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CAPITAL AND LABOUR;  
THEIR  
RIGHTS AND DUTIES:  
A RETROSPECT  
OF THE  
TAILORS' LABOUR AGENCY

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# CAPITAL AND LABOUR;

THEIR

## RIGHTS AND DUTIES.

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TEN years' experience, and the signal success of the "Tailors' Labour Agency," may justify a few words of self-gratulation, and warrant a simple statement of past achievement and future expectancy. To look back upon the hindrances which have obstructed us, the encouragements which have cheered us, and the accomplishment of many of our purposes, will be a retrospect not unpleasing to ourselves, and may have something of profit in it for others. We would like to speak with diffidence on a subject on which there is not entire unanimity of opinion, and while we admit that in carrying out our views we may not always have done the fitting thing at the fittest time, yet we are confident that our purpose has been a good and a righteous one, and we still cling to it hopefully and unflinchingly, thankful for the measure of success which has attended our efforts, and in no degree dismayed by the doubts and scepticism of well-tried friends, or the ill-disguised hostility of mistaken opponents.

It were well, perhaps, that working men generally were better acquainted with the science of political economy, a science which has, in the main, established itself on principles of commercial and social soundness; though some of its expounders have driven their dogmas so hard and heartlessly, that many have been justified in their aversion to the investigating those principles upon which much of their welfare depends. Money, and how to get it, has become of far greater importance than labour and how to live by it; and while the working classes deem themselves excluded from the sentiments and sympathies which make life

cheerful and useful, the opinion is entertained by many that it is the interest and desire of the high and the wealthy to oppress the poor and the lowly; that position, power, and influence are associated only with the possession of money—that it is the destiny of the worker to work on for the enrichment of those that employ him—and that while capital is increasing in the hands of a few, and one class advancing in opulence and living in luxury, there is another and far larger class whose labour can barely find them subsistence; who are living continually on the verge of pauperism, into which they drift at last, leaving the like hopeless toil and cheerless prospects as the “heritage of woe” which the working man bequeaths to his children.

This view of the matter is rather gloomy, and is certainly to some extent erroneous, but any one who has mixed considerably with our working population, our average working men, neither those who are leading vicious lives, nor those whose vocation is dubious and uncertain, must be aware of much in their condition that is unsatisfactory, and even perilous. With all our national greatness, our freedom of commerce, our vast achievements in science, and the growing intelligence among all classes, it surely cannot be that the claims of society, the progress of business, or even the spirit of competition itself requires that our millions of workers, who are the right arm of our strength, and our bulwark of defence, should be crushed in their struggle for bread; that the body should be exhausted by daily toil till the mind become paralysed, and the moral nature be overborne by physical wants and necessities, rendering the higher aims, enjoyments, and even duties of life a bitter mockery, and a stern impossibility. If this be the fate of labour—if there are laws inexorable in their demand, and unyielding in their requirements, which assert this condition to be inevitable—then is the fate a hard one indeed. But we do not believe it.

There are some men whom much political economy has made unreasonable and unfeeling, who would not deny that in many trades the workmen may be inadequately remunerated, and in some scarcely remunerated at all, but they would leave all that

alone. These things, they think, will ultimately adjust themselves by some laws of their own, and any meddling interference with their operation they earnestly deprecate. Such men opposed any interference with the employment of children of tender years in factories, and of women in coal mines, and they would rather support the working man from the poor-rates, as a pauper, than countenance any effort by which the wages of labour might be kept above starvation point. They cannot deny the right of the working class to combine to fix the price of their labour, but according to them this is never done at the right time, nor in the right way; and if hostilities are provoked between capital and labour, capital generally contrives, by calling to its aid some extreme maxims in political economy, to get the best in the conflict.

This has come to be considered by a large class of operatives as more owing to the power of the moneyed interest than to any inherent justness of the cause in the question at issue, and antagonisms have thereby been provoked and embittered to the manifest detriment of both parties in the conflict. But, after all that can be said, money has a power—will always have a power—as the representative of accumulated savings, and the engine by which commercial enterprise is set in motion, and labour made productive; and working men would have long ere now seen their true interests in relation to capital, but for the selfishness of a certain class of employers who look upon their workmen only as the means of money-getting for themselves, who think that to be rich is the best thing, and the next best thing to appear to be rich; whose political faith is that “Poverty is disgraceful, and hard cash covers a multitude of sins,”—whose regard for the workers is dictated by the same consideration which makes them oil their machinery—who view them only physically and socially, and overlook those moral relations which are the bond of a common humanity, and the only means by which a people may become happy and virtuous. We are no unqualified admirers of Trades’ Unions, on the principles by which they have hitherto been conducted; and speaking as working men ourselves—whom, perhaps, fortunate circumstances,

and somewhat of an aptitude for business have raised a shade above the merest operative—we deplore the errors into which they have led those connected with them, and the deep suffering which their unwise counsels have often produced; but we do say that it will be a happy day for this country when the millions of those who sweat and toil, shall have intelligence and union enough among themselves, to combine for securing the same consideration for their labour, as the capitalist can secure for his money; and by prudent, well-regulated lives, promote those measures of social progress, which shall give them a power in the commonwealth to which they have never yet attained.

These views are not mere sentimentalities. Some of the sternest of political economists have put forth opinions to the same effect. Adam Smith, in his *Wealth of Nations*, asks:—“Is an improvement in the circumstances of the lower ranks of the people to be regarded as an advantage, or as an inconveniency to society?” “The answer,” he continues, “seems at first abundantly plain. Servants, labourers, and workmen of different kinds, make up by far the greater part of every great political society. But what improves the circumstances of the greater part can never be regarded as any inconveniency to the whole. No society can surely be flourishing and happy of which the far greater part of the members are *poor and miserable*. It is but equity, besides, that they who feed, clothe, and lodge the whole body of the people, should have such a *share of the produce* of their own labour as to be themselves tolerably well fed, clothed, and lodged.”

Mr. McCulloch, in his *Principles of Political Economy*, says:—“The best interests of society require that the rate of wages should be elevated as high as possible; that a taste for the comforts, luxuries, and enjoyments of human life should be widely diffused, and, if possible, interwoven with national habits and prejudices. Very low wages, by rendering it impossible for any increased exertions to obtain any considerable increase of comforts and enjoyments, effectually hinders them from being made, and is, of all others, the most powerful cause of that idleness and apathy that contents itself with what

can barely continue animal existence." Again, in his *Principles of Population* he has this remark :—"I really cannot conceive anything much more detestable than the idea of knowingly condemning the labourers of Great Britain to rags and wretchedness, for the purpose of selling a few more broadcloths and calicos."

Dr. Wade, too, in his *History of the Middle and Working Classes*, says :—"I am a great admirer of political economy, but do not implicitly adopt all its dogmas. National happiness is more important than national wealth very unequally apportioned. Repudiating with contempt the idea that the *rich* are in a conspiracy against the *poor*, and that they do not wish to improve their condition ; still, I think, that in all fiscal and domestic measures the maxim should be acted upon, that it is better a hundred persons live comfortably than one luxuriantly. High wages are, therefore, more important than high profits ; it is better—should they ever be at issue—the people should be happy than foreign trade prosperous. It is less an evil that the minority should undergo a privation of the luxuries, than the majority of the necessaries of life."

With respect to the feeling which ought to obtain between employers and the employed, a writer in a late number of the *Quarterly Review* has the following :—"Employers ought not to stand too strongly upon their rights, nor entrench themselves too exclusively within the circle of their own order. Frankness and cordiality will win working men's hearts, and a ready explanation will often remove misgivings and dissatisfaction. Were there more trust, and greater sympathy between classes, there would be less disposition to turn out on the part of men, and a more accommodating spirit on the part of masters."

And so, in organising and conducting the "Tailors' Labour Agency," it has not been our aim to propound any new scheme of a society or communistic kind, or any involved or abstruse doctrines ; but, believing that practice was more at fault than principle, we have sought to deal with old facts and subsisting relations, and taking the ordinary intercourse and arrangements between the employer and the employed, endeavouring

to rear out of that, a scheme of co-operation which should enhance the interests of the workmen, while it promoted the success of the business which gave them employment. For it is certain, that even in tailoring, depreciated and maligned though it be, there is as much scope for excellence in taste and skill, as in occupations of a more artistic kind ; and were a body of workmen got together, stimulated and encouraged by an employer, bound to him by some tie more enduring than the precarious one of here to-day and away to-morrow, were they sufficiently educated in mind and eye, and fully alive to the importance of earning and sustaining a reputation for superior workmanship, why, a business, steady, certain, and amply remunerative, would reward their application and industry, realise for them what the life of a competent honest artisan ought to be, and surround them with manifold comforts and enjoyments to which a large number of working men are too often strangers.

Fair wages for the worker we therefore hold to be of the first importance, necessary as a matter of policy and justice, demanded by the rights of labour, and enforced by the duties of capital. There may be some law of supply and demand which would appear to take it out of the category of ordinary obligations, but justice and fair dealing are amenable to a higher law, and will not be set aside by arithmetical figures, or mathematical definitions. The supposed existence of a law in our social economics, by which every relation in life is defined with mathematical precision, has a tendency to destroy that sympathy and kindness of feeling, which should be for the interest of all classes, and produce a cold and hard exaction on the part of those, who, making haste to be rich, seek to increase their profits out of the wages which labour ought to receive. The man of contracted and ungenerous nature, who is dead to the sympathies of his kind, and has never been raised above himself by one wave of impassioned feeling, seizes with avidity upon an argument, or seeming argument, by which his selfishness may be dignified with the name of prudence, shrewdness, or common sense ; in this mood of self-complacency he is regardless and



indifferent about the misery, the want, and wretchedness, the moral debasement which under-paid labour produces among the numerous class of workers whose interests and well-being are vitally important to the community.

It is reported that a member of a tailoring firm in this metropolis has lately purchased a landed estate at a cost of nearly £30,000. For making a coat, known by the name of "Oxonian," that firm pays its workmen six shillings. The time required for making such a garment, is about two days, and the price paid for making it by most other houses in the trade is ten shillings. Now, would not a portion of that £30,000 distributed among the workmen in increased wages, and expended by them on bread and meat, on better clothing, better house accommodation, and more suitable furniture, on the education of their children, and surrounding them with happier, healthier influences, have been a greater social benefit than one man rising to speedy affluence, and becoming the ancestor of a landed proprietary? It is, no doubt, necessary that wealth should be accumulated, and very necessary that there should be security for retaining it when it has been acquired; but surely it is more worthy, more noble, more honest to be content with small gains, that labour may have its equivalent, that the working man may stand erect with a sense of manhood and self-respect about him, than by taking advantage of a supposed redundancy in the population, and pitting the labour of one man against another, seek to extract from that labour the means of sudden wealth, while those who produce it are compelled to feel that increasing labour and decreasing pay are a condition of slavery, most real and degrading.

It is a question for politicians how far the franchise may be extended to the working classes; but it is miserable trifling, and something more, for those to whom capital has given a power over labour, and who use that power solely for their own aggrandisement, to contend that working men cannot be the safe custodians of power, and ought not to be entrusted with it. The working classes, no doubt, have their vices, many of them arising from want of sympathy and encouragement in the numerous difficulties that beset them, but we question if they are worse

than the extreme selfishness manifested by many of their employers, which has separated interests which ought to have been in harmony with each other, creating and fostering asperities which have occasionally threatened to disturb the peace of society, and have been at all times the source of much angry feeling. There is nothing in the relation which ought to subsist between the employer and the employed that implies a right on the one side to domineer, or a duty on the other to be over-obsequious, and it is certain that a kindly consideration and regard on the part of the one would produce a respectful attachment on the part of the other, and make the situation of both much more agreeable.

At all events, it would appear that some such principles, sincerely entertained, and honestly avowed, are in unison with the feelings and sympathies of many thoughtful and reflecting men, as evinced by the magnitude of our business, (Appendix A,) and the increasing power and influence, which, in various ways, it has been able to put forth ; and this second report of our proceedings is issued in answer to inquiries which reach us from many quarters, and which we hope will remove some misapprehension, and impart some information as to the exact position we have taken up.

The origin and conduct of "The Tailors' Labour Agency" does not rest upon the purely benevolent or philanthropic idea ; we might rather describe it as the result of a mind speculative and theoretical, fitting about somewhat vagrantly and restlessly in quest of a social system free from the extremes of affluence and indigence, which make such a wide gulph in the present aspect of society, and then in utter disappointment settling down upon the old system, and in the sphere which seemed to open itself up to us, resolved that the men whose labour we had to purchase, should, by a commingling of interests, a gentle compulsion, and a genial intercourse, be helped to wipe away the reproach that their order is more indifferent to the duties of life, and less capable of discharging them, than those in other classes of society. "The Tailors' Labour Agency," then, is simply a proprietary establishment, conducted like any other

business for the benefit of its promoter, but recognising in various ways the duties which capital owes to labour, and combining several projects, which, while seeking our own interest, may conduce also to the interests of those with whom we are associated. Let us state these a little in detail :—

1st.—The system of employment, and its remuneration.

2nd.—Means for the intellectual improvement of the workmen.

• 3rd.—Provision for the education of their children.

#### THE SYSTEM OF EMPLOYMENT, AND ITS REMUNERATION.

The condition of the working tailor has been for some years greatly deteriorating. Various reasons have been assigned for this decadence. Some have traced it to the strike of 1834, which disorganised the trade societies, and introduced a number of women into the employment ; others have attributed it to the excessive competition in the show shops, the “sweating” system, or the employment of middlemen, and the consequent giving out of the work to be done upon the premises of the workmen. These have undoubtedly been great evils. With the sweater, and those who work under him, one cannot associate the idea of respectability, comfort, decency, or any of the homely virtues which are the stamina of domestic felicity. This home-working, in its worst form, has got the name of “sweating,” because a scheming and unscrupulous middleman interposes between the employer and his workmen, and, by means, more iniquitous than any truck system, contrives to get the most of their earnings into his own pocket. He feeds and lodges them, after a sort, and the miserable abode in which they work, and sleep, and eat, is redolent of odours neither pleasant nor wholesome ; it is in truth, a cheerless, hopeless, miserable life, alternating between excessive working and excessive drinking, a life physically debilitating, and morally debasing, and for which, whatever he may think of it, the employer who perpetuates it is morally responsible.

Several years ago, the iniquities of the practice were exposed in the columns of the *Morning Chronicle* ; and subsequently Mr. Kingsley, in his “*Alton Locke*,” drew a fearful

picture of a "sweaters' den," somewhat over coloured, perhaps, but in the main, painfully true; and yet the evil will continue while it saves money to the employers, and while gentlemen, inconsiderate and unthinking about the matter, are content to have their garments made up under circumstances which, could they but see them in the process of manufacture, they would recoil from wearing.

We determined, as far as we were concerned, to lay the axe to the root of this great evil, and to restore the workman's home to that comfort which the undivided attention of a tidy housewife seldom fails to give it. We have, therefore, our workshops on our own premises, built with all the requisites for convenience, cleanliness, and healthfulness, which the most eminent skill could suggest, and our men come to work and return to their homes with the same regularity that artisans in other trades do, or that is done by men holding situations in mercantile or trading houses; nor can we refrain from saying that, as a body, whether as regards character, conduct, or respectability of appearance, they are a sample of the honest, intelligent working-class of this country, of which any employer might feel proud (Appendix B).

Why, then, is the pernicious system of home working continued? Well, you see a workshop is rather an expensive affair. Besides the cost of erection, the implements of trade, and the usual wear and tear, there is a considerable item for certain sewing trimmings, which the employer who gives his work out, generally makes the men find for themselves; and besides, if a man is at work on your premises, it is necessary that at the end of the week, when you put his wages in his hand, they should be in some measure adequate to the support of himself and family; and hence, in the case of home working, in its least objectionable form, where a man takes out only as much work as he can execute himself, the scanty earnings of the man have to be supplemented by the aid of wife and children, to the manifest neglect of other duties, which are not so claimant perhaps as the bread and butter question, but which are very important nevertheless. In fact, it does seem socially to be of great importance, that a working man's employment should take him out into the world, to undergo

a discipline by conflict and contact with others, which very discipline makes all the more a man of him, and to find the home a retreat and relaxation from the turmoil and cares of a working life, rather than making that home the arena of every conflicting element, the scene of jarring and discord, a place rather to be dreaded and escaped from than longed for and enjoyed. And we find respectable workmen to hold pretty much the same opinion ; for, although nearly all the men in our employ had previously worked at home, we can recollect only one or two cases where men have left us to return to their former practice.

But then, of course, the wages must be fair honest wages, as between master and man, fair too as compared with those of workmen in other trades, and fair in relation to the ordinary necessities of a working man and his family. We do not enter upon any crotchets on the wages question ; we disclaim any idea of fixing a standard of wages, or of influencing the labour market ; we simply avow our design to carry on our business upon certain principles, and that of helping to sustain the value of our workmen's labour is one of them. It is true, that indirectly we should like to see this influencing others ; indeed, it has already done so, for we have made it necessary for men who never dreamt of such a thing before, in seeking the suffrages of the public, to profess that they pay good wages to their workmen ; we can only say that we hope their workmen will see to it, that they practice what they profess.

The wages in the tailoring trade has now been for many years paid by the piece. What is technically called a "log" is agreed upon, that is a certain number of hours for every description of garment, and the wages fixed at so much per hour ; the higher priced houses pay at the rate of sixpence per hour, we pay fivepence ; the lower priced houses adopt the more convenient plan of saying, "Here is a certain garment, the price for making it is so much, and you find your own trimmings." According to our "log" the calculation is that a man of average ability shall earn 30s. per week, or 5s. per day of 12 hours, which is a journeyman tailor's day ; and we have found that calculation a very fair one

for the workmen, clever men will considerably exceed it, and slow men will hardly get up to it, but it is such that ordinary men are not overtasked to accomplish. And then, having a large demand for made up goods, we are enabled during the periodical depression in the trade, by replacing the stock sold in the busy season, to keep up pretty fairly the earnings of our workmen, so that we have no need to discharge any of our people in the slack season, but would rather have them attached to our establishment, as much as the workman of any factory in a provincial town ; indeed we would wish to displace the migratory habits of the journeyman tailor, by a desire to fix himself down in a locality, and acquire those influences and opportunities which are necessary to the proper up-bringing of a family, and attaining a social position which may give life a purpose, and enjoyment a reality.

In this matter of wages too, we are anxious that the public should be satisfied as well as the workmen. There are many persons keenly alive to the principle of buying in the cheapest market, who don't desire their articles lessened in price at the expense of the workman who manufactures them. We know that at the time that public attention was directed to the distressed condition of the needle women, there were many gentlemen who said, that they bought their shirts at respectable shops, and gave a fair price for them, and then were not sure after all that they were not produced at the cost of the poor suffering sempstress. The price for making every article that leaves our premises is vouched by the signature and address of the workman who made it, (Appendix C,) so that should any doubt exist about our professions, it is open to an easy solution. We are anxious to say, too, that in being thus explicit upon this subject, we are taking no credit for excessive generosity ; we are quite satisfied that the course we have adopted has been conducive to our own interests, and moreover, the several schemes which we have in operation for the benefit of our workmen, rest for their success on the basis of fair remuneration to the worker.

MEANS FOR THE INTELLECTUAL IMPROVEMENT OF THE  
WORKMEN.

The question of the day is said to be social progress, and a very perplexing and undefinable sort of question it is. In its general acceptation it is held to have reference to the respectable working class, and to the indescribable working class, which is not so respectable. As a theory, it involves a problem which it is difficult to solve, while it has the merit of instituting agencies, and enlisting sympathies, which have had a genial influence on a class which is not "working." The well-to-do people, and the scantily-supplied people, have become better acquainted with each other, and there is no doubt that the advantages of their intercourse have been reciprocal. It is avowed on all hands that the working class has made great progress during the last thirty years. Their intelligence, thoughtfulness, and provident habits, have well nigh extinguished the occupation of the agitator and the stump orator; they are more disposed and better qualified to investigate those subjects which have a bearing upon their own interests, and less inclined to take their opinions on trust from any man or set of men. The Press has undoubtedly exerted a great influence to this end. Mr. Charles Knight, the Messrs. Chambers, of Edinburgh, and John Cassell, have been the purveyors of a literature which was not popular, but which has held on its way, and done its work, to the almost extinction of the diluted trash which used to be the current literature at the poor man's table. Literary institutions, too, have not been all the failures they are sometimes said to be. In provincial towns especially they have been the centre of attraction for youthful, ardent, and inquiring minds, and stimulated now by the Society of Arts and its annual examinations, they promise to be of increasing interest and usefulness.

And yet the subject of adult instruction for working men is very difficult, if not discouraging. With but few opportunities for the acquisition of knowledge systematically, with habits formed, and tastes acquired, which make it necessary to *unlearn* much, before much can be learned; the utmost one can hope to

do, is to impart something of a relish for intellectual enjoyment, and, by a little training, accustom the mind to reflecting and reasoning, so as to direct the judgment to right conclusions on those important subjects with which it is necessary to be well acquainted ; an education, too, which can cast an enlightenment upon the conscience, and quicken the moral as well as the intellectual faculties ; in fact, such an education for the working classes as will make them better *as* working men, rather than induce a desire to be something better *than* working men.

When we erected our Hall, eight years ago, it was intended chiefly as a day school for our workmen's children, with a kind of vague design, that it should be sometimes used by the men for discussing topics in which they took an interest, or for hearing lectures on both sides of a debatable subject, that they might form their opinions for themselves. A little after-reflection convinced us that something more than this would be necessary, and therefore we took means to organise for ourselves a regular Literary Institute, with its Lectures, Classes, Reading-room, and Library, and such other adjuncts as experience might show to be needful. The premises which are occupied by our Institution have been found to be well adapted for our purpose, and we are now recognised as the "Tailors' Labour Agency Literary Institute," in union with the Society of Arts.

Although as yet we can point rather to means than to results, still, our Institution has in various ways exercised a wholesome influence, and in some cases has effected a decidedly educational improvement. Our classes have been Arithmetic and English Grammar, English History, Literature and Biography, Music and French. The number of persons in our employ is about 110, who are members of the Institution, and the attendance at the classes has fluctuated from 10 to 40, those for English History, and Literature and Biography, being the most popular. Our Lectures have necessarily been of a miscellaneous sort, but the Lecturers have been men of high attainments, who have attracted large audiences, and done some measure of good. In our Library and Reading-room we are amply provided with the means of passing our evenings in an interesting and profitable way ;



and experience has deepened our conviction, that could we get our people more disposed to avail themselves of such advantages, much good in every way would come out of it. Working men have many arguments, which cannot easily be set aside, for seeking enjoyment of a different kind; it is only, after all, a small per centage of their number who have the taste or desire for the acquisition of knowledge for its own sake, or who would make any sacrifice for a course of mental training, which does not promise them a present good; now and then a man will start out from among the rest in pursuit of some subject which has arrested his attention, and if he has the courage to apply himself to it, and the resolution to persevere in the application, his intellectual faculties get quickened, and by intercourse with others who are like-minded, he gets "a little knowledge," which opens up to him a new life and prospects, affording him sources of pleasure which the illiterate can neither understand nor enjoy. Such a man becomes a power among other men: the salt which in a great measure has preserved the working classes, has been the intelligent, self-taught men who have sprung up among themselves—the "little leaven" which may yet help to leaven the whole mass.

We have often said that we would stand by our Institution while there were six men interested in it and likely to be profited by it. We have been frequently disappointed of large results, but we know that it has been to some a haven where they have found solace and shelter, and we would rather go on hoping ever, than abandon the principles which have sustained us hitherto, or lose faith in the efficacy of working and waiting for an outcome of our labours.

#### PROVISION FOR THE EDUCATION OF THEIR CHILDREN.

It was not because we supposed that there was any deficiency in the means of education in our neighbourhood that we opened a day-school in connection with our Institution—we have several excellent public schools and many private ones; but we thought that a school, supported by our own people conjointly,

attached to their own Institution, and to some extent under their own management, would have for them a greater interest than any school of which they had a knowledge only by common report. We thought, too, that from various causes the attendance of the children would be more regular, and longer continued than at an ordinary school; and, that as our members were all acquainted with the schoolmaster, whose interests and sympathies were with them, who conducts an adult class among themselves, and is editor of a manuscript journal, to which they are contributors, he would be more accessible, if they needed to consult him on matters affecting the education and habits of their children, than an entire stranger would be. In all these respects we thought rightly. Whatever difficulties we may have had about adult instruction, we have had few, if any, with the children—our school has been the most encouraging feature in our enterprise, and we would respectfully ask those interested in the cause of education to pay it a visit, assured that half-an-hour would convince them that this experiment, so interesting to ourselves, has not been altogether fruitless. The number of scholars vary from 70 to 80, boys and girls, some of them being the children of neighbours who have sought admission to the school, and been received at a fee of 6*d.* per week. The instruction given includes the ordinary branches, with history, geography, and social economy. In addition, the girls are taught plain, useful needlework, with some little fancy affairs included. Some of the lads whom we have trained have now entered upon the business of life with every promise of success, and others, who have been with us five or six years, are preparing to follow them. For the especial use of those we intend to have evening classes twice a week, for the study of such subjects as may be most useful to them, and to keep up that pleasant intercourse to which we have looked forward as one of the results of the educational efforts we have been making at our Institution.

May we here add, deferentially, a kind of practical solution of the much vexed question of voluntary education and state paid education? If every trading firm, employing a large number of workmen, were to build a school-room as a matter of

course, as they build their workshops, and encourage their men to provide duly for the education of their children, it would do the "State some service," and might save somewhat in the expense of the machinery by which enthusiastic educationists seek to establish their theory of voluntary education.

We have now a few words to say respecting the pecuniary resources by which these various schemes are sustained. Apart altogether from the business premises, and on the other side of the way, we have two houses, in one of which is the hall and committee room, library, class and chess rooms, with warm baths on the basement beneath. The enlargement and alterations necessary in this part of the premises cost over £1,000. In the other house running parallel with the hall, and of the same extent, is the workshop, large enough for 80 men, and which with its conveniences, cost £800. The current expenses of the Institution are defrayed by a charge upon each member of 6*d.* on every twenty shillings of wages he earns. Thus, a man earning thirty shillings a week, would have to pay 9*d.*, and for this he would be entitled to all the benefits of the Institution, and to school instruction for all his children, whatever their number may be. Then, again, we have a weekly penny paid to the library fund, which is expended on books, and in supplying the reading room with newspapers, magazines, &c. ; these pennies usually amount to about £20 yearly.

We will put this matter in a form which will be readily understood, and we are the more anxious to do so because it will appear that while an Institution like ours may need to be helped a little during its infancy, it is sure to become self-supporting, and able to walk alone.

## INCOME.

Per Centage on Wages	...	...	...	£150
Letting Hall	...	...	...	45
Extra Scholars	...	...	...	35
Library Pennies	...	...	...	20
Rooms let at top of House	...	...	...	18
				<hr/>
				£268

## EXPENDITURE.

Rent and Taxes	...	...	...	...	£70
School Master and Mistress	...	...	...	...	102
Books and Newspapers	...	...	...	...	20
Lighting and Warming	...	...	...	...	25
Lectures, &c.	...	...	...	...	10
Cleaning and Attendance	...	...	...	...	20
Repairs and Sundries	...	...	...	...	10
					<hr/> £257

We ought to remark that the sum set down for Lectures is only the incidental expenses connected therewith, the Lecturers sympathising with our objects, having given their services gratuitously. This was a necessity which cannot continue. The source of our income is an expansive one, and will grow with the growth of our business, and the small surplus we have now, will soon become a fund out of which we can pay for the services of eminent Lecturers, and enable us to make Lectures a feature of our Institution, and a boon to the neighbourhood. We feel bound in this place to record our obligations for very valuable services, to the Rev. F. D. Maurice, the Rev. Sydney Turner, the Rev. Paxton Hood, the Rev. G. Rogers, the Rev. D. Thomas, Messrs. Henry Vincent, Appleby, Liggins, J. C. Plumptre, Gearey, Edevain, &c., and for wise counsel and generous encouragement we have been indebted to many whose names and labours have long been associated with the progress of education and the social well-being of the people.

We hope that we have set forth what will sufficiently indicate the theory and practice of the "Tailors' Labour Agency," and that the one will not be considered altogether visionary, nor the other quite unfruitful of results. It has certainly been our aim to make the worker more satisfied with his condition, by making that condition more worthy of his satisfaction. It is true that our sphere is but limited, but within that sphere, we would like to become an influence for good to those around us, convinced, that wherever such an influence has been put forth zealously and disinterestedly, benefit has never failed to ensue. It is a trite

remark, but we believe it to be true, that the present times are auspicious for working men putting forth their strength, and rising to the true dignity of that position which they are destined yet to occupy. "On all hands we see a stir and movement in the public mind which is becoming more alive to the necessity of social ameliorations. Evils which forty years ago would never have been the subject of remark, are now examined with a care that betokens a wide spread intelligence and philanthropy. Every well considered measure, brought forward in a right spirit, not only does good in itself, but makes it easier to do more good. Difficulties which appear insuperable, doubts which cannot now be solved, vanish of themselves when we grapple boldly with the duty which lies nearest at hand. The evils of society, as of the individual, are of our own creation, and are already half conquered when we look them in the face. No society ever yet perished which had the will to save itself. It is only where the will is so enervated, that a community had rather shut its eyes to the dangers which menace it, than make the necessary sacrifices to avert them, that its situation is desperate. Let every one who in his public or private capacity can do anything to relieve misery, to combat evil, to assert right, to redress wrong, do it with his whole heart and soul, and trust to God for the result."

NEWINGTON CAUSEWAY,

*May*, 1861.

## APPENDIX.

## (A)

The amount paid in wages, in each of the last seven years, will show the progress of the business:—

1854	...	...	...	...	£3952	19	2
1855	...	...	...	...	4035	0	5½
1856	...	...	...	...	4086	2	9½
1857	...	...	...	...	3494	2	9½
1858	.	...	...	...	4171	11	3
1859	...	...	...	...	4976	11	6.
1860	...	...	...	...	6709	10	0.

## (B)

The following extract, from the "Conditions on which the Workmen are employed at the Agency," will illustrate the kind of connection we seek to establish between them and ourselves:—

"5. The first three months' employment on the establishment will be probationary. After that time, no Workman will be liable to immediate discharge; but, in case of negligence, imperfect work, or any impropriety of conduct, the Foreman may suspend till the charge be investigated by the Manager, the Foreman, and any one of his fellow-workmen whom the offending party may nominate: and, if dismissal should be the result of such investigation, that Workman shall not, under any circumstances, be again employed on the Establishment.

"6. A decided preference will always be given to those who are careful and industrious in their habits, and clean and orderly in their appearance. It is, therefore, earnestly desired that the Workmen cultivate habits of personal and domestic cleanliness; as it is the avowed design of the Agency, through its entire proceedings, to make connection with it uncomfortable and uncongenial to men of irregular habits and confirmed intemperance."

We may mention, also, that for several years we have had an Annual Holiday ; on which occasion our premises are entirely closed ; and the Workmen, with their Wives, are conveyed, by railway, some twenty or thirty miles in the country, where an ample Dinner and abundant rational enjoyments are provided for them. We have, also, a Christmas Soirée, at our own Hall, when Tea, Coffee, and a Vocal and Instrumental Concert are the entertainments for the evening, These *re-unions* have had the happiest effects amongst us, and are always anticipated with pleasure and enjoyed with propriety.

(C)

## DUNN'S TAILORS' LABOUR AGENCY,

12, 13 and 14, NEWINGTON CAUSEWAY.

WORKSHOPS—39 and 40, BRIDGE HOUSE PLACE, OPPOSITE.

For Mr. \_\_\_\_\_ No. \_\_\_\_\_

Price of Garment \_\_\_\_\_

Wages \_\_\_\_\_ hours, at five pence per hour.

Maker \_\_\_\_\_

This form of Ticket is intended to verify the amount of Wages paid to the workman, and will accompany every garment, with the maker's signature and private address for inquiry.

**The Wages are calculated at 5s. a Day of Twelve Hours.**