

at the opportunity to win Labour votes and "dish the Liberals" with two pieces of unimpeachably Gladstonian legislation, lost no time in passing through the Dominion Parliament a Trade Unions Act and a Criminal Law Amendment Act (1872) modelled on the British Acts of the previous year. This was the first big piece of successful political action by Canadian unions. The prosecution was dropped and the strike was won.

With the adoption of the national policy of tariff protection in 1879, and the construction of the Canadian Pacific Railway in 1881-85, Canadian industry began to revive and to grow, and the unions revived and grew with it. The building trades showed a marked expansion. The railway unions followed the railways westward. The Nova Scotia coal miners in 1879 formed the first coal miners' union in North America and one of the earliest industrial unions, taking in all workers in the industry regardless of craft. Indeed, this organization, the Provincial Workmen's Association, became for a time almost a provincial "one big union", covering not only coal miners and coal pier workmen but also iron workers, steel workers, railway men, tramway men, glass blowers, boot and shoe workers, retail clerks and about ninety other classifications. The Knights of Labor, also an industrial organization, entered Canada in 1881, and remained active here long after it was practically dead in the United States. Even apart from the Knights, the 1880's saw over a hundred new locals added to those that had survived the depression. Almost half of these were in Ontario, 21 were in the Maritimes, 19 in Quebec and 18 in the West.

The local Councils also revived. The Toronto Trades and Labor Council was organized in 1881, the London Council in 1883, the Montreal Council in 1885, and others in Ottawa, Brantford, Hamilton, Vancouver and Victoria at various dates during the 1880's. At first the Knights of Labor took part in these Councils and often a very active part, but towards the close of the decade they formed their own district assemblies in Montreal, Quebec, Toronto, St. Catharines and St. Thomas.

With the revival of the Councils came also a revival of the national central organization. In 1883, a committee of the Toronto Council issued a call to all labour organizations to send delegates to a national convention. This set up the Canadian Labor Congress, consisting of delegates from unions and Knights of Labor assemblies in Ontario only.

In September 1886, three months before the founding of the American Federation of Labor, the Toronto Trades and Labor Council summoned the Congress to meet again, and the "Canadian Trades and Labor Congress" (which in 1887 became the "Trades and Labor Congress of the Dominion of Canada", in 1888 the "Dominion Trades and Labor Congress", and in 1892 the "Trades and Labor Congress of Canada") was born. The first convention had 109 delegates, including one woman. All were from Ontario except one from Quebec City. Of the total, at least 84 were Knights of Labor. The Knights had a majority of the delegates also at the conventions of 1887-1889, 1891, 1893 and 1894, and a Knight held the Congress presidency from 1886 to 1892 inclusive. After 1894, however, the Knights rapidly declined and in 1902 they were expelled from the Congress.

Until 1896 the Congress was far from being a nation-wide organization. At the conventions of 1887 and 1888 all the delegates were from Ontario. From 1889 on, there was always a substantial delegation from Quebec; in 1890 British Columbia sent three delegates and in 1895 Manitoba sent one; in 1896 British Columbia sent two and Manitoba one. New Brunswick sent its first delegate in 1897, Prince Edward Island in 1900 and Nova Scotia in 1903, but in 1905 and 1906 there were no Maritime delegates at all. Provincial Executives for British Columbia and Manitoba were elected in 1895, for New Brunswick in 1896, and for Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island in 1901. Saskatchewan and Alberta were represented from the beginning of their existence. Even in 1901, however, the last year before unity was shattered by the expulsion of the Knights of Labor and other organizations competing with American Federation of Labor unions, the Congress had only 8,381 members in all its unions, and its expenditure for the year was \$809.88. In 1902, for the first time, it engaged "a stenographer and a typewriter", which "necessitated the fitting up of a small office with two desks and a chair".