

DUNDEE WEEKLY NEWS

WORKINGMEN'S EXPEDITION

TO THE

WORLD'S FAIR, CHICAGO.

A TOUR OF OBSERVATION.

(From the "Dundee Weekly News" of 18th March, 1893.)



THE AGRICULTURAL BUILDINGS, WORLD'S FAIR.

Recently, while making an extensive tour through Canada and the United States, Mr. D. C. Thomson, of the *Dundee Weekly News*, conceived the idea that much might be done to raise the quality of skilled labour in this country, and to improve the social and physical conditions of life in an industrial community like ours, were British working men afforded an opportunity of inspecting and observing the methods of work as applied to their respective trades in America. The time has arrived which seems peculiarly favourable for the realisation of such a scheme. The holding of the Columbian Exposition at Chicago presents an occasion for yielding practical and immediate benefits to the vast body of the working classes such as has never before offered, and the proprietors of this paper mean to give readers the chance of profiting by the stimulus that is sure to be lent to all departments of human progress by this unparalleled undertaking. Chicago will this year be the Mecca of the universe. Every road will lead to that city, which is not extravagantly called "the Eighth Wonder of the World."

Can Working Men Go ?

We answer yes. We consider that it will be for the lasting benefit of the country, for the good of the wage-earners, that Great Britain should be represented at the World's Fair by intelligent artisans or operatives, who, investigating and examining from the working man's standpoint, will be able to accumulate valuable information from new and outside influences. They will have the opportunity of becoming familiar with the productions of the various nations of the world, of

inspecting the most recent developments of mechanical skill, of comparing the methods relating to their respective trades, and so be able to judge of the productive capacity of labour; and in a thousand other ways they will be able to discover something worth communicating or adopting. From these shores thousands of people will set forth to visit the Columbian Exposition, but these will be well-to-do people, most of them bent on a pleasure excursion, and able to pay the large cost of such a trip. But apart from the notion of the unique spectacle that the World's Fair will present to the sightseer, it appeals to a higher sense, for it is the biggest object lesson that the industrial world has ever beheld. That lesson working men can derive more advantage from than any other class of men, for there is the prospect held out to them that by increasing their skill they are able to

Command Better Wages,

and, consequently, an increased enjoyment of material comforts. Another advantage which is offered to the working classes is the facility which it affords of inquiring into the labour problem, into the cost of living, and the scale of wages as compared with the production of work. Then beyond that must not be forgotten that the representation of British working men at the World's Fair would tend in the highest degree to promote, strengthen, and extend those fraternal relations and mutual benefits which link together the two great branches of the English-speaking race. That the wage-earners of Scotland, England, and Ireland may not be excluded from participating in any of the

benefits enumerated, the proprietors of the *Dundee Weekly News* have decided to arrange a

Tour to America.

The cost of this expedition will be large, probably the largest of any expedition of the kind, but, adhering to the principle which has always guided the conductors of this paper never to shrink from spending on what would be for the good of the readers, they have drawn up a scheme which will enable the working classes of this country to be represented by men drawn from their own ranks, and animated by their own hopes and aspirations. These men will cross the Atlantic, and in the course of their tour in America see things and inquire into things, not from the rich man's point of view, not from the leisured man's point of view, but from the working man's point of view, from that aspect which will not only be of most interest to the wage-earning classes on this side of the Atlantic, but which will be of most use to them. The members of the

"Dundee Weekly News"

Expedition

will have their routes, steamship lines, trains, and hotels chosen with a view to their having the maximum of comfort and satisfaction as far as it is possible in travelling the 8000 to 10,000 miles involved by the journey. They will have such facilities as will enable them to see the more remarkable scenery on the way, such as the Falls of Niagara, and other sights too numerous for mention here. At Chicago they will have facilities afforded them of making an exhaustive examination of the World's Show, and of devoting particular attention to those departments in which most information is to be gained for the use of fellow-readers of the *Weekly News* at home. Time will also be given to examine the varied industries of Chicago, such as the iron and steel works, the car-building works, the farm machinery works, the stock yards, the beef and pork packing factories, &c., &c.

A Chance Visit to Friends.

There may also be opportunities for short side trips to places of interest within easy reach of the route, and for visiting friends on or near the route, who will, no doubt, extend them a hearty welcome. Arrangements will be made to assist them in inquiring into the conditions of labour, such as the rate of wages, factory regulations, hours of labour, hours of leisure, cost of food, cost of clothing, the rent, taxation, and transportation from house to work. They will have, likewise, all reasonable facilities for making inquiry into any special question, such as the relations of capital and labour, railway systems, applications of electricity, system

of government, land laws, &c., &c. From various points the members of the expedition will forward their notes to the Editor of the *Weekly News*, so that readers may not only know from time to time the progress of the party, but benefit through having their own representatives writing about what they see at the Show, and profit from the result of their investigations into the conditions of labour amongst "Our Kin Beyond the Sea." Those who can take

Advantage of This Offer

must be *bona-fide* working men, though this term may be applied to any person not an employé, such as a village blacksmith, cartwright, crofter, small farmer, or jobbing tradesman who executes work himself, and is not a large employer of labour. We insist that the candidate must bear a good character. The agricultural and the mechanical industries should have at least one representative each, as for the other industries to be represented that is for the readers to decide. Remember the entire cost of the expedition will be defrayed by the proprietors of the *Weekly News*, so that no working man need hang back from the fear of expense. The selection of representatives will be, subject to certain conditions, left to the judgment of readers themselves. There will be in it nothing of the elements of chance. The matter will be put to the vote. If one man finds that he cannot go he can help a friend to succeed in his attempt, and those who wish to promote the interest of their particular trade by hoping to gain a knowledge of the latest Yankee wrinkles can try to gain that end by their votes. If there is any obstacle in the way of any man who desires to take advantage of our offer, we shall be glad to hear what it is in case it may be possible to remove it. In making this important announcement, which we do with great pleasure, we desire to ask the hearty co-operation of our readers and all friends in bringing our proposal under the notice of all whom it may concern. We invite anyone who has a suggestion to send it on, and any point which has not been foreseen, and may be subject to difference of opinion, will be fully discussed in our columns.

No nomination can be accepted unless on the form given below to be cut out. Friends on same farm, or living in same hamlet, village or town, may enclose nomination papers in one envelope, and the voting is open to all readers of the *Weekly News*.

Further particulars will be given next week, but meantime any man who is a candidate may send in his nomination on the annexed form, signed by himself and two friends.

Those Who Want to Go

should secure recommendations regarding their character and fitness, and the subjoined form must be filled up and sent to the *Weekly News* Office without delay.

TO THE READERS.

ON THE SELECTION OF REPRESENTATIVES

(From *Weekly News* of April 29th.)

It has been suggested that a word or two from me at this stage of the election of representatives might not be inopportune. At the time of writing it is impossible to name even one man who will be in the first leet, but judging from the names of men who stand high by the votes already in, the readers are showing that they are taking an earnest and intelligent interest in promoting the election of delegates who will be not only a credit to themselves but to the wage-earners of this country. Everyone who has the welfare of the people of this country at heart must be anxious to see the right men chosen. The sum which the Expedition will cost this paper will be very large—nothing on such a scale has ever been attempted before by private enterprise—but that sum will be small as compared with the monetary advantage which should accrue to the wage-earners of this country if, through having the right men, we are enabled to carry the scheme to a successful issue.

If through the information got by the delegates the readers of the papers should benefit to the extent of only a pound each it would mean an increase in the wealth of the country of over a million sterling! This country is now passing through a period of great industrial depression, and many workers are feeling the brunt of it. If, through the information got, any means could be arrived at for dispelling or even decreasing this depression, which is now sapping every industry in the land, the advantages would be incalculable, the workers would get better wages, the unemployed would get employment, thousands now face to face with starvation might get the means of subsistence for themselves, their wives, and families. Apart from this other advantages are many. Information regarding the conditions of the American wage-earners, how they live, what kind of houses they have, what hours they work, what leisure they enjoy, what kind of food they get, should help our people to compare the respective conditions of the two peoples divided by the Atlantic and should point to the direction and show on what lines improvements on this side might be effected. Anything that can tend to increase the health and happiness of the people cannot be measured in money.

It is not to be supposed that immediately the Expedition returns from America this country is suddenly to be changed into an

Utopia. Progress is often of slow growth. The acorn does not grow into the oak in a day, but any man who gives the matter a few minutes' serious consideration will readily see that reliable information on the conditions of our kin beyond the sea must be invaluable, and that, whatever drawbacks there may be to life in America, with such a go-a-head people as the Americans, there must be many methods and institutions, the introduction of which would benefit our country. With this fully in view, every reader will realise that the choice of delegates is a matter of the utmost importance. It should not be made in any haphazard way. Even a single vote wrongly cast may cause a serious loss to the wage-earners, should it aid any one but a right man to go. No one should record his vote before first reading carefully every line concerning the Expedition.

I am satisfied that the great majority of the readers are fully alive to this, but I have before me complaints which I think call for mention. One is that the complainer has been asked to vote for a man who wishes to cross the Atlantic with the Expedition, and then desert it without sending the slightest report home, or returning communicate to his friends and fellow-workers the information he has gleaned in America. The other is that one party who is a candidate would require an attendant to look after him. I think there is little occasion for fear of any such men getting on the short leet if the readers will vote for steady, respectable men who are thoroughly competent to enquire and report, and who will return to give the benefit of their investigations to the people who elect them. In any case no candidate who is successful in the balloting, and can show that he is qualified, will have any hesitation in furnishing such information as to his record as will satisfy us. Meantime, while pushing on the arrangements with all possible speed, I may express the hope that every reader will vote conscientiously, and counsel his friends and neighbours to do the same, so that there may be no necessity for our intervention against anyone; and, if the results of the Expedition are as beneficial to this country as I anticipate, I shall consider the project amply justified, and look back to its conception and carrying out with the greatest pleasure and satisfaction.

D. C. THOMSON.