

# THE COMMONWEAL

## A JOURNAL OF Revolutionary Socialism.

[Vol. 7.—No. 260.]

APRIL 1891

[ONE PENNY.]

### CONTENTS.

	PAGE.
The First of May .. .. .	25
Notes .. .. .	26
Socialism in the Provinces .. .. .	7
Celebrations of the Commune of Paris .. .. .	28
Thoughts of a Ragamuffin .. .. .	29
International Notes .. .. .	29
Communists' Appeal to Criminals .. .. .	30
Executive Announcements, and Lecture Diary .. .. .	31
Statement of Principles, Advertisements, etc. .. .. .	32

## THE FIRST OF MAY.

NEWS is coming to us from all quarters—in some cases from very unexpected quarters indeed—of the determination of the workers of the “civilised” world to keep Labour Day this year in very earnest fashion. By “Labour Day” we mean Friday, the First of May; for assuredly Sunday promenaders, whatever their ostensible object, will have no part or lot in helping forward the second great annual review of Labour’s forces. That Catalonia and Spain would be with us we anticipated, after the brave deeds done there last year; but the present writer confesses that he had not expected to read, as he has read, of solid Italy, of solid Austria, of solid America, of France all but solid, of Germany throwing off the dictation of her “Social Democratic” leaders in order to take part in the universal May movement. Surely toilers in England may ask themselves the question: “What of us? What shall we do? Shall we British workers leave it to some ten thousand or so professed Revolutionists to demonstrate on the First, as we did last year, or shall we openly take part with our mates throughout the globe in practical exposition of the solidarity and omnipotence of the wakening wage-slaves?”

Let every toiler who reads these lines consider well the meaning and effect of this world-wide demonstration before he takes upon himself the burden of saying that he will have no share in it. Nothing can be simpler than the idea of the First of May, (we need not here trouble ourselves with considering its origin in America, and its adoption at the International Congress of 1889.) What does the May celebration mean? Only that, on that one day in the year, all workers shall take holiday together. The whole practical force of May 1st lies, in fact, in those two things: that it is *taken*, and that it is taken *together*. Yet in those two things there is latent, so to speak, the Revolution itself—the great social Change which shall for ever crush misery out of the land, and give to each according to his needs.

The First of May is no Sunday, no Bank Holiday graciously bestowed upon wage-slaves by the masters who fatten on the fruits of their labour; graciously bestowed, lest haply, from too-incessant toil, the wretched worker should not even live his average of twenty-seven years, until another generation is ready to take his place. No “beneficent” legislation of philanthropic profit-mongers secures this holiday at least. It is taken—seized from the rich robbers. That is no light thing in itself, and is clearly symptomatic of much. Surely presently the worker, who has thus practically denied the right of his bourgeois oppressor to unchallenged usufruct of his time and toil, will deny in still more practical fashion the right of the same oppressor to steal from him the half or more of his gettings.

The worker, however, will never successfully retake his stolen earnings unless he act in unison with his fellows, whatever their tongue, whatever their complexion. The capitalist becomes more and more international; no barriers of race or frontier exist for him in his ever-renewed pursuit of riches and domination. His necessary and inevitable foe—the producer of his riches, the victim of his power—must be international also, and is, one is glad to know, rapidly coming to understand that cunningly-fomented national discords must be forgotten if victory is to be won, that in truth such discords have long ceased to have either meaning or reason. The First of May testifies in no uncertain manner, to the solidarity of Labour everywhere. By

this one retaken day of freedom, Frenchman joins hands with German, Polish Jew with British Gentile, Yankee artizan with his Spanish or half-caste brother in the Argentine.

Hence it is that this novel Feast of Human Federation is hated and dreaded by the possessing classes and their parasites, alike in Barcelona and Paris, in New York and in Buenos Aires; that Matthews and Bradford fear it in like fashion with Constans and his Police Prefect, with the Carnegies and their Pinkertons. It brings home to the tyrants, whom our ignorance has made strong, how absolutely helpless in truth they are if once their slaves cease to labour for them, be it only for a single day. The ideal May Day completely realised would, in all sober earnestness, mean the ending of the whole ugly dream. The whole system of fictions would fade in a moment, like a nightmare when the summer day has come. Of what use or power are millions of golden sovereigns if they cannot purchase a moment’s right to live on others’ toil? So it is that masters fear even such an imperfect May Day as we had last year with exceeding fear. It is an object lesson in the omnipotence of work and the impotence of gold, which bourgeois and proletarian alike may run and read. It reveals to the boss all his weakness and (a much more important matter) it shows the “hand” all his strength.

Therefore it is that Sunday processions are absolutely futile as a method of keeping Labour Day. The Sunday walk is not taken from the capitalist but scoffingly given by him, and it can never be of the slightest value as a demonstration of international solidarity. This is a matter in which emphatically he that is not with us is against us. It is idle for example to attend Conferences of “Eight Hours’ Leagues” and vote for the week-day observance, only afterwards to turn round and work for the Sunday demonstration. Any person, Gas Workers’ President or other, who is supporting the Third of May meetings, is thereby doing his little best to spoil the First of May holiday. Do not let it be said either that the keeping of the First is too hard a matter for workers here; that they will not sacrifice a day’s pay, or run, it may be, the risk of a possible “sack.” Who is there so wretched but he takes a day off once a year for own pleasure? This time let him take it in unison with his mates, not only for his own pleasure but also for the good of his class everywhere. Surely, as things go, even a possible “sacking” is a light price to pay for the great gain of taking the first step to a better society, by establishing, by experimental proof, the utter helplessness of the idle thieves who exploit the toilers. Obviously, too, the more general the movement, the remoter the possibility of individuals being made to suffer.

Many there may be, here in England perhaps, especially, who may say that much here written is true enough, but that they, for their part, know little of the Revolution of which we continually speak, or of the glad time coming when “leisure and pleasure shall be free,” because there shall be neither rich nor poor in the world. I will concede at once that as yet only a minority of workers understand the certitude of the Great Change or are yet Socialists. For all that, even from its point of view, the majority will find its account in joining with us in celebration of May Day. Although such majority may look upon a total change as altogether out of the range of “practical politics” (wherein, by the way, the majority, as usual, is quite wrong), yet every worker, surely, without exception, who thinks of his position at all, now recognises that there are many things he wants from the non-worker, which he is not likely to get except by showing his power and by making the non-worker very uncomfortable. He wants, for example, as it would seem, an Eight Hours’ Day. He may be sure that his master will not give it him if he can help it. How then is he to obtain it? Surely by proving that he is strong, and can, if he be so minded, take that and much else, by giving earnest of his strength, by putting just a little pressure on his “governor.” May Day supplies, at cheap rate, just the opportunity needed for this purpose. The cessation of labour on that day will convince the masters at once of the reality of the demand and of the necessity for yielding to it, convince them with a cogency of fifty-fold the force of fifty years of Sunday processions.

We Revolutionary Socialists therefore make bold to invite all workers to join with us in keeping the First of May, 1891. They may not yet go the whole way with us; they may have set their minds on

many things which to us are but fetishes and Will o' the Wisp; but at least we are all agreed that, whereas now the producer is nothing in the commonwealth, the non-producer everything, the producer should at least be something, (we Socialists say he should be all.) Let us agree further then to take together the first step towards this Emancipation of Labour, a step noways hard or difficult, yet a great step when achieved, the step which consists in practical proof of our union and our force. Next First of May let no stroke of work be done for the profit-mongers; that day let every "employer of labour," no matter what his degree in the hierarchy of boss-dom, "stew in his own juice;" let him find out for himself how absolutely worthless is his land, or his factory, his machinery, or his money, without the strong arms of the foolish slaves who have been so long content to toil for him and his. "Workers of the World Unite."

R. W. BURNIE.

## NOTES.

The long-continued struggle at the docks between the Shipping Federation and the Federated Unions has ended at last in the defeat of the latter. Through dissensions among the Unions concerning the oft-threatened general strike of sailors, dockers, lightermen, stevedores &c., the Labour Federation has gone to pieces, so the Union men are now forced to accept that badge of blacklegism, the Federation ticket, and the Capitalists rejoice greatly.

But why is it that the New Unionism, which was a year or two ago triumphant in all its contests, is now steadily losing ground, and is suffering defeat after defeat. It is owing, perhaps, to the fact that not only the leaders but the men also have not courage enough to face boldly the changed circumstances of the time by taking the only measures which would enable them to be victorious, but it is also due to these very changes. When the New Unionism first arose in all its might and beauty, we were in the midst of great trade revival, the unemployed were absorbed in flourishing industries, and even unskilled workmen had nothing to fear from the unemployed taking their places should they come out upon strike. But now all is changed, since the averted crash in the city last Autumn, trade has grown dull, the study of the market reports in our daily press is quite enough to convince us of that, capital has been "scared," and despite the smooth prophecies of our Stock Exchange prophets, and the efforts of smart financiers to bolster up respectable firms who are upon the verge of bankruptcy, every moneyed man feels that any moment may bring on a crash compared with which the crisis in the city last November would be a trifle.

What is the consequence? Trade is getting slack, large stocks are accumulating on the hands of the capitalists, workmen are discharged in increasing numbers, and these men, desperate and starving, are frequently only too eager to creep into places of their brethren who revolt against the tyranny of their masters. This is not to be wondered at. The New Unionist "leaders" have not shown much sympathy with these unfortunate workers. They have shut them out of their unions, called them hard names, and the unemployed may retort that if the unionists only care for their own selfish interests, and tell the starving unemployed to go to the workhouse or the devil, there is no reason for surprise that unemployed workmen frequently black eg, with the result that the unionists are defeated, and the capitalist chuckles while the workers cut each other's throats.

Now we don't admire the unemployed for doing this, we think that they could be far better employed in helping themselves to some of the surplus wealth they have produced by labour, and thus reduce somewhat its superabundance, which, according to our political economists, causes men to starve. This we have said before in our columns, and we regret that the unemployed have not taken our advice. We, however, fear that the leaders of the New Unionism are not likely to give such revolutionary counsel, though a few years ago some of them were not so scrupulous, but still there is a policy they might adopt which would lead them to victory.

It is quite clear that it is impossible to win small strikes, the recent fight at the docks, not to mention innumerable other instances, has clearly proved this. The struggle at the docks has been nothing but a succession of petty strikes. With what result? The men have been beaten in detail, and as they have refused to work upon Federation ships their places have been taken by "free labour." The ship-owners have done their utmost to split up the unions, and in this they have succeeded too well. The dockers have been bribed by the ship-owners adopting their co-operative scheme, and paying them good wages, while these benevolent gentlemen have made ruthless war upon the Seamen and Firemen's Union, and now that union has been "smashed" the turn of the dockers will come, and they will be devoured in their turn by the capitalist monster. "Divide in order to rule," is still the motto of the ruling classes. But still we do not think that the New Unionism has definitely collapsed, it is, perhaps, upon the verge of collapsing, but even now a little bold strategy might save it from destruction.

Let the New Unionists compose their internal differences; let them remember that they are in front of an enemy that will take every advantage of their petty quarrels to break their ranks and destroy

them. Then they should organise, not a series of petty strikes but a general strike, and let them use as their battle-cry something that will interest not only unionists but blacklegs also. If they can say to the unemployed workman that they are striking for something that will provide him with work, then they can appeal to him to help them in their struggle. Let them tell him moreover, that if he needs bread that he ought not to earn it by doing the dirty work of the employer but should take it by force from the proud oppressor. But what battle cry shall they adopt? That is easy enough, the New Unionists tell us that the Eight Hour Day will make work for the unemployed, by reducing the excessive hours of labour of those who are at work. Therefore we think that a general strike, which has for its object the provision of work for the unemployed, would command their sympathy and would carry the New Unionists to victory. But if they do not adopt a revolutionary policy their ultimate defeat is certain, and before long the New Unionism will vanish, leaving not a rack behind. N.

Our very kind friends of the *Christian Commonwealth* in a recent leader entitled "The Devil and Socialism," appear to be getting into a mighty *funk* regarding the spread of Socialism. They say that the Devil has been at work putting into the hearts of the Infidels (as they call us) the doctrines known as Socialism, and further calls on all Christians to be very careful how they welcome these new schemes. Few will deny that Socialism, if realised, would improve the condition of the working people, therefore Socialism, which comes from the Devil, would do good. But if to do good is the work of the Devil, then, if such a person exists, (which our friends will find it very hard to prove) it is much more preferable to follow him—that is the Devil—than to follow the Christian's god, who, as a defender of the present system, is certainly doing evil.

The Rev. Dr. Clifford of Leeds, on the "Latest Phases of the Social Gospel," said recently that the last century was characterised by a great Religious Revolution, the present century by a Political Revolution, and next century will be characterised more especially by a Social Revolution. Bravo, Dr. Clifford, your eyes are open even if your co-clerics are asleep. You may add, however, that with the Social Revolution the trade of gospel-monger is likely to be a thing of the past, and will become a defunct craft.

So General Booth denies that the Salvation Army Labour Bureau exists for the supply of blackleg labour. Well, this may be all right, but the fact remains that they did supply blackleg labour during a strike, and they cannot deny this fact.

The want of a few good Socialist speakers in the county of Durham is apparent in face of the defeat of the Silksworth miners. These men, after a most determined struggle, lasting several months, have had to give in to the masters' terms through the timidity and moderation of their leaders. When will men learn that the only way to protect their interests is to do without these and to fight their own battles. With a little more of the fiery spirit shown at Leeds the Durham men would have been victorious, and the lesson to be learned is that it is time the Red Flag of Socialism was raised. A Durham man myself, I have an idea that the Marquis of Londonderry and capitalists in general will, before long, curse the day they forced the miners to take more decided action. It is time we began a propagandist campaign amongst the miners; who will help? men are ready if funds are forthcoming.

C. W. M.

STEAD the hysterical has been on the rampage anent Sir Charles Dilke's candidature for the Forest of Dean. Revolutionary Socialists have little love or care for this latter personage, or indeed for parliamentary candidates of any description. Yet one feels as if, for very manhood's sake, one must enter one's protest against the fashion in which Dilke is being hounded down, because, forsooth, he is alleged to have interfered with Mr. Crawford's exclusive right to his chattel-slave acquired by property marriage. It is noteworthy that two big-wigs among the judges, at least, have been recently affirming the chattel-slavery of the property-wife, under bourgeois law, in a manner somewhat too frank for the ordinary middle-class Podsnap, who loves his tyranny (class-tyranny and sex tyranny alike) to be (like the Polar bear) "wropt up."

Podsnap is of course a creature of conventions and shams, and any slightest statement of the real truth of things always drives him frantic and makes him shriek for protection from his police. It is not wonderful therefore that his press should have united in an almost unanimous howl of execration at the essentially Anarchist Ibsen for writing a play like "Ghosts." Ibsen, in his own masterly way, so lays bare the corruption and the imbecility of bourgeois morality, bourgeois religion, and bourgeois society, that even Podsnap recognises his own hideous image, and does not like the portrait.

A direct consequence of Podsnap's property-marriage and Podsnap's conventional morality is the "baby-farming" of which we have lately once more heard so much,—a loathsome name enough for a thing yet more loathsome. Under free Socialism motherhood would always be a glory and never a shame. There would be no "unwanted babes," no unhappy hags driven to the trade of infant murder in order to gain a

crust of bread. It is not by "Society" prosecutions, by Acts of Parliament, or by the Government Inspectors craved for by Colman's Mustard Stuart that the organised starvation and slaying of helpless babies will be abolished. Treatment of symptoms never cured a disease like modern civilisation yet; it is the disease itself—the civilisation of which the bourgeois is so proud—that we must destroy. With it will go the "necessities of our civilisation"—prostitution, baby-farming, and the rest.

Mr. Auberon Herbert in *Free Life* still accuses us of "seeing red," of "preaching a gospel of hatred," and of "longing to sit down at a universal banquet of blood and flame." It is idle to pursue a discussion with an opponent who does not take the trouble to understand our fundamental positions. We long for the final cessation of the class-war, and for the peace which does indeed pass all present-day understanding, the peace of a world when there shall be no classes. We did not make the class-war; it is not we who choose its continuance. Continue it must, so long as classes last. Which is better, that it should smoulder on indefinitely, or that the proletariat, by a determined effort, should end it and the middle class who cause it for ever? We preach hatred, not of the individual bourgeois, but of the bourgeoisie. Really the distinction ought to be clear enough.

As many of our readers know, our good comrades Coulon and Louise Michel are now actively carrying on a Socialist and International School at the Club Autonomie in Windmill Street, Tottenham Court Road. They are assisted by Mrs. Carr, B.A., of the Fabian Society. No more useful work can be done for mankind than this our comrades are thus doing. Whether or not we adults shall live to see the glad time after the Revolution, our children at least will see it (if Capitalism does not sooner slay them). Let them enter upon their Epoch of Rest with minds freely developed under kindly culture, without memory of the vile coercive so-called "education" of to-day, and without necessity to fight their way, as we have fought our way, out of the gloomy hide-bound superstitions of the past. It is proposed to place the School under the control of all the Socialist Groups of London, and it is hoped shortly to move to more commodious premises. For this purpose funds are required. The School and teaching are absolutely gratuitous and free.

R. W. B.

## SOCIALISM IN THE PROVINCES.

### SHEFFIELD.

Many of us here are hoping soon to see the *Commonweal* published again weekly, but we also join with our comrade Coulon and with our comrades of the *Révolte* of Paris in wishing that it may become frankly and decidedly an advocate of the noble and glorious principle of anarchy. This has been suggested to me by seeing in the *Révolte* a translation of Coulon's letter with the same wish expressed on the part of the editors. I need not enter into any explanation of the reasons for so doing, for I think you are all Anarchists and do not require from anyone an explanation why you should do anything so natural.

Now I shall give you a sketch of the propaganda carried on in Sheffield for the last few months; and in spite of the severe winter we have passed through I may say that a very active propaganda has been carried on here every Sunday. I must bear testimony to the brave and untiring services rendered to the cause by some few of the comrades here, who working long hours every week day for the wretches who exploit them, are yet indefatigable on Sundays, going from place to place speaking, singing, making collections, and selling literature and papers. It has also been most cheering to see the attitude of the crowds who came to hear us, particularly at the Jubilee Monument, the most central place of meeting in Sheffield. This has become the recognised ground to break the Sabbath, and it has galled the pious *Telegraph* to that extent that some little time ago it denounced the "strident voices" of our orators as in "ill accord with the day of rest." It also found it discordant with the loyalty that paid down its money to commemorate 50 years hatching on a throne, of the glorious old hen, Vicky, to hear Anarchy and disloyalty preached from the steps of that said Monolith which the *said money* erected. We have had some glorious times there, and especially a few Sundays back. The day was fine though cold, and the crowd was large and most attentive and sympathetic, and our speakers were consequently at their best. Then we had the luck to have opposition started, and of a reasonable kind, on the question how could we do without law and authority. Our opponent was a local preacher and well-known as a temperance advocate. He was fully answered, and, after we had done with him, a stranger asked permission to speak. He began by saying that he had been a minister of the gospel for 20 years, and had never before been at a Socialist meeting, but if what he had heard was Socialism (here we expected him to denounce us before the throne of God Almighty) then he vowed to high Heaven that it was the true religion, and all others were but theories of which this was the practice. He continued speaking for some time and was frantically applauded, and two Sundays after he again came and spoke at our meeting.

Besides the meeting at the Monolith in the morning we have had every Sunday evening a meeting at West Bar, and also meetings in the morning at Newball Road, and in the evening at the Hallamshire Hall, until lately when that was given up by the Labourers Union and by us in consequence. On the whole I can testify that the progress made

here in one year has been satisfactory. I have means of judging as I was in Sheffield in January of last year, and returned again last November, and I found an immense difference in the size of the audiences and at our meetings in the manner in which they received our teaching. No one now need disturb us, least of all the guardians of law and order, on whom our comrade, John Bingham, heaps such contempt and hate, when they dare to appear, that they have not stomach for it.

The Socialist Club has been for some time unsettled, having to leave Blonk Street, but we have now secured most admirable premises underneath the Hallamshire Hall, which latter has been taken by the Children of Israel for the worship of Jehovah. Thus will be found united under the same roof the Alpha and Omega of Intellectual Progress. The great "I Am" above and the great "To Be" below.

We have taken a place at 48, Attercliffe Common for the sale of advanced literature of all kinds, and it attracts much attention; but the landlord insists upon the payment of rent, which is against our principles, and I expect we shall have an eviction war one of these days.

At our commemoration of the anniversary of the Commune on Sunday, the 22nd, of the Anarchist groups will unfurl a handsome banner bearing on one side the inscription: "Sheffield Anarchist Communists" and the motto "Neither God nor Master. On the other side appears the following which we have taken from the declaration of principles which the noble Anarchist of Lyons handed in to the court that condemned them:—"Wretches that we are, we demand bread for all, science for all, work for all, and for all Freedom and Justice." At Attercliffe Common we shall display a large red flag with the word "Anarchy" in yellow bordered with black.

The Sheffield Socialists will also display an artistic banner on that day with the motto "What shall ye lack when ye lack masters. It is brodered in letters of yellow silk and was some time in preparation.

Some of us are anxious to start a paper for Sheffield, and you need not be surprised if, in the course of a few weeks there should appear our *Red Flag of Anarchy*.—J. CREAMER.

### NORWICH.

On Sunday, March 15th, our Norwich comrades, assisted by Comrade Mowbray, held a large and successful meeting in the Market Place, at 3 p.m., in celebration of the Commune of Paris. There is every likelihood of a vigorous propaganda being recommenced in this district during the coming summer. Arrangements are already being made for visits from Comrades Burnie, Turner, and others. W. C.

### YARMOUTH.

On Sunday, March 15th, a very enthusiastic meeting was held in the Hall of the Gladstone Club to commemorate the 20th anniversary of the Commune of Paris. The movement which for a long time seemed to fall on dead ground here, is now firmly rooted, and aristocratic visitors to this seaside resort will have Anarchist-Communism dinned into their ears persistently during the coming season.

### DARTFORD.

Our Dartford comrades are still plodding on quietly, yet earnestly, both by leaflet, pamphlet, *Freedom*, and *Commonweal*, besides talking earnestly to their fellow workers, all of which I am sure must bear good results. Arrangements are being held for outdoor meetings.

C. W. M.

## "COMMONWEAL" GUARANTEE FUND.

Doulos	1	0
Launspach	10	0
L. M. Scott	1	1
F. C. T. S.	2	0
Plumstead comrades	1	0
R. W. B.	10	0
C. Saunders	2	0
H. Glasse	10	0
E. C. Minton	1	6
Miller	2	6
Domoney	1	0
B. M. Fraser	2	0
J. G.	1	0
Mrs. Shack	2	6
Norwich comrades	5	0
H. C. Beith	1	6
North London comrades	10	9
	3	4
	1	

THE FIRST OF MAY.—The London Socialist League invites all London Trades' Unions and Workers' Societies to send delegates to a Meeting to be held in the League's Hall, 273, Hackney Road, on Thursday, April 2nd, at 8 p.m., for the purpose of considering the keeping of May the First, in accordance with the resolution of the Universal Workers' Congress at Paris in 1889.



## NOTICE TO SUBSCRIBERS AND EXCHANGES.

The 'COMMONWEAL' being now the property of the newly-constituted London Socialist League, all communications should be addressed, "The Manager; 273, Hackney Road, London, N.E.," and remittances made payable at Post Office, Hackney Road.

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 organ of the London 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.

Advertisements can only be inserted if unobjectionable in all particulars. Scale of charges and special quotations may be obtained from the Manager.

Subscribers who receive a RED WRAPPER 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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### Periodicals received during the month ending Wednesday, March 24th, 1891.

ENGLAND Belfast Weekly Star Die Autonomie Justice Labour Tribune People's Press Railway Friend Seafaring Worker's Review Free Russia La Tribune Libre anchester Examiner	NEW YORK—Freiheit Boston—Woman's Journal Boston—Liberty Investigator Chicago—Rights of Labour Vorboten Detroit—Der Arme Teufel Kaweah (Cal) Commonwealth Phladel.—Knights of Labour Paterson Labour Standard S.F.—Coast Seamen's Journal San Francisco Arbeiter Zeitung St. Louis (Mo.)—Die Parole	SWITZERLAND Arbeiterstimme Bulletin Continental ITALY Palermo—Avanti SPAIN Madrid—El Socialista Madrid—La Anarquista PORTUGAL Porto—A Revolucao Social GERMANY Berlin—Volks Tribune Halberstadt, Sonntags-Zeitung AUSTRIA Vienna—Arbeiter-Zeitung Brunn—Arbeiterstimme HUNGARY Arbeiter-Wochen-Chronik DENMARK Copenhagen—Arbejderen SWEDEN Malmo—Arbetet ARGENTINE REPUBLIC Buenos Ayres—Vorwarts El Perseguido
NEW SOUTH WALE Sydney—Bulletin Sydney—Truth Adelaide—Quiz	FRANCE Paris—Bourse du Travail Le Parti Ouvrier Le Proletaire Charleville—L'Emancipation Lille—Le Cri du Travailleur Rouen—Le Salarjat Lyon—L'Action Sociale	
VICTORIA Melbourne—Bull-Ant	QUEENSLAND Brisbane—Boomerang	
UNITED STATES New York—Truthseeker Volkzeitung Volne Listy Freie Arbeiter Stimme Voice The World	HOLLAND Hague—Recht voor Allen	
	BELGIUM Antwerp—De Werker Ghent—Vooruit	

## THE "COMMONWEAL."

The Committee of the London Socialist League appeal most earnestly to all who sympathise with the views advocated in this paper, and the views therein set forth, to send at once all the pecuniary assistance they can spare to this Fund. The defection of the late General Secretary caused much confusion and loss, but every effort has been made (and, as we hope, successfully made) to place administrative details on a more satisfactory and secure footing than hitherto. It must be remembered that great difficulties have been occasioned by the lying statements of the capitalistic press that the "Commonweal" was already dead. Nevertheless it has been determined to issue the journal as a weekly (consisting for the present of four pages) from and after May 1st.—Labour Day. With the resumption of our open-air propaganda and the assistance which it seems to us we have a right to look for from sympathising societies and groups, as well as from individual comrades and friends, we confidently believe that we can make the "Weal" a permanent success. That assistance is, however, absolutely needful. We ask comrades to rally round the Red Flag and keep their paper and ours going. "He gives time who gives quickly."

## CELEBRATIONS OF THE COMMUNE OF PARIS.

On Tuesday, March 17th, the London Socialist League celebrated the Proclamation of the Commune of Paris in the Hall in Banner Street. The hall was crowded by an enthusiastic audience, who showed by their hearty applause their sympathy with the ideas for which our comrades fought and died.

Comrade Mowbray took the chair, and speaking of the great advance of Socialism in England within the last few years, pointed out that seven years ago there was only one small meeting held to celebrate the Commune throughout the whole of London, while now half-a-dozen meetings were held in the metropolis.

Nicol then moved the following resolution:—"That this meeting of workers of all nationalities places upon record its undying memory of the brave men, women, and children who died for the cause of Labour and international solidarity in 1871, and its detestation of the capitalist robbers and murderers who slew and imprisoned the martyrs of the people." He said he remembered the uprising of the Parisian workmen 20 years ago when a lad at school. In those days the middle classes did not see its importance, they felt but little alarm for Socialism had then no hold in England, but if there was a similar uprising now in Paris the middle classes would feel that the Revolution was at their own doors. The workers of Paris did not pour out their blood like water, because, they merely denied local self government or were disgusted with the cowardice of the middle class rulers, but to secure freedom and happiness to all mankind. And that freedom can only be gained by the workers, as those rich men who are in our ranks will leave us as Socialism approaches realisation. Let the memory of our martyrs urge us on in our work for the Social Revolution.

Charles (Sheffield), who seconded the resolution, pointed out that he admired the Commune because it was not a constitutional attempt to realise Socialism, and that more would come from revolutionary action than from Parliament or politicians. We might feel sure that this century would not pass without a great change. Stormy times were ahead of us, and we must take care when the opportunity comes to carry out our ideas without any compromise whatever.

Burnie supported the resolution. He thought the first lesson we could learn from the fate of our martyred comrades was to hate the monsters who murdered them, and not so much to hate them as to hate the system which produced them. The massacres which followed the Commune should teach us with what cruelty the middle classes crushed every attempt of the workers to improve their condition, and we must remember also the sneaking hypocrisy with which they sugared over their brutality. Our martyrs died for the brotherhood of man; let us show that we can fight together for the same cause. As a Dutch comrade said in *La Société Nouvelle* we are apt to exaggerate the differences between us; let it be our study in future to emphasise our points of agreement. Let us remember that, thanks to our heroic comrades, the workers all over the world have grasped the fact that the cruelty and hypocrisy of the middle classes springs from their position as monopolists of the means of life.

Louise Michel said: Once let the tocsin sound and events will sweep us on. In 1871 the people did not understand us and called us bandits because we demanded freedom and the means to freedom. We are not cruel because we demand this. Which is better, that two or three perish or that wretchedness crushes the poor eternally? The 18th of March sounds through the world not for what was done, but for the ideas to which it has given birth. We were happy then, so happy, because it was a lovely thing to live our life and struggle. "Each must be free," we said, "each must live and not die and they called us mad." Those workers who at first said we were only fit for the hangman joined us at the last and sought death, and wanted to fire Paris to die with us upon the ashes. The last Revolution must be very beautiful if nothing frightens us and there is no hate among the workers.

The resolution was then put to the meeting and carried unanimously. The collection being taken realised £1 4s. 1½d.

Mowbray then called on Comrade Turner to address the meeting.

Turner reminded us that the outbreak began by workpeople of Paris refusing to give up their artillery at the demand of the government of M. Thiers. Workpeople feel their power when they have arms to defend themselves, and that is why the capitalists are always eager to disarm us. The Revolution of 1871 was accomplished with but little bloodshed, one or two lives, it is true, were lost, but there is not a day passes in London without someone being murdered by capitalism. Most of the members of the Commune were not Socialists, but they were forced into Socialist action because they knew that if they did not move towards Socialism the people would desert them, so it will be here in England. Already we are approaching a climax, right through the country, the whip is slipping from the hands of the masters, in many towns we have seen not only strikes but riots and revolts on the part of the people, and the bolder the teaching the bolder the action. We meet year by year because of our gratitude to the Paris workers for the lesson they have taught us by their daring experiment.

Mrs. Primmer then sang "Street Music."

Comrade Coulon followed with a short speech. He declared that the Commune began in Anarchy, went on in Communism, and ended in glory. The people rose in Paris, not at the call of any chiefs, but before any chiefs were there. We speak of the approach of the Revolution, but the Revolution is going on now, carried on by men working as Anarchists without waiting for orders. It was through the leaders that the Commune failed, for the leaders came in and led the people to Pere La chaise. The 18th March is notable for being the first occasion

in which the private soldiers dared to shoot down their generals. In the next Revolution the Parisians will not only do away with the chief bosses in the army, but with chief bosses of every kind.

● Coulon then sang the "Carmagnole" and the audience joined heartily in the chorus. The meeting then concluded by the singing of the "Marseillaise" by all present, the people afterwards giving three hearty cheers for the Social Revolution.

The London Anarchist Groups held a very large and enthusiastic meeting in South Place Institute, on Wednesday, March 18th, to commemorate the 20th anniversary of the Commune. Comrades Malatesta, Burnie, Louise Michel, Kropotkin, Trunk, Blackwell, Yanovsky, Davis, and Turner were the speakers.

## THOUGHTS OF A RAGAMUFFIN.

[MOSTLY IN BRACKETS.]

II.

### UNDER LAUGHING GAS.

EVER had a tooth extracted under laughing gas? No? What a pity! You don't know then what a charming thing such an operation is. "Tooth-drawing made easy" does not describe it; you will be nearer the mark if you call it a pleasure, for to that, let me tell you, (and to five shillings per tooth) it certainly amounts. No one, who can afford it, should start on the great journey underground, (on that road, by the way, where there are no classes, where the grinder travels along with those he ground and overground, before appearing underground, making for the terminus called Rotten Row;) no one, I say, who can afford it, should (to put it less daily-graphically, though none the less graphically) die before experiencing the wonderful sensation of having a tooth drawn under gas. No one should do it, not even opium-eaters, hypnotic "subjects," persons blavatzkyed into theosophy, or hallelujah lasses; no, not even these latter, exciting though their continual struggle against the Evil One may be, for that sensation beats drum-beating.

Oh, it is delicious! It is done in this wise. You get into a nice soft arm-chair, (which is, if you happen to be one of those who always make arm-chairs but never use them, quite a treat in itself,) and then you inhale some gas, which confuses your senses more rapidly than the best (or the worst) melodrama, more effectually than any ninepenny-shilling dreadful, and then you just die for a little while, and then, when resurrection cometh, you awake—awake to find yourself most beautifully bleeding, five bob and one tooth the poorer, but gently supported by the tooth (and money) extractor and his assistant, with—but my sentence is growing too long, (almost as many-worded as one of Hawkin's black cap sentences,) so I put a full stop to it. You also find a novel taste in your mouth, which is a very economical one, for within the next fortnight or so you require much less biting material for the sound teeth left to you, your appetite being almost gone. Well (to tell you the truth I would rather not use the word *well* at the beginning of a sentence, as it is a peculiarity of that hollow-phrase-monger, that All-Socialist Harcourt, who might have been my pet-aversion had not Bismarck succeeded in forestalling him; I think I had better leave *well* alone and say) that is the influence of laughing gas, which—

"What on earth is the fellow driving at?" you say; have patience, boys, you will soon see that I am not writing a dentist's advertisement.

"But why beat about the bush, instead of coming straight to the point?"

Confound you, can't you wait? Is it only with your everlasting misery and drudgery, with your mental and bodily nakedness, with your sons' slavery, with your daughters' ditto, or else shame, with your aged and crippled parents in Mr. Bumble's clutches, is it with these things only that you have patience? Can't you, you who put up with religious humbug, with political jugglery, with commercial robbery, with parochial jobbery, with all the trickery of a hundred petty tyrants every hour of your (so-called) life, can't you bear with a poor devil like me, damn you? And what if I really can not speak straight to the point? Are crooked ways, are circumlocutory speeches the sole privilege of those Right Honourable gentlemen, who are, as far as I know, neither right, nor honourable, nor gentle, nor even men? Why the deuce can't you let a chap like me relieve his mind as best he can?

Now don't interrupt me again, and I will continue. I say—say what? Confound it all, I got so excited that I no longer know what I was going to say. A plague upon interruptions! The late Bradlaugh never could stand them; he who could stand almost anything, (even the horrid Oath when it turned out to be a barrier between his black coat-tails and the green benches of the common house, commonly called the House of Commons, when he was to represent the Northampton boots, and the men mostly out of them;) he, I say, could not stand interruptions, he hated them, and so do I. Why should people be interrupted? I can, for instance, understand that some of you might not like to hear a Republican Atheist swearing by a god, in whom he has no faith, that he will be loyal to a monarch whom he strives (at all events, strove) to depose. Quite so, but there is no necessity for interrupting him. Old Hamlet's ghost, who may be stalking about in his imagination says, "swear," and the man swears. If you don't like it, lump it, but do not interrupt.

And now that I talk of oaths (by the way, I am an old hand at theological and generally illogical questions, though Booth's noisy

religion is still beyond my reach,) now, I repeat, that I talk of oaths, I recollect what I wanted to tell you, it is this:—

Had you ever indulged the pleasure of a tooth operation under gas you would then have been able better, far better, to appreciate the beauties of civilization. You would then have seen the great difference between the barbarous and rude ways of ancient heathen governments and the gentle methods of modern christian ones. Only think! To be lulled to sleep by eloquent sermons, harmonious hymns, and lovely descriptions of heaven, with its myriads of winged immortal creatures destined to be your playmates, (or, at least, those of your soul, whilst your body rots,) to be thus sent off to sleep a death-like slumber, and not to feel at all how you are being bled, and governmentally operated upon. Oh, that is something quite different from what it used to be in the dark ages long gone by. You would have known what a grand thing religious gas is; how much it lessens the pain of governmental tooth-extraction and bleeding in general; how it makes you unconscious even of the gag in your mouth, which is usual at such operations. You would then have fully realised that the whole thing is now a pleasure indeed.

## INTERNATIONAL NOTES.

### AUSTRALIA.

A certain Mr. Randall, who is an "emigration agent" for Queensland, lately had the impudence to speak of there being in that colony an "unlimited demand for agricultural labourers at fifteen shillings a week and full rations." Thereupon our comrade Hinchcliffe, (Secretary of the Queensland Labour Federation) inconveniently questioned, if that were the case, how it came about that, when 30,000 Queensland wage-slaves lately struck, there were 30,000 Queensland unemployed ready to take their places. Randall has not yet explained this.

In a Sydney sweating-den the prices for trouser-making run as follows:—Policemen's, 1s. 3d. per pair; Railway-men's, 10d.; common trousers, 6d. per pair. Note that this is not in an old despotic priest-ridden European country, but in "free and democratic" New Australia, that Australia which is held up to the unemployed here as a heaven upon earth; the "paradise of the working-man," to use the cant phrase. "Vickers & Co." is the style and title of the firm paying these generous prices.

The writer will be pleased to furnish the full address of these people to any comrade in search of a good job. Here are a few of the billets he or she can have a try for:—

Head Cutter	-	-	£5 a week. (?)
Assistant Cutter	-	-	35s. "
(This assistant displaced a practical man, who was getting	-	-	£3 a week.)
A.B.C. (assistant cutter)	-	-	27s. 6d. "
D.E.F. (examiner)	-	-	30s. "
G.H.I. (lad)	-	-	15s. "
J.K.L. (lad)	-	-	12s. "
M.N.O. (presser), pressing trousers,	-	-	11d. per doz.
P.Q.R. (presser, skilled workman)	-	-	
fixed wages per week	-	-	£2 15s.
S.T.U. (lad) seam presser	-	-	16s. a week.

About 12 girls, from 12 to 25 years of age, 6s. to 22s. 6d. per week.

Yet, as ever, "in the lowest deep, a lower depth" still "opens wide." Not long ago these Vickers' people employed a Jew to do some garments on contract. He engaged some sixteen little girls to do the work at 2s. 6d. the week of nearly seventy hours.

Vickers' victims in the tailoring department have been in the habit of playing outside the workroom during the dinner hour, but this has now been stopped, and they must eat and rest in the same foul atmosphere in which they work. Advance, Australia!

The *Australian Workman* thus speaks of one of the natural results of this system of woman and child slavery:—

"This is the sort of language used by the little boys and girls in the sweating dens:—Janet: 'I say, Yorkie, Minnie says she'll go over in the dark with you.' Is it any wonder that we find girls of fourteen years of age on the town? Can we be surprised at the prostitution in our cities when little boys and girls of tender age are associated for ten hours a day in some factories, where the wages are so low that some of the unfortunate women-workers have to sell their souls on the streets to make up the subsistence wage."

During 1886 there were 26,310 arrests for drunkenness in New South Wales. Last year, though the police were, if anything, stricter than they used to be five years ago, there were 18,355 arrests, or more than 8000 less than in 1886. In the five years, though, the unemployed had more than doubled their number, and misery of all kinds had increased. Yet there are still to be found those who contend that it is drink which causes poverty and lack of employment.

There is a project on foot in Sydney to take up a tract of land in Western Australia for the purpose of starting a community, somewhat on the lines of those in the States. We have not definitely heard that any of the League speakers are intending to leave their work in the Cause to go into the wilderness; we shall be sorely disappointed if we do so hear. The place for a Socialist is in the fore-front of the battle, and though the prospect of a simple clean life, away from the dust and heat of the market-place, the trickery and chicanery of commercialism, is indescribably tempting, the temptation must be resisted, and the fight persevered in. Of course, as a refuge for those who, for work done in the Cause are rigorously boycotted, or who have temporarily broken down under the double strain of earning a "living" and carrying on the propaganda, such a colony would be invaluable. But it is quite certain that it would not stop there, but would result in drawing off to the "serving of tables" those who could be ill spared, and so injure the all-important and pressing work of spreading the light.

S. D. Parnell, an old Chartist and labour reformer, who originated the eight-hour movement in New Zealand, is dead. He could look back upon eighty-one years of hard work, but, of course, died poor. During the recent re-arrangement of electoral districts in New Zealand one district was named after him. Not after the great man at whose erring feet the home newspapers laid it at the time. It wasn't much of an honour, it is true, but even so might as well go where it was intended.

Thus saith the Sydney *Bulletin*—"A Russian has produced a gun which will send a bullet through ten men standing in a row. This is ingenious,

no doubt, but considering that the men who stand in a row are the poor devils who fight for twopence a week, while the Emperor who sends them out is generally hidden under a bed somewhere, a boomerang would probably get at the root of the matter a great deal faster."

President Smith, of the Steamship-owners, avers that the late Mr. Alfred Lamb of Sydney, really brought about the strike, as he knew the labour bodies intended to postpone it until the height of the wool season, which would have placed the employers in a much worse position. Mr. Lamb, therefore, hastened on the result.

H. H. S.

#### BELGIUM.

*La Société Nouvelle* states clearly enough the truth about the Dockers Union and kindred societies—a truth often insisted upon in these columns:—"In short, the English Unionist movement proves once more that the whole strike movement can only serve one good purpose, the organisation of the General Strike, which would cast all industry into confusion, and might serve the Revolution as a starting point. If, however, the agitation should fall into the hands of the Legalists, it will either bring forth a mere Eight Hours' Act, or else will simply cause the constitution of new national or international trade societies." Our good comrade Domela Nieuwenhuis (with whom some of us cannot always agree) gives the more advanced among us some excellent advice in the same Review:—"Let us never forget that there was a time when we were not so enlightened. Let us never forget the prejudices with which we were imbued, and the fights we had to get rid of them. In such fashion we can make propaganda among the weaker and more backward brethren; without remembrance of that time we can do nothing. . . . A government is sometimes changed in twenty-four hours; but a Social Revolution will take time—months, years, for its accomplishment. Every revolution must have a beginning, and the rest must be left to come during the revolution, brought about by the action of the more advanced groups and by circumstances. If we were wiser, we should not be always accentuating differences, but rather seek points of agreement, so as to annihilate together the common enemy—Capitalism."

Our Comrade contends valiantly for a manifestation on the First of May.

#### FRANCE.

*La Révolte* in a recent number has been explaining the *Cu Canny* policy to our Continental Comrades. It is to be hoped that this excellent method of waging war on the exploiting thieves will make its way abroad as it is making its way here. In another kind of rebellion, one is pleased to note the very practical protests our Comrades are making everywhere against military service and the "patriotic" absurdities by which the bourgeois justify their cruel army system. At St. Etienne, while the usual drawing by lot was taking place, our Comrade Chapoton seized a handful of the numbers about to be used for the balloting, and exclaimed, "Patriotism is the last refuge of a scoundrel." Of course he was arrested. He cried to those around as he was seized, "Down with frontiers; long live the brotherhood of peoples! Long live Anarchy!" He was sentenced to fifteen days' imprisonment. This act of Chapoton is by no means an isolated phenomenon. In many places throughout France active protests have been made at the recent ballotings, not only against the "blood-tax" but also against patriotism altogether. At Saint-Denis several of our comrades joined in practical demonstration of their contempt for the worn-out wheezes of "native country," "honour of the national flag," and so forth. Our Comrade Villemejeanne has been protesting still more effectively. After a few days in the army, he attempted to blow up the barracks, an attempt which, if successful, would have inevitably involved his own death. Being arrested, he declared that his object was to protest against militarism. "A soldier is a slave," he said, "and the army system is a plague spot on our civilisation." The very capitalist newspapers have been compelled to acknowledge that our Comrade is a brave man who has the courage of his convictions. He has been sentenced to a year. I may note, while on this question of "patriotism," that the Paris correspondent of the *Daily Chronicle* has had the straight-forwardness to point out that the Parisian working-classes have not felt the slightest interest in the bourgeois agitation in regard to the visit of the so-called "Empress Frederick." The correspondent rightly attributes this to the spread of Socialism, which preaches the solidarity of peoples.

We may hope that the First of May will be duly kept in France, not only by thorough-going Revolutionists and Anarchists, but also by most of the Social-Democratic sections. Our "Marxist" comrades have issued a good manifesto on the subject, which, I regret, space forbids me to reproduce from the Lyons *Action*.

#### GERMANY.

It has long seemed to me that it was time for someone with the requisite knowledge to describe, for our edification, the morass of reaction into which parliamentarianism has led the German Social Democrats. *La Révolte* in a recent number has been dealing out a tardy instalment of justice in this matter. It is impossible to speak too strongly of the manner in which the Reichstag deputies betray all the principles of Socialism. Lately Wollmar (who is actually looked upon as quite an "advanced" person,) voted and spoke in favour of a government grant for African colonisation expenses! Even the very Liberals wanted at least to reduce this vote; but the so-called "Socialist" party supported the Ministerial proposal in what I believe Yankee lobbyists call "bald-headed" fashion. The official press of the party is as astutely Jingoistic as the "leaders" in parliament. The Berlin *Vorwärts*, commenting on the fall of Crispi, says that "the Triple Alliance is not in danger, since that alliance is founded upon the necessity of the Central Powers defending themselves against perfidious Russia, etc." This is precisely the usual sickening cant of the commercialistic newspapers. The word "revolutionary" is now dropped as much as possible by these crafty politicians, and the utmost servility is shown towards the police. It seems incredible, but it would nevertheless appear to be the certain fact, that at party meetings comrades are expected to rise when the Emperor's name is mentioned. Some dissidents have actually written to the *Vorwärts* asking permission to remain seated in the name of freedom of opinion. As one reads of these things they seem like a bad dream. Such facts abundantly justify Marx's criticisms on the Gotha programme, criticisms which have been hitherto kept carefully secret, but which Engels has now published. Marx fifteen years ago denounced the programme as "demoralising," declaring that it was contrary to his duty to make himself an accomplice to it by diplomatic silence, and plumply saying that the appeals made therein to State aid and the theories therein developed were the very negation of Socialism.

After what has been stated *Weal* readers will not be surprised that German "Socialist leaders" should set their faces against observance of the First of May. Like our "Legal Eight Hours" people here they ordain Sunday demonstrations in lieu thereof. Nay more, they even proclaim that Sunday must be the day kept, not only this year but next year, and so on for ever. Of course the manifestation must, above all things, be "pacific." Happily there are signs that the mass of German workers are tired of being made use of by the dictatorial politicians who are thus (this is not a matter for mincing words) doing their best to sell the Revolution, not perhaps for pieces of silver, but certainly for place and power. Let us hope that on the First of May the proletarians will read a needed lesson, both to their capitalist masters and to the Liebknechts and the Bebels. It would perhaps be wrong, however, to censure Liebknecht and Bebel too harshly. As usual, it is the system which is to blame more than the men. It is difficult to estimate the harm which the mania for sending Socialists to parliament has done to the great workers' movement in Germany. Every day we live we may realise more and more (those of us who have eyes to see) the wisdom of adopting the maxim, "Neither electors, nor elected."

#### SPAIN.

The Madrid *Anarquía* continues its capital cartoons, in themselves well worth the price of the paper. It seems a pity that they cannot be adapted to our use here. A "No Rent" movement is in agitation in the Peninsula, a movement to extend to urban as well as rural rents. "It seems decided," says *La Anarquía*, "in some places that no rent shall be paid. It appears to us that the matter is very serious, and will lead to immediate results." Certainly if the project be carried out on any extensive scale, it will constitute a very powerful weapon of attack upon the false society of to-day. Even more or less isolated refusals to pay rent, "upon principle," would be valuable as acts of propaganda.

It is needless to say that the First of May will, as far as one can judge, be kept in Spain upon even a bigger scale than last year. It may even prove to be the beginning of the General Strike. Our comrades of Barcelona are as usual well to the front in preparations. In Spain, as elsewhere, the official Social Democrats are urging a Sunday procession rather than the universal cessation of work on May 1st resolved upon by the last International Congress; but the official Social Democrats in the Peninsula are (like the conies) a feeble folk, and it is not too much to say, as is said in another column, that Spain will be solid on this question.

Meanwhile the class-war goes on, and is waged by our side with the customary Spanish courage. At Almuñécar, one of the most beautiful places in the beautiful province of Granada, want of work and hunger have brought about actual insurrection. The mayor was wounded and the authorities were quite impotent. Doubtless by this time "order has been restored," but the outbreak is significant enough.

I notice from the *Boletín de la Sociedad de Impresores de Barcelona*, ("Bulletin of the Barcelona Printers' Society") that all meetings of the Society are open to all workers. Surely this is a rule which might well be adopted (with possibly some necessary exceptions) by Unions here. Nothing could be more calculated to foster mutual understanding and solidarity, and we have surely suffered enough lately from want of such solidarity and understanding.

#### CUBA.

At last, one is glad to know, our Havannah comrades who have lain in gaol for three months and a half on the false charge of murder, of which I have spoken more than once, have been released, even their bourgeois judges being able to find no fault in them. We shall await news of renewed activity in propaganda in this most promising field with interest. R. W. B.

#### UNITED STATES.

There are 500,000 prostitutes in the United States, of which 100,000 die annually.

There are ten times more tenants turned out of their houses and rooms in a year in New York alone for non-payment of rent than there are evictions in all Ireland in the same time.

The Farmers' Alliance say that out West thousands of families have corn-meal mush as their only food, and delicate young children and "ladies" go around with their feet wrapped up in rags because they have no shoes. This is about the condition of the polenta-eating proletarians of Lombardy and Naples.

Bravo, Canada! The unemployed in Toronto, Ontario, had a parade and demonstration last week. They gathered in St. Andrew's Market, and marched thence to the City Hall, preceded by a drummer and a man bearing a black flag, with the motto, "Bread or Work." What of this, you emigration mongers? answer now or dry up forever. C. W. M.

## COMMUNISTS' APPEAL TO CRIMINALS.

*Our Communist-Anarchist Comrades of Sheffield have issued the following Manifesto which is worth reprinting:—*

### CRIMINALS! BROTHERS!

We salute you brothers in the desire which we have to make you understand that you are so, and not only that but the hope we also have to make you our comrades.

We Communists are like you at war with Society, and are therefore like you criminals. We are desirous to do all that you do, in order to show our contempt and hate of the present condition of things, and because we believe that you criminals are really benefactors of Humanity, while those who sit in judgment on you are the real malefactors, the present system of Society being nothing more than a robbery of the workers for the benefit of idlers.

You are criminals and we are criminals, but the great difference between us is that you, unfortunately, owing to the education which your masters have given you, believe you do wrong in robbing the robbers—that is to say the rich,—while we are fully convinced that it is the right thing and the best thing to do. What is called property is robbery. It is a continual and constant robbery of the workers, who by their toil produce everything useful, everything necessary for the support of existence.

And it is because of this robbery of the labourers that you find yourselves in the position you are in, as you will understand by the following explanation, the reading of which will more than repay you by restoring to you all your self-respect, for we can prove to you that unjust conditions of Society, and not all your own fault, have placed you in your present position.

Society makes criminals and then slowly tortures them in prisons, or strangles them to death. Society makes criminals—that is to say that the frightful robbery which Society enables the rich to perpetrate, inevitably leaves a large number of the workers without the means of existence, and compels them, for self-preservation, to re-take from these rich a part of what they have stolen.

Is there any real reason for this robbery of the workers? Do we produce so little that it has to be scrambled for, and some of us must necessarily go without? Nothing of the sort. Quite the reverse. The fact is that we have means of producing in any country to-day twice as much food and three times as much of all other necessary articles as are required to provide abundance for all.

Why then do so many people want everything, so much so as to be obliged to starve, or to accept degrading charity, or, as you do, boldly accept the risks and take what they require? Because all the means of existence have been grabbed by the real thieves. The land-thieves otherwise called land-owners have possession of all the soil of England, and oblige those who cultivate it to give them (who do nothing) such a large share of what is produced that not enough is left to keep the cultivators in comfort; and the houses we live in, and all other necessary things belong to other grabbers or thieves, who in the shape of rent and profit, take so much from the workers—the only people who produce anything—that the same result follows, namely, such prolonged toil as degrades and stupifies the workers, while they have work, and leaves them without any means of existence whenever they are no longer required to do that work which is only intended to benefit their masters, who own everything and who direct everything for their sole benefit.

Thus it is that in the midst of abundance there are so many of our brothers and sisters perishing of hunger and cold; thus it is too that the very abundance of everything produces want! for when things are so abundant that they cannot be sold at such a rate as will bring profit to the monopolisers or robbers, then production must cease, and the workers in consequence must starve, or beg for what really belongs to them, or our poor sisters must sell themselves to gratify the lust of their masters.

Such a state of Society must not continue, in spite of the fact that our masters have taken advantage of the wretchedness they produce, to hire large numbers of the ignorant workers themselves and employ them as Police and Soldiers to defend their unjust and cruel privileges. Continue then your course of resistance to this vile thing called Property, and to everything which in the shape of Law and Authority dares to prevent you or punish you for taking what is your own. Never dream of abandoning your present mode of life for that of the wretched wage-slave, crushed to death with unbearable toil to increase the riches and unjust power of his masters; and least of all lend an ear to the snivelling Preachers who in the interest of your masters, because paid by them, would teach you to wait for Justice until you arrive at their imaginary Heaven.

Come also and study with us the Social Questions, and you will find that, instead of having reason to be ashamed of your mode of life you have reason to be proud of it, for, though all unconscious of the Truth, you are really in the proud positions of brave soldiers fighting in the very Vanguard of Freedom.

Your Brothers and Comrades in the Social Revolution,

THE SHEFFIELD GROUP OF  
COMMUNIST-ANARCHISTS.

## DO YOU AGREE?

Do you agree with us that the social awakening of the workers is a desirable end? Do you agree with us that we are working in the right way to achieve that end?

You do not? Then oppose us and prove us wrong on every platform and in every paper to which you can gain access!

You do agree? Then work with us and for us; help us to extend our circle of influence; let no day pass in which you have not interested some one in our propaganda!

There is no middle course for an honest man!

All Subscribers receiving their copy in a RED wrapper will kindly renew their expired subscriptions at once, otherwise no copies will be sent after May 1st.

## LECTURE DIARY.

### LONDON.

*Commonweal Club*.—273, Hackney Road, N.E. Lectures every Sunday at 11 a.m. and 8 p.m. Admission free. Membership: 1s. entrance fee, and 6d. per month subscription.

LECTURES FOR APRIL.—5th—D. J. Nicoll, "Coming Revolution." 12th—C. W. Mowbray, "Where are we drifting." 19th—H. Davis, "The Outcome of Trade Unionism." 22nd—H. H. Sparling, "The Latter-day Devil."

*Hammersmith Socialist Society*.—Kelmescott House, Upper Mall, W. Every Friday, French Class at 7.30. Business Meeting at 9 p.m. General Meeting first Friday in each month at 8.30 p.m. Every Sunday, open-air Meeting at the Bridge-end at 11.30 a.m., Lecture in Hall at 8 p.m. Lecturers—April 5th, "Parliament as a means of Reform," D. J. Sweeny, (Irish National League). 12th, "The Story of my Life," Felix Folkhovsky, (Friends of Russian Freedom). 19th, "The Politics of Labour," J. Shaw Maxwell, (United Democratic Club). 26th, "The Labour Commission," H. H. Sparling.

*North Kensington*.—Clarendon Coffee Palace, Clarendon Road. Meets every Wednesday at 8 p.m. Band practice every Tuesday at 8, in the hall at the back of the "Britannia" public-house, Latimer Road—more fifiers wanted.

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

### PROVINCES.

*Aberdeen*.—Organiser, J. Leatham, 7 Jamaica Street. Branch meets in Odd-fellows' Small Hall, Crooked Lane, on Sunday evenings at 8.30. Singing practice, etc., Mondays at 8 p.m.

*Glasgow*.—Lectures and Discussions every Sunday evening, at 7, in the Hall, Antiqua Place, Nelson Street, City.

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

*Hull*.—Club Liberty, 1 Beets Court, Blanket Row.

*Leeds*.—Socialist League Club, 1 Clarendon Buildings and Front Row, Victoria Road. Open every evening. Business meeting Saturdays at 8.—International Educational Club, near St. James's Hall, York Street. Open every evening. Lectures every Saturday at 4. All kinds of Socialist literature for sale at both clubs.

*Leicester*.—Room No. 7, Co-operative Hall, High Street. Branch meeting on Thursday at 8 p.m. Lecture in the Spiritualist Hall, Silver Street, every Sunday at 6.30.

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

*Nottingham*.—Socialist Club, Woodland Place, Upper Parliament Street. Club contribution, 1d. per week; Dancing every Wednesday, 8 till 10.30—fee 3d.

*Norwich*.—Members' meeting held every Tuesday at 8.30.

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

*Sheffield*.—Socialist Club, 63 Blunk Street. French Class, Tuesday at 8.30. Discussion Class, Wednesday at 8.30.

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

*Yarmouth*.—Socialist League Club, 56 Row, Market Place. Open every evening Business Meeting, Tuesday at 8. Singing Practice, Wednesday at 8.30. Discussion Class, Thursday at 8.30. Elocution Class, Friday at 8.30.

## OPEN-AIR PROPAGANDA.

(Weather permitting.)

### SUNDAY.

11 ..... Commercial Road—Union Street ..... The Branch  
11.30..... Hoxton Church ..... The Branch  
11.30..... Regent's Park ..... Nicoll  
3.30..... Hyde Park—Marble Arch ..... Mainwaring and Nicoll  
3.30..... Victoria Park ..... Commonweal Branch  
3.30..... Streatham Common ..... The Branch

### FRIDAY.

8.15..... Hoxton Church ..... The Branch

### PROVINCES.

*Aberdeen*.—Saturday: Castle Street, at 7.30 p.m.

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

*Leeds*.—Sunday: Market Gates, Kirkgate, at 11.30 a.m. and 7 p.m.

*Leicester*.—Saturday: Old Cross, Belgrave Gate, at 8 p.m. Sunday: Russell Square, at 10.45 a.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. Monday: Market Street, Blackley, at 8.

*Nottingham*.—Sunday: Sneinton Market, at 11 a.m.; Great Market, at 7 p.m.

*Norwich*.—Saturday: Haymarket, at 8. Sunday: Market Place at 11, 3, and 7.30.

*Sheffield*.—Sunday: Monolith, Fargate, at 11.30; West Bar, at 11.30; Newhall Road, Attercliffe, at 11.30; Grimsthorpe, at 11.30; Rotherham, at 3; Woodhouse, at 3; West Bar, at 8; Attercliffe Road, at 8.

*Yarmouth*.—Sunday: Priory Plain, at 11; Fish Wharf, at 3; Hall Quay, at 7.

The Conference of members and sympathisers of the London Socialist League decided to celebrate the Labour Holiday on May 1st, and all allied societies and groups are requested to organise meetings in their respective districts to demonstrate the International Solidarity of Labour on that day.

DUBLIN.—Dublin Socialist Union, 87 Marlboro Street. Lecture every Saturday at 8 p.m.

LIVERPOOL SOCIALIST SOCIETY.—Vegetarian Restaurant, Eberle Street, Dale Street.—Meets every Tuesday at 8 p.m.

SCOTTISH SOCIALIST FEDERATION.—EDINBURGH—Labour Hall, 50 South Bridge. Business meeting, Fridays at 8 p.m. Lectures every Sunday, at 6.30 p.m.

To Help the Paper.—There are several ways in which you can help to spread the *Weal*. Ask your newsagent to try and sell it. Get those who don't care to buy it month by month to subscribe direct. Arrange for the posting of contents bills anywhere you can. Any number of other plans will suggest themselves if you think about it.

Postal Propaganda.—Some who would like to do propaganda but dare not openly, or who cannot spare the time to do it personally, can find many ways in which it can be done quietly. Not the least useful among possible plans would be to order and pay for a number of copies to be sent to persons in whose hands they might do good. We will send six copies to six different addresses for 7d. Write the names and addresses legibly.

## LONDON SOCIALIST LEAGUE PUBLICATIONS.

### Leaflets.

All pamphlets not published by the Socialist League will in future be charged to Branches and Allied Societies at the following rates:—1d. each, 1s. 6d. per quire of 26; 2d. each, 3s. ditto.

The following are now on hand—Price per thousand:

An Address on the Chicago Martyrs ...	4 0
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Songs for the Workers (2 leaflets)—each	2 0

### American Literature.

A few remainders—

Plutarch's Lives of Famous Men ...	1 0
Modern Christianity v. Heathenism ...	0 9
Scholar in a Republic (Wendell Philipps)	0 8
The Great Strike: the Irrepressible Conflict between Capital and Labour ...	0 4
What is Freedom? When am I Free? ...	0 4
The Railway Kings and an American Empire	0 2

### MISCELLANEOUS.

The Triumph of Labour. Memorial Cartoon of the Great Dock Strike, Sept. 1889. With cardboard roll, 6d.; artist's edition, ditto ...	1 0
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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.

Printed in the London Socialist League Printery, and published in the name and on behalf of the London Socialist League, by C. W. MOWBRAY, at 273, Hackney Road, London, N.E.