

THE PORCUPINE ADVANCE

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WEDNESDAY, APRIL 18th, 1917.

THE LABOR SITUATION IN THE PORCUPINE.

Some readers of the Advance have asked why this newspaper has not had more to say about the labor situation in the Porcupine and the probability or possibility of a strike in the Camp. The answer is very simple. Little has been said because there is little to say that would be helpful or informative. It is an odd fact that the parties concerned, the mine owners and the workers,—have said less, and apparently known less about the question than some outsiders. In Toronto, for example, there have been men who knew, or thought they knew, that a strike had actually been called. Three weeks ago they could even give the precise date on which the trouble would begin. They said it was April 16th. It is apparent now that they must have confused this date with the famous First of April.—Everybody's Day in Toronto's circle of wisacres.

The persistent discussion of the probability of a strike has been harmful to the general welfare, while the continuing crop of unfounded rumors and reports has been detrimental to the general business confidence and stability of the community. And neither the uniformed discussion nor the unfounded rumors and reports have made it easier for the mine owners and the mine workers to settle their difficulties, if there are any to settle. The discussion, so far as the general public is concerned, has been largely idle and harmful.

The truth is that any possible difficulty between the mine workers and the mine owners is now all a matter of conjecture. Undoubtedly both sides have their special problems. No doubt the high cost of living presses heavily upon the wage earners. The scarcity of labor, the inefficiency of much of the labor available, and the abnormally increased cost of materials and mining operations have to be faced by the mines. But up to the present moment neither side have given ground for any of the idle talk about "strikes" and other troubles.

The majority of the men have displayed a fair and intelligent disposition, and there is nothing in the attitude of the mine owners generally to justify the rumors and reports that are continually unsettling business here.

The one point that appeals to the general public as the possible source of difficulty between the mines and the workers is the matter of a general increase in wages. This matter is altogether in abeyance at the present time. At a recent conference in Cobalt a new wage schedule was drafted, and the mine workers in the North Land have recently been voting on the adoption or rejection of this proposed new schedule. Until the result of this voting is known, and until the men approach the mines with any requests they may decide to make, there is certainly no sensible basis on which to make forecasts of what may happen. The most of the talk at the present time is necessarily useless and unsettling because there is no sound basis yet for the drawing of any conclusions. There is this one fact, however, that should discount much of the wild talk indulged in by some outsiders,—that neither of the parties concerned have given any grounds for believing that they desire anything but a fair deal and a reasonable adjustment of any difficulties that may exist.

In the absence of actual facts and certainties, the folly of much of the discussion should be evident. As a glaring example, the case of The Northern Miner and The Industrial Banner may be cited. The Northern Miner recently attempted to write on the probabilities of labor troubles in the Porcupine. Perhaps, if our Cobalt contemporary had waited for an actual basis of facts, it might have written differently, but as it was referred to many of the miners as "aliens" and suggested that more of them belonged to a sort of a band of "thugs" called the Western Federation of Miners. In gentle response, The Industrial Banner brands the editor of The Northern Miner as a "little fellow," a "big liar" and a miscreant who once worked for The Toronto World for a "weekly stipend." This sort of discussion may not actually injure the parties concerned, but it is not very profitable to the general public. On the one hand it needs a robust imagination to class Len Newton as an alien in this North Land, especially if he had his team of huskies with him, or to picture Wm. DeFen as a full-blooded "thug" solemnly murdering A. R. Globe or Barney McEaney just to make a joyous striker's holiday. On the other hand it is hard to believe that it will do real injury to the editor of The Northern Miner to call him a "little fellow" or a "liar," or to accuse him of working for a "weekly stipend." Of course it might have been better if he had worked for "wages," but if he actually got paid anyway, even the Union should not object. As to his being "little" that should be an advantage in the North Land where there are so many big men. Big men usually have a very good-natured regard for the little fellows. As for the editor being a "liar," how else could he live in the North Land, or anywhere else on the continent for that matter? But after all, what advantage occurred from the discussion in these two newspapers? Was any public good accomplished? Is not the tendency of such discussions rather to make difficulty and ill-will where none before existed?

The Advance trusts there will be no difficulty between the mines and the workers. And The Advance sees no reason why there should be any trouble, if the reasonable spirit displayed by both sides is continued, and no ill-will is bred by outside meddlers.

NINE MORE RECRUITS FOR FORESTRY DRAFT

Recruiting Still Continues With Good Results for Porcupine Platoon.

The work of recruiting for the Porcupine Platoon of the Fourth Forestry Draft continues with pleasing results. Since the last issue of The Advance nine more recruits have been signed up and passed by the medical examiner, while three others just as anxious to go with this unit had to be rejected for physical imperfections. The new recruits since our last issue are:—Berney Lavigne, Robt. A. Melkenson, Mat. Morin, J. C. Laverrier, Charles Laughton, Ed. Laveque, Leo Fanteaux, Frances Chetee and S. Frank Smith.

HEREDITARY FEAR OF A CAT'S EYE

Basis of Plot of an Unusual Motion Picture at New Empire Theatre.

The hereditary fear of a Cat's Eye forms the basic influence that causes the number of complications to arise in Augustus Thomas' famous play, "The Witching Hour," a screen version of which, produced by the Frohman Amusement Corporation, under the direction of Geo. Irving, will be shown at the New Empire Theatre on Friday and Saturday, April 20th and 21st.

This unusual and all-absorbing subject receives wonderful treatment at the hands of a most unusual cast of screen and stage favorites, headed by C. Aubrey Smith, Jack Sherrill and Marie Shotwell.

The production is unusual in its dramatic treatment and decidedly elaborate in its setting. The main theme carried throughout the production might briefly be summed up in a very few words: "As we think evil, so will evil occur."

The cast employed in this production is a large one, and the interior properties and furnishings are valued in excess of \$50,000. Among original paintings of world wide famous artists, there is one Carot alone valued at \$5,000.00 and they all play their part in the unfolding of the story.

The New Empire Theatre has been endeavouring to book this release but, owing to the wide demand for the production throughout the United States, the producers have only late been able to fill the bookings for that playhouse for Friday and Saturday.

BRITISH AND FRENCH CONTINUE ADVANCE

Canadians Taking Important Part. Looks Like "The Big Drive."

The battle on the western front continues to grow in intensity and to spread along a more extended front. This week the news from overseas shows that the French are making important drives on both sides of Rheims. Unless the Germans can find some way to stop the pressure, a general retreat will be forced to new German lines. The British have captured Villeret, Gricourt and les Trois Sauvages, all strategically important. Among the material taken at Lievin is a big naval gun and many thousand rounds of ammunition. The new British "liquid fire" shell did terrible execution. In a counter attack north of St. Quentin the Germans left 1500 dead and 300 prisoners when they retreated. The British have surrounded the city of Lens on three sides, and its capture is expected daily. The Canadians are making a glorious name for themselves in the advance. At Vimy Ridge there were many soldiers, chiefly from Nova Scotia, who were three days without water and five days on short rations, but they told a press correspondent, "We enjoyed every minute of the fight."

"Talking and Travelling" are two things specially discouraged and frowned upon and more or less interfered with on the Continent of Europe now. When "Travelling" was interfered with here to a limited extent, by the curtailing of the train service, what a howl went up! What would happen if "Talking" were restrained in any way? There would be danger of internal explosions in this country, surely.

PROFESSIONAL CARDS

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NOTARY PUBLIC.
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NOTARIES.
Timmins, South Porcupine
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TIMMINS L.O.L. No. 2552
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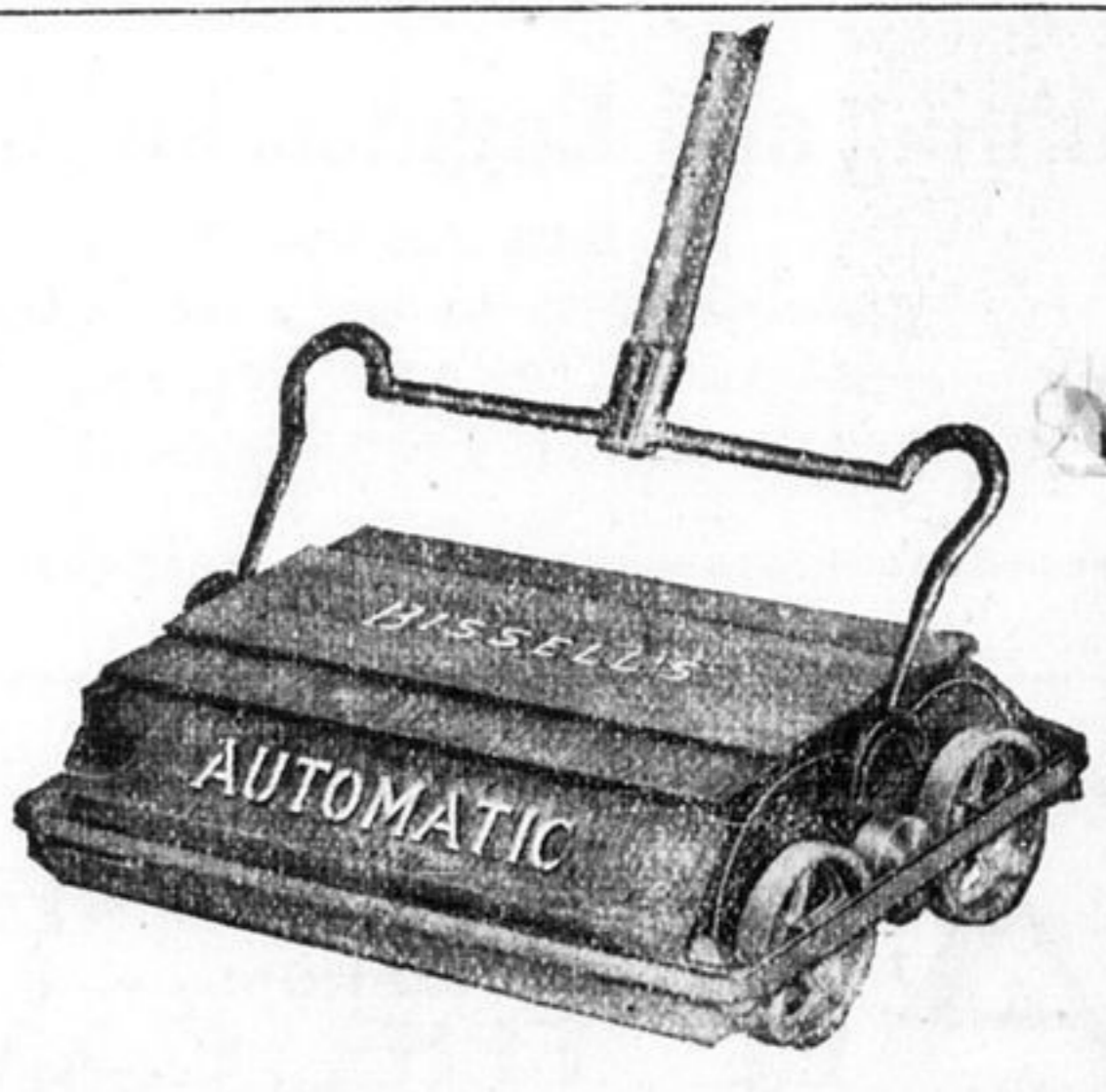
TIMMINS LODGE, I.O.O.F. No. 459
Meets every Tuesday evening in their lodge room on Third avenue. Visiting brothers requested to attend.
GEO. LAKE, N. G. W. G. SMITH, R. S.

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all bought before the recent big advances, and sold at the old prices. You get the benefit. Come and see the big stocks.

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