

# THE COMMONWEAL

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WEEKLY; ONE PENNY.

### NOTES ON NEWS.

THE "intelligent and sympathetic" middle-classes do not seem to have had the strike-fever in a very severe form. After having contributed to the victory of the dockers (whatever that amounted to), they seem to have thought that they had exhausted all the claims that could be made on their "intelligent sympathy," and allowed the poor folk at Silvertown to be slowly crushed down by capitalist tyranny, without showing any signs that they were conscious of that terrible struggle against starvation with or without employment.

Of course, I except Stopford Brooke's eloquent appeal for justice to these poor people; but it fell upon the ears of a class who were not going to accept two such bothers in one year as *two* strikes that shocked their sensibility.

As to the gas-stokers' strike, that is quite another matter. For are they not in the receipt of quite splendid wages? Don't they get as much in a week as a very small gentleman of the proprietary class, or the parasitical class, gets in a day? What on earth can they want more? They want to be free to strike, forsooth, in case their employer thinks fit to put on the screw! What next? They will get ideas of independence into their heads, and what becomes of us, then, the pensioners, of us the parasites? No, no, this is no case for sympathy; these men are our *enemies*, and, what is more, are beginning to know it. Instead of subscribing for them, let us use brute force *against* them, and show them that *they* shall not be allowed to argue with their fellow-workmen.

Well, gentlemen! there is much truth in this view of your period of convalescence from the strike fever. These men are indeed your enemies, for their interests are opposed to yours; and as a class, gentlemen, whatever you may think in your more maudlin moments, when your hypocrisy gets so much the better of your tyrannical greed that it even deceives yourselves, you will not and cannot give up anything to the workers beyond the mere subsistence wage according to the standard of the day, unless you are compelled to do so by force; *i.e.*, by the fear of material injury to your purse or persons.

And that standard of the day, gentlemen, do you really trouble yourselves as to the lowness of it? the horror and disgrace of such a mass of semi-starvation? Silvertown did not move you. And indeed why should it have done so, when such a livelihood is so common? When you know, or could know by asking a very few questions, what the standard of livelihood is for our field-labourers! When you know, and cannot help knowing, that you have made the beautiful garden-like country-side of England into a mere hell of barrenness for the people who feed you! A hell from which the country people flee to that other hell of the city slums, to make for you fresh entanglements of that "social problem" that you gabble about continuously—with no real intention of trying to solve it.

Who can wonder, so sweet as life is for rich people in our civilisation? Nothing short of the fear of imminent break-up, of a break-up of the "status and lives" of those now living at least, can really fix their attention on the fate of the "nation of the poor" amongst whom they dwell; and, for the rest, the strikes do not seem to them threatening enough for them to trouble much about them. As for the field-labourers, they know how weak they are; perhaps they think them weaker than they really are; and the cry of "the land for the people" frightens them so little, that some of them will even coquette with it in the game of politics, which is the top amusement of the proprietary classes. Let us hope that we may live to see the day when they will learn what it really means—to wit, the abolition of the class of compulsory pensioners.

I wonder whether these strike-cured gentlemen noted, as I did, a little incident of civilisation which took place the other day about the Solomon Islands, where one of our war-ships was used for the safe

amusement of "punishing" the islanders for cannibalism? Did it in that case occur to them, as it did to me, that while the poor devils of Solomon Islanders were engaged in eating their enemies, the "superior persons" of British Islanders were eating the people whom they call their friends and fellow-countrymen; their equals before the law, and before God, as the cant phrase goes?

Cannibalism for cannibalism, it seems to me, that that of the poor ignorant poverty-stricken Solomon Islanders is less deserving of punishment than that of the British Islanders; and that the word "punishment" ought to make the latter shake in their shoes, if ever they think, as I fear few of them do, of the natural results of artificial compulsory poverty in a land which nature and the traditions of labour would make so wealthy for all people if the non-producers did not eat up the lives of the producers after the manner of civilised cannibalism.

W. M.

Now is the chosen time of the charity-fiend, the busiest season for the professional philanthropist. At Christmas-tide, the most hide-bound bourgeois will allow himself to be moved, either by compassion or prudence, into rendering back to the poor some infinitesimal part of what he has been busily stealing from them all the year. But, having for so long devoted all his energies to getting, he is unskilled and awkward at giving. Not only that; he would be made uncomfortable if himself brought face to face with the misery he has been making. Even if he took himself and his charity quite seriously, he would still be made uncomfortable; and if, as would probably happen, a dim perception of the humbug and blasphemy of it all forced itself upon his hardened conscience, he would be unable to face his victim without a blush. So that, all things considered, he would very decidedly prefer not to come into close relations with the recipient of his "bounty."

The workman or his wife, on their side, are ridden with a fearful dread of the master and of the landlord; there is so strongly associated with them the fear of dismissal in the one case, of eviction or a rise of rent in the other, that a personal interview is, to put it mildly, rather too suggestive of unpleasantness. It would bring to mind so many scenes of the past, that the pleasantness which would attend the friendly meeting of free men, and the pleasure of accepting a gift from one whom one liked and respected, would be very far removed indeed from the actual realities. So far, indeed, that those realities would more resemble to the workman, either a contemptuous flinging of degrading alms or a shamefaced half-measure of would-be atonement for the wrongs he had suffered.

Here, then, is a field for the philanthropist; here is a gap into which he can fling himself; a function he can justify his existence by fulfilling. On the one hand he can relieve the benevolent landlord or employer of all trouble or responsibility beyond writing out a cheque; and on the other, he can save the workman at his charity-dinner or under his charity-blanket (special quality: see Messrs. Vampire and Co.'s Christmas price-list) from having his appetite spoiled, or his angry passions roused, by the strong contrast between his well-fed benefactor and his unfortunate self. So, into a charitable conduit, with a leak in it here and there, the self-sacrificing philanthropist turns himself, and waxes fat on the consciousness of well-doing. A cheque placed in his right hand becomes coal or soup or blankets in his left. He is a close follower of scriptural commands, and his right hand very rarely knows what his left hand doeth: in other words, so absorbed is he in heavenly work that so base and material a thing as a balance-sheet does not occur to him.

Nor does he ever lose sight of the heavenly side of his mission; the bodily comforts (?) he sparingly administers are made the baits wherewith he fishes for the souls of men. The bread is seasoned and the blankets embroidered with scriptural admonitions to contentment and obedience, with explanations of the worthlessness of perishable bodies as compared with immortal "souls." All of which leads up to the moral, that this is the best of all possible worlds; that his hearers ought to be happy, and would be if they only looked at things in the

proper light; and that the misery and discomfort of their bodies is most healthful for their "spiritual parts," which will one day receive a thousand-fold reward; and all the rest of the pestilent rubbish that is haled out to keep the slaves subservient.

The giving of gifts among equals and friends is a pleasant thing, and good for both giver and receiver; but the doling out of charity is degrading in every way, even when given and received in all honesty and goodwill. When the charity is vicarious, without personal contact and good fellowship; when it is made the vehicle of condescension and class-feeling, a pretence for the preaching of humility, a means of buttressing robbery and preserving the supremacy of property,—it becomes so horrible a blasphemy, so terrible an outrage upon humanity, as to rank, in Socialist eyes at least, along with the most blistering wrongs under which men suffer nowadays. S.

## DISCORD, MONOTONY, AND HARMONY.

It occurred to me that, at the present time,—when a growing feeling is finding utterance amongst all the peoples of the world that the institutions of our age are not the most conducive to the happiness of the largest number, despite the sanctity which centuries of usage has given many of them—a glance at social life as it is and as it might be, life which the environment of society with its usages, man-made laws and traditions necessitates, and life admitting of no bonds but natural laws and the free will of the individual as a factor of society, would induce people, *i.e.*, those who have not already done so, to think more seriously and earnestly upon the social degradation of this so-called age of enlightenment. And I am confident that when once people begin thinking about these things, that their thoughts will soon be moulded into deeds. They will then enrol themselves in the ranks of the discontented, the rebels against ignorance, superstition, and injustice.

The unsocial discord of society grates more painfully on the ears of the Socialist than the most inharmonic sounds do on the ear of the musician. It is this discord that the Socialist is striving to displace. This cannot be done by putting one's fingers to their ears to shut out the unwelcome strains. Perhaps many who do so now in the endeavour to shut out the piercing cries of the victims murdered for greed on the battle field, in the mine, the factory, or the slum, will find that they have turned a deaf ear too long when the sounds of discord roar like the thunder in the heavens, and the victimised class becomes a weapon of destruction more terrible than the lightning. The homepaths say that like cures like; if so, our unsocial discord is awaiting its destruction by the consummation of its own elements.

So far I have only been generalising. Now, let us go into a closer analysis of our unsocial system, or system of discord. First, we have our unsocial system divided into a possessing class and a non-possessing class, familiarly called the haves and have-nots. These two have nothing in common, consequently there is perpetual discord between them; to wit, the incessant strikes and lock-outs, distraints and ejections. The goddess of Liberty prostitutes herself, and at her shrine bow both these classes. Amongst the possessors each man's hand is against the other, for have they not the liberty to compete! Free competition sets everyone against the other to try by chicanery, artifice, or fraud to appropriate to himself as much as he can from Nature's gifts to all. The have-nots, likewise free to compete, fight each other to under-sell their labour to the haves. Thus our unsocial system revels in perpetual discord.

Again, Nature has divided mankind into two, two not varying in nature, but in functions. Unsocial society says the sanctity of the house and family can only be maintained by yoking people in pairs during their mortal tenure, subject to the economic conditions of the system. This means that the possessing classes are all in a position to be yoked. Of the have-nots, those only who get more than enough from the haves to keep themselves can be yoked, so the haves can even prevent the have-nots from discharging their natural functions as human beings. Again, inasmuch as the people are not yoked in accordance to natural law, *i.e.*, by natural selection, many couples of both classes find they have made a mistake in getting yoked; but as the traditions of the elders have taught them it is very naughty to get unyoked, they find themselves compelled to endure a cat-and-dog existence till death does them part, which not unfrequently happens by the man or the woman severing the gordian knot by knocking out the brains of his or her lawfully wedded partner. Sometimes, too, one or other of the partners rebels against the time honoured institutions of society, and tries a change of life with one of more congenial tastes. And thus the sanctity of the house and family is maintained, and sounds of discord waft forth from many a domestic hearth. It would be useless here to dilate upon the want of harmony with natural law in the lives of old-maids, bachelors, and prostitutes. That must be patent to all. Such then is the discord in the relation between the sexes in our present unsocial system.

When one comes, however, to the region of speculative thought, which the traditions of nearly 2,000 years have handed down in varied fantastic forms as truth, the outsider finds chaos supreme. But it is this discord, this warring of hypocrites and impostors and deluded fanatics, that leaves a ray of hope for the truth, that out of the infinity of discord harmony may yet evolve.

I think I have demonstrated that at whatever phase of modern society we take a glance, we find nothing but discord. Surely to

any reasoning being such a system must stand condemned on its own demerits, for merits it has none.

We often find people expressing their abhorrence of a society based upon the principles of natural equality, and they say that the frightful monotony of such an existence would be simply intolerable. Such arguments are on a par with that of the philanthropic old lady who denounced Socialists as wicked, because they were endeavouring to prevent her, and other good, kind, charitable people like her, from enjoying one of the greatest pleasures of life—that is, from helping the poor and destitute: or the policeman, who asked to be removed from his division because his duties were so monotonous. The monotony he complained of was that in all the beats he had taken, by day or by night, he never had the chance of clumping anyone on the head. If we want to find monotony in life, we must look for it in our present system. Take the lives of those victims of society, who, after spending their youth and manhood or womanhood in almost perpetual toil, find the reward of a useful life meted out to them in a workhouse under the degrading name of pauper. If you want monotonous lives, take those of the slaves of the needle, the match girls, the tram men, the railway men, and thousands of other workers whose monotony of hard toil is only varied by an occasional change to starvation. No! monotonous lives cannot be where there is social equality. When the worry, confusion, and discord of modern society ceases, harmony arising from equality of condition, brotherly feeling and peace must prevail.

Some may say, we care not for a sameness, for a monotony. My answer to them is, no more do I; but do not confuse the absence of discord with monotony. An infinite number of varied and pleasing changes can be rung out in harmony; and if an individual be so socially degraded that an infinity of change because harmonious is to him monotonous, then I say he is unfit for the future society in which we aspire to a melody of life unbroken by discord. A. BROOKES.

## SOCIALISM AMONG THE INDIANS.

THE Rev. Mr. Batty, for fifteen years a Quaker missionary among the Indians, and recently labouring among the Sacs and Foxes of Iowa, says, according to the *Boston Dawn*, what is well known, that they do not take kindly to our civilisation, and gives as a reason the following significant account:—

They are on a small reservation, closely environed by a thrifty farming population, but "make no progress" and show no desire to copy the white man's ways. They are all honest; there is not a thief among them. Occasionally one steals under the influence of liquor, but as soon as he becomes sober he returns the goods and begs forgiveness, a touch of paganism which wouldn't be a bad thing for a considerable element of our white population, so that their aversion to the white man's ways may not be altogether due to native depravity. It is chiefly due, according to Mr. Batty, to aversion to the very things in our civilisation on which we are most apt to pride ourselves—our individualism; our utter disregard in business transactions of the interests of our neighbours. The Indian cannot understand this. To him it is monstrous, abhorrent. With him the tribal bond makes individualism of the selfish sort impossible. Every member of the tribe is his brother. All things are held in common, so that none can be in want while others have plenty. If one is successful in the chase, that success, by custom, gives him the right to take the first or choice cut from the game. But this taken, the remainder is the property of the others—not theirs to take simply by his *leave* or courtesy, but theirs by *right* unquestioned.

The same law holds in the cultivation of the land. No one has any exclusive right to the product of the soil. The fact that he has tilled the land does not make the crop his in any exclusive sense. So long as any have plenty, none can be left in want.

And this rule of action, Mr. Batty says, has its root in their religion. To the Indian, the earth is literally his mother and the sun his father. This is not poetry with them, as it is with us, for in their thought the sun and earth are living beings. The rays of the sun fructify the earth and make her fruitful. To her products all her children have equal rights, and to her bosom all must have equal access. It is for this reason that land in severalty is so generally opposed. It is cutting up and parceling out their mother, and shutting out some of her children from access to her breast. The thought is repugnant to the fundamentals of their religion.

Mr. Batty tells a very interesting story of personal experience, which sets forth their property ideas in very clear light. A sick Indian had a pony he desired to sell. Mr. B., at his request, consented to take it to the agency and dispose of it for him, and purchase certain goods. After the sale, and while still at the agency, another Indian of the same tribe came to him and asked him what he got for the pony. Mr. Batty told him. Very soon he inquired what he paid for the goods, and then, after a short pause, how much he had left. All his questions being answered satisfactorily, and finding that Mr. Batty had a balance of twelve dollars, he said, "I need some things for my family, I have no money. I would like what you have left." Mr. Batty objected that the money was not his to give; that it belonged to the man whose pony he sold. "I must return it to him," said Mr. Batty. "You no understand Indians' ways," was the response; "you give me money; it all right. All the same as if you take it to the other Indian. But Mr. Batty was not to be persuaded, and the Indian had to go away without the money. Very soon, however, he returned, with instructions from the agent authorising Mr. Batty to give him the money. He did so, though not without misgiving as to the propriety of his course. On returning home, he reported to the Indian whose pony he had sold, what had occurred, with no little anxiety as to the result. But, to his utter astonishment, when he had finished his story, the Indian replied, "That all right. He my brother."

HOW THEY DO IT.—Municipal Dignitary (to police official): Order the force to have everything in readiness for a descent on the gambling houses to-night. Police Official (to subordinate officer): Tell the men to get ready for a raid on the gambling places to-night. Subordinate Officer (to squad of police): Boys, be around here about 11 o'clock; we are ordered to make a haul of the gambling houses. Policeman (to gambler): Jerry, we're goin' to raid ye about midnight: tell the boys.—*Chicago Tribune*.

## LABOUR'S LATEST WEAPON.

THE "Union Label," says the *Boston Globe*, is Labour's latest and most effective weapon. The changed system of production, owing to the introduction of steam as a motive power and the consequent growth of the so-called "factory system," has led to many such new ideas. With the concentration of large bodies of men working on machinery and the concentration of capital, have naturally arisen the great organisations of labourers and of capitalists. These great organisations stand facing each other, each desirous of securing as much as possible out of the joint product of labour and capital. With the control of machinery, and consequently of the means of employment, it has been possible for the capitalist to say to a great degree how much it should take. The labourers had only one weapon by which to enforce a demand for a larger share of the product. This weapon was the strike. It proved to be costly to the labourer as well as to the capitalist, and was not always effective.

Within the past five years another weapon has been discovered, which has proved very effective. It came into existence as the result of the discovery that not only were the labourers producers, but they were also the great bulk of the consumers. This weapon is the so-called "union label." The idea of using a label to distinguish the product of certain kinds of labour dates back about 15 years. The germ of it was contained in a label first issued by the White League of San Francisco, and which was put upon goods made by white labour to distinguish them from those made by the Chinese. It was used on cigars principally, but it was also placed on boots and shoes and other articles. It was very effective for a time.

The idea was adopted and enlarged upon by the Cigarmakers' International Union at its convention in Chicago in September, 1880. They then originated the famous "blue label" of the cigarmakers, which was placed on every box of cigars and was broken like the revenue stamp when the box was opened. This label, which is in use to-day, certifies that the cigars contained in the box are made by a first-class workman, a member of the union which is opposed to inferior rat shop, coolie prison, or filthy tenement workmanship. It was thus used directly to prevent the sale of cigars made by coolie, prison, or tenement-house labour, by distinguishing goods that were not so made. It indirectly assisted to a marked degree to increase the wages and reduce the hours of labour of its members, because no unfair employer could retain the use of the label. Its success was marked, as stated above.

When the Knights of Labour had grown into large proportions, it also was obliged by the force of events to issue a label. The boycott had been used to such a degree as to impair its efficiency. Besides, the boycott was only negative. It simply said to the members of the organisation, "Don't patronise such a firm." There the matter ended. This was construed in some States to be a criminal conspiracy to injure a man's business, and several persons went to prison on that account, while a large number of indictments were kept hanging over the heads of different agents of labour organisations, terrorising them into inactivity.

The advantages of the "union label" were quickly brought into prominence. Directly, it harmed no particular man's business. It had the effect of inducing the members of the various labour organisations to call for goods bearing the union or Knights of Labour label. If a man had trouble with the labour organisations, and consequently was not entitled to the use of the label, that was his own look-out. He was the only one that was injuring his business. In the *Journal of United Labour* there are engravings given of not less than ten different kinds of labels, which are placed on trunks, shirts, barrels, tin cans, hats, gloves, cigars, files, and collars and cuffs. The shoemakers have also a label, which is soon to be brought into greater prominence than it has had in the past.

When the operative tailors of Boston were suffering from the effects of their accustomed work being taken from them, and sent to New York to be made in filthy tenement houses, and under conditions deleterious to the health of the customer who might wear the clothing so made, they at first knew not what step to take. Out of 7,000 persons employed in Boston, it was alleged that fully 3,000 were idle from this cause. There was then practically no organisation. It was considered by some in the trade, that the first thing to be done was to form an organisation, so that an organised effort might be made against this tenement-house work. Several unions of the different branches were formed by the assistance of members of the Central Labour Union. They existed, with more or less vigour, for some time, and at one time seemed about to follow the fate of their predecessors by collapsing. At this juncture it was suggested by several of the prominent labour men of the city that the unions should adopt a union label to distinguish clothing made by them in Boston from that made in the sweaters' tenement houses. This idea was accepted, and after much deliberation a label was adopted. A strong and determined effort was made to impress on the public the necessity for calling for clothing bearing this label, if they desired to escape buying garments made by the sweaters. The attention of the firms making clothing was also called to the label. One well-known firm, noted for its enterprise and originality in advertising methods, took up the label, and adopted it for use on their garments. Another did the same. The effect was magical. The unions began to pick up in membership immediately, and new unions were formed.

There are to-day six unions of the various branches of the clothing trade, exclusive of the Clothing Cutters' Union. These are the Tailors and Trimmers' Union, Machine Operators' Union, Pressmen's Union, Female Coat-makers' Union, Female Pantaloon-makers' Union, and Male Pantaloon-makers' unions, with a possibility of two other unions being formed in the near future. Contractor after contractor who did work for the different large clothing firms was obliged to allow his employes to join the union of their branch in order to be allowed the use of the label. A label committee was appointed, whose duty was to increase the demand for the label. One man was selected to go around to the different organisations of workingmen every night, and urge upon them to call for clothing bearing the union label. It has had considerable effect already. The different unions of tramway employes were visited. They were many of them about to purchase overcoats for the winter. Their attention being called to the label and the facts about the tenement houses, a large number of them promised to ask for the union label. This agitation is not being confined to Boston. As fast as possible it is intended to reach out into all the cities and towns of Massachusetts and then into other parts of New England.

Wherever a labour organisation exists, there the story of the tenement houses will be repeated and a demand created for the union label clothing. When the American Federation of Labour meets, a demand will be made that the convention indorse this label, and it will then become a national affair, and the same demand will be created all over the United States.

## THE ANTHROPOPHAGITE.

HAST thou a heart cased in steel?  
Hast nought of human save the brow?  
Art turned to marble and canst not feel?  
Then to my Hell follow me now.

The antique anthropophagite  
Am I, masked as society;  
Look on my hands, a bloody sight!  
Look on my lustful, cruel eye!  
There's many a corner in my lair  
With mangled carcasses bestrewn;  
Thither with me do thou repair;  
I ate thy father! I'll eat thy son!

First look upon this battlefield here,  
They mowed it down three whole days long;  
Grapeshot and guns the mowers were,  
The gleaners are this vulture-throng.  
The corn upon this glorious plain  
A yellow carpet bath outspread.  
Ye poor, that bind the sheaves amain,  
Pick out the ears from 'mid the dead.

Look yonder where a brothel stands,  
A lazar-house of infamy;  
Here, severing all familiar bands,  
Lust triumphs over misery.  
See, how this slave of foul desire  
Allures man with her wanton eye,  
Wallowing body and soul in the mire,  
And spat on by each passer-by!

Prisons to look on art thou fain?  
Lo, the men that knives and poisons use!  
That count each crime for a campaign,  
And with the very hangman ruse.  
To the galleys I condemn young thieves,  
Or ever they have learnt to spell,  
But ere the criminal that school leaves  
He's deep, and read in murder well!

Follow me to the factory,  
A more appalling prison still!  
Here human beings caught up, see,  
And ground down by the rolling mill.  
Soul, body, heart, brain consumed, and then  
The residue a damned thing means;  
Here the machines behave like men,  
And men are turned into machines.

Oh, I can show thee other hells,  
Shall I break open a human brain?  
The life-corroding *ennui* dwells  
Where phantasy and thought should reign.  
Shall I lay open a human heart  
Writhing in anguish infinite?  
Galled love of hate hath played the part,  
And molten lead hath poured on it.

The antique anthropophagite  
Am I, masked as Society;  
The masks wherewith I am bedight  
Are Family and Property.  
Proud man, once pent in my domain,  
His conquering destiny hath forgone;  
I hold and loose him not again;  
Thy father I ate and I'll eat thy son!

Translated by LAURA LAFARGUE.

EUGENE POTTIER.

A POET-CHAMPION OF WORKING WOMEN. — A correspondent in Copenhagen writes to the *Neue Wiener Tageblatt*, giving an account of the strike of the workwomen at the large match factory at Christiania. The occupation of these women is extremely unhealthy and badly paid. In order to gain a bare subsistence they must pack no fewer than 16,000 match-boxes in a week, and the women live amid poisonous sulphur and phosphorus fumes for twelve hours every day. The consequence is that most of them fall into a decline, and as their strength goes their earnings diminish. The conditions under which they work render the only means of safety—nourishing food, healthy dwellings, and medical aid—unattainable. More than a thousand workwomen went on strike, and the movement, as soon as it became important, received the powerful aid of the celebrated poet Björnson, who enthusiastically took up the women's cause, declaring that never had strike so much justice on its side, for the helpless women were obliged to act against manufacturers who were without conscience, and who took no pains to arrange sanitary measures against the consumption which played such havoc among the women and girls. Björnson wrote a letter to the Norwegian Bishop Essendrop, calling upon him to fulfil his Christian duties by publicly championing the women's cause, but the Bishop declined, saying that his official position prevented him from siding with any party. Björnson then appeared at a great strike meeting, and made an enthusiastic speech, which was received with great applause. The meeting was opened by Dr. Nissen, who led in three young girls who had once been extremely healthy, but were now living examples of the evil effects of work done without sanitary precautions. Their appearance excited the greatest pity, and moved the spectators even to tears, for the three girls had lost almost all their teeth, and even portions of the jaw, their ash grey faces being frightfully disfigured. Björnson, in his speech, said "that this time the voice of right should be heard, and that the struggle of these women and girls should not be fruitless. He was no agitator, but he would call a hundred strikes into being in the country until the workpeople had got their human rights, and were no longer forced to eat poison with every bit of bread."



OFFICES: 24 GREAT QUEEN STREET, LONDON, W.C.

HAVE YOU NOT HEARD HOW IT HAS GONE WITH MANY A CAUSE BEFORE NOW? FIRST, FEW MEN HEED IT; NEXT, MOST MEN CONTEMN IT; LASTLY, ALL MEN ACCEPT IT—AND THE CAUSE IS WON!

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Seafaring	Le Proletariat	Wien—Arbeiter Zeitung
UNITED STATES	La Revue Socialiste	Brunn—Arbeiterstimme
New York—Freiheit	HOLLAND	DENMARK
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SOMETHING IN A NAME.

I BELIEVE that the working people of England are far in advance of the same class in the United States in comprehension of economic questions and of the social and industrial situation. They are braver, more daring; but this naturally ensues from their better understanding of their own rights and powers. They march, carry red banners, sing revolutionary songs, and "state grievances" in no mild terms. They hold many meetings, and keep numerous speakers in the field. This, at least, we gather from our reading of the *Commonweal* and an occasional London daily.

Why should it be so? Here where the boast is that every man is a sovereign and all are free and equal before the law? Have we not the

"freest and most prosperous people in the world"? You hear it often enough and as soon as you strike the coast line of America. But alas for our boasts! In Chicago on the 11th of November every suitable hall was closed against memorial meetings; the exercises in memory of our brave martyrs were held outside the city, and even then the Waldheim Cemetery authorities did all in their power to prevent the meeting by denying a place for speakers or even room for a carriage or wagon from which they could address the throng. In Philadelphia, thousands of people were prevented from gathering in a mass meeting to hear Hugh Pentecost on "The Crime of the 11th of November" by the authorities closing the hall already rented and paid for. In many other cities no attempts at demonstration were made because it was known to be useless. And yet, scarcely a word is said about such legal invasion of personal liberty. It is treated as a matter of course. No one dares be so "lawless and disorderly" as to rebel against such despotism—no one thinks of such a thing as defying a policeman's command. The chief of police in the United States has more power than England's queen. His monarchy is unlimited; he is not bound by constitutions, or the will of the people. He is as complete an autocrat as the Czar of Russia—in reality, not in name. He is called here "a servant of the people." And herein lies the principal difference between the two countries. Everything is misnamed over here, and the people are so misled by fine-sounding titles that they do not know tyranny, robbery, and oppression when they see and feel them. From the president down to a petty constable everything is under a misnomer, and when the people feel inclined to rebel against conditions, they look around and see nothing definite to fight. They only see, apparently, "freedom and equality for all," a "government by and for the people," universal suffrage, equal opportunities, no aristocracy, no classes, no monarch. There is no visible despotism to struggle against, though they know that the hardest workers are poor, the most willing often rewarded with starving idleness, and that humanity suffers as much through poverty, famine, and sickness as elsewhere.

In England the common people easily learn that they are saddled with a large family of paupers for whom parliament must make fresh provision every year, called queen, princes, princesses, dukes, etc. The whole system by which they are robbed has become so methodical, so old, so customary, that each person is born into a certain groove, with no illusory hope of getting out of it by his own exertions; he is not told he is a sovereign, not taunted with the assertion that he has equal opportunity with the richest to gain wealth and power. He is given plainly to understand that there are classes, and it is the right of one class to live in idleness and rack-rent him. He has something tangible to protest against, and the dullest rebel, or feel ready to do so, at the first opportunity. In America our billionaires, railroad kings, coal-barons, landlords, and bankers, who hold the fate of the common people in the hollow of their hands, comprise an aristocracy as powerful as that in any monarchy; but our legislature votes them *privileges* instead of direct incomes, and our good labouring masses do not recognise them as what they are.

We are supposed to have no classes; yet the working girl or working man stands less chance of meeting his or her employer on an equal social plane than in England or Germany. Several years ago, the junior partner of a large clothing firm was married and had a grand wedding. His employes clubbed together and bought a handsome solid silver service. The forewoman collected the money, bought the silver, and had it sent direct to the house. Some of the girls who had contributed generously, said regretfully, "I wish we could have seen it at least. I wonder if we could not get a glimpse of it if we peeped in at the windows after dark." From the little their employer allowed them after his profits were made, the girls deducted more than they could spare to buy a present they could never hope to see—and not a foot among them dare tread where it had gone. Is there a tighter drawn line anywhere?

The boasted right of universal suffrage is but the privilege of handing a bit of paper as the boss directs, and has no bearing whatever on the voter's real wants, needs, or desires. He simply knows he may lose a chance to toil if he does not "use" it.

Our officers are all "servants of the people," supposed to have no will of their own, but desirous of doing whatever is best for the welfare of society. But woe be to the poor man or the woman driven to despair by poverty, if they come in contact with one of these "servants"! Servants they are, but the badly-bribed servants of a few greedy capitalists, engaged to do the dirty work of government, rather than the *people's* servants. If they were known as the king's own or a czar's instruments of terror, we would know better how to deal with them.

"Law and order" is but another name for the tyranny that pins a man to earth and makes him lie there quietly while another robber takes all he has. It is more respectable to have the fleecing done in an orderly and peaceful manner; and if we name the process something awe-inspiring—so much the better, for the people know no better.

We have the letter but not the spirit. It is obligatory on citizens to reverence certain names, such as equality, liberty, the franchise, citizenship, law and order, etc. They do not recognise the most palpable wrong if bearing these titles. It would be a step in advance if the United States should resolve itself into a dictatorship, as some men still dream of having done, so that the people would see something tangible to attack.

We must teach the people to *know* oppression when they see it, no matter in what guise it comes. Slavery is slavery, though the chains be ever so gilded. Liberty, true liberty, will be so bright, will bring such comfort, such happiness, such plenty in her train, that we cannot by any possibility mistake her. LIZZIE M. HOLMES.

## NOTES.

EVERY now and then there is much talk of the mighty power of the press, and particular stress is laid on the decided progress which is evidenced by the improvements, both literary and technical, shown when comparing the papers of to-day with those of years past. As a rule, this may be taken for just what it is worth, which is not much; but when such a positive comparison is made, and such a challenge thrown out as that made by the preliminary number of the *Daily Graphic*, it is time to kick.

The address to the public states, that the *Graphic* has undergone constant development and enlargement; that in 1869 the annual cost was £54,000 (24 pp.), while now the annual cost is £74,000 (36 pp.). "Prodigious!" This cordial appreciation and sympathy of an "indulgent public" is now taken as warrant to embark in an entirely new enterprise, a daily newspaper, illustrated. Well, if the preliminary number is to be taken as only a fair sample, by thunder the public will indeed be indulgent!

What a sign of "progress" this preliminary number really is, may be judged by the following paragraph of the address: "The day has not yet arrived when our special artist at the seat of war can make a sketch that will be reproduced fac-simile by telegraph in our London offices in the twinkling of an eye, but we may be within measurable distance of such a feat of electricity." This precious paragraph of hope is illustrated with a man sitting on the side of a cart, which carries a reel of telegraph cable attached to the end of the artist's pencil, the battle going on in the distance.

In order that there shall be no possibility of missing the old moral that "a war, bloody war," is the almost constant desire of newspaper proprietors, four whole pages are taken up with a re-dishing of the report of the Battle of Waterloo, illustrated of course. Progress, high civilisation, culture, all are emphasized in this latest emanation.

Of the sixteen pages, four are devoted to advertisements, four to jingoism, four to an illustrated rehash of the *Times* of a century ago, and the rest to gas and twaddle, with a special par for Mrs. Grundy and Mr. Horsley, A.R.A., as for example this: "It shall contain nothing from pen or pencil which a parent would wish to conceal from his family;" the concluding line of the battle report is: "The whole surface of the battle-field is one great shambles"; so, evidently, to familiarise war is quite a family duty. "This we believe can be effected without the paper being considered prudish or namby-pamby."

The address concludes: "Believe me to be, Ladies and Gentlemen, your most obedient servant," and is signed by one who, according to the illustration at the side, has the grace to hide his face, he is boozing so very low. Of course, in any report of the Battle of Waterloo, there must be considerable about the almost supernatural powers of the "Great Duke"; and it really is droll, just after looking such a report over, to read the correspondence between the Iron Duke and Miss J., just published by Fisher Unwin.

What a splendid text for a democratic satirist of the time, with his pencil dipped in a vivid recollection of the despotic modes used by Wellington, when dealing with any agitation, would have been the interview of November 12th, 1834. Never having seen one another previously, this is the sort of thing which takes place:—Miss J. opens by reading the first chapter of St. John down to "Ye must be born again;" whereupon the Duke seizes her hand, exclaiming, "Oh, how I love you! how I love you!" Miss J. (in the tone of a Church Catechist): "Who causes you to feel thus towards me?" Duke: "God Almighty!"

Almighty gosh! what rot; what a thing to make a despot and ruler of. Even with the fact that he was 65 years old, it must considerably discount the immense claims made by some that the Duke was one of the very few always level-headed men equal to every emergency.

T. S.

The United States to-day is the most monopoly-cursed nation on the face of the earth. They have made more millionaires in 20 years than Europe and England have made in 500 years. Everything in this country is controlled by a syndicate, pool, combination, trust, patent or corner. If a boy, now grown to manhood, wishes to go into business he must buy a seat on the board of trade; if he wishes to go into manufacturing, he must buy himself into a combination which represents and has monopolised that business.—*New Orleans Times Democrat*.

Old-fashioned, non-progressive people the English are. They still call them "corners" over there, an uncouth, harsh-sounding name, suggestive of nefarious business methods. Why can't they progress a little? Why can't they call their aggregations of business rascality "trusts"? That sounds less harsh and it don't prevent the good work of plunder going on as effectually as ever. To be sure, the member of an English "corner," like the member of an American "trust," abates no jot of his respectability, can hold his head just as high as ever in society and in church, and is entitled to count on the law as an accomplice. And all the time his stealing is more certain to succeed and to be a thousand times more profitable than ever were the operations of footpad, burglar, or pirate.—*Journal of United Labour*.

## OUR LADY OF LABOUR.

In the faint twilight of half-dawn she stands,  
Scarce knowing light from darkness, life from death;  
In the far east the red sun quickeneth  
To reawakened life the silent lands.  
Her eyes are weary and the clinging bands  
Of pain and sorrow gird her, and the breath  
Scarce lives upon her lips: "Behold," one saith,  
"She bears the curse of ages in her hands."

Nay, for the light grows stronger; nay, the day  
Is yearning towards her, and the morning wind  
Sings as a singer, whose eyes once were blind  
And now have sight and knowledge. Who shall say  
Here stands not one whose woes have passed away,  
The nursing mother of a new mankind?

CHARLES KENNETH BURROW.

## INTERNATIONAL NOTES.

## FRANCE.

Those who believe that all is for the best under "the best possible of republics," will do well to look at the following facts. A few days ago the police made a raid on about 500 wretched homeless people about the Halles centrales; two days afterwards a new raid on over 200! As no accommodation could be procured for such a large number in one night, they left them the whole night to tramp about in the yards of the different police-stations, to be removed early in the morning to the various depots or prisons of this beautiful city. There they will get board and lodging at the expense of the ratepayers for a term varying from eight days to three months "for being too poor." One of them had been picked up thirty-nine times already! Surely that fellow must have a queer opinion of our *democratic* republic! Had he been a robber or a murderer he might have a chance of a better life; he might be rich and free. Poor and "honest" as he is, he spends his whole life in gaol! O great Paris Exhibition! what boon have you brought to the toiler?  
A. C., Paris.

## GERMANY.

The anti-Socialist laws of Germany, so it was said lately in the Reichstag, are now more moderately resorted to than in the first years of their existence. However, the truth is as follows: In the year 1882, 69 persons were sentenced by direct application of the muzzle-laws; in 1883, 83 persons; in 1884, 113 persons; in 1885, 98 persons; in 1886, 92 persons; in 1887, 116 persons; in 1888, 258 persons. For having been members of illegal associations, the convictions have been as follows: In 1882, 22 persons; in 1883, 12 persons; in 1884, 5 persons; in 1885, 6 persons; in 1886, 47 persons; in 1887, 82 persons; in 1888, 108 persons. These are only two especial categories of offences committed by Socialists, but they do not by a long way exhaust the series of offences which Socialists have committed, as these series are really innumerable. Besides the convictions of persons, 1,400 prints have been suppressed, 120 daily or periodical papers or magazines, 200 pamphlets or books. Twelve Socialist publishing houses have been forcibly closed, thus bringing about the total ruin of a considerable number of workers interested in these ventures. Over 600 expulsions have been made. An extraordinary number of meetings have been forbidden or forcibly dispersed, and hundreds of well-constituted associations or trade-unions have been suppressed. More than ten thousand men have had their homes searched by the police.

The imperial crank who is supposed to rule Germany has made his political programme publicly known at the late banquet of Francfort. Drinking to the health and prosperity of the town (the fellow is always toasting) he said: "There are no longer parties. I only know those who are for me, and those who are against me. All the rest is old rubbish (*alter Troedel*)." I am afraid that this *old rubbish* is ere long going to trouble considerably the happiness of that impudent young would-be Charlemagne or Napoleou. If his "left ear" does not kill him, it is pretty certain that the "old rubbish" will do away with him.  
V. D.

## IMPORTANT NOTICE.

To those who have obtained copies of the *Commonweal* through the propagandist work of our comrades, by free distribution in the streets and public conveyances, or by purchase at our outdoor stations, we ask if in agreement with our principles to help the sale of the *Commonweal* by ordering it of their newsagents, and sending on to us the names of newsagents willing to sell it; and still better, as our outdoor work must shortly be reduced, by joining the local branches and helping on the work.

The red flag itself is an emblem of trade-unions, and was carried by the mechanics' union (the "Eranoi" of the Greek) 1,000 years before Christ, when working men were followers of Zoroaster, fire worshippers, "Children of the Sun," the colour of which was emblemized in their scarlet banner.

QUESTION AND ANSWER.—*Question*: Is it wise to put into the *Dawn*, under the heading of "The Tocsin," contrasted statements of the conditions of the poor and the rich? Is it not calculated to be inflammatory? *Answer*: We answer by asking some other questions. Are the statements not true statements? Yes. Do they not fairly illustrate the relative conditions of rich and poor in this land? Yes. They picture truth, then? Yes. Should not the truth, then, be known? Indeed, we hope that these contrasts are inflammatory; we would not inflame the poor against the rich, or the rich against the poor, but we would inflame all men, rich and poor, against the horror, the unchristianity of the present state of things.—From the *Boston Dawn*.

A SOCIAL EVENING to members of the Socialist League will be given by the Propaganda Committee, at the Hall of the Socialist League, 24 Great Queen St., on New Year's Eve, at 8 p.m. Secretary of Propaganda Committee will read report of work done during last half year, to be followed by discussion and Concert; Recitations by comrade Darwood. Meeting and Concert free to all members.

## THE LABOUR STRUGGLE.

### The Gas-stokers' Strike.

The strike continues, though there are few events of interest to mark its course. Mr. Livesey has issued an address to his blacklegs, in which he declares that not one of them will be discharged to make room for the old stokers who have gone on strike, and that they may consider themselves engaged for three months. They are also promised a gratuity of £2 for the first week of the strike, and £1 for each succeeding week, in addition to their wages. But despite these fine promises the condition of the blacklegs is not to be envied. The Ambulance Corps stationed at the Old Kent Road, has treated 130 cases of unfortunate blacklegs who have burned or otherwise injured themselves while at work. They are literally wallowing in filth inside the iron sheds of the works; their condition being so bad at Vauxhall that the medical officer of the Lambeth Vestry had his attention called to it, but took no action, because of a promise from Mr. Livesey to mend matters. It is probable, however, that blacklegs, like other vermin, flourish best in dirty and overcrowded dens, so Mr. Livesey may probably know better than the medical officer what is good for them. The directors and a deputation from the strikers have had another interview, but it has led to no result. The men, in a manifesto they have issued, state that they will return to work if the clauses of the bonus agreement that bind them to work for a year and to serve the company in any capacity, are withdrawn, and on their side they are willing in future to bind themselves to give a month instead of a week's notice before striking. No one can deny that the men are most moderate in their demands, in fact, too moderate, experience having shown that Mr. Livesey can get all the blacklegs he wants in a week, and there is no reason for strengthening his hands by giving him a month for the same purpose. Still there is some excuse for the men, when sham friends of the working-classes, who even call themselves Socialists, have recommended the men to bind themselves for a year. Universal sympathy is felt for the strikers among all sections of the workers, whatever may be the opinions of well-fed middle-class people who read the *Daily News*. Even the old aristocratic trade unionists are full of sympathy for these brave men, who are so gallantly fighting the battle of labour. A good expression of this feeling is found in the leading article of the *Railway Review*, a paper with which we have had on some occasions to differ, but which now speaks upon the right side. It says: "It requires but little experience of the tactics of capitalists to discover the cloven foot of the enemy of combination in the agreement proposal of the directors of the South Metropolitan Gas Company. Imagine for a moment what would be the result of an individual agreement being signed by every man in all our large centres of industry throughout the country. The dates of termination would be different, and the workers would lose that cohesion which is so essential to the men whose only strength lay in the force of organised numbers. Where, we ask, would the strength of a trades' union be under such conditions? . . . It is just because we take this view of the situation that we think the battle now being fought by the gas stokers is one which should be shared by all organised workmen. If the directors succeed, there is no reason why other companies should not also use the same effective weapon to destroy our unions. That such is the desire is no mere stretch of imagination, but is palpable to the dullest of observers. . . . The fate of the gas workers to-day may be that of any other trades union to-morrow. If the army of labour is attacked at one point the safety of the whole is endangered." The article concludes by declaring that "the hewers of wood and drawers of water have caught a glimpse—a far away vision it may be—of the promised land of their hopes, and nothing will induce them to sacrifice that which has brought them thus far on the road, and to return once again to the desert of despair." We think this article, and especially the last sentence, shows that the preaching of Socialism during the last few years has had some effect. We are glad to see in the same paper that a good collection was made for the strikers by the railway men at their big meeting in Hyde Park. This is an example which other trade unionists might well copy. "Sympathy" is not worth much unless it is put into a practical form.

### Great Lock-out at Bristol.

10,000 men in the boot and shoe trade have been locked-out at Bristol. After the one day's strike a few weeks ago, a uniform wages statement was adopted, but a classification committee proved abortive, and the whole dispute has occurred on the classification of wages, as the workers found under the existing classification they received lower pay for certain goods that were largely in demand. All attempts to bring about a settlement having failed, the manufacturers determined to give out no more work, and to suspend clickers, machinists, and rough stuff cutters, and the rounders and finishers. The workmen have offered the following alternative as a basis of settlement: The men will accept either the London statement and wages, or the Northampton statement and classification, or the Leicester statement and Leicester classification.

### The Eight Hours Bill.

The replies of Mr. Gladstone and Randolph Churchill to Keir Hardie on the Eight Hours Bill for miners are models of parliamentary diplomacy. Mr. Gladstone would give the Bill "a dispassionate consideration," while Randolph will vote for it if Broadhurst and Co. will. It must be confessed that the latter young gentleman has given some study to the subject. He has read Mr. Sidney Webb's article in the *Contemporary*, and he has come to the conclusion that the Bill would diminish the unemployed and also the capitalists' profits. Those who believe in improving the condition of the people by wresting election pledges from reluctant politicians may make up their minds for plenty of answers of this kind. The only question would be, in case of two rival candidates giving answers similar to the above, which would be the right person to vote for? "Dispassionate consideration" and a promise of support, conditional on the worst enemies of your pet measure agreeing to it, are both equally worthless. Still, the rival politicians understand their business, and candidates at the next election will do well to copy their diplomacy. They will then be able to juggle a good many

poor people out of a vote, while really promising them nothing. This is the highest art of politics. N.

### The Sheffield and District General Labourers' Union.

The above organisation is making rapid progress. Totally unlike other organisations, while aiming at the removal of existing evils, to obtain a general rise in wages and a reduction of the hours of labour to each as the normal day, the movement has been, is, and will be of a thoroughly Socialistic character. Although only six weeks old, it numbers over 900 members, and is entering at the rate of 200 per week. Comrade Sketchley as secretary, with the help of comrade Bulas as president, hold at least five meetings each week in different parts of the town, at all of which thorough revolutionary Socialism is taught, and is everywhere well received. The system of organisation, too, is very simple, yet most effective in case of a great crisis, which is kept steadily in view. The committee has just taken the Hallamshire Hall, at a rental of £50 a-year. They have entire control of the hall (as sale tenants) for the year 1890. There the secretary (or some other one) will lecture twice each Sunday; in the morning at 11 on the events of the week, and in the evening at 7 on one of the great social or economical questions of the day. The hall will seat about 800. On the Tuesday evenings the society will hold its regular weekly meetings for the transaction of business, etc. The *Commonweal* begins to be looked upon among the more advanced of the members as their organ. B. S.

### REAL AND FICTITIOUS CAPITAL.

THE miscalled "national" banking system of this country, by which every money shark who can buy a 100,000 dols. United States bond, obtains the privilege to issue 90,000 dols. in notes which he can put out at interest, while also drawing interest on the bond, is a wrong and injustice to labour. It makes the indebtedness of the people the basis upon which the Shylocks bark and levy double usury. But it is not so great and deep-seated a wrong as the system under which fictitious credit-capital is created, bearing no necessary relation to the amount of money in the country or the real values of property, on every cent of which credit-capital draws usury. Every operation in bonds or stocks, in produce or in real estate, in railroads or factories, which leaves a profit, adds just so much to the enormous volume of credit-capital. Every time a bondholder clips his coupons or a shareholder in a corporation receives his dividends, there is an addition to the paper-capital and the power of the moneyed class to levy tribute on industry. Capital used to be defined as stored-up labour, but like many other of the definitions of the so-called science of political economy it is an absurdity in relation to what we call capital to-day. There is a sense in which it is true. Real capital—such as machinery, buildings, coal, wheat, or furniture—the tangible material capital—is stored-up labour, though it is usually stored up by and for the use of someone other than the actual wealth creator. Real capital, moreover, is perishable; it is liable to be consumed, worn-out, or destroyed in many different ways. But credit-capital, the capital created not by labour but by buying and selling and putting out money to usury, is not stored-up labour—it is not actual wealth—it represents nothing now actually in existence, but is simply a charge or mortgage upon the labour of the future. And it does not, like real capital, perish in the using; it is not worn out or consumed, but goes on accumulating, piling up and "making money" for its possessor, twenty, fifty, or a hundred years after it was called into existence, by a stroke of the pen on a deed or a banker's book.

We have called this "credit-capital" because the existing phraseology of political economy is lacking and deceptive. It has no term to distinguish these imaginary values created by the speculator, the banker, and the usurer from the genuine labour-created capital. It lumps them both together under the one term "capital," and then, when exception is taken to the insidious process under which labour is taxed to pay the holder of imaginary values, its professors cry out: "Oh, but capital is necessary—capital is stored labour and industry must pay for its use." And so it is no wonder that many intelligent people are unable to see the argument against the injustice of taxing labour to pay usury on a thing that has no existence apart from figures on paper, because their minds have been so befogged by the teaching of learned professors of political economy, who wilfully or ignorantly, confound two entirely different things.

Credit-capital means the eternal enslavement of labour. It lies at the foundation of the enormous fortunes which are accumulating so rapidly throughout America, and of the corresponding impoverishment of the masses. If the process of creating by the juggling operations of a currency system, framed in the interest of bankers and users, and by the inflation of land values, railroad shares, etc., a capital which is real only in its power of taxing the workers to maintain idlers in luxury, is allowed to continue, freedom will soon exist only in name, and the United States will be a plutocracy with a population of serfs.—*Journal of United Labour*.

Very often, indeed, what seems to be noisy or senseless joy in frivolous amusements is nothing but a result of immoderate, galling, and brutalising labour, since the mind, by perpetual hurrying and scurrying in the service of money-making, loses the capacity for a purer, nobler, and calmly-devised enjoyment. Men then involuntarily pursue their recreation also with the feverish haste of acquisition, and pleasure is measured by its cost, and is hurried through as if it were a kind of duty in the days and the hours set apart for it. That such a state of things is not healthy, and can hardly exist permanently, seems obvious; but it is not less clear that in the present industrial epoch enormous achievements are accomplished which at a future time may well serve to make the fruits of a higher culture accessible to the widest circles.—F. A. Lange, 'History of Materialism,' Vol. iii.—'Political Economy and Egoism.'

DIVIDENDS.—What is it to the dwellers on Fifth Avenue as they roll in their elegant, expensive carriages to the theatre or the club-room, or when they give one night's entertainment that costs them ten, twenty, thirty thousand dollars, that thousands of honest poor are struggling to keep life in their bodies on less per annum than they spend on a favourite dog! Here is a horse railroad that it cost only two million dollars to build and equip; stock is sold to the amount of four millions; to pay dividends on that stock the wages must be cut down to starvation limit. The men see that they are being robbed, to increase the ill-gotten pelf of the rich; they combine and strike; there is an ever-increasing army of starving wretches to take their place. Feeling that it is a war for life or death, the strikers meet wrong with wrong, violence and fraud with violence and fraud. Then come the police with club and revolver, next the soldiers with bayonet and Gatling guns. In the meantime the stock-waterer and gambler watches the shooting from his club window, and is only concerned that the soldier will not leave men (slaves) enough to operate his road and increase his millions.—Rev. Chas. E. Stowe.

# THE SOCIALIST LEAGUE.

OFFICES: 24, GREAT QUEEN ST., LINCOLN'S INN FIELDS, W.C.

The Offices of the Socialist League will be open for the sale of *Commonweal* and all other Socialist publications from 8.30 a.m. to 9 p.m. every day except Sunday. The Secretary will be in attendance from 10 a.m. to 9 p.m. daily.

**Branch Subscriptions Paid.**—1888:—Oxford, to end of September.

1889:—Bradford and Hammersmith, to end of April. Norwich, Glasgow, and Yarmouth, to end of May. North Kensington and Manchester, to end of September. Clerkenwell and East London, to end of October. North London, Mitcham, and Leicester, to end of November. St. Georges East, to end of December.

**Notice to Branch Secretaries.**—Please remit to Central Office your Branch Capitation fees as soon as possible.

**Notice to Branch Secretaries.**—Membership Cards can now be had by the Branches at 9d. per dozen from Central Office.

**Notice.**—All letters on League business, except those intended for Editors of *Commonweal*, to be addressed to me. No other person is authorised to sign any official communication. FRANK KITZ, Secretary.

## "COMMONWEAL" GUARANTEE FUND.

The following further sums have been received towards this fund:—Webb, 1s.; B. W., 6d.; Kitz, 6d.; D. J. Nicoll, 6d.; and F.C.S.S., 1s.

## REPORTS.

**NORTH KENSINGTON.**—Good meeting held at Latimer Road; speakers Crouch, Dean, R. J. Lyne; fair sale of *Commonweal*. Comrade Bonham lectured in our Rooms to a good audience on "Money"; a good debate followed.

**ABERDEEN.**—At weekly meeting of Branch on 16th a paper on "Christian Socialism," by E. D. Girdlestone, was read and discussed.—L.

**GLASGOW.**—Our Tuesday night and Sunday afternoon meetings had to be abandoned, owing to the wet weather and indisposition of our speakers—most Socialists, like all other members of the community here, being afflicted with the cold, influenza, bronchitis, or some other "seasonable" illness. On Sunday evening, however, we held our usual meeting at Paisley Road Toll, where Glasier spoke to a good audience.

**LEICESTER.**—Barclay lectured at the Gladstone Working Men's Club on Tuesday. Sunday night, at the Irish National Club, the discussion with Chambers was resumed.—A. G.

**LEEDS.**—On Sunday morning at Vicar's Croft, Rogers debated with Deveril (a local Irish leader) on the "Statement of Principles"; good attendance and great interest shown; *Weal* sold out.

**YARMOUTH.**—On Sunday morning on the Priory Plain, Ruffold addressed a large meeting. In the afternoon, Ruffold spoke at the same place to a good audience, and in the evening at Colman's Granary; 7d. collected and all *Commonweal* sold out.—J. H.

**DUBLIN.**—At the Progressist Club, 87 Marlborough Street, on December 21st, J. O'Gorman lectured to a small audience on "The Demands of Organised Labour." King, Wilson, Hamilton, and Fitzpatrick took part in the discussion.

**SHEFFIELD.**—Things are moving splendidly in this district. In addition to several meetings held during the week, we have had good meetings on Sunday—at the Monolith in the morning, Gower Street in the afternoon, and the Pump, Westbar, at night. This morning a reporter was specially sent down to report our speeches to the Watch Committee of the Corporation, and several rumours are about of various impending prosecutions by the police authorities, who have been rather hardly hit by our comrades during the past month. They seem to have been buzzing about lately for witnesses on their behalf, and there is every likelihood that efforts will shortly be made here to stop our open-air meetings. *Commonweal* and other literature sold well. We all feel encouraged by the attitude of the police, and accept it as the best praise of our work.—F. C.

**NOTTINGHAM SOCIALIST CLUB.**—On Sunday, comrade Proctor gave a paper on "The Unskilled Labour Movement." It was a masterly review of the situation, and provoked a good discussion.

**"WHITE SLAVERY."**—To talk about white slavery in this country, and to liken the condition of the working-men to the negro slaves before emancipation, is to speak falsely, to bear false witness, and to insult, slander, and degrade the vast majority of American citizens.—New York *Sun*. And yet we seem to remember, says the *Boston Herald*, that only a few months ago the *Sun* published a series of articles which bore the heading of "The White Slaves of New York," and described the condition of poor sewing-women of the metropolis in a way that made their condition seem worse, in many respects, than that of the slave-women before the war. Negro slavery was a bad and brutal thing; but at least the slaves ordinarily had a plentiful supply of the bare necessities of life, such as food, clothing, and shelter. Self-interest and the law, if no higher motives, compelled the master to see to that. But, according to the *Sun's* own accounts, some of the poor sewing-women of New York, and hard-working ones too, do not have these bare necessities. They are at the mercy of "sweaters" and landlords as much as the slaves were at the mercy of their masters. Is there not, then, some truth in the talk about "white slavery"?

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CHELSEA S.D.F., Co-operative Lecture Hall, 312 Kings Road, Chelsea.—Sunday December 29, at 8 p.m., Songs and Recitations by the Hammersmith S. L. Choir and Friends.

## LECTURE DIARY.

### LONDON.

**Battersea.**—All communications to E. Buteux, 20 Abercrombie Street, Battersea Park Road.

**Clerkenwell.**—Socialist League Hall, 24 Great Queen Street, Holborn, W.C.

**East London.**—Crown Coffee Tavern, 2 Columbia Road, Hackney Road.

**Hammersmith.**—Kelmescott House, Upper Mall, W. No lecture on Sunday 29th.

French Class, Friday, 8 to 9.

**Merton.**—3 Clare Villas, Merton Road.

**Mitcham.**—"Lord Napier," Fair Green. Meets every Sunday at 12.30, to enroll members, etc.

**North Kensington.**—Clarendon Coffee Tavern. Meets every Wednesday at 8 p.m. No lecture on Sunday December 29.

**North London.**—6 Windmill Street, Tottenham Court Rd. Meets every Friday evening at 8 o'clock.

**Southwark.**—Secretary, George Evans, 56 Lucy Road, Bermondsey, S.E. Hill's Coffee Tavern, Great Charlotte Street, Blackfriars Road, S.E.

**Streatham.**—Meets every Thursday at the "Leighian Arms," Wellfield Road, at 8.30 p.m.

**Whitechapel and St. Georges in the East.**—Branch meetings at International Club, 40 Berner Street, Commercial Road. J. Turner, organising secretary.

### PROVINCES.

**Aberdeen.**—Organiser, J. Leatham, 7 Jamaica Street. Branch meets in Odd-fellows' Small Hall, Crooked Lane, on Monday evenings at 8. Singing practice at 46 Marischal Street on Thursdays at 8 p.m.

**Bradford.**—Laycock's Temperance Hotel, Albion Court, Kirkgate. Meets every Tuesday at 7.30.

**Dundee.**—Address to W. Cameron, 17 Laurence Street, Dundee.

**Glasgow.**—Ram's Horn Hall, 122 Ingram Street. Branch meets on Thursday evenings at 8 o'clock and Sundays at 7 o'clock. Annual Hogmanay Social Meeting will be held in Rams Horn Hall, at 8 o'clock, when the New Year will be brought in with songs, readings, and dancing.

**Hullifax.**—Socialists meet every Sunday at 6.30 p.m. at Helliwell's Temperance Hotel, Northgate.

**Leeds.**—Clarendon Buildings, Victoria Road and Front Row. Open every evening. Business meeting Saturdays at 8 p.m.

**Leicester.**—Exchange Buildings, Rutland Street. Branch meets on Monday and Thursday, at 8 p.m. Tea and Entertainment in Spiritualists' Hall, Silver Street, Friday January 3rd, 1890, 6 p.m.

**Manchester.**—Working Men's Educational Club, 122 Corporation Street, corner of Hanover Street. Weekly meeting of members every Tuesday at 8 p.m.

**Norwich.**—Sunday, at S. Gordon Hall. Tuesday, at 8.30, Members' meeting. Thursday, at 8, Discussion Class. Saturday, Social Meeting. Hall open every evening from 8 p.m.

**Oxford.**—Temperance Hall, 25½ Pembroke Street. First Friday in every month, at 8.30 p.m.

**Walsall.**—Socialist Club, 18 Goodall Street, Walsall. Meetings every night.

**Yarmouth.**—Branch meets at comrade Headley's, near Co-operative Stores, every Tuesday evening. Elocution Class Friday at 8 p.m. On Sunday afternoons during winter a Discussion Class will be held at 3 o'clock.

All persons who sympathise with the views of the Socialist League are earnestly invited to communicate with the above addresses, and if possible to help us in preparing for the birth of a true society, based on equality, brotherhood, and freedom for all.

## OPEN-AIR PROPAGANDA.

	SATURDAY 28.	
8.30.....	Mile-end Waste .....	Cores and Presburg
	SUNDAY 29.	
11 .....	Latimer Road Station .....	Dean, Crouch, and Maughan
11.30.....	Kilburn—"Old Plough," Kilburn Lane .....	Mainwaring
11.30.....	Commercial Road—Union Street .....	Cores
11.30.....	Mitcham—Fair Green .....	The Branch
11.30.....	Regent's Park .....	Cantwell and Nicoll
11.30.....	Southwark—Flat Iron Square .....	The Branch
3.30.....	Hyde Park—Marble Arch .....	Cantwell and Mowbray
3.30.....	Victoria Park .....	The Branch
7 .....	Weltje Road, Ravenscourt Park .....	Hammersmith Branch
7.30.....	Walham Green—back of Church .....	Hammersmith Branch
	TUESDAY 31.	
8 .....	Walham Green—back of Church .....	Hammersmith Branch
	THURSDAY 2.	
8.15.....	Hoxton Church .....	The Branch

### PROVINCES.

**Glasgow.**—Sunday: Jail Square at 2 o'clock; Paisley Road at 5 o'clock. Tuesday: Cathedral Square, at 8 p.m.

**Leeds.**—Sunday: Hunslet Moor, at 11 a.m.; Vicar's Croft, at 7 p.m.

**Manchester.**—Sunday: Philips Park Gates, at 11; Stevenson Square, at 3.

**Norwich.**—Sunday: St. Faiths, at 11; Market Place, at 3.

**Sheffield.**—Sunday: Monolith, Fargate, at 11 a.m.; Gower Street, at 3 p.m.; Pump, Westbar, 8 p.m.

**Yarmouth.**—Sunday: Priory Plain, at 11; Colman's Granary Quay, at 7.

LIVERPOOL SOCIALIST SOCIETY, 1 Stanley Street, Dale Street.—Meets every Tuesday at 8 p.m.

NOTTINGHAM SOCIALIST CLUB, Woodland Place, Parliament Street.—Sunday Dec. 29, at 7.30, H. Snell (Fabian).

STAR RADICAL CLUB, 8 Mayall Road, Herne Hill.—Sunday Dec. 29, at 8.30, M. J. Jackman, "Our Hereditary Legislators."

WOOLWICH RADICAL CLUB, William Street.—Sunday December 29, at 8 p.m., W. S. De Mattos, "A Socialist Programme for London."

DUBLIN.—At Progressist Club, 87 Marlboro' Street, Saturday Dec. 28, at 8, T. Hamilton, "Liberty, Equality, Fraternity—What they Mean."

EAST FINSBURY RADICAL CLUB, 134 City Road, E.C.—Sunday December 29, at 11.30 a.m., W. S. De Mattos, "A Socialist Programme for London."

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## STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLES.

THE Socialist League advocates International Revolutionary Socialism. That is to say the destruction of the present class society, which consists of one class who live by owning property and therefore need not work, and of another that has no property and therefore must work in order that they may live to keep the idlers by their labour. Revolutionary Socialism insists that this system of society, which is the modern form of slavery, should be changed to a system of Society which would give every man an opportunity of doing useful work, and not allow any man to live without so doing, which work could not be useful unless it were done for the whole body of workers instead of for do-nothing individuals. The result of this would be that livelihood would not be precarious nor labour burdensome. Labour would be employed in co-operation, and the struggle of man with man for bare subsistence would be supplanted by harmonious combination for the production of common wealth and the exchange of mutual services without the waste of labour or material.

Every man's needs would be satisfied from this common stock, but no man would be allowed to own anything which he could not use, and which consequently he must abuse by employing it as an instrument for forcing others to labour for him unpaid. Thus the land, the capital, machinery, and means of transit would cease to be private property, since they can only be used by the combination of labour to produce wealth.

Thus men would be free because they would no longer be dependent on idle property-owners for subsistence; thus they would be brothers, for the cause of strife, the struggle for subsistence at other people's expense, would have come to an end. Thus they would be equal, for if all men were doing useful work no man's labour could be dispensed with. Thus the motto of Liberty, Fraternity, and Equality, which is but an empty boast in a society that upholds the monopoly of the means of production, would at last be realised.

This Revolutionary Socialism must be International. The change which would put an end to the struggle between man and man, would destroy it also between nation and nation. One harmonious system of federation throughout the whole of civilisation would take the place of the old destructive rivalries. There would be no great centres breeding race hatred and commercial jealousy, but people would manage their own affairs in communities not too large to prevent all citizens from taking a part in the administration necessary for the conduct of life, so that party politics would come to an end.

Thus, while we abide by the old motto

Liberty, Fraternity, Equality,

we say that the existence of private property destroys Equality, and therefore under it there can be neither Liberty nor Fraternity.

We add to the first motto then this other one—

FROM EACH ACCORDING TO HIS CAPACITY, TO EACH ACCORDING TO HIS NEEDS.

When this is realised there will be a genuine Society; until it is realised, Society is nothing but a band of robbers. We must add that this change can only be brought about by combination amongst the workers themselves, and must embrace the whole of Society. The new life cannot be given to the workers by a class higher than they, but must be taken by them by means of the abolition of classes and the reorganisation of Society.

COUNCIL OF THE SOCIALIST LEAGUE.

## NOTICE.

Subscribers who find a red mark against this notice are thereby reminded that their subscriptions have expired and must be renewed immediately if they wish to continue to receive *Commonweal*.

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