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WEEKLY; ONE PENNY.

THE "EIGHT HOURS" AND THE DEMONSTRATION.

Now that the noise and clatter of the 4th of May demonstration are over, it may be profitable to consider what it was that that huge meeting was crying for, and whether it is likely to get it.

But first we must assume that the 4th of May demonstration did not aim at showing any expression of sympathy with labour generally throughout the civilised world. It was in fact an English trades-union meeting distinct from the meetings held on the Continent and in London on May Day, although it was only the agitation on the Continent that made it possible. The English workmen, if we may believe the *Star* (which is now a definitely reactionary paper) have got together a huge demonstration, which, while it was a mere hanger-on of the revolutionary meetings abroad, disclaims any solidarity with those who first began the movement, and allows the English press to insult them with jingo rot unrebuked.

The legal eight hours, then, is the thing claimed by the 4th of May. Of course, I do not deny that many who attended that meeting go much further than that; but then a great many more do not go as far, and only have very hazy ideas of what they want.

Furthermore, the spirit of that demonstration was a kind of missive to Parliament. It practically said: "We want the eight-hours day: you, Parliament, must get it for us, and settle how it is to be."

That this was its spirit is clear enough from the fact that no sort of hint has been given of any action to follow the demonstration. For instance, one would have thought that with such a definite and apparently small aim before them, the leaders of the movement would have called a congress of at least the London workmen to settle on some course of action to push the Parliament on toward some steps for giving effect to the workmen's wishes: but as above-said, nothing of the sort is being done, and the matter is to be allowed to go cold; and in the meantime the capitalist press is having *its* innings, and is showing with a mixture of truth and falsity peculiarly easy of employment under the circumstances, that the limitation of the hours of labour is impossible, and that if possible it would be of no advantage to the workers. Of course, these capitalist agents do not mean by this to put forth the matter from a Communist standpoint, as will have to be done here presently: all they mean is, that resistance wherever possible to the amelioration of the workers which is the great object of modern politicians.

Now let us look at this eight hours claim for a little and try to find out what it means. In the first place, no one who is not a slave-driver (and most middle-class persons are slave-drivers), would deny that it would be a good thing in itself for the maximum day's work to be reduced to eight hours; although on the other hand it would not in itself be even a step in advance towards Socialism. From that point of view it would be nothing more than an amelioration in the lot of—slaves; just as an increase in the wage-earner's wages is an increase in the slave's rations. Now, one must say that this kind of amelioration is just the thing which can only be gained by that species of "self-help" which is called a general strike; and that if it were gained *in this manner, the manner* of gaining it would be so educational that the gain would have a very different and much greater significance than it would if thrown to the people by Parliament as a mere tub to the whale.

Now, as to the gain of an Eight Hours Bill, what would it amount to? In the first place, would it benefit the whole of the workers or only a part? Surely there can only be one answer to that question. For instance, how is such a Bill going to deal with the work of the agricultural labourers? And I may notice in passing that this body of workers, at once the most useful and the most hardly used of all, are

generally left out in the cold when it is a question of these partial "ameliorations"—unless where it is obviously intended to "work" them for some political plot. Many other instances of workers who would not benefit by an Eight Hours Bill will occur to any working man who thinks about the subject.

Again, the Bill passed, a struggle between masters and men will begin as to the *wages* to be paid for the shorter day's labour. Will Parliament deal with this difficulty, I ask? I will show presently what it will mean if it does. Meantime I assert that the men will have to deal with it by strikes—*i.e.*, they will have to fight the whole battle over again. Once more, if the capitalists stand to lose by the change, they will strain every nerve to recover that loss; and the intensification of labour is one obvious means of doing this. Improved organisation (*i.e.*, slave-driving) in the workshop, improved machinery in the factory, will set the capitalist right again and force the workers to produce more in every hour—*i.e.*, to waste their bodily and mental powers more.

Surely all these things must, in any case, be dealt with by the usual methods of a Labour war, and the mere machinery of a statute will have very little effect on that war. Why, then, when the workers must of necessity make the new bill work themselves, should they not save time and toil by making the unwritten custom themselves at first hand? Of what use will be the mere ornament of a legal enactment when they have got what they want without it? And let us also remember once more that every gain won by the combination of labour hastens the day when the odious distinctions of class will be abolished.

But some people will say, "This may be true if we are to stop at a mere eight hours bill; we mean much more than this." Quite true; every Social Democrat who knows the aims of his party, knows that a legal eight hours day will be unworkable without a legal minimum wage in each big trade (how about the little ones?), and that that again will be useless without the enactment of a maximum price of all general articles of consumption; and these enactments will make it necessary to establish national workshops in order to destroy the profit of the capitalists, *i.e.*, the capitalists themselves. This means complete State Socialism, with which we Communists do not agree, because we believe that the difficulties besetting it are so great, that the realisation of Communism would be no more difficult on the one hand, and on the other would mean a whole revolution, and not that most fertile parent of counter-revolution, a half revolution.

But apart from this, does any man in his senses suppose that any Parliament in England (or the world), on this side of civil war, would hesitate one moment between allowing an eight hours bill to become mere waste paper and accepting the logical consequences of it? Our artful Social Democratic friends would find they had done nothing with the small end of the wedge but jar their hands by hammering on it, and that they would have to begin all over again, unless they had force enough to *compel* the capitalist enemy to disgorge his ill-gotten gains for fear of worse.

We may be sure that whatever part of the Social Democratic claim Parliament yields to, will be given with the intention of its being either a nullity or a bait to quiet possible revolution.

One thing which the Demonstration of May 4th asked for they may get in a fashion, that is, the eight hours day in government factories; but it will be given, if at all, in the hope of its acting as a little bit of corruption. The price expected to be paid will be the quieting, the de-revolutionising, of the workmen so employed. One may indeed hope that the price will not be paid. But this on the other hand is sure to happen, that the Parliamentary capitalists will think they have done a prodigious stroke of Socialist business, and will take care not to do any more Socialism till the Revolution is thundering at their doors, and no man cares a button what they do.

Meantime, one must use the thread-bare fable again, and say that when the *labouring* mountains have produced *this* ridiculous mouse, the music of his squeak will scarcely pay us for all our trouble and all our—shuffling. State Socialism?—I don't agree with it; in fact, I think the two words contradict one another, and that it is the business of Socialism to destroy the State and put Free Society in its place. But State Socialism in the hands of a bureaucratic department—that is indeed a strange birth of compromise and "moderation."

WILLIAM MORRIS.

STANLEY'S EXPLOITS:

OR, CIVILISING AFRICA.

(Concluded from p. 149.)

But there is one thing Mr. Stanley is frank about, and that is his treatment of his own followers, and in this he shows that he has not changed with time. The following instance of how he serves them when mad with hunger is taken from his letter dated Ituri River, August 28, 1888. It runs as follows:

"Hitherto our people were sceptical of what we told them, the suffering had been so awful, calamities so numerous, the forest so endless apparently, that they refused to believe that by-and-bye we should see plains and cattle, the Nyanza, and the white man Emin Pasha. We felt as if we were dragging them along with a chain round their necks. . . . They turned a deaf ear to our entreaties, for driven by hunger and suffering they sold their rifles and equipments for a few ears of Indian corn. . . . Perceiving that prayers and entreaties and mild punishments were of no avail, I resolved to visit upon the wretches the death penalty. Two of the worst cases were accordingly taken and hanged in the presence of all."

Mr. Stanley's receipt for dealing with men driven to desperation by hunger might be copied by his middle-class admirers in future trade depressions, when unemployed men mad with famine may sack a few baker's shops. The only obstacle, doubtless, to the gallows as a remedy for discontent, is, that the English workers have not yet sunk to the abject servility of Mr. Stanley's escort, and the people who applied the remedy might perchance have a taste of their own medicine.

It is not surprising, considering the sufferings of the men—who perished by scores during the march—and the remorseless cruelty of the tyrant at their head, that later on a "mutiny" broke out, headed by one of Emin Pasha's men, who by this time had been "rescued." The scene that followed was well described by a fervent admirer of Stanley (Mr. Stevens, an American correspondent) at the Savage Club, on Saturday, February 15, 1890, and appeared in the newspapers on the following Monday. I give it in full, and ask the reader to remember that it was told by a friend of the explorer:

"At that time Stanley was so weak that he could not turn in his bed without help; but so strong was his iron will that he insisted upon being taken out of bed and propped up in a chair. He took a strong stimulant and had himself carried outside of his tent, where the people were all drawn up, and where the mutineer, who had been tried and found guilty, awaited his sentence. The chair was put down, and Stanley faced the miscreant, the fever in his eye and his thin hand outstretched, 'We have come through a thousand difficulties and dangers to save you,' he said, 'and this is our reward. Depart to God!' The people thereupon rushed upon the man, shouting, 'What shall we do with him?' 'Send him to God, I say,' shouted Stanley, pointing to the overhanging limb of a tree. A rope was thrown over it, noosed round the miscreant's neck, and he was swiftly run up and soon dangled a corpse in the air."

Other mutineers were subjected to "mild punishments," that is, "some were flogged and others ironed." You would think this would be sufficient to maintain "order" in an expedition, but it is not enough for Stanley, he must introduce that other civilising influence—the gallows—into the African wilds as well. Perhaps the savage may find a good use for it one of these days, and send somebody else to "God." We mention no names, but there are some people who are too "good" for this wicked world. Before quitting this subject we would like to say that if Major Bartelott administered Stanley's system of ironing, flogging, and hanging liberally among his men, we can quite understand why his cannibal escort made short work with him.

In summing up the methods of Stanley's system of "exploration," we find them to consist of fire, sword, and rapine among the natives, and of ironing, flogging, and hanging among his own followers. And this is the person whom the respectable middle-class from press and platform call upon us to worship as a dauntless hero, a "Christian pioneer," bringing "sweetness and light" to the benighted natives of the darkest regions of Africa! We would suggest, that after a series of Stanley banquets the middle-class should make a pilgrimage to the tomb of the late Mr. Peace, of immortal memory, and cover it with heaps of flowers. Surely if Stanley's courage and enterprise is worthy of so much admiration, we should not forget the efforts of the noted burglar in his most dangerous and hazardous occupation, which requires the very same qualities that Stanley has displayed. True, the exploits of Mr. Peace have not benefited the human race to any considerable extent. Let us see now if Stanley's explorations have improved the lot of wretched humanity. Let us look at Africa, and see if we Socialists are not right in denying that Stanley's expeditions have benefited or will benefit the natives of Africa. Our first reason is that, up to the present, he and his men have only benefited the natives by acting as the advance guard of Arab slave-hunters. In his book on the Congo, Stanley describes how in his journey up that river he found the tribes who had so valiantly opposed his passage had been massacred by slave-dealers, who, after Tippoo Tib's return to Nyangwe, had followed in Stanley's track, and with the aid of the Manyemas had carried fire and sword along the populous banks of the Congo. Stanley tells us in his book how his allies had desolated 118 villages and 43 districts, a country larger than Ireland, and had captured 2,300 women and children as slaves and 2,000 tusks of ivory. He says:

"Given that these 118 villages were peopled only by a 1,000 each, we have only a profit of 2 per cent., and by the time all these captives have been subjected to the accidents of the river voyage to Kirundu and Nyangwe, of camp life and its harsh miseries, to the havoc of small-pox

and the pests which such miseries breeds, there will only be a scant 1 per cent. upon the bloody venture."—'The Congo,' 2nd Vol., p. 148.

Please admire the commercial instincts of Mr. Stanley, who, in the presence of misery, rapine, and murder, can calculate concerning the small profit upon such a "bloody venture." Further on, Mr. Stanley states that slave-hunters to get their slaves

"have shot 2,500 natives, while 1,300 more died by the wayside through scant provisions and the intensity of their hopeless wretchedness. And such slaves! They are females and young children who cannot run away, or with youthful indifference will soon forget the terrors of their captivity. Yet each of the very smallest infants has cost the life of a father, and perhaps his three stout brothers and three grown-up daughters. An entire family of six souls have been done to death to obtain that small, feeble, and useless child."—'The Congo,' 2nd Vol., pp. 149-50.

And yet if Mr. Stanley had never explored the Congo, all this misery would not have occurred. Stanley, according to his own account, had some notion of avenging the massacre of the natives on the slave-drivers, but he reflected as follows:

"And yet, whom am I that I should take the law into my hands and mete out retribution, . . . I had not the slightest shadow of authority to vindicate the dictates of justice. I represented no constituted government, nor had I the shadow of authority to assume the rôle of censor, judge, and executioner."—'The Congo,' 2nd Vol., p. 144.

It is strange that Mr. Stanley never thought of these things when wretched savages were in question and not well armed slave traders. He might surely have also thought what right he had to assume the "rôle of censor, judge, and executioner" when his own followers were concerned. Perhaps the fact that the slave-traders were a strong party and armed with rifles had something to do with this singular forbearance. So he treated these demons as allies and comrades. "We exchanged gifts with Karema and his blood-stained confederates" (p. 151). That Stanley still finds allies among the slave-traders may be seen in his accounts of the Emin Pasha expedition, where we find him again acting in concert with Tippoo Tib and the Manyemas. Again he serves as the advance guard of the slave-hunters, for in his letter of Sept. 1, 1888, to the Royal Geographical Society, he states that his passage through the rich and thickly populated country of the Banalaya, Bakunda, and Bunganeta has been the ruin of the people. He writes, "The abundance found by us will never be found again, for the Arabs have followed my track by hundreds and destroyed villages and plantations, and what the Arabs spare the elephant herds complete." So up to the present Stanley's explorations have hardly been a blessing to the natives of Africa. Mr. Stanley has first broken the spirit of the natives with the deadly fire of his breech-loaders, and they have then fallen an easy prey to the Arabs who have followed close upon his heels.

With the facts before us, there can be no doubt as to whether Stanley's explorations have been for the benefit of the African race. But there is something else for our consideration, even if his brightest dreams are realised and commercial civilisation is introduced into the centre of Africa. Ask those workers who live under that civilisation, and who slave in unhealthy factories for starvation wages, and eat bad and adulterated food, and dwell in rotten slums, whether they think the African savage will gain anything by exchanging his wild free life for theirs? Let the philosophers and scientists, who say that the life of the savage is preferable to that of the civilised labourer, answer. Then, surely, until the life of the mass of the population is happier than that of the savage, we have no right to go and inflict our miseries upon him. Let us set our own house in order first before we talk of "civilising" others.

Let us sum up the conclusions at which we have arrived. We have seen that Stanley forced his way by the armed hand and with ruthless cruelty through native tribes, burning their villages and shooting them down like dogs with explosive bullets. We have seen that, far from suppressing the slave trade, he has often allied himself with the slave-hunters, and has cleared the way for them to fresh fields of rapine and slaughter. Finally, we see that his ultimate aim is the extension of trade and civilisation, that is, the extension of a "shoddy commercialism" including the "improvement" of the savage off the face of the earth by the Martini-Henry rifle, the Gatling gun, the whisky bottle, and the worst diseases that our civilisation breeds. We can see in Africa, and all over the world where "civilisation" spreads, that the poor savage perishes from the face of the earth, or, at the best, sinks down into a hopeless degraded being, as wretched and miserable as the outcasts of our great cities. Knowing these things, we Socialists refuse to join our voices to the chorus of triumph which greets the man who, to swell the ill-gotten wealth of our cruel sweaters, is willing to inflict these untold horrors upon a simple people who have not yet been accursed by "Christian" civilisation. Let the great thieves and their parasites welcome the "sanctimonious pirate" who glosses over fire, slaughter, and cruelty with the "snuffing cant of the mission-hall." We will have none of him. Let him be satisfied with the applause of those who would have crucified Christ and worshipped Barabbas; but, at least, amid the applause he shall hear our hisses. We have made our protest. We have given reasons for our accusations; and though we expect to make no impression on those who recognise in Stanley a man after their own heart, yet we trust that at least some of those who have been beguiled by them will take the warning to heart, and join no longer in the Jingo worship of one who combines all the vices of an old buccaneer or a modern burglar, with all the soul-corroding humbug of Little Bethel; who is a cross between Pecksniff and Blackbeard or Bill Sikes, with a dash of Quilp to add the final flavouring—the typical hero of commercialism.

D. J. NICOLL.

FREEDOM.

AND are we free? Ah! say not so;
Gyves such as these ne'er freemen wore.
As well tell lark in gilded cage
That he in sky is free to soar.

Go watch the stunted worker creep,
Tired and worn from daily toil;
Behold his haggard face and eyes,
His body gripped in slavedom's coil.

And watching; who shall say that he
Is one of Freedom's happy sons?
Free? Aye! to work, to slave, to starve,
So long as life's blood feebly runs.

Free to be sweated, and to sweat;
Free to be murdered, slowly, sure;
Free to be scorned by robber rich;
Free to be shown the workhouse door!

Free to compete with father, son;
Free to compete with mother, wife;
Struggling for bread and stifling den,
Dreading to snap the thread of life.

And while for vampires men must moil,
And o'erhead hangs the darkling mist,
While workers starve, and robbers thrive,
So long will slavery exist.

Not till the plunderer stays his hand,
And ceases riffer more to be,
Not till each lives by honest toil—
Not, not till then shall men be free.

And when the mist is rent in twain,
And Freedom's face peeps shyly through—
Then will the toiler strive to reach
The throne of Love, the Good, the True.

Break, then, ye mist, that all may see
The goddess fair, the ideal bright;
Clutch fearlessly the flaming torch
Before the day shall turn to night.

Ring, ring, ye heavens, with joyous cries,
And torches glow with ruddy glare;
Let Brotherhood, majestic youth,
Wed Liberty, that goddess fair.

EDWARD J. WATSON.

IN NEW ZEALAND.

WE owe a great deal here to the London Dock Strike, in the way of stimulating workers in every trade to organise themselves for mutual help and protection and the amelioration of their lot. Ever since the strike our papers also are well supplied with cablegrams about the Labour movements, which seem to be keeping things pretty lively with you. Our only morning paper here in Dunedin has lately given a fortnightly column to the record and consideration of labour happenings throughout the world. The column is in good hands, and has been expressing views which cause intense annoyance to and evoke much hostility from the "let alone" party among our population. That they find a place at all in the columns of a paper supported by the capitalist and commercial classes is something to note as instructive.

Some idea of how the Dock Strike stirred us up may be gathered from the fact that during the last year no less than twelve unions have come into existence, with an aggregate membership of 12,250.

A few details as to the principal organisations may be interesting. The Coal Miners, whose centre is Westport, includes all coal-miners, quartzminers, and labourers on the west coast. Its membership amounts to 1,800. It is a branch of the Amalgamated Association of Miners in Australia, whose total membership exceeds 28,000 men. The Federated Seamen's Union has a membership of about 2,000. It is also a branch of the Federated Seamen's Union of Australasia, which totals up 14,000 members. The Wharf Labourers' Union of New Zealand is of recent growth, having only been started some four months ago, but already numbers 3,000 men. It is local at present—i.e., to New Zealand—but negotiations are going on between the colonies for federation. The three foregoing unions are united together under a council called the Maritime Labour Council of New Zealand. The Railway Employés Union is also a very youthful union. It is only a few weeks old, but embraces 3,500 members. This union, it is likely, will shortly be federated with the Australian union of railway employés. Another youthful body is the Tailoresses' Union, which is only a few months old. It was first formed in Dunedin, but is now gradually extending in Christchurch, Wellington, and Auckland. Its present membership is about 1,900. The Bootmakers' Union has 850, and the Typographical Society about 600. This latter body is affiliated with Australia. The Amalgamated Society of Carpenters and Joiners have over 900 members here; they form a branch of the Home society. The Amalgamated Society of Engineers is also pretty strong, but I don't know their exact numbers in New Zealand; they also are a branch of the Home society. The Marine Engineers have a membership of close on 400, and as most of these are certificated men, affiliated to the Australian society, they are another powerful body. The Shipmasters' and Officers' Association show close on 300 members, all of whom possess Government certificates.

The foregoing are the principal unions in New Zealand, but there are still the following to swell the total: Ironmoulders (80), Boilermakers (50), Shipwrights (150), Painters (190), Bakers (300), Millers (60), Wharf Carters (250), Plumbers (100), Tailors (260), Stewards and Cooks (600—federated with Australia), Invercargill Trades and Labour Union (400), Bluff Fishermen and Oystermen (100), Plasterers and Bricklayers (number unknown). There are a few more unions of a local nature, of which the particulars are not t hand.

Each of the four chief cities of New Zealand (Dunedin, Christchurch, Wellington, and Auckland) has a Trades and Labour Council, which consists of delegates from the foregoing unions, whose duties are to look after the interests of all classes of labour, and to settle amicably, if possible, any dispute that may arise in any particular branch of trade; failing this, they invoke the whole power of all the unions on behalf of the particular one concerned.

It will be seen that the growth of trades-unionism in this colony has been somewhat remarkable. The numbers given here represent a membership of over 17,000. The movement is constantly extending. Taking the unions in process of formation, and those whose numbers are not at hand, there must be now a trades-union membership of close upon 20,000 strong out of a total population of a little over half a million. This is already a somewhat formidable organisation, and when the process of amalgamation with Australian unions, which is now going forward, is completed, it will be seen that these federated unions will give a powerful position to labour in the colonial industrial world.

Not before it is wanted, however. At a meeting to form a tailoresses' and pressers' union, held in Auckland, January 28, Mr. Preston, a tailor, alluded to the sweating system, and stated that in one establishment in Auckland a more cruel system than that employed could not be devised. For slop goods this employer paid 9½d. for making trousers, 6d. for waistcoats, and 1s. 1d. for coats, making a total of 2s. 4½d. for the suit. He knew of one married woman, whose husband was a carpenter and out of work, and who took some work from this employer at 9d. a-pair for trousers. Her husband, however, would not allow her to do the work at the price. At first-class shops the average price for making trousers is 6s. 6d., waistcoats 6s., and coats 19s.

There is now a Sweating Commission sitting here, cuttings of the evidence before which I send you, and you will see that we are quickly catching up to you in some things as well as in others. Here is a sample:

"S. Spragg gave evidence that he was one of the reporting staff of the Otago Daily Times. Towards the close of 1888 he received instructions to make as thorough an investigation as was practicable into what was termed the 'sweating system,' then in operation, and concerning which communications had been received and published by the journal with which he was connected. He began the inquiry without any preconceived opinions regarding it, and prosecuted it with a view to ascertaining the facts, whatever they might be. With the results of the inquiry he was in no way concerned, his instructions being to investigate the circumstances impartially. He must admit that the facts elicited soon removed his feeling of comparative indifference, but, he believed, that did not affect the inquiry in a prejudicial manner. The result of these investigations were published in a series of articles on the 'Sweating System,' which appeared in the Times during the month of January last year. In his researches he had found nothing of what he would call 'sweating,' but a very low rate of wages obtained, which necessitated employés very long hours of work in order to obtain a sufficiency of wages on which to live. His definition of 'sweating' was the letting out of work to others by sub-contractors at a rapidly descending rate of pay, and he had seen nothing of this sort in Dunedin. If 'sweating meant that the people who do the work could make next to nothing out of it, then there had been any amount of sweating going on in Dunedin. In one case he had been informed by the proprietress of a factory that she had been induced to lower her charges upon a promise of continuous work; that for the sake of constant work her employés had consented to a reduction that enabled her to accept the terms offered; and then on one plea or another the supply of work was intermittent, and she and her employés suffered in common. He had no doubt that the state of things described in the articles was brought about by excessive and reckless competition. In using the term 'reckless' he meant to imply that the employers were not at all careless of their own interests, but that they seemed reckless as to whether their employés could live honestly or at all on the wages paid to them. He had found a reduction of wages occasionally to result from the competition of 'outsiders' to obtain occasional work. His observations were confined mainly to clothing factories. He had known girls in factories taking work home to finish, but never knew them to complain of it. He had rather thought they were glad to get it to do. He had visited their homes, and what he had observed was told in the articles referred to. In some cases he thought the girls he visited who were working at their homes were only fit to be in the hospital. The opinion had been expressed that the low rate of wages resulted from the desire of the public to obtain goods at the lowest possible price. He held an entirely different opinion. The people who made a profit out of the low rate of wages were the only people who were to blame. It was absurd to suppose that paying 1½d. or 2d. less for a shirt would be any inducement to the retail purchaser. And it was also as ridiculous to suppose that the retailer who sold a few dozen shirts in a week (more or less) had a great interest in doing so. But to those who put out 100 doz. or so at a time, 2d. a-piece made a considerable difference; and those who got the profit should also get the blame. In regard to trade unions, the witness expressed the opinion that they were an undoubted good in a community, for they prevented factories from taking contracts at improper rates. So far as witness could see, the evils of the sweating system would, under the existing condition of things, best be obviated by a really strong federated trades union, supported in all reasonable demands by public opinion."

Mornington, N.Z., March 20, 1890.

H. K. WILKINSON.

The strike on Meteor Downs has been settled (March 8). After five weeks' struggle Tyson has agreed to give the labourers fair wages. The influence of the Australian Labour Federation contributed a good deal to the result.

OVER-PRODUCTION AND OVER-POPULATION.—There must be many thousands "unemployed" in Australia. There are two and a half millions of workmen out of work in America. There are over a million in England. Is it not an indictment upon our civilisation, asks the Brisbane Worker, when, in the newest countries as in the oldest, under protection and free trade and mongrel tariff alike, we utterly fail to bring together the workers, we cannot carry on production and exchange without this terrific friction? Frank Cotton, an Australian-born Georgean, tells a fine story in this connection. He says he was on a mining field down South, when along came a protectionist touter, who began to a group of miners about the iniquity of letting in cheap American goods. "How does that hurt us?" demanded a digger. "They over-produce on the cheap and unload on us," explained the touter, "so that we can't start factories of our own." "Yes, but they are protected, and yet they have cheap labour. How's that? Oughtn't men to earn high wages in a protected colony?" "Of course," responded the touter, nothing abashed; "they ought to, but the country's over-populated, and that makes wages low." "See here, mister," commented the digger, "you say they produce too much, and that there are too many of them. Over-production and over-population!—too many kids and too much tucker! What the buck-eyed rabbit are you giving us? Go to blazes out this!" And that is about the size of it in every country. The more there is produced the poorer the workers get, because the richer the non-workers become. That's how it will be in Australia unless something is done.



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

The COMMONWEAL is the official organ of the Socialist League; but, unless definitely so announced by the Editors, no article is to be taken as expressing in more than a general way the views of the League as a body. In accordance with the Manifesto and Statement of Principles of the League, the COMMONWEAL is an exponent of International Revolutionary Socialism. On minor differences of opinion the widest freedom of discussion is maintained. As all articles are signed, no special significance attaches to their position in the paper.

Articles and letters dealing with any phase of the social problem are invited and will meet with earnest consideration. They must be written on one side of the paper only, and accompanied by the name and address of the writer, not necessarily for publication. MSS. can only be returned if a stamped directed envelope accompanies them.

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CONTENTS.

	PAGE.
The "Eight Hours" and the Demonstration	WILLIAM MORRIS 153
Stanley's Exploits: or, Civilising Africa (concluded) ..	D. J. NICOLL 154
Freedom	EDWARD J. WATSON 155
In New Zealand	H. K. WILKINSON 155
News from Nowhere; or, an Epoch of Rest (continued) ..	WILLIAM MORRIS 156
Degrees in Crime 157
In France	B. 157
Notes	W. M. 157
The Labour Struggle	D. J. NICOLL 158
An Australian Lesson 158
Executive Announcements, Reports, Lecture Diary, and Notices of Meetings ..	159
Statement of Principles, Advertisements, etc., etc. ..	160

Periodicals received during the week ending Wednesday May 14

ENGLAND	FRANCE	GERMANY	ITALY	SPAIN	GERMANY	AUSTRIA	DENMARK	SWEDEN	ARGENTINE REPUBLIC
Freedom	Paris—La Revolt	Berlin—Volks Tribune	Milan—Cuore e Critica	Barcelona—El Productor	Berlin—Volks Tribune	Vienna—Arbeiter-Zeitung	Social-Demokraten	Stockholm, Social-Demokraten	Buenos Ayres—Vorwarts
Justice—Bulletin	La Revue Europeenne			Madrid—El Socialista					
Labour Tribune	Charleville—L'Emancipation								
People's Press	Lille—Le Cri du Travailleur								
Seed Time	Lyon—L'Action Sociale								
Unity	Rouen—Le Salariat								
Worker's Friend	Hague—Recht voor Allen								
New South Wales	Anarchist								
Sydney—Bulletin									
INDIA									
Bankipore—Behar Herald									
UNITED STATES									
New York—Freiheit									
United Irishman									
Volkzeitung									
Workmen's Advocate									
Boston—Liberty									
Investigator									
Nationalist									

NEWS FROM NOWHERE:

OR,

AN EPOCH OF REST.

BEING SOME CHAPTERS FROM A UTOPIAN ROMANCE.

CHAP. XVI. (continued).—DINNER IN THE HALL OF THE BLOOMSBURY MARKET.

WHEN we had done eating, and were sitting a little while, with a bottle of very good Bordeaux wine before us, Clara came back to the question of the subject-matter of the pictures, as though it had troubled her. She looked up at them, and said: "How is it that though we are so interested with our life for the most part, yet when people take to writing poems or painting pictures they seldom deal with our modern life, or if they do, take good care to make their poems or pictures unlike that life? Are we not good enough to paint ourselves? How is it that we find the dreadful times of the past so interesting to us—in pictures and poetry?"

Old Hammond smiled. "It always was so, and I suppose always will be," said he, "however it may be explained. It is true that in the nineteenth century, when there was so little art and so much talk

about it, there was a theory that art and imaginative literature ought to deal with contemporary life; but they never did so; for, if there was any pretence of it, the author always took care (as Clara hinted just now) to disguise, or exaggerate, or idealise, and in some way or another make it strange; so that, for all the verisimilitude there was, he might just as well have dealt with the times of the Pharaohs."

"Well," said Dick, "surely it is but natural to like these things strange; just as when we were children, as I said just now, we used to pretend to be so-and-so in such-and-such a place. That's what these pictures and poems do; and why shouldn't they?"

"Thou hast hit it, Dick," quoth old Hammond; "it is the child-like part of us that produces works of imagination. When we are children time passes so slow with us that we seem to have time for everything."

He sighed, and then smiled and said: "At least let us rejoice that we have got back our childhood again. I drink to the days that are!"

"Second childhood," said I in a low voice, and then blushed at my double rudeness, and hoped that he hadn't heard. But he had, and turned to me smiling, and said: "Yes, why not? And for my part I hope it may last long; and that the world's next period of wise and unhappy manhood, if that should happen, will speedily lead us to a third childhood: if indeed this age be not our third. Meantime, my friend, you must know that we are too happy, both individually and collectively, to trouble ourselves about what is to come hereafter."

"Well, for my part," said Clara, "I wish we were interesting enough to be written or painted about."

Dick answered her with some lover's speech, impossible to be written down, and then we sat quiet a little.

CHAP. XVII.—HOW THE CHANGE CAME.

DICK broke the silence at last, saying: "Guest, forgive us for a little after-dinner dullness. What would you like to do? Shall we have out Greylocks and trot back to Hammersmith? or will you come with us and hear some Welsh folk sing in a hall close by here? or would you like presently to come with me into the City and see some really fine building? or—what shall it be?"

"Well," said I, "as I am a stranger, I must let you choose for me."

In point of fact, I did not by any means want to be 'amused' just then; and also I rather felt as if the old man, with his knowledge of past times, and even a kind of inverted sympathy for them caused by his active hatred of them, was a kind of blanket for me against the cold of this very new world, where I was, so to say, stripped bare of every habitual thought and way of acting; and I did not want to leave him too soon. He came to my rescue at once, and said—

"Wait a bit, Dick; there is someone else to be consulted besides you and the guest here, and that is I. I am not going to lose the pleasure of his company just now, especially as I know he has something else to ask me. So go to your Welshmen, by all means; but first of all bring us another bottle of wine to this nook, and then be off as soon as you like; and come again and fetch our friend to go westward, but not too soon."

Dick nodded smilingly, and the old man and I were soon alone in the great hall, the afternoon sun gleaming on the red wine in our tall quaint-shaped glasses. Then said Hammond:

"Does anything especially puzzle you about our way of living, now you have heard a good deal and seen a little of it?"

Said I: "I think what puzzles me most is how it all came about."

"It will may," said he, "so great as the change is. It would be difficult indeed to tell you the whole story, perhaps impossible: knowledge, discontent, treachery, disappointment, ruin, misery, despair—those who worked for the change because they could see further than other people went through all these phases of suffering; and doubtless all the time the most of men looked on, not knowing what was doing, thinking it all a matter of course, like the rising and setting of the sun—and indeed it was so."

"Tell me one thing, if you can," said I. "Did the change, the 'revolution' it used to be called, come peacefully?"

"Peacefully?" said he; "what peace was there amongst those poor confused wretches of the nineteenth century? It was war from beginning to end: bitter war, till hope and pleasure put an end to it."

"Do you mean actual fighting with weapons?" said I, "or the strikes and lock-outs and starvation of which we have heard?"

"Both, both," he said. "As a matter of fact, the history of the terrible period of transition from commercial slavery to freedom may thus be summarised. When the hope of realising a communal condition of life for all men arose, quite late in the nineteenth century, the power of the middle classes, the then tyrants of society, was so enormous and crushing that to almost all men, even those who had, you may say despite themselves, despite their reason and judgment, conceived such hopes, it seemed a dream. So much was this the case that some of those more enlightened men who were then called Socialists, although they well knew, and even stated in public, that the only reasonable condition of society was that of pure Communism (such as you now see around you), yet shrunk from what seemed to them the barren task of preaching the realisation of a happy dream. Looking back now, we can see that the great motive-power of the change was a longing for freedom and equality, akin if you please to the unreasonable passion of the lover; a sickness of heart that rejected with loathing the aimless solitary life of the well-to-do educated man of that time: phrases, my dear friend, which have lost their meaning to us of the present day, so far removed we are from the dreadful facts which they represent."

"Well, these men, though conscious of this feeling, had no faith in it. Nor was that wonderful: for looking around them they saw the huge mass of the oppressed classes too much burdened with the misery of their lives, and too much overwhelmed by the selfishness of misery, to be able to form a conception of any escape from it except by the ordinary way prescribed by the system of slavery under which they lived; which was nothing more than a remote chance of climbing out of the oppressed into the oppressing classes.

"Therefore, though they knew that the only reasonable aim for those who would better the world was a condition of equality, in their impatience and despair they managed to convince themselves that if they could by hook or by crook get the machinery of production and the management of property so altered that the 'lower classes' (so the horrible word ran) might have their slavery somewhat ameliorated, they would be ready to fit into this machinery, and would use it for bettering their condition still more and still more, until at last the result would be a practical equality (they were very fond of using the word 'practical'), because 'the rich' would be forced to pay so much for keeping 'the poor' in a tolerable condition that the condition of riches would become no longer valuable and would gradually die out. Do you follow me?"

"Partly," said I. "Go on."

Said old Hammond: "Well, since you follow me, you will see that as a theory this was not altogether unreasonable; but 'practically,' it turned out a failure."

"How so?" said I.

"Well, don't you see," said he, "because it involves the making of a machinery by those who didn't know what they wanted the machines to do. So far as the masses of the oppressed class furthered this scheme of improvement, they did it to get themselves improved slave-rations—as many of them as could. And if those classes had really been incapable of being touched by that instinct which produced the passion for freedom and equality aforesaid, what would have happened, I think, would have been this: that a certain part of the working classes would have been so far improved in condition that they would have approached the condition of the middling rich men; but below them would have been a great class of most miserable slaves, whose slavery would have been far more hopeless than the older class slavery had been."

WILLIAM MORRIS.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

(This Story began in No. 209, January 11, 1890. A few sets of Back Numbers can still be had.)

DEGREES IN CRIME.

If you should steal a million golden dollars in a lump,
The people would regard you as a genius and a trump.

If you secure but half the pile, a "shortage" that would be;
Whereas a somewhat less amount would be "insolvency."

To steal a tiny, paltry sum would give them the belief
That you were a dishonest man—a robber, and a thief.

But if you steal a loaf of bread whereby your life is saved,
They'll put you into prison with the "totally depraved."

IN FRANCE.

TERRORISM has ruled for the last three weeks in France. M. Constans, Minister of the Interior, who is certainly not a man of genius, but still is a very clever rascal, has quite well understood how to support the bourgeoisie in these difficult moments. The party indeed being composed of men, and some men having through their talent and education a certain influence over their friends and the mass of the workers, M. Constans saw that depriving the party of these men the movement would, if not fail, at least be a little softened. And so he proceeded on this plan. It is true that the agitation of the last week was remarkable, but far from the importance it was expected to be. The reactionary papers were certainly very frightened, if it is to be judged from the exaggeration they made of every little circumstance. So the best informed Tory papers, as *Le Matin*, *La France*, etc., stated that a clandestine printing office had been seized, and all printers arrested, including the manager of the Anarchist paper *La Révolte*. In fact, the printing office was not clandestine at all, and it was the printing office of the united Anarchists, which had been removed lately from the *Rue du Marais*. The head printer, Cabot, was arrested; Grave, the manager of the *Révolution*, was not. The *Révolution* starts this week with a day of delay, and will be printed in a bourgeois printing office. It is true that Malato, Martinet, Gégout, Merlino, Petraroya, Prodi, and other Anarchists were arrested, and will be sent to hard labour for having distributed pamphlets and manifestoes to students and to the soldiers. Comrade Stolanoff, a Bulgarian student, was also arrested. There was a perquisition made upon the apartment of comrade Molinari, an Italian Anarchist, and there were found some manifestoes, but the comrade was successful in escaping. It is to be feared that the foreign Socialists arrested will be handed over to their respective governments after serving their sentences. Louise Michel and Rhénavin were also arrested, and some other arrests made will be kept secret. Tramps frequenting the Halles (Market) have been put in custody, but this had begun a long time ago, in November, when the crisis and starvation were growing threatening against the possessing classes. B.

Goods are theirs who enjoy them.—*Italian*.

With sublime condescension, millionaires' daughters have been visiting the working-women's convention this week, and informing poor girls, who work for three and five dollars a-week, what wonders economy might be made to accomplish with their incomes. For pure heartlessness and cheek combined, this "takes the biscuit."—*Boston Daily Globe*, April 18.

NOTES.

THE Commission on the ill-treatment of the so-called dynamiters in Chatham prison has reported on the subject in the way that might have been expected from a Commission sitting on a very bad case; that is to say, that while practically admitting the charges, it said—"Well, it doesn't matter." The case seems to have been so plain that even the respectable *Daily News* has had its stomach turned by it, and a man of sense and humanity writing in its columns has condemned the finding of the Commission in cautious words, but very clearly. Let us say a few plain words on the subject.

The prison system of this country is, and is meant to be, a system of torture applied by Society to those whom it considers its enemies; but this fact is kept in the dark as much as possible, lest ordinary good-natured people, who do not want to torture persons unless fear drives them to it, should be shocked, and the system should be swept away—or at least altered. The ordinary middle class man, till within the last few years, had no idea of what went on in a prison; and even now, after some light has been thrown on it by the imprisonment of "gentlemen" both in Ireland and England, he shuts his eyes to it as much as he can. Keeping things dark is the necessary rule in a prison.

Now it is clear that no one could accept the office of habitually torturing his fellow-creatures unless he were a specially callous and degraded man, and were probably also driven to it by hard need; it follows as a matter of course that the officials of a prison must be chosen from the off-scourings of the earth. Surely the evidence of such people should be taken with great reserve by men not interested in suppressing anything.

But the ruling classes are, as we have seen, deeply interested in proving that our prison-system is reasonable and humane; and any knowledge of the real facts will dispel that idea, and show that it is a system of hideous and wanton cruelty. Can we expect, therefore, that any enquiry into the treatment of men considered as the special enemies of Society will be a fair one? It is clearly impossible that it should be, as that highly respectable paper, the *Daily News*, has found out.

I appeal to all honest and generous-minded men, whatever their opinions may be, to consider what this extra torment and insult means applied to men already tortured by the mere cast-iron system up to the limits of endurance. Surely the insulting or tormenting of a prisoner so over-burdened with misery already, so helpless as he is, is such a dastardly and abominable crime, that any crime committed by the prisoners in a jail sinks by comparison into insignificance. You men of the comfortable middle-classes, so kind and unselfish in family life, so scrupulous in business—so respectable, in a word—think of what you are doing vicariously by means of the dreadful tools you have made necessary to you! Think of it—if you dare!

Amongst this Commission of Evasion we read the names of Mr. Drummond and Mr. George Supton. These gentlemen were, no doubt, put there because our rulers thought, or pretended to think, that they represent the working-classes. I appeal, not to Socialists, but to the working-men in general to say whether it is not about time to let the said rulers understand clearly that this humbug can be stood no longer, and that these gentlemen and others like them do not represent the working-classes, or any section of them. W. M.

Hunger pierceth stone walls.

Eighty destitute men are receiving food and shelter at the old Immigration Depot, Brisbane (March 15).

Henry George says he "believes in nothing half-way." Then why, asks the *Bulletin*, is he not a land-nationalisationist or a Socialist.

The boy question is not yet (March 15) settled among the Charters Towers unions. At the mine where men were working for boy's pay, the management, out of pitiful spite, discharged all the lads employed, and a small minority of the miners, fathers of the lads, are attacking the executive and president of the union for their action, the president, who appears to a "white" man, coming in for plenty of abuse. The large majority recognise that the union only did its duty when it shut down on men receiving boy's wages.

ALL WE LIKE SHEEP.—*Tobacco*, a newspaper published in the interests of the cigar and tobacco manufacturers, gives in a recent issue the circulars sent out to manufacturers in this line of industry by a committee who are opposing the clauses in the Tariff Bill affecting tobacco imports. The circulars include a form of petition against the bill, and the recommendation to employers in the trade is as follows: "We would advise that you copy the following in duplicate, have the petition signed by every employé in your shop and forward," etc. Just notice, says the *Journal of the Knights of Labour*, the cool assumption in the passage we have italicised, that the employer, as a matter of course, controls the political action of his workmen and can dictate to them what petitions they shall sign. Unfortunately, the despotic language of the circular only reflects the actual conditions of matters in many establishments where workmen are completely subservient to the dictates of their masters in their political movements. But we cannot help thinking that the framers of this circular might at least have had the decency to pretend that the employés were to be appealed to on some other ground than the mere will of the employer. It would have looked better and been more politic. We commend this instance to those who are so terribly solicitous that the "individuality" of the citizen will be sacrificed by labour reform.

THE LABOUR STRUGGLE.

The Lords on Sweating.

After a long delay, the Lords' Sweating Commission have at last issued their report. In this they state that the sweating system is not the result of sub-contracting or the introduction of machinery and sub-division of labour or of foreign immigration. Well, let us admit it; but what, then, is the cause? The Lords are ready with the usual middle-class answer: "Oh, it is all the fault of the poor." It is "the inefficiency of many of the lower class of workers, early marriages, and the tendency of the residuum of the population of large towns to form a helpless community together with a low standard of life and the excessive supply of unskilled labour." Indeed? O that wicked "lower class of workers"! why will they marry early and be inefficient in their work? But still we do not think the Lords have dived to the bottom of the matter. Who, for instance, is responsible for the "excessive supply of unskilled labour"? We have always thought that the grasping landlords, who have ground the agricultural labourer down to such a depth of misery that he is glad to escape out of their hands into those of the sweater in the towns, had something to do with it. Do the noble lords agree with us? But the chief cause of the sweating system is certainly the greed of capitalists, who have forced the masses of the workers down to such miserable wages that the wretched workman, having so little money, buys the cheapest of goods. Cheap goods, that chief blessing of our commercial system, lauded to the skies by middle-class Liberals, are usually the product of starvation wages. Thus there is a lower depth still to the misery of the masses—i.e., by the misery of the people who produce goods for their consumption. The labour of married women working at unskilled trades in their homes and working "at what would be starvation wages to unmarried women," is another cause, according to the Lords. Quite so; but why are these women forced to work? Because the pay of their husbands is not sufficient to enable them to live without. Thus the mass of misery which makes sweating possible is merely the result of our commercial system, and as long as that system endures, so long will the sweater thrive and flourish. Instead of the petty tinkering remedies which the Lords recommend, but which surely not even they can expect will make much difference to the condition of the poor wretches who bear on their shoulders the crushing weight of the present system, they should have advocated the extinction of themselves and all other idlers who live upon rent, profit, and interest. We are convinced that this alone will end the tyranny of the sweater.

Strike of East-end Tailors.

Just as the report appeared, the East-end tailors, who are the chief sufferers from the white slavery of modern commercialism, turned out on strike because their masters have for the last six months deliberately broken the strike agreement of last autumn. The average hours of work, according to returns sent in to the Strike Committee, are about sixteen daily. One man, in one of these returns, thus describes his slavery: "For three days I work from eight to eleven, and the rest of the week from seven a.m. until two a.m. next morning; no time for meals." He works with a crust in one hand and an iron in the other, and his pathetic reason is "compulsion." This indeed is the answer in every case. Another wretched man writes: "Hours from eight a.m. to twelve p.m.; air is very foul, and one day a-week the small workshop is used as a laundry; the stench is overpowering." Will the remedies suggested by the House of Lords sweep away these horrors? Why, they will not even palliate them.

The men demand (1) that they shall work from eight a.m. to 8 p.m., one hour being allowed for dinner, and half an hour for tea; (2) four hours overtime only to be worked during the week—two hours only to be worked in one day; (3) the first two hours to be paid for at regular wages, the second two hours at time and a half. They insist upon the masters signing a document drawn up by the Strike Committee embodying these terms. Eighty-two masters have already surrendered. The sweaters resolved at a general meeting that they should join hands with the men against their common oppressor the shop-keeper. They have decided to open negotiations with the men to boycott the shops which will not pay sufficient for the keeping of proper hours. On the whole, it seems that the workers have now a good chance of winning.

Great Demonstration of Railway Men.

The railway-men held a large demonstration in Hyde Park, amid a heavy storm of rain, although they were cheered by a glimpse of the sun towards the end of the meeting. John Burns, Cunningham Graham, Bernard Shaw, and George Bateman were the chief speakers. The men have issued a manifesto containing their demands, which are roughly as follows: That fifty-four hours constitute the maximum week's work for railway-men on day duty and forty-eight for those on night duty; that all time over ten hours any day be paid for as overtime at the rate of time and a half, and that a week's holiday in the year and pay be granted. For platelayers and permanent-way men nine and a half hours a-day, and for shunters in busy goods yards and signalmen in important boxes, eight hours shall be a day's work; and in shops fifty-one hours shall constitute the week's work. Sunday duty is to be paid as double time, unless a day off be given in lieu thereof. That a week's pay be guaranteed to all guards having to devote the whole of their time to the company employing them. For the railway carmen, they demand fifty-seven hours a-week; for all men whose wages do not exceed 21s. a-week they ask that a rise of 15 per cent. be granted; that for all not exceeding 28s., 10 per cent.; and for those above 28s., 5 per cent. To get these concessions the men have only to organise; and if the 400,000 men working on the railway would join the General Railway Workers' Union, they could obtain these very moderate demands in a week. They would not then be kept on continuous duty for forty-two hours, or be forced to work eighty, ninety, and a hundred hours a-week for starvation wages, as many have to do at the present time.

The Eight Hours Day.

The firm of Messrs. Green and McAllan, printers, have conceded the eight-hour working-day to their employes, without any reduction in wages. Report has it that several other firms in this trade will follow suit. Caslon's, the typefounders in Chiswell Street, are also among the converted. This is very kind of them, and shows that even demonstrations may do some good. By the bye, we have a suggestion to make to the Central Committee. Messrs. Shipton and Co. profess to be very eager to obtain the eight hours

day by organisation. But though this may deceive some people, most of us know that they are about as earnest in the matter as most capitalist Liberal M.P.'s. Why not take them at their word, and say, "Very well, we'll get it by organisation. We will have a general strike at an early date. Will you join us?" Strikes me that Shipton would even prefer a "legal" eight hours day to this dreadful prospect. N.

AN AUSTRALIAN LESSON.

[FROM THE BRISBANE 'WORKER.']

TOGETHER you are all-powerful, workers of Queensland, workers of Australia, workers of the world! Together you can be free men and women, citizens of a free land, never needing to crave from a fellow man permission to earn a bare living by making somebody else richer, never needing to fear the bitterness of unemployment, never needing to shrink at the thought that those you love may want. Together, by standing together, you can insure that your boys and girls will have opportunities now denied them—opportunities to be strong and learned, and honoured and happy; that in old age you and those who come after you will have enough; that in sickness or in death there will be no thought of destitution; that the workers will no longer squabble for the butter-milk of their wealth production, while the idle cunning glut themselves with the cream. All this you can do, and more if you will only stand together, and be patient and wise. You can take all social injustices and industrial inequalities and vested privileges, and strangle them one by one with your million-muscle hands, as Hercules strangled in his cradle the serpents of Juno. Not all at once, but gradually, patiently, slowly, by being thinking men working in harmony with each other for the good of all, and by ceasing to crouch in hopeless apathy within the prison-walls of competition, or to rise spasmodically and disconnectedly impotent, because only partial, revolt.

Singly, individually, you are really as powerless, you workers of Queensland, as the slum-soaked slaves of modern Babylon, as the tenement house toilers of Paris and New York. Because there is sunshine here instead of fog, and fever instead of rheumatics, it does not follow that therefore the law of supply and demand—the divine law under which English women work for 1s. 6d. per week, finding themselves, while American miners fight for the tremendous privilege of earning 3½d. an hour—would reverse its invariable process here, and cover the worker with a blessing instead of with a curse. This is called an Eight-Hour country, but how many work eight hours? Twice as many wage-earners work Ten, and numbers Twelve, right here in Queensland. It is claimed that wages are high, but the average Queensland wage for all classes of labour, skilled and unskilled, is considerably under 30s. per week; and those who consider the pay exorbitant ought to be made to keep their families on it for a whole year—only, perhaps, the common worker isn't supposed to have a family or anything else that is luxurious. Companies and syndicates, and various other soulless forms of that Capitalism, which at its very best is little disposed to give to the worker more than it must of the wealth he produces, are forcing down wages on the mining fields and watching the maritime men for a moment of weakness, and tried only the other day to reduce rouseabouts' pay throughout the central district, and would have had it not been for the wholesome dread inspired in the Employers' Association by the Federation move. In Brisbane the tramway company used to outrage decency in its treatment of the workers whom necessity compelled to accept its terms, and the planters have been trying for years to kick out the white worker altogether, using every plea but the true one that there is more profit to be made out of kanaka, profit being the only recognised standard in the commercial morality of our Christian civilisation. And if more proof be wanted that if he stands alone the Australian worker will be driven into the gutter just like the European worker, the ridiculous wages often paid here to women-workers, and the arbitrary condition of their employment, should suffice the greediest. Women are thus compelled to work for an almost nominal wage because they do not stand together, but allow themselves to be treated individually and to be set off one against the other. If men allow themselves to be similarly dealt with, there can only be the same result, to their own sad loss and to the profit-monger's gain. This is why those who profit by the work of others object to solidarity; it is for their own pecuniary advantage that they endeavour to persuade the workers that it is far better to beg for enough to live on, cap in hand, than to march up like men and demand it.

Workers ask charity of nobody. They do not have to, for there is no wealth in existence which did not come from them, not a stick nor a stone, not a pound of wool nor a loaf of bread. They produced all that is in Queensland or the exchange value for it, which is the same thing, and the idlers who mainly "own" it, only do so because our civilisation is a ghastly failure which does not give the wealth to the worker, which needs a general overhauling in the interest of the robbed. And at this epoch, when from end to end of Australia the idea of nationality is in all men's mouths and fermenting in all men's brains, is the time for the workers to insist in their united strength, in their restless solidarity that there shall be just such a general overhauling, that when this Australia of ours rises among the nations she shall rise as the land of free men, not as the land of slaves. For he is indeed a slave, whether he lives under a czar or a king or a president, whom circumstances force to beg for permission to work and live, who when his children are hungry and his wife in need, cannot satisfy them except by paying profit-toll to another.

It is against the conditions which have crushed down our brothers, the workers of Europe, that Australian labour is marshalling its legions; the Gospel of Organisation is only a form of the universal Gospel of Discontent. It is not good enough to drift on to the slums and the workhouse; it is not good enough to build here a nation whose head of gold shall be the private property of monopolists, and whose feet of clay shall be crimson with the blood of ill-paid toilers who suffer and die. It would be better to shake this civilisation to pieces as the Goths and Vandals shook the rotten civilisation of Rome, than to see in Brisbane and Townsville the sights one sees in English cities, than to see our bold, brave, dashing bushmen degraded to the helpless poverty of the once-hardy peasantry of the Atlantic lands. Yet the horrible sights have commenced and the degradation is not far off. On Queensland streets Australian girls sell themselves for bread just as English girls do in the Haymarket. . . . On the plains the bushmen whom no man needs are thickening; in the towns the unemployed gather; purple-proud plutocrats sneer at the complaints of the workers, and bid them be thankful if all their labouring gives them enough of bread. Are these the conditions which workers desire to see grafted in a new nationality? Will they even lift their finger on behalf of such a nationality? . . .

For an Australia that would do them justice, what would not the workers do in return? To an Australia that would earnestly endeavour to right their wrongs, and to give to each man work, and to every worker his fair share of the wealth produced, how the heart of millions would go out, how the love of a grateful people would encircle it like a wall of fire! This is the Australia that the workers seek, and that they dream of in their cheering for "The Federated Republic." But it is not this Australia that the politicians are after. Their Australia is to be an America of millionaires and misery, a republic of rent-robbery, a democracy of diamonds and destitution and despair; the workers are to be its beasts of burden, and the rich its aristocrats, and there is to be no thought for the helpless, and no sympathy for the poor. Few of them see, like Chief Justice Lilley, that the Australia which is coming must answer the industrial problems if it would root itself in the lives of the people. But they will see it soon if the workers only stand together, if to skilled and unskilled, to men and women, to all sorts and conditions and grades of the army of the workers, there comes a comprehension of the great issue at stake, and a realisation of the value of organisation.

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.

Annual Conference.—The Annual Conference of the Socialist League will take place on Whit Sunday, May 25th. All propositions from Branches should be sent in at once to allow of agenda being made up. Place of meeting and other particulars in future issue.

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. East London, to end of October. Mitcham, to end of November. St. Georges East, to end of December.

1890:—Manchester, to end of January. 'Commonweal' Branch, to end of February. Leicester and North London, to end of March. North Kensington, to end of April. Streatham, to end of December.

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.

REPORTS.

'COMMONWEAL.'—On Sunday, May 11th, G. B. Shaw lectured on "Socialism in Practice" to a small audience.

HAMMERSMITH.—Very good meeting at Bridge End in spite of rain; speakers were Bullock, Morris, C. Smith, A. J. Smith, Tarleton, Johnson, Tochatti, Sparling, and Frye; 43 'Weal' sold. Large meeting in the evening; speakers were Tarleton, Davis, Grant, A. J. Smith, and Clara Watt; 12 'Weal' sold.

STREATHAM.—We were disappointed that Parker was unable to be present, but good results sprang from the disappointment; the branch and the general public turned out in good numbers, Moore, Collins, and Smith speaking for upwards of an hour; 'Weals' sold out, and 1s. 8d. collected.—S.

NORTH KENSINGTON.—Good meeting held at Latimer Road; speakers were J. F. Lyne, Crouch, and Saint; fair sale of 'Weals.' At our rooms in the evening we had a discussion on "The Wastefulness of the Present System," which was opened by Crouch and taken up well by the audience; all 'Weals' sold and 1s. 6d. collected.

NORTH LONDON.—On Saturday in Hyde Park, Cantwell and Nicoll held a good meeting for an hour and a quarter; good sale of 'Weal' and pamphlets. In Regent's Park on Sunday morning, Cantwell and Nicoll addressed a large audience; good sale of 'Weals' and 1s. 6d. collected. Sunday afternoon in Hyde Park, a splendid meeting was addressed by Cantwell, Saint, Mrs. Lahr, and another comrade; very good sale of pamphlets and 'Weal,' and 1s. 11d. collected.

ABERDEEN.—On Tuesday a special meeting was held to discuss "Eight Hours Day," on which subject Leatham read a paper. At Sunday night meeting, Gilray's paper—"The Problem of the Poor"—which appeared in *Kilmarnock Standard* as contribution for a competition, was read and discussed. A belated eight hours demonstration takes place on the 17th under auspices of Aberdeen Trades Council.—L.

GLASGOW.—On Sunday at 1 o'clock, Joe and Tim Burgoyne addressed a large and very sympathetic audience on Jail Square. At the same hour Glasier gave a lecture on "Socialism—what it means" to the Springburn Branch of the Irish National League; the lecture was received with entire approval. Our Paisley Road Toll meeting could not be held owing to the rain. As we must now remove from our present room in Ingram Street, we have arranged to co-operate with the Christian Socialist Society and the S.D.F. in securing a suitable hall for public lectures and private meetings.

NORWICH.—Sunday last, in the afternoon, a large open-air meeting was held. W. Moore opened, followed by F. Kitz (London), who delivered a very interesting address upon the present position of the workers. In the evening another open-air meeting was held, the speakers being Poynts and Kitz; owing to heavy rain, the audience was not so large. Kitz made special reference to Stanley, who is shortly to visit Norwich. Audience very attentive. *Commonweal* sold out, and 8s. 7d. collected for propaganda; good sale of *Freedom*.

YARMOUTH.—On Sunday morning, on Priory Plain, comrade F. Kitz delivered a splendid address on the Labour Struggle from a Socialist's standpoint to a large and attentive audience. In the afternoon, near the London Boat Landing-stage, an attentive audience was addressed by F. Morley; several questions asked, and answered to the satisfaction of those present. In the evening, on Colman's Quay, Morley spoke at another large meeting. Ruffold assisted at each meeting. 18 *Commonweal* sold, several pamphlets, and 3s. 11d. collected towards defraying the expenses.—J. H.

LIVERPOOL SOCIALIST SOCIETY.—On Sunday we held two meetings at the Landing Stage—at 11.30 a.m. and 3 p.m. Comrades Mowbray (London), Reeves, Chapman, and Balfour spoke. Mowbray created a good impression, in spite of his hoarseness through speaking too often during his week's tour in Lancashire. Papers sold, 5s. 6d.; collection for *Commonweal*, 3s. 8d.

SHEFFIELD SOCIALIST CLUB.—We have now opened some fine and centrally situated premises at 63 Blonk Street, containing meeting room, reading room and library, smoke room for games, etc. Open every evening, and on Sunday all day. Membership, 1d. weekly. French Class, conducted by Ed. Carpenter, every Tuesday at 8.30 p.m.; terms, 3d. weekly, which goes towards club funds. Discussion every Wednesday at 8 p.m. We have a good assortment of Labour and Socialist papers from various parts of the world on our reading tables, but should be glad of any books for library. We are very sanguine of being able to accomplish grand propagands in Sheffield and district during the coming summer, and ask the earnest co-operation of all Socialists in this neighbourhood.

LECTURE DIARY.

LONDON.

Battersea.—All communications to E. Buteux, 45, Inwith Street, Battersea Park Road.

Commonweal Branch.—24 Great Queen Street, Holborn, W.C. Business meeting of members every Thursday evening at 8; Discussion Class at 9. Hall open every evening from 7 till 10.

East London.—A meeting of members will be held at the International Club, Berner Street, on Sunday May 18th, at 7.30. Comrades of St. George's-in-the-East Branch are requested to attend. Important business.

Hammersmith.—Kelmescott House, Upper Mall, W. Sunday May 18, at 8 p.m., Sydney Olivier (Fabian), "Emilé Zola—Studies of French Society under the Second Empire." French Class conducted by Mde. Desroches on Friday evenings at 7.30.

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

North Kensington.—Clarendon Coffee Palace, Clarendon Road. Meets every Wednesday at 8 p.m. The branch Band will have its first practice next Friday. All comrades wishing to join can give their names to the Instructor at the above address.

North London.—6 Windmill Street, Tottenham Court Road. Meets every Wednesday evening at 8 o'clock.

Streatham.—Address secretary, R. Smith, 1 Natal Road, Streatham.

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 Hall, 9 Harriet Street, on Sunday evenings at 6.30. Singing practice, etc., in Odd-fellows' Small Hall, Crooked Lane, Mondays at 8 p.m.

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

Glasgow.—Members are invited to meet on Thursday and Sunday evenings, at 8 o'clock, in the Secretary's house, 250 Crown Street, S.S. All communications to be sent to that address.

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

Leeds.—Clarendon Buildings, Victoria Road, School Close. Open every evening. Business meeting Saturdays at 8 p.m.

Leicester.—Exchange Buildings, Rutland Street. Branch meets on Monday, Thursday, and Saturday at 8 p.m.

Manchester.—Socialist League Club, 60 Grovesnor Street, All Saints. Open every evening. Branch weekly meeting on Tuesdays at 8.

Norwich.—Members meet at 23 Rose Yard, St. Augustines, Tuesday at 8.30.

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.—Socialist League Club, 56 Row, Market Place. Open every evening. Business Meeting Tuesdays at 8 p.m. Elocution Class Friday at 8.30 p.m. Discussion Class Sunday 3 p.m.

OPEN-AIR PROPAGANDA.

SATURDAY 17.

7 Hyde Park Nicoll and Cantwell

SUNDAY 18.

11 Latimer Road Station North Kensington Branch
 11.30 Hammersmith Bridge Hammersmith Branch
 11.30 Kilburn—"Old Plough," Kilburn Lane Mainwaring
 11.30 Mitcham—Fair Green The Branch
 11.30 Regent's Park Nicoll and Mowbray
 3.30 Hyde Park—Marble Arch Branch
 3.30 Victoria Park The Branch
 7 Hammersmith Bridge Hammersmith Branch
 7 Weltje Road, Ravenscourt Park Hammersmith Branch
 7 Wormwood Scrubs North Kensington Branch
 7.30 Mitcham Fair Green Mrs. Lahr and Davis
 8 Streatham Green Branch

TUESDAY 20.

8 Walham Green—back of Church Hammersmith Branch

THURSDAY 22.

8.15 Hoxton Church Kitz and Davis

PROVINCES.

Glasgow.—Sunday: Jail Square at 2 o'clock; Paisley Road at 5 o'clock.

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

Leicester.—Sunday: Russell Square at 11 a.m.; Humberstone Gate, at 8 p.m.

Liverpool.—Landing Stage, Sundays at 11.30 a.m. and 3 p.m.

Manchester.—Saturday: Middleton market ground, at 7 p.m. Sunday: Philips Park Gates, at 11; Stevenson Square, at 3.

Norwich.—Sunday: Market Place at 3 and 7.30. Addresses by Walter Neilson (London Freedom Group).

Sheffield.—Sunday: Monolith, Fargate, at 11.30 a.m.; Pump, West Bar, 8 p.m. Monday: Lady's Bridge Wicker, at 7 p.m. **Rotherham.**—Sunday: College Yard, at 3 p.m.

Yarmouth.—Sunday: Priory Plain, at 11; Bradwell, 11.30; Colman's Granary Quay, at 7.

ANARCHIST LEAGUE.—Sunday May 18, a meeting in Hyde Park, near Marble Arch, at 4 o'clock.

CLUB AUTONOMIE, 6 Windmill Street, Tottenham Court Road, W.—Sunday May 18, at 8.30, George Attersoll, "Economic Liberty."

NAT. FED. OF ALL TRADES AND INDUSTRIES, "The Bell," York Street, Lambeth.—Sunday May 18, J. B. Bucheridge, "Labour's Wrongs and how to Right Them."

EDINBURGH—SCOTTISH SOCIALIST FEDERATION.—Tuesdays, Reading and Discussion at 35 George IV. Bridge, at 8. Business meeting, same place and time. Sunday, meeting in Meadows at 4.30; local talent.

NEW MANHOOD SUFFRAGE LEAGUE, "Three Doves," Berwick St., Soho, W.—Sunday May 18, at 8.30 p.m., W. Townshend, "Hard Times: The Cause, Over-Production of Goods or Under-Production of Money?"

THE NORTH KENSINGTON BRANCH appeal to comrades and friends for their Band Fund. They have the offer of getting drums very cheap from a band that has become defunct, and want to raise about £2 4s. for this purpose. Please send subscriptions to Mrs. Fox, Clarendon Coffee Tavern, Clarendon Road.

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The Skeleton or Starvation Army ...	2	0

American Literature.

A few remainders—

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Problem of Labour and Education (Karoli). Cloth ...	1	6
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Labour Capital (Kellogg) ...	1	0
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MISCELLANEOUS.

Spaziergänge eines Atheisten. Bei Ferdin- and Heigl ...	0	8
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The above Leaflets, at prices given, can be had from the *Commonweal* manager in any quantities by Branches, members, or sympathisers, for distribution, 24, Great Queen Street, Lincoln's Inn Fields, 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 wrapper* round paper 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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