before the right hon. gentleman, and ask whether the Government could not assist to place them in the position in which they understood they had been placed by the Acts of former Governments.

Mr. Allan said that so far back as 1855 they succeeded in getting two clauses inserted in the Friendly Societies' Act, by which they imagined they obtained legal protection against fraudulent trustees or other officials. It is now very questionable whether they had that protection ; in fact, they were inclined to think they had not. The Court of Queen's Bench had decided that their rules placed them outside the pale of the law, and that they could not have the protection of the Friendly Societies' Act.

Mr. Walpole understood that the Lord Chief Justice decided that the society before him could only be looked upon as a society formed in restraint of trade, and could not be supposed to be legal.

Mr. Hughes said that in the rules of all the societies there were clauses that would probably be considered also as a restraint upon trade.

Mr. Allan said the Friendly Societies Act gave them certain privileges on depositing their rules with Mr. Tidd Pratt, provided they contained

nothing contrary to law. In 1851 the society to which he belonged—in order that they might be perfectly satisfied as the legality of their rules, which went further than they now did in regard to piece-work, overtime, length of hours, &c.—got the opinion of Sir Alexander Cockburn, at that time Attorney-General, who held that their rules were perfectly legal. If they were legal, the societies contended that they should have the protection of the Friendly Societies Act with regard to fraudulent trustees. On the faith of the protection they had deposited a large amount of money in the post office savings' bank. They had at first some difficulty about that, but they waited on Mr. Gladstone, who ultimately granted them the privilege of depositing their funds there. It was now questionable whether if any fraud took place they had any control over the persons who defrauded them. Mr. Gladstone decided that their rules were not illegal, and therefore they ought to have the benefit of the Friendly Societies' Act.

Mr. Walpole: What power had Mr. Gladstone to decide that? He only gave his opinion, I suppose?

Mr. Allan said he was Chancellor of the Exchequer, and representative of the Government.

Mr. Hughes said that there had been a direct sanction by the Government of the investment in the post office savings' banks.

Mr. Guile said the funds of the Amalgamated Engineers amounted to £140,000, and they were scattered in various parts of the country.

In reply to Mr. Walpole,

Mr. Guile replied that the rules were pretty nearly the same in all cases.

Mr. Hughes said those of the Bradford boiler-makers were rather stronger.

Mr. Allan said the rules on which Sir Alexander Cockburn gave his opinion were quite as strong, if not stronger, than those of the boiler-makers were; and yet he said distinctly and clearly that they were not illegal, but perfectly sound according to law.

Mr. Walpole then read the judgment of the Lord Chief Justice, to the effect that he thought the society could not be brought within the Friendly Societies' Act—first, because the purposes for which the trades' unions were organised were not analogous to those of benefit societies, and because its rules, though not criminal, yet acting as a restraint of trade, were by the law of the land illegal. He also read the opinion of Sir Alexander Cockburn, which was to the effect that it was legal for men to combine to protect themselves, and to persuade others to act with them, provided no violence were done to person or property, and all threats, intimidation, and molestation were avoided, and that the rules were not objectionable in point of law, though they might have been prepared with greater accuracy. The right hon. gentleman then asked the deputation to point out what they specifically asked him to do.

Mr. Guile said the society which he represented instructed him to ask the Government to take their rules and put them into the hands of the law advisers of the Crown for examination. If they were of opinion that they were not legal, he was requested to ask that Government would provide such an Act as would place them within range of the law for all practical

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purposes. The speaker mentioned a case in which an agent of his society had £83 belonging to it, but which after the recent decision they could not claim. He also furnished a number of statistics to show them that the object of the societies was more benevolence than the advancement of the trades' unions. In eight years the society to which he belonged had expended on men out of work, but not through the operations of strikes, on the sick and disabled, on the aged and on funerals, no less than £138,503; whilst in the same period the total amount paid for strikes was £1,877. This was at the rate of 5s. 6d. per member to support strikes or disputes, while for benevolent purposes there had been paid £21 5s. 6½d. per member.

Mr. Walpole said there was no doubt that would be perfectly legal. He did not know really how far the facts on the case as decided by the Court of Queen's Bench, were or were not identical for the purposes of the law with the case as regarded the deputation. He thought it so important a matter that the best thing the deputation could do was to put into writing, in the shape of a memorial, to be presented at that office, the exact thing they wanted him to do. That would enable him to consider and, if necessary, to consult with his colleagues as to how far they could fall in with the suggestions made to the Government. He saw a difficulty about consulting the law officers merely on the application of one society; for he should, if granting the facility in one case, have to afford it in others.

Mr. Hughes thought that the case of the societies was that they had been led into the present scrape by previous Governments; they had dropped their old system of protection by checking their officials, and they had been led to rely upon the protection of the Friendly Societies' Act. Now their funds were scattered all over England, and their affairs were exceedingly critical, because if their officers turned out rascals they had no power to recover a penny.

Mr. Walpole said the matter really depended on the ulterior question whether the societies were legal or not according to the judgment of the Court of Queen's Bench. The law officers could not decide such a question. Nothing but the court could decide whether the rules were contrary to law or not within the meaning or decision of the court. The law officers of the Crown could not give them any valuable opinion except as to what the decision of the Court of Queen's Bench would be.

Mr. Applegarth said the important question was, were trades' unions "as" trades' unions to be outside the pale of law. They had been of opinion that it was quite lawful for working men to combine for the protection of their interests, provided they did not bring themselves into collision with the law that provided against intimidation, &c. He would admit that if in any part of the country work was plentiful, men underpaid, and employers refused to raise their wages, they would draw the men from their employers, and pay them 15s. a week as strike pay; but they set their faces against all kinds of intimidation; and as for strikes, he would not say they dreaded them, but they did all they could to set their faces against them, and endeavoured to substitute for them a system of arbitration. He thought the suggestion made to them by the right hon. gentleman was a very good one; but he should wish that after they had put into writing

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what they desired, there should be some sort of inquiry to let the Government see what trades' unions really were. No doubt they did many sad and serious things, but they were not so bad as they were painted. Such an inquiry was necessary before any legislation was attempted. They required some specific law for their protection, for even now at Bradford and Hull they had cases of agents from whom they could not obtain large sums of money on account of the decision of the Court of Queen's Bench. The question was, what were they to do? Were they to be placed at the mercy of unscrupulous men, when the Government had led them to believe they had protection? A favourable solution of the difficulty would lead to their purging their rules if on impartial inquiry anything objectionable could be found in them; but with this exception, that they would not surrender the right to strike when a strike became a necessity, not even for a Bill.

Mr. Walpole said two distinct propositions had been laid before him. One was to deal with this particular case by some legislation immediately, and as to that he understood the deputation were prepared to lay a memorial before him as to the exact point on which they wished legislation. Secondly, with reference to the importance of a full investigation into the working of these societies, all he could say now was—and he believed Mr. Hughes would bear him out—that they would find in a very few days that he was not in the least unfriendly to such an object as that.

The deputation then thanked the right hon. gentleman and withdrew.

TRADES' UNIONS PROTECTION BILL.

Mr. Neate, who has written ably regarding trades' unions, at this time had given notice to the House of his intention to bring forward a Bill to secure legal protection for the funds of trades' societies. The conference waited on him several times with the view of assisting him to get the following Bill passed, as it embodied the views expressed at the interview with the Home Secretary.

The following is a copy of the Bill introduced into the House of Commons by Mr. Neate, to "Exempt Associations of Workmen from certain Disabilities for a limited Time :—Whereas doubts have arisen as to how far and in what cases associations of workmen not certified under the Act 18 and 19 Vic. cap 63, are entitled to any benefit under that Act, Be it enacted by the Queen's most excellent Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the Lords spiritual, and Commons, in this present Parliament assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows :—From and after the passing of this Act, until the end of the next session of Parliament, no such association of workmen shall forfeit any right or benefit to which they might otherwise have been entitled under the 44th

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section of the said Act, by reason of any rules or rule of such association of workmen being in restraint of trade, provided that such rules or rule do not prescribe or recommend the performance of any act made subject to any statutory penalty."

It has been said by a few persons that the above Bill was not sufficient for the purpose, and that we ought to have asked for an Act which would give protection to the funds of trade societies, whether they have other than trade benefits attached to them or not. In answer to that, we say that the Bill was merely intended as a temporary measure, and we think it would have been extremely unwise on our part to have asked for complete legislation pending the enquiry of the Commission; but, small as it was, it was too big for the House of Commons, for they have thrown it out unceremoniously.

THE TRADES' UNIONS COMMISSION—DEPUTATION TO THE HOME SECRETARY.

The conference having read that another deputation had waited on the Home Secretary and expressed satisfaction with the present construction of the Royal Commission, thought necessary to have another interview with him on two especial points. The first was to have one working man appointed if possible, the other to secure the presence of a second representative of each trade to explain any difficult or complicated question which might arise. Mr. Samuelson, M.P., was consulted on the subject, and he went to the Home Secretary, who consented to again receive the deputation on February 15th. The following is what transpired:—

A deputation of representative working men waited on Mr. Walpole, on Friday, at the Home Office, in reference to the construction of the Royal Commission on Trades' Unions, which has been decided upon by Parliament. The deputation included Mr. J. Stuart Mill, M.P., Mr. Odger (shoemaker and secretary to the London Trades' Council), Mr. Danter (president of the Amalgamated Engineers' Society), Mr. Coulson (representing the bricklayers), and Mr. Guile (secretary to the Moulders' Society).

Mr. J. Stuart Mill, M.P., introduced the deputation. In doing so the hon. gentleman mentioned that Mr. T. Hughes, M.P., was to have accompanied the deputation, but he had been unavoidably prevented from attending.

Mr. Odger said that the deputation had to express their regret that they had to trouble Mr. Walpole on the question of the construction of the commission, but the belief that it would give general satisfaction, and indeed that it was essential that a working man should be placed on the commission was their excuse for doing so. Another thing they thought should occupy the attention of the commission was the advisability of having present during certain portions of the inquiry practical men who would be able to

suggest the putting of questions respecting technical matters connected with workshops, the answering of which would help the members of the commission to arrive at proper conclusions. Otherwise, he believed the inquiry would be carried on under many difficulties, and would be concluded without the persons really most interested getting an opportunity of being heard. What he would suggest was, that, according as matters affecting particular trades came on for hearing, persons deputed by those trades should be allowed to be present to watch the proceedings, and suggest such questions as they considered advisable for eliciting the truth, and protecting the various trades from being misrepresented, through, it might be, a lack of proper information. Each of those persons need only be present while his particular trade society was being inquired into. He thought if some such plan as this was adopted by the commission it would be the means of giving satisfaction, and would show that the inquiry was being carried on fairly to the workmen.

Mr. Walpole: With regard to doing the working men any injustice, I do not think anything like that need be feared. As far as I could I tried to make the commission as fair and impartial as possible, and I think you may rest satisfied that those appointed on the commission will act as I am desirous they should. The last time I received a deputation from certain parties connected with trades' unions, I understood that if Mr. Harrison was appointed on the commission it would give entire satisfaction. I can only say, in reference to Mr. Harrison, that his works on the subject, and the great interest he has evinced, show you that you could not have any person so fully competent to assist in the inquiry, and I think you may rely on Mr. Harrison to bring all matters connected with trade unions forward which may be necessary.

Mr. Odger: Such is our opinion too.

Mr. Walpole: In consequence of the representations made to me by the other deputation, I wrote to the Queen, requesting the addition of Mr. Harrison's name to the commission. Her Majesty complied with the request, and the commission has been signed by the Queen, and confirmed by myself. Under these circumstances, I must say that it is not really in my power to make any other alteration in the construction of the commission. As regards the suggestions of having representatives of trades in attendance to explain matters of detail connected with the various trades, that is a matter that I could not well interfere with. The commission will have power to adopt such a suggestion, and I have no doubt that, if applied to, they will afford the representatives of the various trades every opportunity of getting a fair hearing. I think you may have full confidence in the gentlemen composing the commission. At the head of the commission is one who will be disposed to see that every part of the subject is thoroughly gone into, and that the views of the different trades are completely examined and weighed well before he will bring his judicial mind to bear on the subject—one who has never been supposed to arrive at any conclusion except when the justice of the case is clearly brought before him. I will write myself to Sir William Erle, the head of the commission, as to the possibility of having particular persons brought forward in the interest of

particular trade societies, but, as I said before, the matter lies entirely with the commissioners themselves. The matter is really out of the hands of the Government, and I cannot again interfere.

Mr. Guile said, that all the working men wanted was that any possibility of their being held up to the country in a prejudicial light should be avoided, and to effectually guard against such a result he thought that, if they could not have a working man on the Commission, they ought at all events to be allowed opportunities of correcting mistakes or misrepresentations the moment they arose.

Mr. Walpole: I think it could be so arranged that Mr. Harrison could bring forward witnesses as he considered they were necessary, and I think you may rely upon Mr. Harrison to do so.

Mr. Odger said that the trades had perfect confidence in Mr. Harrison, and the appointment had given great satisfaction; but they felt that if a commission were appointed to inquire into the affairs of some of the universities, it would be stupid to entrust the inquiry to working men, who did not properly understand the matters to be investigated; and that, therefore, the present inquiry should not be left entirely to persons who had no practical acquaintanceship with the workings of trades' unions. Such was the opinion existing among a great many of the working men.

Mr. Walpole: I must say my experience of commissions is different from that. I have served on many of them, and, although knowing little or nothing of the subject beforehand, from the information brought before me I have been enabled to get a pretty good knowledge of the subject, and have thereby been enabled to come to what I considered a fair conclusion. I have always found commissions desirous of affording every means of eliciting reliable information, and I have no doubt the present one will do likewise.

Mr. Danter remarked that there were two masters on the Commission, and he thought one working man might at least be allowed on it.

Mr. Walpole: I believe there is one master on the Commission, but I am not aware that there are two. The one master I do know I believe will act with the utmost impartiality. As regards the suggestion to put an additional person on the Commission, I cannot make any further alteration.

Mr. Odger: We do not want an additional person added to the Commission. All we ask is to substitute a working man for one of the present members of the Commission.

Mr. Walpole: It cannot now be done.

Mr. J. S. Mill, M.P.: I have no doubt the Commission will examine every person that may be produced, and that any person the working classes wish to represent them will get a fair hearing; but if I understand the matter rightly the difficulty was not that witnesses will not get opportunities of giving all the evidence they consider desirable, but that some persons in the interests of the trades' unions, and properly understanding their working, should be present to answer any charge that may be made affecting the character of any one of the trades. I believe what is desired is, that some persons having practical acquaintance with trades' unions should be put in position to contradict anything that may be said, through,

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perhaps, ignorance, damaging to the character of these societies, or to put such questions as would have the effect of enabling the Commission to form a better and more impartial opinion than perhaps they otherwise could have done. Very likely Mr. Harrison may do it well, but Mr. Harrison with a working man may be able to do it better. If the Commission had the power to do what the trades' unions desired with regard to the attendance of persons to watch the interests of each trade as questions affecting that trade came up for inquiry, no doubt it would be better.

Mr. Walpole: I think the Commission can do so, but I should not like to interfere any further.

Mr. Mill then thanked Mr. Walpole for the courteousness of his reception, and the deputation withdrew.

GREAT MEETING AT EXETER HALL.

The next thing, and a very important one, was a meeting convened by the Amalgamated Engineers, in Exeter Hall, on Thursday, February 21st. This meeting was attended by representatives and members of the whole of the trades' societies, and was one of the greatest successes ever attempted by any association. We refrain from giving here a report of it, as in a short space we could not do it justice; but we beg to inform our readers that a *verbatim* report of the whole proceedings has been printed in the form of a pamphlet, and can be had at the Amalgamated Engineers' Office: 54, Stamford Street, London, S. We should advise all working men to possess themselves of this useful document. They are supplied at 1s. per doz. By post, 1s. 3d. per dozen.

At the meeting referred to, the following resolutions and petition were carried unanimously, and a copy of the petition and signatures, and another copy signed by the London Trades' Council, were forwarded to the Home Secretary.

First Resolution.—"That in the opinion of this Meeting the recent decision of the Court of Queen's Bench, in the case of *Hornby v. Close*, virtually destroys the protection which trade societies have enjoyed since the passing of the Friendly Societies' Act, and takes from them the privileges the Legislature intended to give in the passing of that measure. It therefore calls upon all trade societies to support the following Requisition to the Home Secretary in favor of Mr. Neate's Bill."

Second Resolution.—"That in the opinion of this Meeting no Commission of Inquiry into the doings of trade Societies can give satisfaction to the working classes unless they be represented on the Commission by members of their own order; and that, as the Royal Commission appointed to inquire into the organisations of Trades' Unions contains no such direct representation, we feel bound to express our disappointment and regret that the Commission has not been more equitably composed."

(COPY OF PETITION.)

To the Right Hon. Spencer Walpole, Her Majesty's Chief Secretary of State for the Home Department.

"SIR,

"During the discussion of the Friendly Societies' Act in the House of Commons, in the years 1854 and 1855, some of the representatives of the trades unions, thinking there was then an opportunity of getting legal protection for the funds of trades' societies, put themselves in communication with the late Mr. Sotheron Estcourt, Lord Goderich, and other members of Parliament who were most active and persevering in the laudable endeavour to secure as much as possible the contributions of working men against the defalcations of those who were entrusted with the management of their associations and funds.

"Previous to the final passing of the Act, a Special Committee of the House of Commons considered the whole question, and in the session of 1854 reported as follows:—

"Your committee, however, taking into their consideration the state in which members of unregistered societies find themselves, from being unable to have recourse to a remedy by law if they should be defrauded or unfairly treated by the officers of these societies, are of opinion that this, which has hitherto been treated as a privilege, ought rather to be extended as a matter of justice and policy, for the protection of the members of all societies; and they have therefore introduced a clause, giving a power to members of all friendly societies, unregistered as well as registered, to sue and be sued as amongst themselves and their own officers.'

"Upon this recommendation the Bill of 1855 was prepared and introduced into the House of Commons by Mr. Sotheron Estcourt, and ultimately became law, the 44th section of which was specially framed to carry out the recommendations of the committee.

"Trade societies, since that date, have acted with great confidence upon that section, and under it various prosecutions against defaulters have been successfully enforced.

"We therefore believe that the withdrawal of that protection, which hitherto they have enjoyed under the Friendly Societies' Act is only calculated to impress still deeper the artizan class of this country with a sense of injustice; and we believe that it will also tend to embitter the future struggles between employers and employed, which the largest and best organised trades have for years been unceasing in their efforts to prevent.

"We therefore trust that you will see fit to give your concurrence to the Bill introduced by Mr. Neate, which will temporarily prevent such results, and at the same time that you will undertake the introduction of a permanent measure, such as will ensure to the trades' societies the protection which for the last twelve years they thought they possessed, and thus do an act of justice to thousands of industrious and deserving workmen.

"Signed on behalf of the undermentioned societies;—

SECRETARIES,	NAME OF SOCIETY.	No. of Members.
" William Allan	Amalgamated Engineers'	33600
" Daniel Guile	Iron Founders' Society	11150
" R. Applegarth	Amalgamated Carpenters'	8500
" G. Odger.....	Amalgamated Cordwainers	8000
" Mathew Lawrence.....	London Operative Tailors'.....	7000
" E. Coulson	Operative Bricklayers'	6000
" H. Self	Consolidated Society Compositors'	3300
" Beaumont Cole	Curriers' Society	1400
" William Burn.....	Brickmakers'	1000
" Thomas Joseph Dunning	London Consolidated Bookbinders, 5, Raquet Ct.	658
" William Bockett	Bookbinders, Day-working	420
" Isaac Merryweather	Tin Plate Workers' Society	300
" Thomas Spelling	Vellum Binders	266

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At the next Meeting of the Conference it was resolved: That a deputation be appointed to seek an interview with Mr. Gladstone, as that gentleman had given permission to the Trade Societies to deposit their funds with the Government: and it was thought probable that his valuable aid might be enlisted in furtherance of our endeavours to secure the protection we were seeking for our funds. Mr. Gladstone was immediately communicated with, and at once replied that he would have much pleasure in receiving the deputation on the 7th of March. Subjoined is the substance of what took place.

TRADES' SOCIETIES' FUNDS IN POST OFFICE SAVINGS' BANKS.

INTERVIEW WITH MR. GLADSTONE.

The deputation included Mr. Allan, Secretary of the Amalgamated Society of Engineers, &c. ; Mr. Danter, President of the London Trades' Council; Mr. Odger, Secretary of the same body; and Mr. Applegarth, Secretary of the Amalgamated Carpenters' Society.

Mr. Gladstone having received these representatives with the greatest courtesy,

Mr. Allan said: It will be in your recollection, sir, that in 1864 Mr. Danter and I waited on you, with regard to our society depositing their funds in the post-office savings' banks. You then granted our request, giving us permission to bank in them to any extent. We have since then deposited a very considerable sum of money in those banks. But the late decision of the Court of Queen's Bench has placed us in an awkward position, for defaulting trustees may now rob us with impunity.

Mr. Gladstone: It is, indeed, a very awkward position.

Mr. Allan: We placed our money to the great extent we have done, in consequence of the arrangement made with you, as Chancellor of the Exchequer. We thought we were acting in accordance with law, and certain of legal protection; and more especially so as, in answer to your questions, we stated all the purposes to which those funds were collected and might be applied; that amongst others we paid men when out of work, having refused to accept a lower rate of wages.

Mr. Gladstone having given a general assent to these remarks, asked if the rules were registered.

Mr. Allan: We have deposited a copy of them.

Mr. Gladstone: Yes, deposited a copy of them. I regarded it as a sort of friendly society. Of course it was not for me to determine what was legal or illegal. My impression was that you had complied with the requisitions of the law. I am as much surprised at this decision as anybody can be. I cannot understand it. Do you know on what precise point the judgment turns?

Mr. Danter: Simply that we support men when out on strike.

Mr. Allan handed to Mr. Gladstone the opinion of the Lord Chief Justice, when Attorney-General, as to the rules on which the judgment turned.

Mr. Applegarth directed the right hon. gentleman's attention to the rules now declared by the late judgment of the Court of Queen's Bench as operating in restraint of trade.

Mr. Gladstone: You have not the exact terms of the judgment. I have never seen the exact judgment.

Mr. Allan: "Operate in restraint of trade" were the exact terms of the judgment.

Mr. Gladstone said restraint of trade was a very large phrase. He referred to a rule which at one time existed amongst wholesale publishers of books as to the terms of discount upon which alone they would consent to supply the retailer. It had been given up, but at the time it might have been regarded as in restraint of trade. If one of those retailers had refused to pay for a parcel of books, was the wholesale publisher to be defrauded because the books had been delivered under a rule in restraint of trade? A man might devote his land to purposes perfectly legal, but which might be in restraint of trade. He confessed he did not know where that was to stop. The question before him in 1864 was whether a legal society might be permitted to bank to any extent in the post-office savings' banks. He then understood they had complied with the regulation which made it a legal society, namely, by depositing the rules, and that they could not deposit rules which contained anything illegal.

Mr. Allan: Mr. Tidd Pratt says he has nothing to do with seeing whether the rules are legal or not.

Mr. Gladstone: So that an illegal society might deposit its rules?

Mr. Danter: The Act gives him power, and he examines the rules to see whether they are legal or not.

Mr. Gladstone: So I thought.

Mr. Allan: The Society I represent has deposited upwards of £40,000 in those banks.

Mr. Gladstone: The question before me at the time was, whether you might not be allowed to bank as a friendly society. Well, why are you not a friendly society?

Mr. Allan: We have tried it, and ascertained that we must be registered in Scotland and Ireland, as well as England, and then we would be three different societies.

Mr. Gladstone: What is there in point of law which makes you otherwise than a friendly society?

Mr. Allan: We are a corresponding society, going through various countries.

Mr. Gladstone: I want to know whether there is any legal impediment to your becoming a friendly society. Would that rule about supporting men when on strike prevent you?

Mr. Odger explained that the judgment was to that effect.

Mr. Applegarth: Take our societies as a whole, they are for the purpose of assisting our members to take their labour to the best market. Now that embraces the supporting them when on strike or when locked out.

But along with that we have many benevolent objects. We believed as you did, sir, that Mr. Tidd Pratt would not have allowed our Rules to be deposited if our society had not been a legal one.

Mr. Allan said they believed they could not be wrong in acting upon the legal opinion of the Attorney-General of England.

Mr. Gladstone asked the proportion that the amount paid to men on strike bore to the expenditure of the societies for benevolent purposes during the past ten years.

Mr. Allan said not one-tenth, he believed, was paid to men on strike. He then explained that the deputation did not ask Mr. Gladstone to undertake to remedy the grievance complained of, but that he would be kind enough to render his most valuable assistance generally so far as he could to Mr. Neate in carrying the bill he had introduced through Parliament, that temporary protection might be obtained for their funds pending the permanent settlement of the matter.

Mr. Gladstone said the principles of combination were of very great importance. Whatever was permitted by law ought to entail no legal grievance. He was completely puzzled by the matter as it then stood before him, and requested to be furnished with a copy of the judgment of the Court of Queen's Bench, which the deputation promised to send. It was, he said, a very interesting matter, and he would give it his best attention.

The deputation then thanked Mr. Gladstone for his kindness and withdrew.

THE CONFERENCE AND THE ROYAL COMMISSION.

On Friday, March 15th, the Royal Commission of Inquiry into Trades' Unions met at their office, 2 Victoria Street, Westminster. A deputation from the Conference consisting of representatives of the Amalgamated Engineers, Amalgamated Carpenters, Ironfounders, Bicklayers, and other important trades of the country, had an interview with the Commissioners, and requested that when any particular trade or society was the subject of inquiry, a representative from such trade or society should be allowed to attend.

This was granted, as will be seen by the following copy of a letter sent by the Secretary of the Commission to Mr. Applegarth, who is acting as secretary to the Conference of Trades' Representatives:—

"2 Victoria Street, Westminster,
" March 15th.

"SIR,—With reference to the application made this day by the deputation of the Trades' Delegates Conference, introduced by yourself, I am directed to inform you that the Commissioners have agreed to the following resolutions: 1. 'That in addition to the presence of such persons as the Commissioners may deem expedient at any time,

the Commissioners will be ready, as a general rule, to admit some one person connected with or representing any trade or society which seems likely to be affected by the inquiry, to be conducted on a given day.' 2. 'That, when printed, a copy of the shorthand writer's notes of the examination of witnesses each day be sent to every person so attending, and to be supplied, as soon as convenient, to any member of the press who may apply for it.'

"I am, &c.,

"J. H. PATTERSON, *Secretary*.

"To Mr. R. Applegarth."

In addition to the above the following communication was received by the Conference :—

"We thank the Conference for their offer, made through their deputation, of assistance in our inquiry, and we will avail ourselves of that offer as far as we think expedient, and we will receive from time to time any application, on behalf of any member of the Conference, for him to be present at any sitting of this Commission."

It will be seen from the above that the Conference has done every thing in their power to secure a fair and impartial examination.

GREAT MEETING OF LONDON TRADES IN EXETER HALL, IN REFERENCE TO THE SHEFFIELD OUTRAGES.

We now come to a very serious part of our narrative, namely, the conduct of the conference upon the appalling disclosures at Sheffield becoming known to the public. Each member of the conference brought the question to the notice of his respective society, and a vote was unanimously adopted at the whole of the large societies to assist the London Trades' Council in calling a meeting at Exeter Hall immediately to express the surprise, indignation, and horror of the trade societies at the crimes perpetrated by Broadhead and his accomplices at Sheffield. The following is a report of the meeting :—

On Tuesday night, July 2nd, at eight o'clock, when the chair was taken by Mr. W. Allan, secretary to the Amalgamated Engineers, the great hall was densely crowded with artisans, and on the platform were seated most of the leading trade unionists of the metropolis. Amongst others who occupied seats on the platform were Professor Beesly, Mr. Beales, and Colonel Dickson.

The Secretary read the following letter from Mr. Ludlow :—

"MY DEAR SIR,—I regret much that I shall not be able to attend the meeting of this evening, but an engagement in my own parish, for a co-operative purpose, hinders me from doing so.

"The Trades of London do well to meet on this occasion, and I trust the present meeting will be followed up by a series of similar ones, both in London and elsewhere, which shall bring the public opinion of the working class to bear upon the men of Sheffield with such weight of earnestness, that not only the recurrence of atrocities like those paid for by Broadhead and his compeers shall become impossible, but that the guilty parties shall feel that there is no room left for them in the midst of honest, God-fearing English artizans.

"The present, be assured, is a trial-time for Trade Societies. Oblivious of the fact, that what we see now revealed are not the first, but, as I trust, the last of trade outrages, which were formerly common to many other trades and towns than the six or eight tainted trades of Sheffield,—and that the inquiry which has at last uncloaked these iniquities was asked for by your societies themselves,—foolish men are raising a cry, some for the legislative suppression of trade societies, others, who fancy themselves more moderate, for still withholding from them those legal guarantees for their safe and open working, the absence of which forms at present the only avowed colour of excuse for the outrages in question, and tends necessarily to transform into secret conspiracies institutions otherwise of an essentially friendly, though one-sided character. This temporary crisis in public opinion needs above all to be met by a course of conduct in moral reprobation of outrage which shall overcome prejudice and defy evil, as well as by a firm and temperate indication of the principles on which your societies rest.

"And since it appears to me certain that legislation and fear, hostile legislation—on the subject of trade societies will be attempted in the next session of Parliament, I cannot but earnestly urge working men to be prepared to send members of their own order to the next House of Commons; men of unblemished character, of experience, firmness, and good sense, whether drawn from the actual ranks of trade societies, or even from among such persons as, through various circumstances, may either have left or never joined those ranks, but who entertain (as many such do) a full sense of the need which exists for trade organization, of the benefits which it confers on the working class, and of the guarantees for good character in the workman which trade societies generally supply.

Depend upon it, the time is come when the working man must fight his own battle, in or out of Parliament. You have amongst you good men and true, as I well know. You have the means of sending them to Parliament, and maintaining them while there. If you do not send them, you know as well as I that it will be your own fault, the fault of those petty jealousies and prejudices, of that narrow-mindedness and exclusiveness, which unfortunately are as prevalent in your class as in almost any other.

Meanwhile, as one who for many years now has paid some attention to trade societies and their proceedings, I am glad to express my perfect conviction, and should have willingly done so, if present, from your platform to-night, that the great bulk of these societies are entirely free from all complicity or sympathy with such practices as have hitherto disgraced the Borough, of which Mr. Roebuck is the long-chosen representative.

"Yours truly,

"(Signed) J. M. LUDLOW.

"To Mr. William Allan."

The Chairman, in a brief speech, said that the London Trades' Council had convened this meeting in consequence of the recent disclosures at Sheffield, which had to a great extent involved trade societies that had no conception of the deeds which had been perpetrated. Broadhead appeared to be the leader in these affairs, than which nothing could be worse. These disclosures must to a certain extent damage their societies, as they would cause people to distrust them to some degree. He was exceedingly glad that these doings had been brought to light—(cheers)—and hoped that means would be taken to put a stop to them in the future. He boldly declared that if trades' unions had to depend upon murder the sooner they ceased to exist the better. (Hear, hear, and cheers.) Their presence there showed that they did not countenance these atrocious outrages, but that they repudiated them with sentiments of detestation and horror. Besides the murders, there were the cases of shooting and maiming, which, in his opinion, were almost worse than death itself, as through these means the unfortunate victims were deprived of earning their livelihood.

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Mr. Guile (ironfounder) moved the first resolution, and in doing so complained of the efforts made to connect all unionists with the Sheffield outrages, and after an effective speech moved—"That this meeting of members of trades' societies not only expresses its utter abhorrence of the crimes perpetrated by Broadhead and his accomplices, but feels bound to say that it cannot understand how the delegates, who composed the Council of Organised Trades of Sheffield, did not discover for so great a length of time, such an unparalleled system of notorious crimes as has existed in connection with some of their societies."

Mr. George Odger, shoemaker, and a member of the Reform League, seconded the motion. Broadhead had not acted for the benefit of trade societies, but for his own purposes; and it was only another of his crimes to pretend that he was trying to benefit the class with which he was connected. He had no purpose to serve except his own. Whether he had been a trades' unionist, or had been associated with the law or the church, or whether he had been a statesman, he would have been just as great a criminal as he was as a trades' unionist. (Cheers.) Was it right that all members of trades societies should be condemned because of the acts of those scoundrels who had confessed their crimes before the commissioners. (No, no.) Had not society been outraged by the crimes of men of all classes? by members of the learned profession? Would it have been just for society to condemn a whole class on account of their individual acts? (Cheers.) On the same ground it was monstrous for newspaper writers and others to charge the whole of their trades' societies as being guilty in this respect. So far from the London Trades' Council having any sympathy with crime, he would remind them that seven months ago the council sent a committee to Sheffield for the purpose of inquiring into an outrage which was then committed—that of blowing up a house. Mr. Danter and himself went down, and discovered that rattening had been encouraged by some of the trades. They made a report which was sent to the London newspapers. One or two took notice of it, but the others did not. In the report they stated:—"We felt it to be our duty to visit the council of the 'Organised Trades' of Sheffield, for the purpose of putting such questions to them as we thought consistent with the responsible position in which we were placed. The result of which is that Mr. Broadhead unequivocally admits that rattening, to the extent of taking away bands and tools, and detaining them until some fines and contributions are paid, has been the custom of some of the societies since they had an existence." The fact that the London Trades' Council made this report fully proved that the system of rattening was unjustifiable, and their desire that it should be put a stop to.

Mr. Howell, secretary of the Reform League, said that a large portion of the press of the country appeared to denounce crimes only when they were committed by a certain class. After strongly condemning the conduct of the trade societies of Sheffield, which did not take sufficient care to inquire into the manner in which their funds were distributed, he remarked that, not to speak of murder and assault, taking even the milder case of rattening, there could be no doubt that such acts were not only great crimes but great blunders. (Cheers.) They must be prepared that evening to denounce all

who had connection with those notorious crimes; but if any portion of society thought that on account of the Sheffield outrages they could with impunity assail the trade unions, they committed a great error. (Cheers.) The working men of England were not prepared to allow the principle of combination for trade purposes to be interfered with.

Mr. Harry (carpenter) spoke in the strongest terms of the crime of rattening. When stealing and burglary were once commenced, worse crimes would follow, and murder would finally result. He condemned the language used by the journals which sought to fix on a body the crimes of a few individuals.

Mr. Dunning (bookbinder) said that just now they were before the bar, not of the press, but of public opinion. Public opinion very seldom judged wrongly, but just at present there could be no doubt that there was somewhat of a *furor* against the trade societies. Broadhead was at best a sorry villain, with a keen eye for the main chance, and was at the time that he was plotting great crimes endeavouring to embezzle a few pounds for his own purposes. He did not blame the Government for giving Broadhead and the others certificates of indemnity, but he should express his strong hope that the outcome of the inquiry would not be that the rogues were let off and the honest men punished. (Hear, hear.) The error committed by the men of Sheffield was in not separating themselves from the societies in which the crimes were committed.

The resolution was unanimously adopted.

Mr. Applegarth (carpenter) proposed—"That we, the members of the metropolitan trades' societies here assembled, beg to express our most cordial approbation of the services rendered to the country generally, and to trades' unions especially, by Mr. Overend and the whole of the gentlemen forming the Sheffield Commission, in having brought to public light, and thereby to just execration, a system of organised crime in connection with certain trades' unions in Sheffield, which has been a source of terror to the people of the town and a means of bringing distrust upon all trades' combinations." He would desire to add to that, that all that had ever been written in condemnation of the acts done in Sheffield he fully concurred in, but he did not concur in the censures which had been lavished on the entire population of Sheffield. There was one fact to be remembered, that these horrible trade offences were year by year growing less. Within the last five years there was only one serious outrage in Sheffield; within the previous five years a dozen were committed. He defended the conduct of Mr. Dronfield and others, men whom the press sought to drag down to the level of Broadhead, and who were as honest, as moral, and conscientious as any in England. He then referred to the efforts which the working men in Sheffield had made to discover the causes and perpetrators of outrages, and which had broken down owing to the conduct of the masters. How was it, he asked, that working men, every day at their business, could be expected to discover crimes which skilled police officers had failed to discover? He trusted that the commission would continue the work it had commenced fairly and impartially, and extend their enquiries into the acts of the masters as well as those of the workmen. (Cheers.)

The resolution was seconded by Mr. Dodd (zincworker), and supported by Mr. Coulson (bricklayer).

Professor Beesly said he had listened with great satisfaction to the resolutions which had been moved, and to the able speeches which had been made in support of them. He was glad to see this great meeting pledge itself to such excellent sentiments, but he might be allowed to say that when that meeting was over he thought that nearly enough would have been said about this matter. There was no good to be attained by using exaggerated language even about Sheffield outrages. He did not mean to say that any exaggerated language had been used at this meeting. He thought that all the speakers had been animated by a very proper spirit. Murder was a great crime. They were all agreed about that. But after all it must not be forgotten that a trades' union murder was neither better nor worse than any other murder. The wealthy classes of this country, in whose eyes unionism of itself was a crime, naturally considered that any crime connected with unionism was doubly criminal. But clearly that was a doctrine which this meeting could not admit. He was aware that such an observation would excite the anger of those who thought that all the workmen in England ought to be kept sitting in sackcloth and ashes for what had been done in Sheffield; and if his remark should find its way into the newspapers he should very likely see himself denounced as an apologist for murder. Well, that would not be very agreeable. But if we were to shrink from saying the truth because there were base persons always ready and eager to place an odious misconception on our words, we had better hold our tongues altogether, and make room for others who might have greater courage and a stronger sense of duty. What he wished to point out was that a man who is perpetually protesting his innocence from crime must inevitably become demoralised. It was impossible that he should retain his self-respect if he had always to assume an apologetic attitude. It was most desirable that this remark should be made by some one, and perhaps it came better from him than from the other speakers. He was no apologist for murder. During the last twelve months he had subscribed his money and given what other assistance he could to bring a great murderer to justice—a murderer whose hands were red with blood not of two or three victims, but of more than four hundred. That murderer had committed his crime in the interest of employers, just as Broadhead had committed his crimes in the interest of workmen. The wealthy class of this country had been called on to express their opinion on the crimes committed by wealthy men in Jamaica just as the poorer classes in London were now called on to express their opinion on the crimes committed by poor men in Sheffield. And what opinion did they express? Did they summon a meeting in Exeter-hall and proclaim aloud that they abhor the crime, and that though they wished to protect property and wealth they repudiated such means of protecting it as Governor Eyre had adopted? (Cries of "Question" from one or two individuals, which was immediately drowned in a roar of applause.) Did they do so? No! but they offered him banquets; they loaded him with honours; they made his deed their own. That murderer was now at large in England, not because he had a certificate of indemnity like Broadhead, but because

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a bench of magistrates of his own class had refused to send him before a jury. London workmen had acted differently. It was not their class to which the stigma of encouraging murder attached. He did not see that they need take blame or shame to themselves for what had been done at Sheffield. He did not see why they should hold their heads less high or recede one inch from the claims they were making on the legislature. The middle classes would go on talking about the Sheffield outrages for a long time, and they would be glad to keep workmen talking of them in order to divert their attention from the state of the law as affecting unionism. It had already been pointed out to-night by more than one speaker that the law refused protection to union funds. Thus the middle class invited thieves to do what they were afraid to do themselves. They set on thieves to steal the union funds just as Broadhead set on his agents to steal bands. In short, the only difference between rattening as practised by trades' unions and rattening as practised against trades' unions was that the law punished the one and encouraged the other. Again, take the law respecting so-called "intimidation." No one disputed that the man who struck another, or even shook his fist at him, or used language calculated to provoke a breach of the peace, ought to be punished. But such was the state of the law at present that the magistrate at Marlborough-street had been able to commit more outrages in a week than Broadhead had for twelve months. If a tailor told another tailor that he should refuse to work with him, the magistrate would commit him for trial and exact £100 bail from a poor man earning twenty or thirty shillings a week, and then when he came for trial, a jury of employers and a bench of middle-class magistrates would send him to the treadmill. These were monstrous grievances, and the middle-class would try, by raising a great dust about Sheffield, to prevent workmen from getting redress for them. They would make a great mistake if they assumed a more humble tone or confined themselves to a defensive attitude. A defensive attitude was always a weak attitude. They were now likely to have some means of influencing the legislature. They should get bills drawn to remedy the two grievances he had mentioned, and at the next election, under the Reform Bill, every popular constituency should pledge candidates, not to such rotten tests of radicalism as were now proposed, but to these two bills. If such were passed he believed they would hear of no more outrages even at Sheffield, for it was the sense of wrong legally inflicted which made unionists outstep the limits of legality.

Mr. Edmond Beales, who was greeted with the most enthusiastic applause, addressed the meeting in eloquent terms, remarking that he would indeed regret any efforts he had made to obtain the enfranchisement of the people if they were the sympathisers with crime some persons sought to represent them. (Cheers.)

The proceedings closed with the usual vote of thanks.

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DELEGATE MEETING OF THE LONDON TRADES' COUNCIL.

The delegates at the Annual Meeting of the London Trades' Council considering that the speech of Professor Beesly at the Exeter Hall meeting, on July 2nd, had been much misrepresented deemed it their duty to express their opinion on the matter.

The following resolutions were unanimously adopted, and the opinions therein expressed are based on the result of years of intimate acquaintance between Professor Beesly and the Trades' Council:—

First Resolution—

“That this meeting of delegates and members of the trades' unions of London desires to express its deep sense of respect and gratitude to Professor E. S. Beesly who for the past seven years has been the patient, zealous and judicious friend and adviser of the trades' unions of the united Kingdom, and who has invariably dealt with the many difficult, exciting, and irritating questions that have arisen between workmen and their employers in the spirit of truth, kindness and moderation, and has thus done much to calm and assuage bitter feelings on the part of the unionists, and to check the spread of that class antagonism which he has always recognised to be one of the most deplorable results of the present unsatisfactory relations between labour and capital.”

Second Resolution—

“That this meeting also desires to express its sorrow and indignation at the mode in which certain influential portions of the public press have attempted to destroy the character, position, and influence of Professor Beesly, by misrepresenting and taking advantage of a few isolated passages in his speech at Exeter Hall, on the 2nd of July last, which passages, if they afford the slightest excuse for the denunciations for which they have furnished a text, do so only by the incompleteness with which they expressed his views, and which ought by all fair men to be interpreted in accordance with the honourable, just and useful character of his public life; and this meeting is assured that no impression was conveyed to those who heard his speech at Exeter Hall, that he had offered, as is alleged, the slightest extenuation of the Sheffield crimes.”

Third Resolution—

“That copies of these resolutions be forwarded to the institution with which Professor Beesly is connected.”

In giving them insertion here we desire to express our hearty approval of the opinions contained in these resolutions.

CONCLUSION.

We have thus given to the members we represent, and to trade societies generally, a true and faithful account of our transactions in connection with these important questions; and we feel ourselves justified in saying

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that the effect of our proceedings has been, throughout the whole of this most critical period, to secure the general approval of the press and the public. In conclusion, we take this opportunity of stating that we shall follow up the work which we have been so much engaged in until the Royal Commission has completed its labours, and make known the result to the trades from time to time, or call a conference of trades generally, should it be found necessary.

We remain,

On behalf of the Conference of Amalgamated Trades,

DELEGATES.	SOCIETIES.
MR. W. ALLAN,	} Amalgamated Society of Engineers.
" R. DANTER,	
" D. HENDERSON.	
" W. ROBSON,	
" D. GUILLE,	} Ironfounders' Society.
" J. HEMLEY,	
" T. POWELL,	
" R. APPLGARTH,	} Amalgamated Society of Carpenters and Joiners.
" T. W. HUGHES,	
" J. D. PRIOR,	
" E. COULSON,	Operative Bricklayers' Society.
" T. SPELLING,	Vellum Binders' Society.
" G. ODGER	London Trades' Council.

W. ALLAN, *Chairman.*

R. APPLGARTH, *Secretary.*

R E P O R T
OF
ST. MARTIN'S HALL
United Kingdom Trades' Conference Committee
ON THE
TRADES' UNION INQUIRY COMMISSION
TILL 7TH AUGUST, 1867.

FELLOW-WORKMEN,—The Royal Commission on Trades' Unions at Westminster, having at their last Meeting adjourned for some months; the Committee appointed by your representatives in Conference have thought this a convenient time to bring before you in a report a summary of the proceedings which you appointed them to watch on your behalf. The Committee desire, also, to draw your attention to the following Minutes of their proceedings.

TRADES' CONFERENCE COMMITTEE.

OFFICIAL MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS.

LONDON, *May 17th, 1867.*

The United Kingdom Trades' Conference Committee met this morning, according to circular, at the BEEHIVE Office, Bolt Court, Fleet Street. All the Members were present, Mr. CONNOLLY presiding. The Minutes of the previous Meetings were read and confirmed.

The Chairman made a statement as to the proceedings of the Trades' Union Commission of Inquiry, which he had attended as representative of this Committee. The financial position was thereupon taken into consideration, and after a full statement, it was found that, although not quite satisfactory, we were in a much better position than was anticipated.

The Secretary reported that the amount due from the Glasgow Trades' Council had been sent up by him, and he would pay the same over to the Treasurer. Edinburgh had not as yet sent anything, but he was of opinion that there was no doubt but Edinburgh would

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maintain her honour in this matter; at least he (the Secretary) strongly hoped so.

Committee took into consideration the course to be pursued towards this inquiry, when a full report of the statements of the various witnesses was much desiderated. With a view to giving our constituents the fullest opportunity of defending themselves, the following resolutions were adopted, viz:—

1. "That this Committee respectfully urge upon the Commission, the desirability of examining the employers of labour in the first instance, and that when such evidence is published, that a copy be furnished to the next operative witness of that trade to be examined, in order that he may have an opportunity of giving explanations, and replying to statements of the other side; or in the event of this mode of procedure interfering with the arrangements of the Commission, that the representatives of operative Trades' Unions have an opportunity of replying to statements made against their respective Associations; this privilege to be granted to those witnesses who have been examined already.

2. "That with the view of having this investigation as fair and exhaustive as possible, and that the case of the various Trades' Societies be fully put before the Commission and the public, that the selection of witnesses to give evidence on their behalf be left in the hands of the trades themselves.

3. "That with the view that the trades of the United Kingdom may continue to be as efficiently represented as possible, this Committee shall endeavour to make such arrangements as shall enable any trade to comply with the preceding resolutions; and shall also send, from off this Committee, to watch the proceedings on behalf of the workmen, the Member best qualified for the interest of the trade under examination.

After a long conversation as to the re-arranging the officers of the Committee, the matter was delayed, and the Committee adjourned at six o'clock till nine o'clock next morning.

May 18.

Committee assembled this morning. Resumed consideration of change of officers; but after a long discussion, it was finally agreed, with one exception, to continue the Committee as at present constituted. Mr. Holmes, of Leeds, our respected Treasurer, insisted on retiring, on the score of ill-health, and the urgent representations of his medical adviser that he should do so. It was with great reluctance the Committee were forced to acquiesce in this decision, but ultimately, Mr. Holmes agreeing to continue a Member of Committee, his resignation as Treasurer was accepted, and Mr. M'Donald appointed in his place.

With the view of obtaining the pecuniary and moral aid of the various trades in conducting our operations, it was resolved, that each Member of Committee shall use his influence to get such trades as have not hitherto joined us to do so; and urge those trades represented at the conference, but who have not contributed to the levy, to do so at once. And that in order that the trades may be fully informed of all the evidence given before the Com-

mission, the BEEHIVE newspaper be requested to publish a full report, and we would respectfully call on all Trades' Unionists to give this organ of labour their utmost support.

It was next resolved that, in order to strengthen the hands of Mr. HARRISON, our representative on the Commission, that we render him every information in our power to enable him thoroughly to accomplish our work, and we hereby instruct our Secretary, as far as practicable, to furnish Mr. HARRISON from time to time with such information.

There having as yet been no audit of the Treasurer's books, it was agreed Mr. Holmes consenting, that he shall continue to receive all monies, and continue to discharge the duties of Treasurer, till next Meeting, when audit may be made, and the books handed over.

After a vote of thanks to the Chairman, the Committee adjourned *sine die*.

6th August, 1867.

Met, according to circular, the United Kingdom Trades' Conference Committee. Present—Messrs HOLMES, of Leeds; ALLAN, of Liverpool; WOOD, of Manchester; and LEIGH, of Hyde—Provincial representatives; and Messrs POTTER, LEICESTER, and CONNOLLY, of London. The other provincial Members, viz.,—Mr. M'DONALD, of the National Miners, was absent on business; Mr. KANE, of the Iron-workers, from not having got the intimation in time; and Mr. PROUDFOOT, of Glasgow, the Secretary, was at the Commission, and under examination; Mr. CONNOLLY presided. The first business was the consideration of the position and duty of this Committee towards the Commission of Inquiry, in consequence of the exclusion by the Commission of Mr. CONNOLLY, (who has from time to time represented this Committee there) from their Meetings in consequence of some criticisms passed by Mr. CONNOLLY, at a Public Meeting, on the political conduct and consistency of a Member of the Commission. The representatives of the London Trades, at a Meeting, had appointed a deputation to wait on the Commission, with a view to procure the rescinding of their resolution. Mr. LEE, of the London Compositor's Society, on the part of the deputation, was present, to report to the Committee.

Previous to receiving this report, Mr. CONNOLLY made a statement as to the proceedings of the Commission, the evidence of the various witnesses up to the date of his exclusion on the 5th July, and reported the facts relative to his exclusion.

Mr. R. LEE reported from the deputation that they had an interview with the Commission, who declined to rescind their resolution respecting Mr. CONNOLLY, but were quite willing to receive another representative from the Committee in his place.

After receiving this report, the Committee at six o'clock p.m., adjourned till to-morrow morning at ten a.m.

August 7th, 1867.

The Committee re-assembled this morning, and in addition to those present yesterday, Mr. PROUDFOOT, the Secretary, was present. Mr. LEIGH, said he thought their first business was to consider what future connection this Committee should hold with the Trades' Union

Inquiry Commission, or in the event of resolving to hold no further communication, to dissolve this Committee. Mr. PROUDFOOT made a statement as to his experience of the Commission, and thought it would be suicidal policy on our part to dissolve the Committee, until it had fulfilled, or found it impossible to fulfil, the objects of its appointment. In his opinion, nothing whatever has occurred, to alter the position of this Committee in regard to the important inquiry before the Commission, and if the Commissioners had (as in his opinion they had), somewhat compromised their dignity, by becoming parties to a dispute which was purely personal, between one of their number and Mr. CONNOLLY, or constituted themselves judges *ex parte* in the cause, that was no good reason why we should forget our dignity, or the important interests committed to our charge. Moreover, he, Mr. PROUDFOOT, could not see how we could, in honour to those who appointed us, abdicate our functions without calling them together and consulting them, and giving them the opportunity of bidding us go on, or removing us, or electing others in our room. This Committee had various duties to perform to their constituents, besides sending a Member to sit at the Commission. It was, he Mr. PROUDFOOT, considered a part of that duty to keep the trades fully informed of every movement, and to advise and instruct such as had explanations to make, and information to give. Also, after the Commissioners had given in their report, it would be the duty of the Committee to make a report to the trades, as to the action to be taken by Trades' Unionists on the report of the Commission; in fact all the more important work of the Committee was yet in the future, he was therefore decidedly opposed to the idea of dissolving the Committee.

Mr. ALLAN, Mr. LEICESTER, Mr. WOOD, and Mr. HOLMES all concurred in the views enunciated by Mr. PROUDFOOT. Mr. POTTER also concurred, and stated further, that, as the Commission had adjourned for some months, this Committee should issue a report of the progress of the Inquiry up to this date, and moved a resolution to the following effect:—"That as the Trades' Union Commission had adjourned its sittings till November next, this Committee adjourn for the present the consideration of what future connection they will hold with the Commission; and in the meantime, this Committee shall prepare and issue to the trades an opinion as to the line of policy they would recommend to be adopted in future. And further, that to enable the Committee to carry on its work, a levy of One Farthing per member (in accordance with resolution of Conference), be now called for." Mr. PROUDFOOT seconded the resolution, which was adopted unanimously, after some discussion. Mr. LEIGH, of Hyde, was appointed Treasurer in the room of Mr. HOLMES, who retired at last meeting in consequence of the state of his health—Mr. M'DONALD, who was elected to the office at last meeting, and agreeing, now declined to fill the office. Mr. HOLMES submitted an account of income and expenditure from opening of Conference till 18th May last, when he retired, which was audited by the Secretary and Mr. Wood, and found correct, the books and balances since that date being handed over to Mr. LEIGH.

The Secretary was instructed to prepare a report to the trades on

the Trades' Union Commission, in conformity with the resolution of Committee, as early as possible, and the proceedings of this Committee (as far as not published in the Conference report), relative thereto, and also a statement of income and expenditure.

After the transaction of some routine business, the Committee adjourned *sine die*.

(Signed) JOHN C. PROUDFOOT, *Secretary*.

TO THE TRADES REPRESENTED AT ST. MARTIN'S HALL CONFERENCE, AND TO THE TRADES OF THE UNITED KINGDOM GENERALLY.

BRETHREN,—From the repeal of the Combination Laws in 1824-25, whereby the toiling millions of this country were allowed to exercise in freedom the right to agree together as to the conditions on which, the proportion of time, and the price at which we would sell our labour,—till now, there has only been one crisis of any importance, in regard to legislative action, respecting those associations which we have established for the protection of our industrial interests, and for maintaining our right to sell our labour, which is our capital, upon the conditions which we may mutually think most conducive to our moral, intellectual, and physical welfare. That crisis was, I need hardly remind you, in 1838, when a Select Committee of the House of Commons was appointed to inquire into the subject of Trades' Combinations, under the chairmanship of the late DANIEL O'CONNELL. The appointment of this was consequent upon the great Strike of the Cotton Spinners of Glasgow, the year before. Trades' disputes were then, and had been for many years previous, characterized by violence and outrage, than which those recently disclosed at Sheffield were not more atrocious, horrible, and inhuman. The Committee was appointed to make inquiry into the operation of the Act 6, Geo. IV., chap. 129, and generally into the constitution, proceedings, and extent of any Trades' Unions, or combinations of workmen, or employers of workmen in the United Kingdom, and report their observations to the House. Another crisis of still greater importance has again occurred after the expiry of two decades of years. We say of greater importance, because the ramifications of Trades' Unions are vastly more extended than at any former period of their history; and their business is carried on in a manner, and with a completeness that would do credit to some Imperial Governments; and, as a general rule, with a care and a deference for the rights of individuals which, whatever our enemies may say to the contrary, is almost unimpeachable. We have once more an inquiry into the subject of Trades' Unions this time by Royal Commission, who, by Royal warrant, and in pursuance of Act of Parliament, are to inquire into, and report on, the Organization and Rules of Trades' Unions and other Associations, whether of workmen or employers; and to inquire into and report on the effect produced by such Trades' Unions and associations on the workmen

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and employers respectively and on the Relations between Workmen and Employers, and on the Trade and Industry of the Country; with power to investigate any recent acts of intimidation, outrage, or wrong, alleged to have been promoted, encouraged, or connived at by such Trades' Unions, or other Associations; and also to suggest any improvements to be made in the law with respect to the matters aforesaid, or with respect to the relations between workmen and their employers for the mutual benefit of both parties. Happily, in these latter days, with some very trifling exceptions (and any connection with these exceptions the great body of Trades' Unionists most emphatically repudiate) we have no cases of outrage or wrong promoted, encouraged, or connived at by us for the Commission to investigate. The inquiry, however, is not on that account of the less importance to us as Trades' Unionists; nor is the result of the inquiry likely to be of such a nature as that we can safely leave the Commission to pursue it without any attention being paid on our part to its progress, the witnesses brought up to give information, and the nature of the evidence tendered by them to the Commissioners.

As we took occasion to state to you in our former report, this inquiry having been entered upon, it is of the utmost importance that it should be fair, free, and exhaustive; and that if the opponents of those institutions of ours which are deemed essential to the due protection of the interests of labour against the overwhelming influence of capital, are to be allowed and invited to rake up from the ends of the earth all sorts of possible, impossible, and ridiculous charges against them, you, who are the creators and natural conservators of these institutions, should be watchful, and have equal opportunity, and be equally ready by your representatives to defend to the utmost whatever you may think unfairly attacked; and as your enemies will by no means be over-scrupulous whence they draw their information, very nice as to its absolute correctness, or generous in its application, it must be seen to by you that, if such a course is likely to be, or is being pursued, that you will not allow it to go to the world without such contradiction and explanation as shall convince all men that there is nothing connected with our Associations which we desire to conceal, and nothing which we deem of importance that we are not prepared to defend. If there be anything in the constitution of our Societies, their operation, or effects of those operations, which is proved to be against public policy, and injurious to the great body of the public, we are sure no one will rejoice to have the matter corrected more heartily than the great operative class, who have established these institutions for the protection of their labour.

The inquiry has already, as all of you are aware, been going on for five months, so that we are no longer left to guess at the nature of the evidence (and the spirit shown in it) which is to be brought against us. The campaign was opened by the examination of some of your own representatives. Mr. ROBERT APPLGARTH, of the Amalgamated Joiners and Carpenters, was the first witness, and without agreeing in all the doctrines enunciated by Mr. APPLGARTH, we may say that his positions were generally well taken, and ably argued. He was examined as to the origin, constitution, and mode of management

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of that Association, as to the payments by, and benefits guaranteed to members, and as to the relations which the operations of his Association produced between employers and employed; but as we have already published all his evidence given at that time in the *Beehive* newspaper, we need not at present condescend on particulars further than to say that a great portion of the examination being directed to elucidating particulars respecting the friendly portion of their Association was not, in our opinion, strictly german to the purpose for which the Commission was appointed.

Mr. GEORGE POTTER, of London, a member of our Committee, was the next witness, and was examined at great length on the constitution and practice of his local Society, as well as on his experience of Trade Societies generally, and his acquaintance with other Associations of an analogous kind; also as to piece-work, overtime, and the practice of fixing a minimum, or average rate of wages, which Mr. Potter justified on the principle that while one man might be more highly skilled in one department of labour than another, another might be more valuable in some other department of labour in which strength was of more avail than skill, and to which work the more highly skilled artizan would not apply himself, and at which all his skill would render him no advantage over the less skillful workman, and that men were usually put to that class of employment which produced the highest profit to the employer. Mr POTTER gave very lucid evidence on all points, and specially that it is quite untrue, as alleged by the enemies of Trades' Unions, that their effect is to prevent the more highly-skilled and prudent artizan to better his condition, but that every man was at full liberty to appraise his own labour, and act accordingly, although, as a general rule, we should never forget that our motto should be "each for all and all for each."

The main, or at least one motive cause for the appointment of this Commission, was the loud outcry made by certain interested though rather obtuse individuals, that the effect of the extensive combinations of the operative classes was sending a great portion of our most important industries to be executed abroad, and which would eventually tend to drag us from our position as the great workshop of the world. This "cuckoo" cry was repeated *ad nauseam* by a portion of the press whose delight it is, in the interests of the moneyocracy, to yelp at the heels of that class by whose toil all wealth was originally created, and by whose patient industry it still progresses with such giant strides, and has now attained to such magnitude that it looks with disdain upon its humble parents, and "and knows them not," except as created for its profit. To expiscate some information relative to this, among other matters, Mr. WM. ALLAN was put under examination as to the Society of Amalgamated Engineers, and explained to the Commission that practically he had no fear of foreign competition, as although the engines about which there had been so much talk had been put together abroad, the material for them was really manufactured in this country; and that although the foreign workman nominally received a lower rate of wages, it was not practically so, as he did at least one third less work than the English workman, and the franc of France and Belgium, in point of fact, procured there more of the necessaries and conveniences of life than an Englishman's

shilling at home. Mr. ALLAN was examined at very great length as to the constitution of his Association at home and abroad, its effects and influence, and proved that it had all along been part of their settled policy to prevent strikes and promote good feeling and confidence between employer and employed; and that instead of their vast ramifications and large funds instigating them to be quarrelsome, these facts had quite an opposite effect. We beg to refer to the evidence as published from week to week in the columns of our organ. After Mr. ALLAN, followed Mr. HARNOTT, Secretary of the Operative Society of Stonemasons of England, who was examined in regard, *inter alia*, to certain rules of their Society respecting a practice called "chasing," and the publication of black lists. After Mr. HARNOTT came Mr. THOMAS CONNOLLY, of the same Association—a member of our Committee, who gave evidence as to the question of "chasing" and overtime. Mr. COULSON, of the Bricklayers' Association, was the next witness, and Mr. GEO. HOWELL, of the same Society. Mr. CHAS. WILLIAMS, of Liverpool, followed, and gave explanations as to certain lockouts and disputes at Bradford. Mr. Howroyd's sons, about whom the dispute originated, while reaping all the advantages derived by the members of the Union, refused to become members, and thereby contribute from their increased earnings towards the expenditure in virtue of which their earnings were so increased, and in consequence the workmen withdrew. In looking at this matter from a purely commercial point of view, there is much to be said for the Bradford Plasterers' Association, and however obtuse Mr. ROEBUCK may have been in apprehending Mr. WILLIAMS's illustrations, Mr. HOWROYD's sons being in enjoyment of the increased remuneration consequent upon the action and expenditure of the Trades' Union, were most undoubtedly "reaping where they had not sown." Operatives are entitled to sell, or to refuse to sell their labour, at any time, for any reason, or no reason at all. The only good ground of complaint the master plasterers of Bradford or Mr. HOWROYD could have had, was if they could have proved that by intimidation or coercion their men were withdrawn, and by the same means were prevented from getting others to supply their place. But the mere fact that one man or one hundred men refuse to sell their labour for what seems good and sufficient reason to themselves, can form no legitimate ground of complaint on the part of the person or persons to whom they refuse so to sell. Mr. HOUSLEY, of the Bricklayers' Society, Sheffield, was the next witness, then Mr. M'DONALD, of the Manchester and Salford Alliance of House Painters, and Mr. ROBERT LAST, of Manchester, Secretary of the General Union of Joiners and Carpenters. This list of witnesses completed the operative portion heard first after the opening of the Commission, and the Commissioners proceeded to hear representatives of the employing class. Mr. THOMAS PIPER, Secretary to the London Master Builders' Society, was examined, but nothing of any importance in respect to the inquiry was elicited, neither from this nor the two following, viz., Messrs. GEO. SMITH and G. F. TROLLOPE, excepting that the last two expressed an opinion that the action of Trades' Unions had led to estrangement between employers and employed. Mr. ALFRED MAULT was the

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next witness, and he appeared fully charged to devastate the ranks of Trades' Unionism, and to give to our protective Societies their final *coup de grace* and consign them to the limbo of "things that were." To attempt to give a summary of this gentleman's evidence would be adding one more to the labours of Hercules. Indeed, that old hero, notwithstanding all his wondrous feats, might well have shrunk appalled from the task; and it would be "cruelty to animals" to impeach his personal courage for so doing. Mr. MAULT's evidence, if it has no weight in any other respect (and we are far from saying that it has not) has great weight from the mere quantity of it. The evidence is mostly all second-hand, having been supplied by employers from the northern and midland counties for Mr. MAULT, to put into shape and lay before the Commission; and whatever may be said of the value of some of it, Mr. MAULT deserves every credit for the labour he has bestowed upon the work. There is, no doubt, much valuable information in Mr. MAULT's evidence, but it is wrapped up in such a cloud of dust as to be very difficult to get at. We have no desire to defend every action of every Trades' Union in the country, nor indeed every action of any one, conscious that there are some things in most, and much in many which could be well spared, but we do not see that the principle of Trades' Unionism is to bear the blame of all the unjustifiable actions of men who are Trades' Unionists, even when such actions are done by them either as individuals or associations; and no class in this country will have greater satisfaction, if by exposing such reprehensible practices to the light of public opinion, through the evidence before the Commission, or otherwise, Trades' Unions may be relieved from the grievous burden of being afflicted by such practices, and having a stigma attached to what is legitimate and just in itself, in consequence of the conduct of certain individuals or associations, who, over anxious about conserving and extending their own rights, are forgetful of the rights of others.

In speaking thus we are not for a moment to be supposed to admit as proved all the statements of Mr. MAULT, framed as they are, and intended to damage the principles of Trades' Unionism, nor do we mean to say that very much of what he, in his anxiety to damage our cause has charged against us, may not be justified on the principle that every man, or body of men, have the right to exercise their freedom in the manner most conducive to their own interests, so long as by their exercise of that right they do not infringe on the freedom of others. And we most sincerely hope that all our Trades' Unions will take the earliest opportunity of rebutting such charges as are laid against them, and affording such explanations to the uninformed in these matters, as shall silence all calumniators, and in respect to other practices which, in their own nature, are unjustifiable, they will take such measures, so that as in all matters we should be "without fear," so we should also be "without reproach."

But let us ask the denouncers of our Unions, while so very anxious to take the mote out of our eye, they have seen to it that there was no beam in their own. May not very much of what they complain of be the result of the spirit of retaliation. If a greater moderation and conciliation had been adopted towards the operative

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class, by employers; if they had shown a disposition when the claims of the operatives to an increased remuneration were obvious and undeniable, to meet such claims with a good grace, instead almost always grumblingly and grudgingly, a better spirit might, in return, have been exhibited by the operatives; but this has never, or very rarely, been the case.

We take it, that even now, when such an outcry is making about the tyranny of Trades' Unions, few men of sense will be inclined to argue that the increase of the wages of the operative class has kept pace with the increase of the gross wealth of the nation, or the increase of income (chargeable with Income-Tax) of the monied classes for the last twenty years. Without being prepared to say what exact proportion of the profits of industry properly belongs to the labourer, we have no hesitation in saying that notwithstanding the great improvement which has taken place of late years, he is still far short of receiving that share in the profits of his own labour, to which its value in the production of wealth ought fairly to entitle him. We may be met by the query, what would labour be without capital? Very true, we reply. And just put the converse, what would capital be without labour? To use an illustration of Mr. MILL, on another branch of the same broad subject, the production of wealth—Capital and labour are as necessary to each other as the "two legs of a pair of scissors are in the act of cutting," and it is "just as rational to dispute whether five or six does most in making the product of thirty." Yet, the employing class do not hesitate to argue that the productive labourer ought to have no word at all in the matter of selling his labour, and whenever, along with his fellows, he ventures to state the conditions upon which he is willing to be employed, the cry is raised that he is interfering with the mode in which a master chooses to conduct his business, whereas all the while it is purely in reference to his own business, viz., the sale of his labour about which he engaged. We most sincerely hope that many of the statements made by Mr MAULT are fictions, or, at all events, so highly coloured as to approach the fabulous. And as with the view of enabling the trades to know all that has been advanced of a nature damaging to the interests of the various Unions implicated, we have from time to time published the evidence, we hope those trades will be thoroughly prepared to meet such statements, either with a direct denial, or afford such explanation as shall set their position right before the Commission and the public, or at once cry *peccavi*, and prepare in the interests of justice and good policy to correct all abuses in connection with themselves, being well assured that that which cannot be justified ought to be at once excised. Such abuses, if retained, only serve to bring upon all the objects of our Association that condemnation which should only apply to the abuses themselves, but as long as such things are not only retained, but cherished, we cannot expect the public to distinguish between the good and the evil, and all combinations of the operative class, therefore, are indiscriminately denounced. As the Committee representing the interests of labour, appointed at the great Conference at St. Martin's Hall, in March last, we have left nothing undone which we deemed it essential to your interests to do. At our meeting in May last, we came to certain resolu-

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tions as to the manner in which it would be desirable that evidence in regard to Trades' Unions should be taken; first, by hearing the charges, the opponents, and denouncers of Unionism had to bring, and thereafter the defence of the operatives. On speaking of the matter to a very esteemed member of the Commission, we were informed that such a course was the course, which the Commission as a general rule, intended to pursue, and that every facility would be afforded to those Trades' Unions against whose rules, conduct, and constitution, charges have been made, to meet such charges by rebutting evidence. In order that the Trades might be fully aware of all such charges, it was resolved to publish from week to week in the "Beehive" Newspaper, the minutes of evidence as printed for the Commission; and also, that the Commission should be requested to leave the selection of witnesses on the part of any Trade, to the members of the Trade, which course has been followed by the Commission. It only remains therefore with the Trades' Unions of the United Kingdom to give us such aid, moral and material, as shall enable us to make such a defence for them as the magnitude of their interests demands.

In the middle of Mr. MAULT's evidence, an American gentleman, an Iron Manufacturer, gave some very useful information as to the condition of labour in the United States, and the relations between Employees and Employer, and stated in answer to question 3777, that the Employer and workmen in America agree in this. "In England they have degraded their labour to very low wages, too low for families to maintain themselves properly and comfortably. In America we are determined never to see that state of things introduced as long as we can possibly help it." And further, that English competition and the race after cheapness is all very good and sound, except that it leaves out of question, the "condition of the labourer." Mr. HEWITT also stated that he accounted for the absence of strikes and disputes in the establishments with which he is connected, by the fact that "our personal relations with the men are very good, and we do not hesitate frankly to talk over the condition of trade with them." How different the state of things is in Britain we all know. It would be deemed *infra dig* in an Employer of labour in this free country to talk over the condition of trade with a body of his operatives, and as to the question of the "condition of the labourer" entering into his calculations, such a thing could not for a moment be thought of. Mr. HEWITT also exposed the fact, that in the race after cheapness, and the scurry of competition, and in the country whose proudest vaunt is that she leads the van of civilisation, and in this later half of the Nineteenth Century, women and boys' labour is largely employed to do the work of men, and at the miserable pittance of 10d and 1s 3d a day. An attempt is made to excuse this state of things by saying, "it is the women themselves who desire the work." This may be true, but what is the cause, plainly that the remuneration given to their fathers, husbands, and brothers is so very low that they cannot keep their females without forcing them into competition with themselves, and thereby affording a pretext for a still further reduction of their already starvation wages. We strongly commend

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this gentleman's evidence to the attention of the operative class. Mr. JOHN M'DONALD of Glasgow, Chairman of the Glasgow Master Brick-builders' Association came next. This gentleman delivered judgment *ex cathedra* against all Trades' Unions whatsoever. His "points" as he called them, were mostly directed against what he termed a monopoly of labour, as sought to be established by the Union of Operative Bricklayers. He endeavoured to prove this by stating that the Union of Operatives limited the number of apprentices, and by making it incumbent on an apprentice, after being six months at the trade to become bound to the Employer for a term of years, and to pay to the Union of the workmen, an apprentice fee of Two Pounds. He also stated that the effect of Unions was to prevent an energetic, skilful workman from improving his condition, although how, Mr. M'DONALD did not or perhaps could not very clearly show. One thing Mr. M'DONALD certainly did show, viz., that the Society of which he is the honoured head do that which he charges against the Union of the operatives, by levying a fine of Five Pounds against any Master who pays any one man in his employment, or allows him to be paid either directly or indirectly in any form, one penny more than the regular agreed on rate of pay. Mr. M'DONALD goes on to say that in his opinion, and from his experience, wages would have been just as high or higher if there had been no union on the part of the men, and yet he admits that every increase of wages was conceded in consequence of an appeal from the workmen. He also says that supply and demand will, and ought to regulate wages. We thoroughly concur with Mr. M'DONALD in this doctrine, but before it will do so that NATURAL LAW must be put in operation by the workmen. Mr. M'DONALD most effectually proves this by stating that, during a very busy season, when in the ordinary and natural course of things, the competition between the different masters for men ought to have been very strong, not one Employer, although all were most urgently needful, would offer one penny more wages to induce more men to come to them, thus most clearly proving that Employers are very ready to put the law of supply and demand into operation in a falling market, but can never see their way spontaneously to do so in the interest of the operative. Mr. M'DONALD seems to have very confused notions regarding certain "unalienable rights" the operatives have according to the showing of the Secretary of his own Association, to combine together for "mutual council and support." Mr. M'DONALD does not think that such "unalienable right" at all extends to agreeing among themselves, as to what price they will sell their labour at, or how much of their own time they will sell, as he thinks such conduct interfering with the sovereign rights of the Employers, although how a man or any number of men have not the right to say what price they will consent to take, for what is most emphatically their own property, Mr. M'DONALD does not seem to know. How men can be possessed of unalienable rights, and yet have no right to exercise those rights we leave Mr. M'DONALD to decide. He also says that in his opinion the workmen would in most cases have got what they wanted without a strike. This seems a very odd statement for any man of common sense to make, when as everybody who has any knowledge of the matter at all knows, that

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a strike only intervenes when the operatives fail to obtain what they think suitable terms. The Employers must be gifted with a greater amount of stupidity than we gave them credit for, if they submitted themselves to the loss and inconvenience caused by a strike rather than give something, which all the while they were willing to concede for the simple asking,—such are specimens of Mr. M'DONALD'S logic. This gentleman also entered a complaint against the Operative Bricklayers' Union, for joining with the Master Bricklayers, to have all bricks made the same size. Now this is a very odd combination. Most of the Master Bricklayers in Glasgow make their own bricks, at least all the more important Employers, and the workmen are accused of combining with the Masters as Brickmakers against the Masters as Brickbuilders. This surely is confusion worse confounded. The truth seems to be that it was a Master Brickbuilder, and one of the largest contractors and Employers of labour in the United Kingdom, who first started the question of the sizes of bricks; but it comports very well with all Mr. M'DONALD'S reasoning to blame the operatives for what was actually the work of an Employer.

Mr. E. ASHWORTH, of Manchester, was examined after Mr. MAULT and gave evidence as to certain strikes at Manchester and the neighbourhood. This gentleman, while deprecating many of the actions of Trades' Unions, frankly admitted that they had been successful in raising wages, and maintaining the increase in a great many instances. Mr. JAMES WILSON, Chairman of the Leeds Branch of the General Builders' Association, was the next witness, and gave evidence as to the doings of certain Trades' Unionists in Leeds and Yorkshire generally. This witness also unreservedly added that the effect of Trades' Unions had been to increase the remuneration of the workmen. Mr. WILSON was examined at very great length as to the influence the operations of Trades' Unions had on the relations of Employers and employed, and their general effect upon trade; and he was reluctantly forced to make many admissions as to the value of Trades' Unions, to the Operative Class, but as it would be impossible to give a summary without doing so at great length, we must refer Trades' Unionists to the evidence itself. The entire evidence up to the 6th August, is published in a Blue Book, and will form a very important document for Trades' Societies. After Mr. WILSON came Mr. RICHMOND, an Inspector of County Police in Lancashire, who gave evidence as to certain Trade outrages committed by Brickmakers, and as to a rule among the Brickmakers of the Manchester and Stockport districts that does not permit Bricks made in one district from being carried into the other, or used there. Mr. JOHN BRISTOW was the next witness who detailed certain differences and disputes between himself and the Unionists of Manchester, both Joiners and Bricklayers, he also gave an account of personal injuries done to a friend of his, a Mr. BARLOW, a Brickmaker, and certainly, if the facts which Mr. BRISTOW relates be true, it betrays a state of things very much to be deplored, and approaches more nearly to the outrages of Sheffield than we had conceived possible anywhere else in the country. Such conduct not only brings disgrace on Trades' Unionists (that is, if done, or en-

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couraged, or connived at by them), but on humanity itself, and it is as much the interest of Trades' Unionists to put down such practices as it is the interest of every other good citizen. Mr. G. HARROP, another Inspector of Police, was examined in corroboration of the two previous witnesses in regard to Trade outrages, for information as to which we must refer to the Blue Book. Mr. J. KETTLE, the foreman Bricklayer at the Manchester County Prison, during the strike there, was the next person examined, and gave a history of that transaction. Mr. JAMES WEST, Carter, of Manchester, was examined as to his not being allowed to cart bricks in the Manchester district, and corroborated Mr. BRISTOW's statements. Mr. JOSEPH BARLOW was next examined as to the Trade outrages mentioned by Mr. BRISTOW, and confirmed that gentleman's statements. Mr. MICHAEL JOSEPH O'NEIL, general secretary of the Bricklayers' Union in Manchester, was examined in explanation of certain statements of Mr. Robert KETTLE, regarding the dispute or strike at the Manchester Assize Courts, and said that the dispute originated between Mr KETTLE and the labourers on the job, because Mr. KETTLE had appointed some labourer to be the foreman of the labourer's "gang" over some other senior, who, according to custom, ought to have got the position. The Bricklayers being thrown out of employment, in consequence of the refusal of the labourers to work under Mr. KETTLE's nominee, they demanded, previous to re-commencing their work at the New Prisons, that the wages they had lost in consequence should be paid by the contractor. With all due deference to Mr O'NEIL, and the Manchester bricklayers, we are of opinion that they put the saddle on the wrong horse, as by their own showing the cause of the loss lay not with the contractor but with the labourers, who assumed to dictate to Mr KETTLE, and through him to the employer, who should be their foreman. The supreme right of choosing who shall do any work most clearly belongs to the person who has to pay for the work being done, and no custom, nor any amount of customs, neither can or ought to override this right. Upon the whole, we are of opinion that Mr. O'NEIL's statements, considered in the light of common sense, justice, and candour, do not improve the case. Mr. JAMES CLARKE, Secretary to the Stockport Bricklayer's Union, was the next witness. He denied that there had been, since he became secretary to the Union, any serious disputes, nor anything at all approaching outrage or intimidation. He admitted that there was an understanding between the bricklayers and makers, that the former would lay no bricks made by non-unionists, and the makers, on their part, would not supply any master bricklayer with their bricks, when there was a dispute between such master and his operatives. The witness also admitted that it was the practice to put pickets on to watch work in cases of dispute, or strike. This of course for the purpose of peaceably persuading operatives not to seek employment during the currency of the dispute. The witness following Mr. CLARKE was a Mr. TUCKER, actuary and accountant in the city, who made a statement as to the payments of the members of the Amalgamated Carpenters and Joiners, and the inadequacy of these payments to meet the promised benefits; and that in consequence of such inadequacy, that Society, and others similarly

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situated must, sooner or later, become insolvent. Mr. TUCKER, however, had not had the needful time to go so minutely into the accounts as he would like, and requested further time to consider from the constitution of such Associations, how soon that state of insolvency would begin to show itself. This course of examination was entered on in consequence of some statements of Mr. MAULT, that men were induced to join these Associations by the promise of benefits, which it was quite impossible for the Societies to keep, and that for the legislature to permit such a state of things was to lend themselves to a fraud. Mr. ROBERT APPLGARITH, who was present, was examined as to Mr. TUCKER's statements and very clearly gave it as his opinion, that from certain circumstances peculiar to Trades' Societies, and between which and ordinary assurances there was no strict analogy—his association would be quite able to meet all its obligations. He was also examined as to the picketing system, and very strongly defended the right of picketing as quite within the "peaceable persuasion" permitted by the Amended Combination Act, 1859, provided always that no intimidation nor coercion of any kind whatever was resorted to * Mr. WILLIAM ALLAN, of the Amalgamated Engineers, was further examined as to the payments and benefits of his Society with reference to the statements of Mr. TUCKER. Mr. FINLAYSON, the Government actuary, was called in on this question, but owing to that gentleman not having had the necessary papers long enough, he was not prepared to go into the question. The Commission desired Mr. FINLAYSON to look carefully into the matter and report. Mr. JAMES MATSON, of Glasgow, general Secretary to the Associated Carpenters and Joiners of Scotland, was the next witness. He put in copies of the Rules of the Association, also copies of the Monthly and Annual Reports issued to the members since the formation of the Society. Mr. MATSON explained very clearly the financial operations of the Association, and the general operations and influence of the Society. Mr. JOHN C. PROUDFOOT, of Glasgow, a member of the same Association, Secretary to the Trades' Council of Glasgow, and also Secretary to our Committee, was the next and last witness examined. Mr. PROUDFOOT stated that he had had very considerable experience of Trades' Unions, having been Secretary of the Association (on which the Society for which Mr. MATSON is now Secretary was founded) in 1854, and had for many years made a study of such questions. Mr. PROUDFOOT stated that he could not presume to defend every action of any one Trades Union, but as a rule he was most decidedly of opinion, from long observation and experience, that judiciously conducted Trades' Unions had been of great benefit to the operative class; in fact he attributed the comparatively improved position of the entire operative class very greatly to the influence of the Unions taking advantage, of course, of the progress of Society, and the increase of the national wealth. On the question of limiting the number of apprentices by some Unions of operatives he stated that the Society with which he is connected does not restrict the number, but he entered on an abstract argument on the subject, and strongly defended the right of the operatives to do so, where, as is almost universally the practice the operative is the person called on to teach

* See note at the end

such apprentices their trade or profession, and that certainly therefore the operative had an undoubted right to say how many persons he would be instrumental in bringing into the labour market to compete against and undersell himself. He most severely criticised the statements made by Mr. M'DONALD of Glasgow, as crude and illogical, and defended the operative class from the charge of that gentleman, that the Unions legislated for the employers as third parties. Mr. PROUDFOOT claimed as the "unalienable right" (mentioned by the Secretary of Mr M'DONALD'S Society) of the entire operative class whether one or five hundred, the right to say on what conditions, how much of, and at what price they would sell their toil. This they did as first parties legislating for themselves, and then they come to the purchaser or second party, the employer, and made offer of their labour on these terms, and prepared to make a bargain about it. If the terms are suitable they are accepted, if the contrary, rejected. The master keeps his wages and the workman his labour. It was farther shown that all increases of wages had within living memory been the result, more or less, of combinations of the operatives, whether these operatives came together in a temporary manner for some one particular object, without having previously contributed to any common fund, or in the more permanent form of an ordinary recognised Trades' Union for general purposes in connection with any trade. The first is as virtually a Trades' Union as the second. In regard to picketing, Mr PROUDFOOT thoroughly concurred with Mr APFLEGARTH, as to its legitimacy in the light of the Combination Act, 1859; or otherwise the Act 6 Geo. IV. c. 129, as to conspiracy had been amended for "naught and in vain." If men are to have the liberty "peaceably to persuade," it naturally follows that they have the liberty to discover who the parties are who need such persuasion, and this can only be done by picketing. It is, no doubt, a very difficult thing in the case of a Lockout or Strike, to keep all persons engaged in that Strike strictly within the bounds of law in regard to strong language, a natural consequence of irritated temper, but it seems very like "Justices' justice" to visit the Office-Bearers of any Union, with condemnation and punishment for the faults of temper exhibited by members of the Union doing picket duty; and for whose conduct in performing that duty, the said Office-Bearers cannot in fairness be held responsible. Indeed picketing exists not in consequence of any determination to that effect on the part of Office-Bearers, but in consequence of a resolution of the whole number of persons engaged in any Strike, or dispute, and instead of Office-Bearers encouraging or conniving at intimidation, or coercion, all their influence is, and ought to be, devoted to restraining the members within the due bounds of law. In the recent case of the Office-Bearers of the London Tailors' Protective Association, we solemnly believe this to have been the case, and that these officers of the Union were no more responsible for, nor cognisant of, any coercion or intimidation which pickets may have been guilty of, than Mr. BARON BRAMWELL himself, or the jury who returned a verdict of guilty against them. This verdict too was delivered on the most shadowy distinction, (or rather the line was so very fine that it had no shadow,) as to what was to be construed intimidation, and what

"peaceable persuasion." Assuredly they are doubly blessed who are in possession of such powerful legal microscopes. The chemical feats of Burns' Doctor Hornbook, were nothing to this. His

"Mite-horn shavings, films, scrapins,
Distilled *per se*,
Sal-alkali, o' midge tail clippins,
An mony mae,"

were nowhere in comparison. This hairsplitting forcibly recalls to our memory Swift's sarcastic lines—

"Strange that such difference should be
"Twixt tweedle-dum and tweedle-dee."

We sincerely hope the learned BARON'S bow may "long abide in its strength," and that the sauce which has been found so suitable for the *goose*, may also be served for the *goose's* master. Perhaps the magistrates of Great Marlborough Street will seriously lay this to heart, and may be discover that conspiracy and intimidation are not absolutely confined to combinations of operatives.

Mr. PROUDFOOT was further examined as to the effects of the operations of Trades' Unions on the relations between Employers and Employees, and stated that, as far as he knew, there might, just at the time of a dispute about the rate of remuneration or any other condition of labour which the operatives deemed it their interest to insist upon, be a little irritation of feeling. Still, so far as his experience went, such a feeling was, by no means permanent. He had taken for some years previous to 1857 a rather prominent part in trades' questions, and yet was always on the best terms with his Employer, who, he thought, as a general rule, did not think worse of any man for standing out for what he thought was right, so long as it was done in a reasonable manner, and with a due respect for the rights of others.

We would again advise Trades' Associations to provide themselves with a copy of all the evidence tendered up till the adjournment of the commission, for the information of officers and Members. In a report of this nature, we can only give the merest outline, indeed, we do so mostly as a foundation for criticism, explanation, and reply.

Having thus, brethren, given you a short and necessarily imperfect outline of the doings of the Commission, we are desirous in a few last words, to urge upon your attention the absolute necessity of close attention being paid to the progress of this enquiry, and that no effort nor sacrifice should be spared on your part, in laying your case in the best possible manner before the Commission and the public. We believe we are justified in saying for you, that you have no desire to extenuate any of the least of those outrages which have been perpetrated in the name of Trades' Unionism; and while desiring perfect freedom for yourselves, you can have no desire to fetter the freedom of others. We believe, also, we are justified in saying for you, that you sympathise deeply and sincerely with those trades of Sheffield who, neither by their office-bearers nor otherwise, had any connection with any of the atrocities recently disclosed. And in particular, would we desire to sympathise with those office-bearers of the United Kingdom Alliance of organised trades, who

were associated in the government of it with the notorious Broadhead, of whose character and doings, we believe, they were as profoundly ignorant as those writers in a portion of the press, who most unfairly and dishonestly desire to include the Alliance in his guilt. We also earnestly hope that the exposure of such doings, and the culpable neglect of Members of Committees which made such doings possible, will have the effect of not only eradicating such things from the Unions of Sheffield, but from every other Union of operatives in this country, for we much regret to say, that there are grave suspicions, that there exist practices either connected with Trades' Unions, or at least countenanced by professed Unionists, which, if at all different in degree (?) are not so in kind.* If we are to ask such a recognition in law as shall make us incorporated bodies, enabling us to sue and be sued by our office-bearers, we must make our institutions such as the law can legitimately recognise.

From the tone adopted by a portion of the public press of this country, which has always been notorious for its virulence in opposition to every attempt of the labouring population to obtain a somewhat fairer share of the profits of their own toil, you may very clearly perceive the spirit which animates the patrons of that press in the part taken by them in the Commission inquiry. It is, perhaps, rather late in the day to attempt a revival of the laws against combinations of operatives for purposes which are in themselves legitimate; but that such is the drift of the opponents of working class trades' unions, there can be no manner of doubt. If, by the remotest chance, any matter damaging to the character of a trade's union or unionist can be raked up, twisted, and construed to suit a foregone conclusion, with what gusto and smacking of the lips it is done, as if, forsooth, any association could be answerable, or could in reason be expected to be answerable, for all the actions of all its various members; and, upon the whole, much of what is objectionable in the practises of unionists, or combinations of operatives, is due to the contemptuous and supercilious manner in which their just and reasonable claims have been met. If, occasionally, in some of their actings they have outraged the laws, let it not be forgotten that they have been ostracised and placed beyond the pale of the law. It is, therefore, scarcely to be wondered at (although deeply to be deplored), that they should have adopted such means in default of the law, as most readily appeared to their minds suitable or likely in the circumstances to answer their purpose, and be a law unto themselves, judge, jury, etc. We desire to draw the attention of the entire operative class to the paragraph in the Royal Speech respecting trades' unions, at the prorogation of Parliament; and to the likelihood of some legislation being attempted on the subject next session. We have no doubt the Royal Commission will very early in the session present, if not a final, at least a report of their conclusions on the evidence taken by them up to the commencement of the session. As the committee watching over your interests in this matter, we must call on you to give us your utmost and most cordial support. We are of opinion that any important legislation on this question ought, in fairness, to be delayed

* This was written previous to the Manchester disclosures.

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till after the general election consequent on the Reform Bill. We shall then, by our own representatives, be in a position to take part in deliberating on those laws which we will be called on to obey; and on which depend the "safety of our property, our liberty, and our life."

It would be highly imprudent, as well as impolitic, in our opinion, for the present moribund Parliament to proceed to legislate on a class of questions from the consideration of which the class of persons most interested is entirely excluded. We also hope that at the next general election of members to serve in the Commons House of Parliament, the operative class will make such use of their enfranchisement as shall secure that it is really a representation of the Commons of the United Kingdom. If landocracy, railwayocracy, moneyocracy, and all other ocracies be represented, why should the wealth-producingocracy be awaiting? Send men to represent you, brethren, who, by experience, know your needs, your wishes, and your ideas. Then you will have pleasure in obeying loyally those laws which, by your representatives, you have assisted to frame. This is a most important matter. The longer experience we have of the Royal Commission of Inquiry, the more are we struck with the mistake made in not putting, at least, one or two intelligent men belonging to the class to be put on their trial, among the representatives of other classes of the community. A great deal, in that case, seems confused and misty, would have been made clear; and the inquiry been more satisfactory to the class who are most deeply concerned. We have no fault to find with any member of the Commission. We willingly admit their anxiety to bring out the whole truth, and to deal towards both sides with the most scrupulous fairness; but we cannot shut our eyes to the fact that their practical knowledge does not enable them fully to accomplish that which they so anxiously desire. Let us see to it, fellow-workmen, that this remedy is provided in the future legislative councils of the nation; and that henceforth the laws affecting the welfare of the great labour-selling class of this country, shall not be left exclusively to the making of the labour purchasers.

As the work of our Committee cannot be carried on without some pecuniary resources, we desire to direct the attention of those trades represented at the St. Martin's Hall conference, to the resolution of Committee calling upon them (in terms of resolution of conference), for a levy of a second farthing per Member. The business has hitherto been managed on the most economical principle (too economical perhaps for thorough efficiency), and the various trades may be assured that, consistent with efficiency, the same system of economy will be pursued for the future. We desire, also, to say to those trades or societies who were not at the St. Martin's Hall meeting, that our cause is also theirs. Brethren, there should be no standing aloof from one another at this crisis; we should join hand in hand and put shoulder to shoulder, and work earnestly together for the accomplishment of our object, alike important to us all. The pecuniary pressure is not heavy, and more labourers make the work lighter. Who would not sacrifice a mere fraction of his earnings to defend his right—to take the best means apparent to