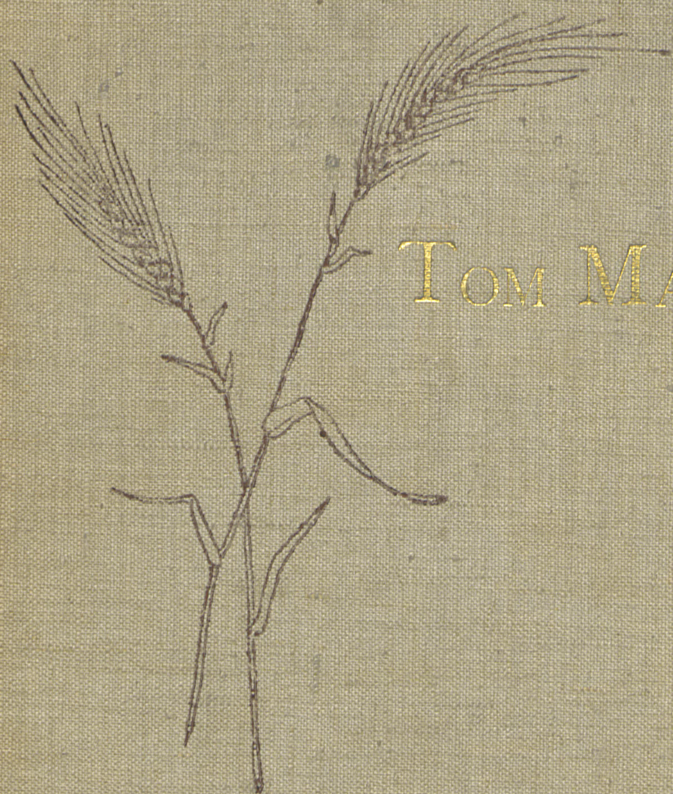

Tom Maguire

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TOM MAGUIRE:

A REMEMBRANCE.

2/- Nett.

The Labour Press Society Limited, Printers and Publishers,
57 and 59, Tib Street Manchester.

TOM MAGUIRE,

A REMEMBRANCE:

BEING A SELECTION FROM THE

PROSE AND VERSE WRITINGS

OF

A Socialist Pioneer.

WITH MEMOIRS.

MANCHESTER:
LABOUR PRESS SOCIETY LIMITED, PRINTERS AND PUBLISHERS,
57 AND 59, TIB STREET.
1895.

BRITISH MUSEUM

PREFACE

After the death of Tom Maguire in March last, at the early age of 29, and just at the close of the terribly long cold winter which did so much to hasten his end, a number of verses and pieces in manuscript were found among his papers, and it was felt by his friends that considering how many of these had never hitherto been printed, some selection of his writings in verse and in prose should be made and published. A Committee was formed for that purpose and the following selection is the result.

Tom Maguire contributed to several Socialist and Labor newspapers, such as the *Commonweal*, the *Labour Leader* and the *Labour Champion*, and the *Factory Times*, and many of the verses which appeared in those papers are re-printed here. In the *Labour Leader*, "Bardolph," the signature over which he wrote, was well known to all its readers. In the *Labour Champion*, a Leeds paper edited by himself, he assumed the name of "Gurth."

The "Announcement" and "Dedication" at the beginning of this volume were originally written for "Machine Room Chants," a collection of ballads from the *Labour Leader*, which was in process of publication by that newspaper at the time of his last illness, and has since appeared in book form. Among those verses which were found in manuscript, and are new to the general public, are "The Youth's Choice," "Pursued," "Away to the Woods," "The River," "The Lay of a Loose Essence," "A Victim" and "A Nursery Rhyme for Old Kids."

The prose piece, "In the Lists," republished here from the *Labour Champion*, seems to throw forward faintly a shadow of the project which was absorbing much of Tom Maguire's thoughts almost at the very time of his death. He intended to write a book on Socialism, and only the day before he died he discussed the matter with a friend and gave some indication of the manner in which the subject was developing in his mind. "I have so many ideas in me," he said, "if only there was someone who could carry them out." In this book Socialism was to be treated from its widest basis, and set forth clearly as a living thing entering into all the

ways of life—as a great ideal and as something of far more deeply practical import than just another "party," or another cause of argument and disputings. "I want to get it away from your damned party politics and silly quarrels," he said, and again in a letter to the same friend on the subject, "People call themselves Socialists, but what they really are is just ordinary men with Socialist opinions hung round, they haven't got it inside of them. Mind you, political progress is not made after the fashion of a Corydon-Phyllis dance, jigging along, so to speak, with pipes (or say, cigarettes,) in our mouths, through pleasant places with the sun shining over us. But there's the other side; it's hard, very hard; we get mixed up in disputes among ourselves or about one thing and another, and can't keep a straight line for the great thing, even if we all of us know what that is." That this book was never written is an irreparable loss to the Socialist cause, and must be forever a regret to his friends.

Of the imagination, the tenderness, the sympathy—in a word the genius—evidenced in these writings of Tom Maguire's it is unnecessary for me to speak; but perhaps some words of his own on an author and his works will be interesting here as showing some of his thoughts on books. Writing of R. L. Stevenson in a letter he says, "It is a fine thing to have done work like Stevenson's, but it is finer still to have won the hearts of readers so genuinely and generally as he appears to have done. I suppose it is the magic of his wide human tolerance, a thing so rare, even in books, that it is bound to captivate. Still, as a person, I dare say he would give me the fidgets, which is a consoling thought to defective onlookers, such as myself, who sometimes prefer plain wood to French polish. Yet (and this is a saving clause) Stevenson is unique in his way, if not altogether the extraordinary genius his death—per press—proclaims him. I can look on very few writers as a personal part, so to speak, of their writings. Most writers, I fancy, have a separate and purely intellectual existence in their writings, and as human beings, if they are not prigs, they are as much the creatures of impulse as the rest of us; otherwise where would the rest of us have a look in? which is a prig's philosophy, may be, but, as I said before, consoling." In a later letter, speaking of Stevenson's "Inland Voyage," Maguire says, "To me this is the best of his books I have yet seen, and I withdraw and penitently recant my former heresies concerning plain wood."

The following words from another letter seem to speak vividly out of the experiences of Tom Maguire's own circumstances, and reach us almost from the dark shadow of his illness and death. "I hope you are getting the upper hand of Jack Frost, and his screaming, cold-blowing missus. Like yourself, I, too, hate cold—it is the enemy of life. Yet there are people who profess to like cold weather; well-fed and wrapped in furs,

with the hot blood jumping to their extremities, they may enjoy their power of resisting cold; but suppose they were not so blessed, and went shivering and hungry home to a fireless grate and a supperless table? There is your true test. The poor do not like cold because they *feel* it; the sick are the same, the cold touch of the dead repels us even when the body is that of a friend. Coldness is death. I have never been able to get over the misfortune of being born in December. That much for the people who say they like cold weather! Your remark about the tiresomeness of the long walk an immortal life implies must have been one of the pagan objections to immortality, and may account for the wings of the angels, but for all that I would sooner have immortality without wings, (or for the matter of that, sandals either) than be eternally elbowed out of place after one small scrappy peep at the big show."

This letter was written on the 3rd of January, on the 8th of March Tom Maguire died.

B.F.

September, 1895.

MEMOIRS

I remember Tom Maguire first at Sheffield, when we had a Coffee House in Scotland Street, in connection with our little "Sheffield Socialists" Society, and he used to come over occasionally from Leeds to speak at our meetings: a young fellow, not much over twenty, of medium height and build, dark haired and rather pale, with good eyes and features, and with (for his years) a wonderfully temperate, reasonable, style of address, which combined with the low musical sympathetic quality of his voice, great felicity of phrase, and an Irish ease and unfalteringness of expression gave great effect to his utterances.

At that time (1887) he had already been a Socialist for three or four years. Born, I believe, in Leeds, of Irish Catholic parents, he sang, as a boy, in the Roman Catholic Cathedral choir, and was favourably thought of by the priests on account of his talents and disposition. But about the age of sixteen or seventeen he took to reading Theology, with the consequence that he drifted from the Faith into "Freethought" channels. In '83 he picked up one day a *Christian Socialist* (edited at that time by Champion and Joynes) from the Secular Hall bookstall. That brought him into touch with the literature of the Socialist movement, and before long he was out in the streets of Leeds preaching the "Cause."

It was a plucky thing to do, for a boy of eighteen. He was alone and unsupported; he had deeply offended his family and compatriots by deserting his religion, and by advocating a line of politics more important than Home-Rule; for a long time he was threatened and his meetings were disturbed, and on one occasion his platform was wrecked by infuriated Irish; and indeed throughout his time there was bitter feeling against him in this quarter; his father, too, had died at an earlier date, and on Tom now devolved the necessity of supporting not only himself, but his mother and the sister who remained at home.

First as errand-boy, then as photographer's assistant, and photographer, he earned what living he could. His employment itself had no charms for him; nor did he pretend that it had. Living with his mother in the dingy wilds of East Leeds—an outcast among his own people, and feeling that keenly—with only poverty and the deadly hideousness and unhealthiness of a "commercial centre" for his environment, the *Cause* was to him, as it has been to so many others in this sad-eyed age, the "one thing worth living for"—the hope of better things, if not for himself then at least for those who might come after.

By '85 or thereabouts a little Socialist club was formed. Maguire

had, I believe, joined the London S.D.F. soon after his own conversion. When William Morris and his party broke with the S.D.F. and founded the Socialist League, Maguire became a member of the latter, and started an S.L. Branch in Leeds. J. L. Mahon came from London as an emissary of the Socialist League, and helped Maguire in this work, and a considerable intimacy sprang up between the two. In '86, besides Mahon (who was only an occasional visitor in Leeds) some of the most active members of the club were Fred Corkwell, Bill Allworthy, Friedenson, Paylor, Bill Hill, Mat. Sollit and Alf. Mattison. In '87 the club moved into rooms in Clarendon Buildings, Victoria Road, where it remained for some time, and whence it carried on a considerable and effective propaganda.

In those days, naturally, Socialist propaganda was a very different thing from now. Socialist ideas were looked upon generally with much the same horror as Anarchist ideas are now, and were supposed to be connected with an insatiable thirst for blood! To belong to the propaganda was to become almost an outcast; street meetings meant encounters with the police and scoffs and ridicnle from the crowd; indoor meetings were scantily and timidly attended; and crowded I.L.P. demonstrations and Merrie England bazaars had not yet been invented. As leader and adviser of his little band of reformers, daring yet cautious, a dreamer and yet a man of action, Maguire's real capacity soon came out; and in this as in later times, though keeping his own personality consistently in the background, he was the mainspring and inspirer of the movement in Leeds. Indeed he combined the practical and the ideal in a rare way; and, enthusiastic as he was, knew well enough how to keep his head under trying emergencies; or while ready to discuss the expediencies of a situation, never lost sight in the policy of the moment, of his ultimate goal. Through the troublous times of the gas-riots in the summer of 1890, he was, unseen, the general referee and head-centre, and practically I believe planned the whole campaign. Indeed he was strong on organisation —especially of unskilled workers,—and the society of *Bricklayers' Laborers* still flourishing in Leeds, remains a testimony of his labors in that direction. But though on several occasions offered positions as secretary or organiser to such bodies, he never would accept them—preferring that his work of this kind should be voluntary.

Every worker in the labor movement has felt mad at some time or other at the apathy of the people. It was not often that Tom Maguire broke out on the subject; but on one occasion, I remember, he did. Some of us were on a semi-propagandist tour in Derbyshire, and at Hathersage we held a meeting, and set him on a point of vantage as the most likely person to talk to and attract the country yokels; but though he did his level best, not one of these latter would come within thirty yards of him!

There they stood with gaping mouths, practically just out of earshot; Tom shouted himself hoarse for a quarter of an hour, did all he could to excite a gleam of intelligence in their faces, and then with a complicated Irish swear came down from his post, and shaking the dust of Hathersage off his feet declared that he would go to another and warmer place before he would return *there* again.

With the pen too, it is needless to say, Tom excelled. From the time of the starting of the *Commonweal*, his humorous and satirical and pathetic verses, or more solidly argumentative articles and paragraphs were a well-known feature of this and other labor papers. He read considerably, both in general science and literature, and without making any display was well up in these subjects. Goldsmith and Sterne and the eighteenth century writers generally were perhaps his favorites in literature. In the history of the Irish rebellions and the lives of the Irish patriots, as well as in the records of the Chartist movement, he was thoroughly versed.

While sympathising with the general aim of the Anarchist section of the labor movement, Maguire was too practical to adopt their current methods; and when the time came, threw his energies into the organisation of the Labour Electoral League and the Independent Labour Party. The two following letters may help to give an idea of his relations to these various movements.

12, Lincoln Field Terrace,
Leeds, July 30, 1890.

Dear C.,—I hope you will excuse me for not having answered yours sooner, and I think you will when I tell you that there has been such a rumpus raised by a few demented Anarchists here—since the gas-riots—that it has become impossible for us to work together any longer. As usual with Socialists when they fall out, all kinds of personal attacks and insinuations have been the order of the day. So intolerable indeed were the latter that I have withdrawn from the club since I find it more than my nerves can stand to be continually warring with a parcel of raving fools in public and private over matters which are the outcome of personal feeling and not principle. Perhaps the real issue (shorn of the cloud of bitterness and personal animus) is which of the two courses is the correct one to take bearing in mind the events of the gasworkers' struggle. Those of us who had to do with the gasworkers, in response to the men's wishes and in accordance with our ideas of policy, considered a Labour Electoral League should be formed, and accordingly this was done.

Our Anarchist friends, who were conspicuous by their absence in the gas fights, joined issue with us at once, attacked not only the League but ourselves, and finally told the people that no policy should be entertained but physical force. Now, while I believe in the *use* of physical force when necessary I think it is midsummer madness to advocate it on the public platform, and it is unlikely, as it would be undesirable, for the people to resort to it until other means had been tried and found wanting. I admit the Labour Electoral move is not all to be desired, but it seemed the next immediate step to take in order to keep the Labour unions militant, and to emphasise the conflict of the workers and the employers.

For myself, I will see the L.E.L. in working order—which I daresay will be done in a couple of weeks—and then I have done with it and all other blessed movements for

some time to come. I'll retire into a corner and write poetry, and revenge myself on mankind that way.

I am very sorry that I should find it necessary to write you on this; it is a painful, stupid business altogether, but it seems as if these things were unavoidable. When men learn to love one another as heartily as they have learned to hate one another they will probably be able to differ in opinion without descending to slander and vituperation. . . . Don't let anything I have written worry you; the worst is over now. There will be less friction for the future, and if our Anarchist friends can make the Leeds folk into revolutionists no one will be more pleasantly surprised and mightily satisfied than, yours fraternally, T. MAGUIRE.

The following, dealing with the birth of the I.L.P., may be of interest. It bears the post-mark 26th November, 1892 :—

As you may not have heard be it mine to mention that Now the mountain, so long in labour, has been delivered of its mouse—a bright active cheery little mouse with just a touch of venom in its sharp little teeth. But there be traps and tempting baits you may say. To which I shall reply that our mouse though young in the flesh is old in the spirit, since to my own knowledge this is its third reincarnation. Still, but a mouse, you may think. Yes, but it will nibble its corner of the net. Talking of mice reminds one of men, unfortunately, and Robbie has writ: "The best laid schemes o' men and mice gang aft agley." To come to the point, however, an Independent Labour Party is born unto us—long may it wave!

You will find in your travels that this new party lifts its head all over the North. It has caught the people as I imagine the Chartist movement did. And it is of the people—such will be the secret of its success. Everywhere its bent is Socialist because Socialists are the only people who have a message for it. Come to Leeds and Bradford as sceptical of the Labour party as I am of Anarchism, the Devil, and the lord knows what else besides, and I'll bet a glass of —— well, soda and milk,—that you'll remain to pray. . . .

T. MAGUIRE.

There is another point characteristic of Maguire, which must not be forgotten—his love of music. He had an excellent ear, and in a low, sweet voice would troll many a song as he sat with his comrades round the club-room fire, after the business of the evening was over. *Annie Laurie* (which Parsons sang the night before his execution) was probably his favourite, but a comic or satirical ballad with a chorus suited him well—like *Father O'Flynn* or *Ballyhooly* ("We don't care what we ate, if we drink our whisky nate, in the Temperance Brigade of Ballyhooly"). There are many of his friends with whom the remembrance of his songs will live as long as they live.

With this diversity of talent and interest it is easy to imagine how many lights and side-lights he was able to throw on the one engrossing topic of his life, and what a broad and sane criticism he was able on the whole to turn on political affairs. And if occasionally in private as well as in the clubs he was a little keen and satirical when thwarted or opposed—sometimes wounding even his friends in this way—he was ready enough to make up for these sallies at the first opportunity. To most of the younger members of the Labor movement in Leeds he was the kind

wise adviser and leader, whose help they could always count on, and of whose sympathy and interest they could always feel secure—even though he asked for so little of these things for himself.

Perhaps to some of his friends there was, in this latter characteristic, a cause of regret. It was so difficult to get him to speak of himself, or touch the chords of personal confidences. Though genial and sociable, there was about him a certain reserve and aloofness, which I believe most of his friends felt. And yet it was not difficult to see that his life was really rather lonely, and wanting in elements which are more or less necessary to every one; not difficult to see that he suffered. Of the weakness of habit which grew upon him in later years, and which was largely no doubt the result of his life-conditions, he was acutely conscious; yet, for reasons which are only too easy to understand, he could never lift himself out of it. The mental and physical depression of large town life, the want of true sociability anywhere, the void of personal affection trying delusively to fill itself by the conviviality of the cup, the need which artistic and sensitive natures often experience under modern conditions, the need of forgetting the hideous monotony of their surroundings—all these things were to Tom Maguire, as they have been to so many others, the kind of Hydra with which in his inner nature he had to battle—even as outwardly he was fighting with its counterpart in society at large.

There was something almost tragic in the rapidity of his end—when after the intense cold of the winter, during which he had untiringly laboured in the cause of the unemployed, concealing from everybody the fact that he was practically one of the unemployed himself, and more acutely in need than many of those he was pleading for,—with his health already undermined, and power of resistance completely gone,—he sank suddenly under an attack of pneumonia, and in two or three days, almost before those around him knew he was ill, had passed away: something that was tragic, and much that was heroic, and which his comrades in the labor movement will never forget. E. C.

My first meeting with Tom Maguire was also the occasion of my first acquaintance with Socialism. It must have been sometime early in 1886 that, strolling through the Market-place of Leeds, my attention was attracted by a pale but pleasant-featured young fellow, who in a clear voice was speaking to a motley crowd. After listening for a while I began to feel a strange sympathy with his remarks, and—what is more—a sudden interest in and liking for the speaker; and I remember how impatiently I waited for his reappearance on the following Sunday. A few months later and I joined "the feeble band, the few," and became a member

of the Leeds branch of the Socialist League, which Maguire had already founded.

At that time the members met at each other's houses, but by the end of '86 we succeeded in getting a small room for ourselves In Holbeck. Maguire was much elated; he drew up a manifesto addressed "To the Working Men of Leeds," and declared that work should now "commence in real earnest." From that time onward, lectures and open-air propaganda were carried on, in the clubroom, in the Market-place and on the Moors; and for some years, it may be said, the mass of the work in the way of speaking devolved upon Maguire—whose faith through many adverse times seemed never to fail, and cheered us on when alone we should have despaired.

In 1888 the Leeds branch moved into better premises in Victoria Road; and it was about this time—after the great upheaval of the unskilled workers in London, begun by the Gasworkers and followed up by the memorable Dock Strike—that Leeds began to feel the influence of the New Unionism. Some dissatisfaction was being felt among the Bricklayers' Laborers at Leeds on account of the low rate of their wages. A few of them came to one of our meetings and asked us to help them "to do something." Maguire advised them to combine into a Union. The Socialist Club was placed at their disposal and a meeting of the laborers was duly announced. The Socialists threw all their energies into the work, the men rolled up, and at the end of a month's time over 800 members had joined the "Bricklayers' Laborers' Union." A demand was then made for an increase of wages, which was of course refused. This was followed by a strike; and within three weeks all the employers had yielded—the result being a splendid victory for the men. The Union was put on a sound working basis; and the Socialists, who had at first taken the entire management of it, gradually handed it over to the men.

Throughout this struggle Maguire worked like a Trojan, and for a long time afterwards remained the adviser and general helper of the Union. To-day the Society is flourishing, has a large membership, sends sixteen delegates to the local Trades Council, and has made it practically impossible for a non-unionist to exist in this line of work.

In the autumn of '89 Maguire, together with a few others, feeling keenly the conditions under which so many Leeds girls work, and the scanty wages they earn, began to agitate among the tailoresses, and got up a meeting at which Clementina Black and Isabella Ford made stirring speeches, urging on the girls the necessity of having a Trade Union. It was from this meeting, and from the ten week's strike which followed among the tailoresses at Messrs. Arthur's—in which Maguire worked with an untiring zeal and devotion which can never be forgotten by those whom

he aided—that the Tailoresses Union, now slowly forging ahead in Leeds, owes its origin. The oldest members of this Union regard him as the chief originator of the organisation, and they feel most keenly the want of his sympathy and advice. It is the greater loss to them because his views regarding the position and future of women were unusually advanced, as were also his sympathies with them, and what one can only describe as his chivalrous desire to help them.

Following upon this agitation came that of the gasworkers employed under the Leeds Corporation. They became infected with the new Unionism; the success of the London gasworkers had roused them thoroughly. At that time all men employed in the gasworks worked a twelve hour's shift, at arduous and killing work. The Socialist Club was again approached by a deputation, and again took up the work of organisation. To describe this in detail, and the innumerable efforts put forth by Maguire, Paylor, and the rest of the comrades, to mould the new Union would take too long. Suffice it to say that the unity of the whole mass of Corporation employees was accomplished at last, a demand was made for an eight hours shift and better conditions generally, and when this was refused a strike was declared and a week's notice tendered by the men. The Gas Committee in retaliation organised the importation of hundreds of blacklegs from all parts of the country—a wretched and incapable crew, some of whom guarded by police and soldiers were lodged inside the gasworks, while others were housed for the night in the Town Hall, and treated to beer and comic songs by anxious Town Councillors! How at last the gas gave out and Leeds for five nights was in complete darkness, how public feeling became incensed against the authorities, how more police and soldiers were sent for, how one evening, when a convoy of blacklegs protected by the latter was on its way through the town and passing under one of the railway bridges, it was attacked by a crowd of thousands of people, how the people got possession of the bridge and poured down tons of brickwork and stones upon the enemy, and how a pitched battle –in which the women played no inconspicuous part—lasted till nightfall in the streets; all this is matter of history. The result was that in the next few days a remarkable change came over the Gas Committee, the demands of the men were all granted, the strikers went back to work, and the Gasworkers' Union became an established fact!

The part that Tom Maguire played in this struggle can hardly be over-estimated. He was the life and soul of it. Calm, thoughtful and practical all the time, the credit of its success rests mainly with him. As to the Gasworkers' Union, up to his death he was identified with it, and did no end of solid work—for which, as for all in Labour's cause, *he never would and never did accept anything in the shape of a pecuniary reward.*

The Socialist Club was now besieged by other sections of unskilled workers eager in like manner to form unions for their help and betterment. Several months were spent in organising a strike of the Jewish workers in Leeds—some 3000 in number; and a great feature of the strike was a song written by Maguire, entitled "The Song of the Sweater's Victim"—the singing of which by several hundred Jews in their broken English may be better imagined than described. Besides this, unions embracing dyers, wood carriers, engineers' laborers, maltsters, etc., etc., were organised.

Some time about the middle of 1892 the Labour Electoral Union was formed, of which Maguire became an active member; then the Leeds Fabian Society; and about the end of that year, with the birth of the Independent Labour Party, Maguire threw all his energies into the building up of that movement. In October, '93, the *Labour Champion*, of which Tom was editor, began its brief career, too soon brought to a close by want of funds. The winter of the same year saw him hard at work in the "Unemployed" agitation, and this agitation he never dropped till near the day of his death. It was a great problem for him; his sensitive spirit was deeply cut by the pains and miseries endured by the out-o'-works, as witness for instance his poem, "The Out-o'-work's Prayer."

From the beginning of '92 onwards, Maguire's health had been gradually breaking up. His immense activities of the previous years no doubt accounted largely for this. He was never a strong fellow. Then for four or five years he had only had temporary and precarious work as photographer, while the last two years of his life found him completely out of employment, except for an occasional job, and his work on the staff of the *Labour Leader*. The severe winter of '94-'95 tried his health sorely; he had occasional attacks of hemorrhage of the lungs; and on some days it was only with great difficulty that he was able to reach the Central I.L.P. Club, where latterly he so often resorted. In the early part of January it was easy to see that the state of his health was very serious, and many of his comrades were much concerned, though Tom himself made light of it.

The end came with a shock to everybody, and throughout the town there was the deepest manifestation of mourning and sympathy, for he was known and loved far and wide. His body was carried on the shoulders of his comrades a distance of nearly two miles to Burmantofts Cemetery, accompanied by a procession of some thousand people, while the streets all the way were lined with men, women, and children—a striking demonstration of the true affection in which Tom Maguire was held among the people of Leeds, and of the sincere grief which his death elicited.

A. M.

ANNOUNCEMENT

The lines are writ appealingly, 'pealingly, 'pealingly—
The lines are writ appealingly
        That follow down below;
And they are written feelingly, feelingly, feelingly—
They are written feelingly
        That follow further fro.

And it's hey! and it's ho!
And where'er my book shall go
  It will carry me inside it
And each reader I shall know—
  Every laugh, every tear,
  Every jibe, every jeer,
  Every thumb-mark, every smear—
Be he friend, be she foe—
  I shall see, I shall hear;
  But from son of man, or daughter,
  I shall cry, not I, for quarter.
It is written,
        Be it so!

I.

ADVERTISEMENT

(Appealingly)

Hi, hi, hi! come and buy, come and buy,
You surely wouldn't stand to see a fellow peak and die,
For a poet's sometimes hungry, and he's often rather dry,
And you're earnestly invited up to buy, buy, buy.

The publishers say poetry's a drug,
And publishers should know a bit about it,
The critics, with the instincts of the Thug,
They laugh at it, and scoff at it, and flout it.
There will never be a great master-poet anymore—
Coming knocking at the door, anymore;
If you visit with your curses each poor devil who makes verses
Why—who would be a poet anymore?

The poet may become an engineer,
And if he fashions bombs he'll be respected,
But if he fashions squibs, as I do here,
The chances are his work will be rejected.
And there will not be a great master-poet anymore,
While the poet's skin is sensitive and sore,
If you scarify and flay him for his budding month of May-hymn,
Well, the poet won't be having any more.

It may be, there are men among us born,
In whom a Burns, or Shelley, may lie sleeping,—
Who fearful of the critics' blighting scorn,
Will not entrust their souls in critics' keeping.

Will there *never* be a great master-poet anymore,
  Who will rise and wipe the literary floor
With those superficial "slaters"—the petty poet-haters,
  As the masters used to do in days of yore?

You may be a minor prose-writer with ease,
  It will pass without a comment if you show it;
You may be a minor anything-you-please
  Provided you are not a minor poet.
Yet, know the minor poet is for now and evermore!
  Though you vote him down a bother and a bore,
He keeps ajar the portals where dwell the world's immortals,
  That the Master-man may enter at the door.

Hi, hi, hi! will you buy? will you buy?
Beware the imitations of small literary fry,
If you'll please to think a moment you may one day come to die—
You'll surely cease to borrow books, but buy, buy, buy!

II.

DEDICATION

(Feelingly)

"SIR,—The Editor presents his compliments, and regrets that he is unable to find space for the enclosed verses."—Extract from *The Daily Letter.*

If you be a minor poet—
And have the cheek to show it,
Beware! O beware! for the critics do not spare;

And your friends will sit upon you
And request you for to stow it,
They'll skin you like a hare
And leave your feelings bleeding bare.

Still the truly minor poet
Rather likes the world to know it,
He affects an absent air, also crow-black curly hair,
For full six inches down his back
He doesn't fear to grow it,
And the croppy boys they hate him,
And the barbers at him swear.

O ! it's pleasant thus to go it,
Though your copy, 'sub-eds.' throw it,
For the most part, in the basket by the editorial chair ;
But if you're philosophical
You'll merely murmur "blow it,"
And be ready with your volume
When the birds begin to pair.

For though people may not know it,
Yet to such as you they owe it
That the world is green with tender hope and not grey with despair ;
So write on, though critics mock you,
Dare to be a minor poet !
And when you've gone the length of that—
There's nothing you won't dare.

BE CONTENT

Said the parson, "Be content,
Pay your tithe-dues, pay your rent;
They that earthly things despise
Shall have mansions in the skies;
Though your back with toil be bent,"
Said the parson, "be content."

Then the parson feasting went,
With my lord who lives by rent;
And the parson laughed elate,
For my lord has livings great.
They that earthly things revere,
May get bishops' mansions here.

Be content! be content!
Till your dreary life is spent;
Lowly live and lowly die,
All for mansions in the sky.
Castles here are much too rare;
All may have them—in the air.

—From *The Commonweal*, 1886.

MAMMON LAND

Weep for the fallen, alas for them all,
  The daughters and sons of men!
Accurst was the hour that told of their fall—
  Accurst every hour since then—

When they wandered away into Mammon Land,
To be slaves to the god of gold :
Weep for the fallen, alas for the fallen
From worthier ways of old.

But have you not heard of the land of night,
And the folks that therein dwell ?
And know you not aught of their direful plight ?
Well, the story thereof I tell.
For I am a captive where Mammon sways,
And long have I languished there ;
And I know the people, their joyless days,
And the dull life load they bear.

Yes, Mammon Land is a dismal land
Of blackened streets and stones,
Reared by the cunning of human hand,
'Mid human oaths and groans ;
And sunless and seared is Mammon-sky,
And jaded and sad the air,
And all that's on earth, and all that's on high,
Speak out of a soul blight there.

No sweet birds warble where Mammon reigns,
And the captives pine and die ;
But if one should live he forgets his strains,
And his song grows hard and dry ;
And nought of beauty the eye can tell,
No trees or flowers grow there,
But all has the look of a burnt-out hell,
With ashes everywhere.

And ah! the people, the women and men
  That once were happy, and blest
With a fulness of work, and a fulness again
  Of leisure and food and rest;
Now cold is the heart of the people grown,
  The men without soul to dare
Are held—and the women in bondage prone,
  Pale ghosts of the folk that were.

For the fruit of their toiling is dead sea fruit,
  And it mocks them that toil all day;
For lo! when their labour is ended, mute
  And meek do they starve away.
Lord Mammon's is all their hands have won,
  Lord Mammon hath goodly store;
So they hunger and mourn when their toiling is done,
  Until Mammon cries out for more.

They once had smiles all the short-lived day,
  And now they have nothing but tears;
They once had virtues, and pure were they,
  The tale of their jovial years.
But what have they now save sorrow and sin,
  And where have their sun-lives fled?
There are ashes without and ashes within,
  But the old-time fires are dead.

They were the chosen of Nature, they
  Were given the earth to home,
With the birds and the beasts, and the wild-flowered way
  Was their's with their loves to roam.

But the birds and the beasts, and the wild-flowered way,
Look lonely since men have flown,
While in through the tall trees, grave and gray,
The winds breathe dirge and moan.

How men were lured into Mammon land,
Away from the woodlands fair,
He may read in the books who would understand,
The sorrowful tale is there.
How Mammon tempted and how he won,
The woe unto men thereby ;
How Nature, reft of her fairest son,
Went wild and was like to die.

How Mammon he is the idol God
Of grasp and of greed and gold,
And how beauty withers beneath his rod,
How virtue and love grow cold,—
Let him read in the books who is fain to know,
'Twould be wearying work to tell
Of the tears and the shame, and the sin and woe,
That journeyed with men to hell.

But some still sigh over Nature,. where
The sky sweeps always blue,
And long for a breath of her grateful air,
And a glimpse of the good and true ;
And whiles they think over bygone hours,
And whiles of their grief and gloom,
And they mourn for the loss of the land of flowers,
And bitterly mourn their doom.

The birds flit gaily from tree to tree,
  And pick of the golden grain,
And carol together a day-long glee,
  With never a plaint of pain ;
The tree leaves whispering, rustling glad,
  Take part in the sweet refrain :
But there comes a breaking, and silence sad
  Steals all through the woods again.

For a voice is wanting, the voice of one
  That Nature shall mourn for aye ;
Her last and her fairest favourite son,
  Whom the gold-god stole away.
For a voice is wanting, the sweetest voice
  That ever through woodlands rung ;
And such is the end when the woods rejoice,
  And their sweetest songs are sung.

'Tis man that is wanting when Nature is sad,
  Though her face be fresh and green ;
For she broods o'er the beauty his presence had,
  And she longs for him morn and e'en ;
But her sons are strayed into Mammon Land,
  And their hope of return is o'er ;
For Mammon binds whomsoever he finds
  In his fetters for evermore.

Then weep for the fallen, alas for them all,
  The daughters and sons of men !
And weep for the day and the hour of their fall,
  And the many long years since then ;

And pity them strayed into Mammon land,
Poor slaves to the god of gold;
O weep for the fallen, for those who have fallen,
As Lucifer fell of old.

From *To Day*, January, 1887.

THE COMING OF DEMOCRACY

[Astronomers say that the "Star of Bethlehem" will be visible this year.—*Vide Press*.]

Spake the Wise Men of the nations, keeping watch at midnight stations,
"Lo! the hour is now at hand when, rising in the heavens afar,
Should the messenger be sighted, in a robe of glory lighted,
Bringing tidings of New Birth and shining out a beacon star.

"O! the days have travelled slowly, and the nights were dark, unholy,
But the Christ to men was promised, yea, His coming is foretold,
All too long the poor, ill-fated, in their weariness have waited,
And the hour is now upon us written by the seers of old.

"With the day-star onward guiding, we must seek his place of hiding,
Where the blasts of winter enter, whistling through the shakey door;

In abodes of want and sorrow we shall find him on the morrow,
And the star shall shed its halo o'er the hovels of the poor.

" His abiding place a stable! Ere his little limbs are able,
We shall find him in the mines and workshops labouring hard and long;
Cares and spurns and burdens bearing, in the woes of others sharing,
Ever battling for the weak against the haughty and the strong.

" Spite of sneers and high disdaining, we shall find him growing, gaining
Strength and wisdom, knowledge; gathering, garnering Truth's beloved store;
Ripening unto godlike kindness, kindling eyes gone out in blindness,
Breathing words of love to those that knew but bitter thoughts before.

" But he comes, no more a dreamer! He shall smite the foul blasphemer;
Scribe and high-priest who have mocked him and have bartered him for gold.
Yea, he comes his house to straighten, warring with the wiles of Satan,
And the hell-wolves long since loosened on the shepherd's fold.

" Even now the star appeareth, lo! the hour of triumph neareth,
Christ-Democracy ariseth, big the world is with New Birth;

Blessed now ye poor, ill-fated! who have waited, wept and waited,
For the dawn of happier days is breaking o'er your nights of dearth."

—From *The Commonweal*, 1887.

DEPRESSION IN DUCKLAND

A FABLE

A silly, self-sufficient goose
Laid golden eggs for an old duck's use ;
And the old duck lived on the golden eggs,
While the goose ate worms and the marsh-bank dregs.
But the duck had title deeds to show
That the marsh-bank dregs and the worms below
Were his sole, exclusive propertee,
On which the goose might fatten free;
To yield a regular egg supply
Was the one condition he bound her by.

So the goose had plenty of worms and dregs,
And the duck had plenty of golden eggs ;
And the duck waxed fat and round and sleek,
While the goose waned wiry, worn and meek.
But on Sunday mornings the goose would hie
Regularly to the pond close by,
Where the duck would hold a service of prayer
For the good of the goose attending there ;
And the sinful goose cried " Alas !" and " Alack !"
Whenever she heard the good duck quack.

For the duck would speak of the wicked ways
Of geese, beginning and ending their days
A thriftless, shiftless, lazy lot,
Who didn't thank God for the worms they got.
He exhorted the goose to labour and lay
An extra golden egg per day,
To enable him to spread the light
Of his teaching and law in the lands of night,
For heathen turkeys and heathen "chucks"
Might all be geese, though they couldn't be ducks.

So the simple goose laid eggs galore,
And the artful duck still called for more,
Till at length, so great was the egg supply,
That the duck complained of their quality.
"Supply" exceeding her sister, "Demand,"
The duck brought things to a sudden stand,
Declared a stop to the laying of eggs,
The killing of worms, or the drinking of dregs;
Saying out to the goose, "You must now make shift,
As I shall do, on the savings of thrift."

"Alas!" the goose cried out in her woe,
"May I lay for myself?" but the duck said, "No!"
"Then, oh!" she exclaimed, in wild dismay,
"May I drink of the dregs?" but the duck said, "Nay!
The dregs are mine, and mine are the worms,
And did you not agree to my terms?"
"But," argued the goose, "I have changed your dregs,
By labour and skill, into golden eggs!
What is the remedy for my lack?"
The duck's laconic reply was "Quack!"

Puzzle

The puzzle, readers, to me and you,
Is to find a moral to fit hereto ;
For fables are foolish vapourings,
Requiring morals, and such like things
Pertaining to the affairs of men,
And evident to the simplest pen ;
Wherefore I freely apologise,
For geese are silly, but men are wise ;
And so no moral is understood,
For ducks are wicked, but men are good.

—From *The Factory Times*, 1892.

THE SONG OF THE MICROBE

I'm a merry little microbe,
 And my heart is light and gay,
And I love the sunny weather
 In the merry month of May.

All the Winter I lay sleeping,
 And my enemies slept too,
But my coming resurrection
 Will provoke a How-de-do.

I shall swarm in myriad millions
 On the banks of River Aire,
And your old acquaintance " Typhus "
 Will be present with me there.

I shall raise the good old odour
In the goit at Tenter Lane,
And the papers will be screaming
In their customary strain.

But the tanner and the skinner
And the City Council too,
Will protect me from the mercies
Of the sanitary crew.

I'm a merry little microbe—
Quite a microscopic thing ;
So just warn the undertaker,
To be ready after Spring.

—From *The Leeds Labour Chronicle*, May 6th, 1893.

A NEW NURSERY RHYME

Sing a song of England,
Country of the free,
Sing her teeming millions,
Rulers of the sea ;
Sing her trade and commerce,
And her " vales serene,"
Isn't it a dainty dish
To lay before the Queen ?

Sing a song of England,
Shuddering with cold,
Doomed to slow starvation
By the gods of gold ;

See her famished children
  Hunger-marked, and mean,
Isn't that a dainty dish
  To lay before the Queen?

Sing her House of Commons,
  Sitting all at ease,
While a ring of coal-lords
  Fasten like disease
On the helpless toilers,
  Hollow-eyed and lean;
Faith! it is a dainty dish
  To lay before the Queen.

Mammon in the counting-house,
  Counting out his money,
His lady in the parlour
  Eating bread and honey.
The worker on the highway,
  Short of food and clothes—
God bless happy England!
  And save her from her foes.

—From *The Labour Champion*, Nov. 11, 1893.

"THE UNCO GUID"

It happened a good while ago,
    You must know,
  When Christ, in his infinite piety
Healed sick men on Sunday
As though it were Monday,
  And shocked Pharisaic society.

Whereon his disciples have said,
You'll have read,
That a lawyer impugned the propriety
Of healing the blind—
'Twas opposed to the mind
Of a Lord's Day Observance Society.

And the answer came pat, so they tell,
You know well,
Of the property owner's anxiety
For the ass in the pit—
Quite a palpable hit
At a Lord's Day Observance Society.

And from what has been lately averred,
As I've heard,
It would seem there's a modern variety
Of those dismal old blokes
Who were partial to mokes,
Called the Lord's Day Observance Society.

—From *The Labour Champion*, 11th November, 1893.

FAR MATABELELAND

They were niggers, and they occupied
Far Matabeleland,
And for years we gave 'em gospel,
But they wouldn't understand;
For thirty years the mission
Tried to bring 'em to contrition—
They were going to perdition
In far Matabeleland.

And we only saved six sinners
  In far Matabeleland,
For their heads were thick and woolly,
  And their souls were black and tanned;
And you can't convert a nigger,
Till you perforate his figure
With the gospel from a trigger,
  In far Matebeleland.

So our pious game was played out
  In far Matabeleland,
And we failed to swop the gospel
  For their scurvy patch of sand;
So we tried explosive bullets,
And that fetched 'em down like pullets,
With pellets in their gullets,
  In far Matabeleland.

If they'd taken to salvation
  In far Matabeleland,
We'd have had this consolation
  Which we cannot now command:
As the rifle told its story
On each body dark and gory—
We'd have sent a soul to glory
  From far Matabeleland.

—From *The Labour Champion*, 25th November, 1893.

AN OUT O' WORK'S PRAYER

O God of Humanity, gaze on me, powerless, pulseless, and spent,
Shrunken of muscle and withered of heart and of mind,
With all that was hope in me strangled, distorted, broken, and bent—
All that was man in me loosened and left far behind.

Myself but a heart-stinging memory travelling joylessly back
On tracks which the bruised, bleeding feet of my comrades have trod;
Dry-eyed and dry-hearted and barren, with every nerve on the rack,
I cry to Thee, hear me, O hear! thou omnipotent God!

O! hear the death-cry of the babe sucking dry at its starved mother's breast!
If me thou'lt not hear, who am stained by the sin of long years,
Hear the voices of children that hunger, and plead in their pitiful quest
For bread in the gutter, which poisons the soul that it smears.

Hear the moan of the woman dragged down in the mud by her brothers and damned,
Hear the sob of the mother whose hair whitens o'er at the sight,
Hear the curse of the father who flings her adrift, and, with mercy's door slammed,
List the wild mocking laugh of the harlot borne into the night!

And the low inarticulate cry of the legions who labour, O hear!
As they fall broken under by hunger, and toil, and unrest;
See them poisoned, and drooping, and dying, yet bleached with unspeakable fear,
Of the famine-wolf crouching to spring at the masters' behest.

Hark the chant of the heroes afar, who lived and who strove for mankind,
Marching bravely to death o'er the stretch of Siberian plains,
Hear the shriek of wild birds swooping down on the faint who have fallen behind—
Lo! the line of stark skeleton forms left to crumble in chains.

So hearing, then curse Thou thy chosen, thy fair favoured daughters and sons,
Whose greed has no limits, whose lust has no mercy nor shame;
Who fawn to Thee steeped to the lips in the life-blood of innocent ones,
O harken! and curse them by famine, by flood, and by flame.

Barabbas is god in thy Temple; thy Son has no place in the land;
Thy word by Iscariot preachers is gilded to sell;
Then rise in thy wrath, mighty God!—if thou livest—and stretch forth thy hand,
Wring their curst souls from their bodies and fling them to hell.

—From *The Labour Champion*, Nov. 25, 1895.

A VICTIM

(WHOSE NAME IS LEGION)

O ! I am tired of factory toil,
  Of starveling virtue tired am I ;
It is so hard to be poor and good,
  It is so hard by degrees to die ;
Easier it were to take heart and drown
In the river that winds the factory town.

The factory air is choking close :
  Without in the streets it's cool and sweet—
And the factory bully, that comes and goes,
  Has never a word—save a curse—to greet.
It is not so in the streets without,
Where all are free to go gaily about.

My cheeks are pallid, they once were red ;
  My eyes are saddened, they once were bright ;
And weary and faint the steps I tread,
  Though once I carried me firm and light ;
The breath of the grave has damped my brow,
But the world seemed never so fair as now.

O, what in return does Virtue give ?
  She has stolen my hopes away ;
She has stolen (and sore I grieve)
  The laugh from my lips and the light from my day.
And nought in return does Virtue give
But a tomb—and toil while her votaries live.

If toil and the tomb be Virtue's lot,
  If Vice be ever the world's elect,

They may be chaste who are tempted not,
Or have the means to be circumspect;
But let them not of temptation tell
Till they look at the streets from a factory hell!

'Tis but a step from the factory door
To the streets—to laughter and song and wine,
To the sullen river but one step more,
And there is an end to this life of mine.
Through one or the other must I, one day,
Pass from this with my shadow away!

—From *The Commonweal*.

THE YOUTH'S CHOICE

(IN FOUR PARTS)

I.

The youth was born in a fairy land,
His early childhood's hours
Were passed away like a light may-day
In sunshine and soft showers,
Brightened by a dear fairy hand
With tender budding flowers.

And o'er his eyes a rosy film
Was spun by a weaver deft,
Who wove so well that none might tell
A thread of the warp or weft;
And rosy and fair was the world to him
Of his cold clear sight bereft.

Soft voices sounded in his ears,
Soft hands caressed his hair,
And sweet lips pressed his fears to rest
With whispered words of prayer;
And so he grew in strength and years
Nor knowing aught of care.

From east and west came men of lore
To teach him wisdom's ways,
And each one brought the choicest thought
And knowledge of those days;
How fair appeared this wondrous store
Before his rosy gaze.

So gathered he their learning in,
And through his radiant eyes
Base deeds of blood seemed great and good
And evil-working wise,
And only poverty was sin
Unfit for Paradise.

And all went well with the 'chanted youth,
'Twas told by augury
That time would dower with fame and power,
His manhood's days to be,
For that the haggard naked Truth
His eyes could never see.

II.

The oriental séers say
In sleep the spirit soars away,
And transient gleams
Of shadowy experience

Float o'er the prone hypnotic sense,
    And these are dreams.

And oriental seers say
The clouded sense of waking clay
    No truth discerns,
But only in the soul's sight
The light of truth by day and night
    Eternal burns.

So oriental seers say,
Deep, mystic wonder-workers, they
    Have rent the veil
That hides from our unseeing eyes
The myriad life mysteries
    That skirt earth's pale.

Howe'er, it came about one day,
The youth asleep and dreaming lay,
    There passed before
His night-illumined consciousness
The paths to Fame—a strange impress
    Each calling bore.

He knew them all, had loved them, when
In waking moments truly then
    Fair maids they seemed,
And one of them he thought to wife,
And in her cause bestow his life—
    But now he dreamed!

And lo, the Church, the Army, Law,
Letters and Commerce stripped he saw,
    And ghastly bare,

Their shrivelled breasts and withered skins,
Their blood-flecked lips and grizzled chins,
All gibbering there.

Science and Art, with heads low bent
Passed onward, blushing as they went,
Foul rags they wore ;
And Politics in sackcloth clad—
The last of all the loves he had—
Crept on the floor.

And wondering and sore amazed
The youth upon the harpies gazed,
And smote his breast ;
And these are not the maids, he said,
I loved but yester-even sped
With pure love's zest.

So pondered he as out of sight
Into the black abode of night
The phantoms filed ;
And in his new bewilderment
Wept tears, and gave his sorrow vent,
Even as a child.

But presently he paused to hear
Low moaning breezes gathering near,
And telling of
Mute misery expressed in sighs,
And in the dim tear-laden eyes
Of wounded love.

Wrapt in the weird and mournful strain,
The youth forgot his new-born pain

In new-born fear;
His heart was touched in strange accord
With griefs too deep for human word
Or human ear.

And nearer still, the wordless hymn
Was borne, and with it spectral dim
Unearthly hues,
Like those that bend across the sky
When muttering storms have drifted by
And peace diffuse.

So silently upon him stole,
A vision that absorbed his soul,
And senses freed
From waking doubts and the false tints
Environment on all things prints,
And casts in creed.

But ere his eyes had seen her eyes
Filled with a sadness deep and wise,
She passed him by:
And, held in bonds that laid him prone
And powerless as pulseless stone
His voice leapt high:—

Follow her, follow her, follow her
Into the ambient air,
O soul of mine, and speed be thine,
Out and away and follow her—
Follow her everywhere!

Hark to the music! rippling music,
Travelling in her wake,

The thrush and the lark her course to mark
Fly after her feebly fluttering,—
Follow the course they take.

Over the seas and lofty mountains
Into the heavens deep,
Find her abiding place of hiding,
Write it clear on thy memory,
Follow her while I sleep.

Bring me the tidings, blessed tidings,
Telling her name and place,
So shall I rise to ecstacies,
And dreaming or waking follow her,
For love of her angel grace.

Follow her, follow her, follow her
Into the ambient air
O soul of mine, for she's divine,
Out and away and follow her,
Follow her everywhere.

III.

Away sped the soul of the sleeping youth, who dreamlessly slept on,
Swift into the night, led by the wild birds singing ;
But the thrush and the lark had fallen behind, for the fleeting Truth had flown
O'er the mountain-top, her course like an eagle winging.

And following high and over the snow-strewn heights where dun clouds roll,
And lightning thrusts dissolve the heavens in thunder,

Still on and on, in the wake of a golden eagle leapt the soul,
Till stretching far and away the sea washed under.

Then whirling round with a wild cry like the wail of a wounded thing,
The eagle turned heart-sick of his vain pursuing,
When lo ! from out of the starlit mist wheeled a seagull on the wing,
And the soul pressed close beside it—hope renewing.

But drowsy and dead the sky hung overhead, and darkening round
The waves tossed serpent curves, hissed serpent noises ;
And the moan of the damned rose out of the sea, with a hollow echoing sound,
Like devils mimicking prayer in despairing voices.

Still forward they pressed in the gloom, and the gathering roar of the thwarted sea
Grew fiercer with every breath, and deeper and deeper,
And the frighted gull fled screaming away storm-tost, hurrying to flee ;
And alone over all was the luminous soul of the sleeper.

Gazing down at the passionate waters dashing full at a line of rocks,
That raised their forbidding fronts in grim defiance,
With crevices here and there through which a vessel might pass with shocks,
And still float bravely on buoyed up by science.

So here are the rocks of Custom, which have wrecked so many a barque,
That superstitious mariners shun and fear them,

They say that the sea beyond is the home of the sword-fish
and the shark,
And they are accurst and doomed who venture near them.

The soul of the youth leapt over the rocks and looked on the
sea beyond,
"What hope," cried the soul, "for the man or woman
drowning?"
"No hope," the turbulent hungry waves in pitiless tones
respond,
"No hope," from the ragged rocks all darkly frowning.

And the soul looked into the distance deep, but rock upon
rock arose
Whereon full many a human shape lay rotting,
Crushed shells of many a noble heart that the waves, in
their angry throes,
Cast high to their ministering hags on the dread rocks
squatting.

And behold the hag on each crested rock had the harpy face
and claw
Of the creatures who had risen in the youth's dreaming,
And standing in front was the Church, and next the Army,
backed by Law,
And last of all loomed Politics—goodly seeming.

O fair to see was the rock of State, flower-favoured and grass-
grown,
A haven of hope where myriads have wended;
But alas! for the hidden shoals and the countless wrecks upon
them strown,
And alas! for the high-strung aims thus rudely ended.

Up, up leapt the soul o'er the cloud-crowned rock, and fast through the mists it bore,
Drear, icy, murky mists that wide-pervaded ;
Behind lay the gloom of receding night, but budding in bloom before
Day wakened bright, with subtle colours shaded.

Then the waves beneath grew calmer, gently rocked like a child to sleep,
Breathing a low and melancholy crooning ;
And the soul felt mystic presences approaching with every leap—
Wild odours filled his senses, sweetly swooning.

And a low, clear voice spake mournfully: "Say, traveller from afar,
What brings you here, and whom would you discover ?"
"Oh, I am come at the bidding of one, and drawn by a strange loadstar
I follow unfalteringly, a true, true lover."

"So you are come at the bidding of one, and drawn by a mystic spell,
With never a word or deed fresh hope betiding,
Go back, go back, and light up the heart of your still inanimate shell,
Go back to the world in tears and darkness biding.

"Go, gird up your body, and first and last of the hag-rid rocks defy ;
The rock of State was shaken by me, a woman,

When a clod-crowned tyrant Tzar fell crushed, and the world
hushed at the cry
Of the brute beneath the heel of the conquering human.

" But Truth has no eyes, save sockets of tears, for him who
flies the fray ;
From him her luminous face by day is hidden,
And on nights when she drives the hags through the land of
dreams her lips shall say
In silence deep how much faint souls stand chidden."

" So be it, so be it," the poor soul cried, " but here would I
sojourn ;
The temple wherein I dwelled will, on awaking,
Espouse a hag, and from my dear love by day and by deed
will turn,
And all for the sake of the false the true forsaking.

" Then shall I go back a captive soul and party to misdeeds,
Which in a lover of the Truth were treason ;
The fairest flower shall bloom in vain in the midst of regnant
weeds,
And the soul is lost where Greed outgroweth Reason."

The poor soul ceased and the low clear voice fell in sad under-
tones,
" Here tarry, then, an empty handed lover,
And join with your stark companions who whisper secret
moans,
But yet like you have chosen here to hover.

Only by deeds done in the flesh for the help of humankind
May light break in on the soul-sense, darkly seeing,
And Truth in all the majesty of her white, unclouded mind,
Reveal the undraped beauty of her being."

IV.

The youth awoke into Fairy land,
And a man of the world was born,
But never a gleam of his midnight dream
Remembered he at morn;
Nor ever shall dreams his memory brand
Who turns from them in scorn.

All rosy and glad the good world looked,
Bright smiled the paths to fame,
For him to choose or win or lose
One fixed, deciding aim;
But his shall be the path most crooked,
That leads to deeds of shame.

Yea, his shall be the secret path
Whence princely brigands come,
With dark intrigue and evil league,
The hopes of men to numb,
Giving blackmail to him that hath,
And taking from the slum.

And he shall be a chief among them,
Renowned for grammarye,
As keen and smooth as an ivory tooth,
And deep as the soundless sea,
His heart walled in by corpse-cold phlegthm,
And barren of sympathy.

The cry of the famishing shall fall
 Unheeded in his ears,
His filmy eyes shall in nowise
 Respond to human tears;
But oh! his coldness shall appal
 Mankind with voiceless fears.

Success shall lie at his scented feet
 A smiling handmaiden—
The concubine of a crooked line
 Of misbegotten men,
Seeming as passing fair and sweet
 As an angel fresh fallen.

And ever as fast the swift years speed,
 State honours on him shall roll,—
Till youth and man old age shall span
 And Death calls for his toll;
The world shall profit him indeed
 Who hath lost his immortal soul.

TO THE WAGE-SLAVE

'Tis the dog's to live and the dog's to die
 At the heels of a master—not man's!
Yet this is the portion of you and I,
O brother of mine, and you ask not why!

'Tis the dog's to whimper and whine for the bone
 Which is flung from his master's board;
And 'tis our's to beg of the haughty drone
For leave to labour that he may own.

Is it thus we must sneak through the byways of life
Without leaving a trace behind
Of a word or a blow 'gainst the wrongs which are rife,
Or a past howe'er small in the turmoil and strife?

A thousand years answer a thousand times—No!
In the deeds of their bravest men,
Whose hands laid the wrong and the wrong-doer,
Whose thoughts are the torches the centuries show.

'Tis the man's to be masterless, fetterless, free!
The slave's 'neath the whip to crouch down,
And none is so foully misshapen as he
That sits idly passive where wrong-doings be!

—From *The Commonweal.*

PURSUED

Laughing aloud on the frosty air,
Breaking the sleep of night,
Scattering melody everywhere
Under the weird moonlight,
Chatter the tongues of the merry sleigh bells,
Echoing miles away,
Warning the snow-sullen hills and dells—
Look out! look out for the sleigh!

Warning the folk on the country side,
With every shake of the reins,
Someone is out for a dare-devil ride
To-night on the open plains;

Warning the wehr-wolf's tenuous ear,
In the rude den where he dwells,
That a long-time vulpine foe is near,
Betrayed by the mad sleigh bells.

Into the open lit up by the moon,
The wehr-wolf, bristling, springs,
Bending his ear to the wild shrill tune
That out of the stillness rings;
Then deep from his breast breaks a long-drawn bay
Soon answered by fearsome yells—
A blood-chilling echo that smites the sleigh
And hushes the laughing bells.

Whoever rides over the plains to-night
Grim death at his heels shall ride;
God pity the fool! and lend wings to his flight
Who strays from the country side.
For whoso rides over the plains to-night
Shall tempt the wolf from its lair,
And sup his fill of a harrowing sight
Of the wild dogs of despair.

But the sleigher who goes from the country side,
A chieftain proud is he,
And he has taken his bonny young bride
Some midnight sport to see;
Full little he heeds the ravening pack,
His heart like the bells beats gay,
For often his merry light rifle crack
Has kept the lean brutes at bay—

Laughing aloud on the frosty air,
  Waking the ghostly night,
Scattering merry bolts here and there
  From the smooth bore glist'ning bright ;
Rattle, oh ! rifle, your chorus of knells,
  Echoing miles away,
Join in the cry of the carolling bells—
  Look out ! look out for the sleigh.

The chieftain's sleigh is of burnished gold,
  Its sliding blades are steel,
Its sides are bedded against the cold
  By furs filched from the seal ;
And sharp-fanged frost shall bite in vain
  The chieftain and his bride,
Protected by the silken mane
  That blooms on the beaver's hide.

Two monster dogs of wolf-hound breed
  The chieftain lightly reins,
Both strong of limb and sure of speed
  To bear him o'er the plains ;
And many a time have they borne him on
  His perilous career,
When the wolves were out and the green moon shone,
  And the white frost nipped the year.

As Terra and Gelt the hounds were known,
  Fierce, tawny brutes, and bold,
So named from a whim of the master's own
  Because he had Land and Gold ;

And away, away, for the wolves are out,
A pitiless hungry crowd!
"And it's ho! for the hunt of a rabble rout!"
The chieftain cries aloud.

Sliding and sprawling on impotent paws
The vulpine body hurls,
Snapping its hot spume-dripping jaws
A torrent of angry swirls,—
And leading some several lengths ahead
The wehr-wolf's form shows clear;
And all for the living and all for the dead,
The vengeance hour draws near!

"Ho! ho!" laughed the chieftain, "such sport as this
But few in the world may know,
The fox that tricks the spent hounds has his
As he vanishes down below;
But little he knows of the sport divine
That lies in a dead true aim,
When hunters close in upon tracks of mine
And count me for easy game."

"Oh! chieftain, my chieftain," his bonny bride speaks,
"Our brave dogs surely lag,
The wolves' foul breath beats on my cheeks,
Wild fears my heart-strings drag."
But cheerily, cheerily, cries the chief,
"I'll venture a warning round,
And you shall have swift and sweet relief
For the wild dogs know the sound."

Then into the night the dread voice spoke,
And loud was the answering roar,
Yet no wolf out of the loose ranks broke
As fast on the sleigh they bore.
"Oh! chieftain, my chieftain, they falter no whit,
The fangs in my flesh I feel."
"Bear bravely, my lady, I'll aim for a hit,
And leave them to share the meal."

Tearing unseen through the heart of the pack
The winged balls shear their way;
Wolf upon wolf sinks shuddering back,
But the leader's loud deep bay
Rallies them all, save the dying and dead,
And forward they boldly pressed;
Then the chieftain aimed at the wehr-wolf's head,—
But a charmed life he possessed.

Rugged and lined is the chieftain's brow,
Cold is his steel-grey eye,
Fear, white fear on his face sits now
As he lists to the hue and cry;
For always the wolves in their previous runs
Had paused in their tracks to rend
The flesh from the bones of the fallen ones,—
Now, who shall foretell the end?

"Up, up," cried the chieftain, "good Terra, brave Gelt,
Your enemies press behind,
Their hate is as hot as the hate of the Celt
For all of the sleuth-hound kind;

And traitors, black traitors! they cry, they cry,
With every lease of breath;
So faster and faster my brave dogs fly
From the furious jaws of death."

"Oh, chieftain, my chieftain," warm tears down fell
And dewed his young bride's face,
"Full sore is my heart the truth to tell—
But the wehr-wolf wins the chase;
And Terra or Gelt to sacrifice
Were to sacrifice the twain,
With the certainty that the sad device
For our own dear sakes were vain.

"Wherefore, and because that the fixed fates willed
That one of we two shall die,
Let mine be the blood in atonement spilled,
Since barren of fruits am I;
So, chieftain, I kiss you, and bid you to speed
A bullet through my left side,
That I may be dead ere the gaunt wolves' greed
Lays hold of your twelve months' bride."

Cold beads oozed out on the chieftain's brow,
His mouth was stricken dumb;
The wehr-wolf noses the sleigh-rail now,—
And crying, "They come, they come!"
She seized a knife from the belt he wore
And buried it in her breast,
And flung herself out of the sleigh.—The roar
Of the wolves told him the rest.

Laughing aloud on the frosty air—
  The wolf-laugh of delight
Follows the chieftain everywhere,
  As he vanishes into night.
Another shall ride in his rich State sleigh
  And rattle the silver reins,—
But never again, by night, or by day,
  Will the lost chief cross the plains.

AWAY TO THE WOODS

O! far away from the haunts of men,
  And their pools of inky dye,
And far away from the shrieking toil
  That blots out sun and sky,
The birds of song, and the great grave trees,
  With their hunted mother lie.

She rests in sorrowful repose,
  An outcast mother, she,
Yet silver throats sing silv'ry notes
  On every listening tree;
But lone and silent are her walks,
  Though green and sweet they be.

She hides from none of her children, save
  The dearest of them all,
O! she is safe where reynard roams,
  Or prowls the wild jackal:
But she withers like a blasted thing
  Where the foot of man doth fall.

Her ingrate sons have fouled the blood
  That sparkled through her veins,
And they have smeared her vesture o'er
  With rank defiling stains ;
All hard and cold her valleys are grown,
  All cold and hard her plains.

The sun that lit her face with flowers,
  The sweet life-giving rains,
Now smite on unresponsive stones,
  Or wake the deadly drains ;
They sow the seeds of pestilence
  And death's are all the gains.

The light of her sky, the breath of her flowers,
  The whisperings of her trees,
The songs of her feathered melodists,
  The life of her vernal breeze—
Of all the treasures she gave to men
  None other was like to these.

But men digged into her bowels and wrenched
  The bones of her mighty frame,
And builded themselves a charnel-house
  Of strife and sin and shame ;
And she has fled with her friends afar,
  A melancholy dame.

. . . .

Away from the rush and roar of trade,
  Away from the broad backs bent,
Away from hunger-staring eyes,
  And the tale of lives misspent ;

Give me to rest on Nature's breast,
And verily I am content.

Let heartless knaves their victims sweat,
I envy not their store,
Who lists may pour in the mouldy tome
And pride him on his lore ;
But the breath of the woods is all to me
And the deep blue dreaming o'er.

Tender and sweet is Nature's face,—
Plagued was he that prest
Into her body and broke her bones
To strew them o'er her breast,
That planted stones and chimney stacks
Where once the flowers caressed.

Beautiful is the human form !
I nowise itch to seek
For the spark that lights the lamp of life,
'Neath tissues white and sleek,
For I'm content with the laughing eye
And the rosy dimpling cheek.

What boots it me, Professor Grub,
To know with every breath
I swallow a million merry mites,
And do them all to death ?—
My breath from heaven to a myriad souls
A life-destroying breath ?

Nay, give me the fair outside of things,
And I'm content to gaze !

Let earth-worms grope with clay-cloyed eyes
In Nature's hidden ways ;
Be mine her soft sweet bosom of green,
Be hers my song of praise.

THE RIVER

Sullenly the foulëd river windeth where the city stands,
Stealing, like a drowsy serpent, o'er a waste of sterile lands,
Breathing plague-born exhalations spawned within its slimy sands.

Nothing dwelleth in the river, saving deadly loathsome things,
Never bird flits lightly over, lest it soil its dainty wings,
Never song to soothe or soften save the chant the steamer sings.

Far away from town and travail, where the mountain lifts its head,
Where soft springs leap up in crystals, trickled out a slender thread—
Promise of the stately river, fresh and grassy was its bed.

By the rains that fall from heaven, and the dew-drops of the flowers,
Grew the stream, through vale and village, greater in its breadth and powers,
Mightier in pulse and volume, clear as dews and soft as showers.

All within its limpid bosom silver, speckled visions leapt;
By its side the love-birds nested, and the tall trees o'er it swept,
Song and murmur, fairy laughter, echoed round the course it kept.

But its course was ocean-guided, ocean gave and ocean drew,
And the river bended thither, heedless of the way thereto,
With good-bye to song and flower, to banks of green and skies of blue.

So the woodlands fade behind it, bleaker grows the way before,
And a dull sky glowereth darkly, darkening the river o'er,
Comes a sound—as many voices mingled in one hideous roar.

Downward though, the darkening river, woe-betided, headlong down,
Spite that gullies flood their poisons, spite the clouds that over frown,
Ocean tides swell skyward yonder by the black abysmal town.

But the town hath gript the river round with incubus embrace,
Fetid odours rise from under, blight hath fastened on its face,
Stilled is every pulse that quickened varying forms of light and grace.

Looking on the saddened river, musing o'er its pleasant past,
So, I thought, the paths of childhood—sweet as springtide summering fast—
Reach to manhood's ways and sadness, like the river to the last.

So I gazed on youth and beauty, sauntering on their hopeful
way,
From the green walks of the roses where it was their wont to
stray,
From the haunts of love and laughter, and the light of cloud-
less day,

To the land of night and sorrow, there to win a laurel crown,
In the land of pomp and squalor, in the sordid festering town,
Their's to be a crown of thorns bereft of roses or renown!

What shall save the sparkling river? Youth and beauty what
shall save?
Naught can cleanse the sullen river but the wild salt ocean
wave;
Nought can chasten sullied manhood but the mould that makes
its grave.

THE LAY OF A LOOSE ESSENCE

My name is Atma Buddha, but still I am the same
Immortal soul your fathers knew by many a different name:
You may call me ghost or spirit and I won't mind in the least,
But I'm known as Atma Buddha to the experts of the east.

So having introduced myself, permit me here to say,
'Tis now a rounded season since I quitted human clay,
And I have, with the zephyrs, dwelt and watched the ways of
men,
Devoutly hoping never to be tied to one again.

I've motored many an animal in many a different shape,
From the simple cell in jelly to the complicated ape;
But whatever be the future state to which I am assigned,
Preserve me from creation's lord and then I will not mind.

With man I sojourned in a land where honest folk were pining,
While sturdy rogues had much to do to keep in trim for dining,
So various were the dishes they were called on to digest,
So mighty was the pressure to the square inch of their vest.

Behold! the cunning rascals said, the cares and woes of wealth,
'Tis all for trade and industry we sacrifice our health;
'Tis all to give employment to the lean and rabble rout,
That we qualify for apoplexy, gravel and the gout.

By dint of repetition to the point and by the way,
It came to be regarded as a truth beyond gainsay,
That wealth was one great gruesome round of many-headed ills,
Involving constant dosing, opening medicine and pills.

And yet in spite of all the pains they took about their pleasure,
They lived their full three score and ten and died with lots of leisure;
And though they posed as martyrs at the altar of enjoyment,
They seemed to thrive much better than the folk in their employment.

These workers, on the other hand *would* die at half the span
Beseeming in the civilised and fully franchised man;
But what was most peculiar they starved in meek content,
And though they dwelt in wretched slums they always paid the rent.

They were such honest simpletons—they paid for what they
got,
And spent their time in labouring for them that laboured not;
They filled the shops with shirts and stuffs, yet singular to say,
Made shift at times without them just because they couldn't
pay.

And when the land was fat with fruits, and beasts were all in
clover,
And flowers were gay, and everything was gay the country
over,
'Twas then the wretched labourers in search of work to do,
Would tramp and starve contentedly the weary winter through.

My man, forsooth! was one of these poor weary working
wights—
Who begged and tramped by day, and slept in barn or field
o' nights,
Whose conscience gripped him tightly if when sorely famished
grown,
He dared to stay his hunger on a turnip he had sown.

Accordingly one frosty night I left him stark and cold,
A coroner's enquiry, and the rest is quickly told,
A wooden box, a pauper's cart, a nameless clammy hole,
With the canting benediction—Heaven have mercy on his
soul.

And now I'm free to come and go, I've got the run of space,
I skim the distant Milky Way or join a meteor race;
I glide clean through a cloud upon a sunbeam down to earth,
And laugh at men's and women's ways for all a spirit's worth.

A NURSERY RHYME FOR OLD KIDS

Jack Frost—Jack Frost—before you go away,
Just lift the lapel of your fez for I've a thing to say;
Right willingly and gladly I'd speed the parting guest,
But that my spleen o'ertops the cough you planted on my chest.

Jack Frost—Jack Frost—when that I was young,
Folk said you were a merry sprite and high your praises sung,
And I was aye your willing dupe and smoothed the causeway slide,
Which lent the proud man Mercury heels, and bumped his nether side.

Jack Frost—Jack Frost—none but a coward knave
Would seize an infant by the throat and drop it in the grave;
None but a slimy miscreant, by reptile instincts led,
Would knock old women on the chest and old men on the head.

The young and hale laugh gaily as round their steps you creep,
They glory in the filmy web you weave o'er waters deep;
But when they quit good honest earth and strike out from the brink,
You crack into a wide-mouthed laugh and let the beggars sink.

Oh! weasel-hearted Jack Frost, the world shall know your deeds,
You rob the poor man of his work and multiply his needs;
The strong and rich despise you and them you hurry by,
Unless you catch them unawares and nip them on the sly.

You rot the feet of little birds, all innocence and song,
And make us doubt if Providence takes note of right and
wrong;
You cause the rich to query, by the harm you spread about,
"If Heaven sends such cruel foes—what need at us to shout?"

Some spots there be, I've heard say, where Jack Frost hasn't
been,
Where golden fruits and flowers and corn the year round may
be seen;
Nor want, nor envy ever stirs a symptom of unrest,
Nor white frost—nor black frost—to harden nature's breast.

It's O! to be a dormouse or hibernating bear,
The wisdom of one's ancestors is manifested there;
At Jack Frost's earliest approach they go below to sleep,
And dream of nuts and honey till the buds begin to peep.

Jack Frost—Jack Frost—you've lost me many a friend,
And now you hold me by the throat with lungs too worn to
mend;
I fancy I could hibernate, but yet I do not know,
And it's usual to snuff out if you want to lie below.

Come listen, fellow citizens, these are the outs and ins,
Jack Frost was made and forwarded as penance for folk's sins;
But like all other punishments, 'twas willed he should be
blind,
And then let loose to play the deuce with wicked human
kind.

And like all other punishments, Jack Frost made matters
worse,
The wicked shut him out of doors and didn't care a curse;

But after he'd played havoc for a temporary spell,
Jove got his mighty dander up and sent Jack Frost to hell.

He soon reduced the temperature—inside of a week
The devil had diptheria and found he couldn't speak;
And it was clearly manifest, this frigid visaged lout
Would if he stayed another week clear all the devils out.

So Jove sent him a-touring with orders not to stay
Too long in any given place the equatorial way,
But to keep within a certain stated circle near the poles,
Save when a country blacked its face by stealing nature's
coals.

And so he comes to England, earth's blackest little brat,
Bored through with deadly worm-shafts, and cold enough at
that:
But there are other worlds than this, and what I want to know
Is, will Jack Frost be good enough to pack his traps and go?

Jack Frost—Jack Frost—take a walk in space,
Skim the creamy Milky Way, kiss the moon's cheese face;
Go to Mars or Jupiter, stay with each a year,
Then go anywhere you like that's further still from here.

QUEER CARDS FROM A CURIOUS PACK

In the year Once-upon-a-time, which, as everybody knows happened long, long ago, a few of us, green and tender saplings, started a society, the simple object of which was to nationalise the inhabited world. Our holy trinity consisted of Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity, and our favourite colour was crude red. Yet we were kindly, well-disposed young chaps—some of us with a leaning to vegetarianism. We believed that the object of life was to be happy; the place to be happy, here; the time to be happy, now; and the way to be happy, to make others so—even at the risk of making ourselves intensely miserable. On every other conceivable subject we differed with the whole-hearted cock-sureness of youthful infallibility. Once a stranger coming among us had the hardihood to describe the society to me, its hon. secretary, as "a collection of oddities," whereupon I wrote him down ass and drove him from our gates.

It was in this society that a profound revelation as to the precise origin and nature of names appeared to me. Native modesty and the regulation allowance of laziness have, between them, prevented me from writing a volume in elucidation of this—perhaps the only really original theory of names. Briefly, I hold names to denote the exact opposite of natures. Names are natural sarcasms, obvious to everyone save the bearers; and this is borne out even in the sombre circles of science. A biologist will give a name to a microscopic animal forty thousand times larger than the animal itself—looking as grave as an owl in the christening process.

By way of demonstrating the truth of this an example or two in point may suffice, and the amicable reader will be able to supply plenty of necessary corroborative data from among his own friends and acquaintances. Note then, our tenderest-hearted member was named Nails; our most yielding and soft-natured member gave it out that he was a Hardman; the sternest revolutionist of the lot was called Lamb; and our smartest, most-knowing man signed himself Simon Green. We had a teetotaller in our ranks whose life was a round of torment, inasmuch as an ironical fate had labelled him John Beer. In consideration of his hard lot we thoughtfully nick-named him John Barleycorn. Need I say further?

Now there is more in this matter of names than superficial people imagine. The silly, simple, love-struck Juliet, is reported to have asked: "What's in a name?"—as who should say,—nothing; and a crowd of unthinking people have since echoed the query. But the wily Iago has answered: "He who takes from me my good name leaves me poor indeed"—or words to that effect. Again the wise saw says, "Give a dog a bad name, and you may hang him." Here, then, is much virtue, or much mischief, in a name. Polly Dabbs, who turned up her nose (partly assisted by nature in the act) at my brother, after she had been engaged to sing at the New Connexion concert, would never have been a *prima donna* to this day if the astute impressario who picked her up had not billed her as Marie St. Diabolo. Many men whom I have known have suffered seriously through life on account of indifferent and sometimes, downright bad names inherited from their fathers.

So then I do solemnly asseverate here that some men are born with good (or bad) names; some have good (or bad)

names thrust upon them ; and none has the name to which he (and it may be she) is fairly and justly entitled.

(N.B.—The above paragraph is worth re-perusing, though I says it myself as should'nt.)

It was even so in the club which we formed for the Internationalisation of the entire world. One day there came to us one who sought to be initiated—a young man, bringing with him a pair of mild blue eyes and a corrugated Scotch accent. The soothing, reassuring effect of his blue eyes just about neutralised the galvanic shocks which seemed to bristle in his brogue. All therefore went smoothly till he divulged his name, which was Jock McAuchlin, whereat the club jumped to its feet as one man. Anticipating trouble and wishing to gain time, I asked him how he spelled it—heaven only knows how he pronounced it ! "I move," shouted a rather excitable and sensitive member, named Wood, "I move that it be not accepted !" "That *what* be not accepted ?" I asked. "*It*," he replied, "*that name*." The unfortunate owner offered to drop the "Mc," "in orthor to sumplify ut," he said, and on a vote being taken he managed to become a member by a short neck.

Poor Jock !—I called him Jock from the first, and thus avoided any feeling of resentment rising against him—his name hung like a mill-stone round his neck. No two people pronounced it alike, and the more they mentioned it the more dissatisfied they became. Dislike of the name begot dislike of the man, and though he was really a hard and able worker, always the first to tackle risky jobs, he was always regarded with doubt and misgiving.

The public were never reconciled to Jock's unspeakable surname. Besides, his accent aggravated them. His con-

sistent advocacy of the Internationalisation of the known globe ultimately brought him the usual reward. He was dismissed from employment, and set off on tramp in search of fresh woods. I was in constant communication with him, knew his conditions most intimately, and was much gratified to learn that, although often suffering acute privations, he still kept steadily advancing the principles to which we were both bound. His undoubted organising abilities were exercised to good effect. He established democratic and industrial organisations in various parts of the country, and invariably received kicks for his pains.

Years after, he came back to Ourtown, where he had obtained a situation, and again he threw himself into the Democratic movement. He brought back with him the same distasteful name and accent (the latter a trifle modified), but a pair of glasses now detracted from the mildness of the blue eyes aforesaid, and a wealth of red whiskers embellished his otherwise placid countenance. Now—it is pious opinion of my own, and I give it quite gratuitously—red whiskers are not beautiful, and they look decidedly bellicose. I remonstrated with him over this hirsute adornment—in plain English I entreated him to "get his hair cut"—but all in vain. He had no eye for the grotesque, and he took his whiskers seriously.

Somewhere about this time it was that our members set to revising their programme and propaganda. Some thought—Jock among the number—that we might advantageously limit the scope of our ideal to the five continents, while directing our operations more immediately to our own locality. Others were strongly of opinion that our ideal was too narrow, and they proposed as the object of the society the internationalisation

of the known and undiscovered world, with a view to the eventual inter-solarisation of the planets and their satellites. They entirely ignored the locality to which, for the most part, they were comparative strangers, and they might have been easily lost in the best known parts of it. But the solar-idealists lost the vote, and as a matter of course they all turned upon Jock. He was dubbed a "reactionist," "a Mr. Facing-both-Ways," "a traitor to principle pure and simple" (especially simple), and then some brilliant intellect suggested "Tory money." That settled it. There is something about Tory money which makes the angels weep. It is not counterfeit coin; in fact, an expert would not be able to detect it from Liberal money. The butcher, the baker, the missionary, and the mendicant accept it with thanks and hopes of future favour. But if you differ with a man in politics, and you are a smart up-to-date sort of person, declare your opponent's politics to be the result of Tory money. You may then go home to your virtuous pillow and sleep the sleep of the just, quite satisfied that you have damned a rascal who dared to differ with you. It is a famous argument; I don't know why and perhaps you won't know why, but it is nevertheless the fact. And, remember, it is no sort of retort to say your adversary's opinions are the outcome of Liberal money. Nobody will believe it. Liberals will part with many things, but they stick to their money.

It is strange how ready people are to listen to the evil that can be said of a man and to turn a deaf ear to the good. "The evil that men do lives after them; the good is oft interred with their bones." Nor should we be surprised at so melancholy a fact. Let each of us hold the mirror to our own minds, and candidly confess that it is because the evil is so easy to see and to retain, besides being so pleasant to

gossip about. Hence it was that McAuchlin's successful achievements (and they were not a few) were ignored, while all his foiled attempts at good were flung at him, and by the very people for whom they were made. Quite foolishly I made a feeble attempt to stem the flood of calumny which was gradually engulfing him round. The crowd was incredulous. I—what had I to say? Something in his favour? Who wants to hear anything in favour of the man who is down? If you cannot join in with the general kick stand aside, or be prepared to take a stray kick or two directed at the man on the ground.

Meanwhile Jock preserved an outward calm, surprising to his friends and exasperating to his enemies. He never relaxed his efforts to advance the cause with which he had associated himself in the face of determined opposition from within and without. During these days, however, I observed traces of a curious change coming over his habits of thought. Earlier on he had been a democrat of democrats, possessed of a passing faith in the principles of democracy. His hate of tyrants could be felt. But now he began to speak more tolerantly of the Cæsars, and he shocked my democratic feelings by an expression of sympathy with the last days of Napoleon. Once in a burst of confidence he told me that, in his opinion, Moses was the greatest man that the world had produced, and only such another as Moses could raise a democracy out of the miserable mob of wage-captives who worshipped the golden calf of capital in the civilised world of to-day. These expressions, painful as they were to my anti-tyrant inclinations, were but the natural outcome of the cruel conditions which at that time were bearing McAuchlin under.

Matters were now approaching a climax. A number of badly paid workmen whom Jock had organised, struck work, and asked him for his assistance. Always ready for thankless work, Jock rushed in and kept the men together for about three days. They were three terrible days, rain falling continuously the whole time. On the morning of the third day I saw Jock. He had not slept a wink for forty-eight hours, and had been with the pickets in the rain for most of that time. Then he told me that the solar-idealists and certain other enemies of his had been among the men slandering him and weakening their confidence in him. He complained bitterly of this, not for himself, but on account of the injury it was doing to the chances of the men. On the evening of the third day some of the men determined to go back to work, declaring at the same time their want of confidence in Jock. Jock met them at the work gates, and attempted to persuade them to remain out until the rest of the men were got together. A few were willing to do so, but the majority refused. Jock tried to reason with them, when one of the malcontents struck him, and a free fight ensued, some of the men taking his part. Jock, besides having his skull fractured in the row, was arrested, sentenced to three months' imprisonment for intimidation, and the strike was lost.

At the end of the three months, myself and another met him at the prison gates. He was worn to a shadow, and had been in the hospital most of the time suffering from brain fever. We escorted him home, stayed with him a little while, until, on his complaining of weakness, we left him lying in his bed. The following day we called again, and in answer to our inquiry we were told that he had died during the night.

Those who care to search in the woodiest recess of Our-

town Cemetery will find a small marble tablet bearing the following lines:—

"HERE LIES
THE VICTIM OF A BAD NAME,
DONE TO DEATH
BY LIARS AND SLANDERERS."

—From *The Factory Times.*

THE OLD MAN OF THE MOUNTAIN

IN THREE CHAPTERS

CHAPTER I.

EVERYBODY has heard of Sindbad the Sailor and the Old Man of the Sea; how the wicked Old Man caught Sindbad napping, and locked his legs round the sailor's shoulders, with the evident intention of enjoying a free ride for the remainder of his unnatural life; how strenuously Sindbad objected to be written (or ridden, you takes your choice) down ass with such a bold hand; how, therefore, he refused to regard the Old 'Un's close attentions in the light of a disinterested desire to oblige, and of the subsequent struggle for mastery between the two, which finally resulted in the overthrow, through drink, of the wicked Old Man, and the emancipation of the too teetotal sailor. All this is better understood of good, Christian folk, than is their Bible; but it is otherwise with Sindgood the Simple.

Now, it looks to me as if Western folk who go East for tales of the marvellous do a deal of unnecessary travelling, since there are many more marvellous happenings under their own noses than all that is set down in the "Arabian Nights' Entertainments." Besides, Easterns have a proud disdain for facts, and hence their stories will not always bear critical scrutiny; whereas most of the adventures of Sindgood the Simple can be verified with little inquiry, as the man himself is alive now and can, if necessary, be produced.

Like the celebrated sailor of Bagdad, our own Sindgood is the most modest, unassuming fellow in the world, blind to his own peculiar merits, and dumb as to the million hair-breadth 'scapes attending his adventurous career. It will thus be seen that there is nothing in common with him and the modern explorer, who exhausts the telegraph to fill the daily press, and exploits the publisher and public platform in brazen advertisement of his twopenny deeds of "derring do," performed mainly by his idiotic followers, and consisting of a really profitable exchange of home manufactured explosive bullets for the rough unfinished ivories of the heathen in Central Africa. And yet our own Sindgood had travelled much and in many lands. Macclesfield had no terrors for him, and he was as much at home in a slum tenement as the Queen of this country is when abroad. But for all that a really business-like publisher would as little dream of offering Sindgood £40,000 for the story of his travels as he would of publishing my manuscript poetry without guarantee and subsidy against possible, probable losses. For Sindgood lacked business push quite as much as he lacked bounce, and business without bounce—pugilists' postscripts to the contrary notwithstanding—spells failure in the go-ahead days that are. So Sindgood went without the sweets of advertisement, not that he loved seclusion more, but that he knew a thing or two less.

Howbeit, of the many adventures of our hero by flood and field I choose not to speak, for though he had explored the bowels of the earth and the bed of the ocean, bringing forth with him countless treasures, he still remained as poor as a church mouse, and as truly thankful as a church bishop ought to be. Some people considered this as evidence of his piety and Christian resignation, whereas, in simple truth, it was

nothing other than positive proof of his downright ingrained, bovine imbecility. It is, however, of his latest adventure that I particularly wish to tell, partly because of its resemblance to the one which befel the Oriental sailor, and also because he is not quite through with it at the time of my writing.

It chanced, many years ago—and the exact date hardly matters—that Sindgood the Simple found himself the sole human occupant of a dreary, dismal, misty, island. Like the profane poet surveying the fly in amber, you may wonder "how the devil he got there?" I answer in the modern way—"that is another story." And if you insist on knowing the name of the island I reply that the island by any other name would still be a dismal, misty island. A plague on these impertinent particulars! The central facts to remember are (*a*) Sindgood the Simple (*b*) landed on a desolate island. Simplicity is the soul of truth.

Before going further permit me to state that this is not a philosophical treatise; on the contrary, it is, with occasional interruptions, an attempt to tell a story with as much regard to consistency as the facts will allow. Inquisitive people interested in the whenness, the whereness, and the howness of things are recommended to read Bax's "Problems of Reality."

To return to our island. It was a wild, bleak, boggy patch of land viewed from the position in which Sindgood found himself. The shore running sheer into the sea was one vast expanse of quicksands; and stretching for miles into the uplands was a waste, boggy, marshy soil, so that our hero was fain to keep moving for fear of being sucked under the surface. For a long and wearisome period he struggled onward through

the mist and mud of the low-lying lands, until gradually the earth became firmer under his tread and the mists began to clear. At length he saw outlined before his eyes the steep sides of a verdure-covered mountain, whereat he rejoiced with exceeding great joy, and pressed forward with such vigour as his then exhausted condition of body admitted. After mnch effort he finally dragged himself high on the dry land of the mountain side, whereupon he lay down and sleep watched over him.

Chapter II.

Having thus satisfactorily disposed of our hero, let us cast a loose eye on the curious shape that lay down behind Sindgood at the exact moment he himself lay down. I don't think I mentioned this shape before, and, to be candid about the matter, it didn't occur to me till now. The fact is (as facts go) the figure was not discernible until Sindgood was well through the mists, and even then it was only dimly discernible. Not that I wish to excuse myself for the seeming oversight. Indeed, no. I might, had I chosen, have reasoned, since "coming events cast their shadows before," and going events necessarily cast their shadows behind, that the shape was a shadow. But I didn't. Or again, if I were a mystery-monger, I might have dropt dark hints as to its being Sindbad's "doppelganger." But it wasn't. Be silent, therefore, that you may hear what it was. The shape, then, was no other than—of course, you have guessed it. The art of story-telling consists in allowing readers every opportunity of guessing.

Never had mortal eye beheld so gruesome an object as the creature which lay beside Sindgood the Simple. It was hairy and lean; its head was large and surmounted by a pair of twisted horns; it had great goggle-eyes, and it slept with one open, while it winked the other; its jaws hung down on its skinny breasts like two empty pouches; its belly was wrinkled and overlapped like the folds of a collapsed gas-bag, and its hind legs, shaped like a pig's, terminated in cloven hoofs, while its fore legs, or arms, were long, though attenuated, and ended in a couple of enormous clapper-claws. To look at it for an instant was as good as a gourmand's nightmare. Can I say fairer?

You would think it was the devil, but you would be mistaken if you did. Need I say more?

When Sindgood woke from slumber, the first thing his eyes lighted on was the creature whose identity is to us no longer a matter of mystery. Being a practical, hardheaded sort of chap, he did not pass his hand across his brow and proceed to wonder if he still slept, or dreamt, nor did he pinch himself, or do any of the fantastic things that other heroes in a similar plight are commonly supposed to do. On the contrary he up and said straight out, "Who the deuce are you?" on which the creature, sitting bolt upright and blinking its eyes, remarked,

"Why, don't you know me, Sindgood?"

"Blowed if I do!" was the reply.

"Know, then, I am your long-lost, sorrowing father, Sindgood."

"Come, Old Man, drop that sort of talk. *You* my father!"

"Indeed, it is true, Sindgood!"

"With such eyes?"

"The better to see with, Sindgood."

"All skin and claws!"

"The better to grab with, Sindgood."

"And a blooming tail, as I'm a living sinner!"

"The true missing link, my Sindgood."

"Well, this takes the cake, Old Man."

"I generally do, my son."

Whereupon they eyed one another in silence for a brief space. Resuming the conversation Sindgood addressed himself to the shape as follows:—

"Ever since I can remember I have heard it said that my father was as fine a sample of manhood as could well be found, and that he came to grief on a vegetable diet, backed up in the same by the woman who was my mother."

"Bosh!" said the grinning shape, "that's an old wife's tale. Besides, you never had a mother; it wasn't necessary. Now, do be reasonable, Sindgood. Look at things as they are. There's the bog of No-man's-land below you; beyond is the sea. That way madness lies, but you are at liberty to take it. Mark the word 'liberty,' Sindgood—fine word is liberty. I always say give a man liberty and he'll give himself away. You see then, Sindgood, you have the liberty to come and go."

"I see," said Sindgood.

"But," continued the shape, "here's this mountain side, fertile land, rich in produce, good for you and me, but it is not yours, Sindgood; in fact, you're a trespasser. This place belongs to——"

"Who?" cried Sindgood.

"The Old Man of the mountain," was the reply.

"But who is he?" quoth Sindgood.

"I am he!" returned the shape. (Exactly so, good reader, but calm yourself.)

"Oh!" exclaimed our hero; "well, and what then?"

"This, then," said the Old Man; "you may remain on my mountain, nay, you shall work on it and live on it, if you accept my conditions, which I think you will like when——"

"But if I don't like?" interrupted our hero.

"Why," said the Old Man, "you have still your liberty."

"What liberty?" queried Sindgood.

"Well," said the Old Man, "if you don't like my conditions, you have the liberty to lump them."

"Very true!" assented Sindgood.

To cut a long dialogue short, the Old Man placed his conditions cunningly before our simple wayfaring friend. He pointed out to Sindgood that heaven had given him a big head and goggle eyes, while he went about on feeble, ricketty legs. Since, therefore, Sindgood had long, strong legs, a broad back, and no head worth speaking about, it only required a union into one common concern for them to become a perfect working organisation. He proposed, then, that Sindgood should hoist him—the Old Un—upon his broad shoulders, and he would exercise his eyes and head for their mutual benefit, while Sindgood did the carrying and travelling. This much arranged, they would proceed to ascend the mountain, supplying themselves with the necessary fruits and foods as they progressed, but on the strict understanding that all the products which rolled down the side, from summit to base, were, by sacred and inviolate right of contract, the Old Un's.

Sindgood mused a moment, glanced at the wizened shape beside him, and, reasoning that it would be an easy burden to

bear, he nodded agreement. So collaring him forthwith he flung him across his shoulders, on which the Old Un, settling himself with a tenacious grip, cracked his tail, and away they went merrily up the mountain side.

Chapter III.

Up through furze and bramble they pressed, Sindgood with his head bent low clearing a path through the underwood, and occasionally snatching a root for his sustenance, while the Old Man swept aside the long branches that crossed their way, striking down the ripe fruits and munching incessantly. Higher and higher they groped and stumbled until they reached the mountain top, when, wheeling round as in a dizzy delirium, they commenced to descend. Rapidly they hurried down, bearing with them such products as lay strewed in the underwood, till on approaching the base of the mountain, overcome by their increasing velocity, they fell headlong, prone and gasping, at the foot.

Recovering almost simultaneously from the shock they had received, Sindgood and the Old Man gazed at the wealth of grain and fruit heaped in profusion round them. And already our simple hero felt the worm of hunger at work within him.

"When shall we commence our ascent again?" quoth Sindgood.

"All in good time," replied the Old Man, "but I must first dispose of the fruits that lie here."

"Why not let me join with you, then, since I am hungry?" said Sindgood.

"Sirrah!" was the reply, "part of these fruits is payment for risk run by me in riding you. The remainder is the reward of abstinence."

"Really, Old Man," rejoined Sindgood, "you seem to have thrived on your abstinence. Anyhow, you might allow me to go to the mountain in order to pick up something of a living for myself!"

"Impossible! Impracticable! U-to-pian!" shrieked the shape. "What about the freedom of contract? Would you fly in the face of political economy?"

"I beg pardon," said the simple one.

"I forgive you then," remarked the Old Un; "but O, my Sindgood, never, never, utter such blasphemy again."

So Sindgood waited in patience and in hunger while the Old Man gorged himself until he swelled visibly. When most of the fruits had been consumed and decay had set into the rest, another ascent was made and so the curious game had gone on.

As it was in the beginning so is it even now. But years have passed since then, and the Old Man has grown heavy and corpulent, and our hero breaks under the oppressive burden. Moreover, the supply of fruits has increased by the careful husbanding of Sindgood, and access to the mountain is all the more easy by reason of their constant passage to and fro. The consequence is that this interval of hunger, during which the Old Man consumes the surplus fruits that fall, becomes longer and more painful for the victim to bear, so much so that he has once or twice complained.

A mocking-bird recently sang a song to Sindgood, the burden of which is still ringing in his ears. "Rise, simple Sindgood," it seemed to say, "rub away the rust that has

gathered in your eyes from too constantly regarding the earth. Look up to the light. Sever the partnership which allots to you the labour and to another the fruits. Use your own eyes, and gather for yourself."

But Sindgood doubted his own eyes and mistrusted the mocking-bird, and the Old Man decried the songster, declaring him to be a knavish agitator seeking to batten on other people's gain. He furthermore declared that the ups and downs which they experienced on the mountain were the law of nature, like the ebb and flow of the tide. There would always be the seven fat years of boom and the seven lean years of depression. And Sindgood is disposed to think so too.

There are however, prophets who declare that he will one day insist on sharing the surplus fruits of the mountain; others assert that he will yet throw his rider and reverse matters; and again, there are others who prognosticate a cataclysmal cropper in which the Old Un will break his bally neck. I do not pretend to know. I simply chronicle the plain facts. Sindgood has not yet recovered from his last great fall; but this much is certain: he will carry his burden up the mountain at least once more. He is willing, eager, nay, dying to do it.

And now my tale is ended. Of course, the critical sharp will protest against its lame and impotent conclusion. I, however, stand on facts, and fear not. Truth is stranger than fiction—more's the pity! since it only shows what a considerable number of liars are about. But if anyone is in

doubt as to where Sindgood the Simple may be found, why, then, my answer to such an one is—if you cannot see through a stone wall, look over it. The man who guesses eggs when he sees shells is likely to be as far out as the man who guesses oysters.

"DUMMY"

[Being the complete text of a letter, addressed to the Coroner, found in the breast pocket of a young man who had committed suicide.]

"Sir,—Seeing that the course I am about to take will most likely result in the necessary formal farce of a post-mortem examination, I take the chance of telling you some of the causes which led up to my present lucid interval, before the expiry of which I hope to be no more.

"Of course you will, nevertheless, recommend a verdict of 'temporary insanity.' British law very considerately provides that excuse for all who take the liberty to die by their own hand—as if human life were dear in Britain! It is a well-intentioned insult to the dead, and may possibly serve as a consolation to the sane persons who linger on living in their own made hell out of fear of a worse hereafter, but it is hardly worth while calling twelve men together in order to brazen out so utterly lying and stupid a finding. However, it can be of no consequence to me what the verdict is when the verdict is given. I am satisfied of my sanity. It is for you now to decide.

"Mr. Coroner, and gentlemen of the jury, you are sitting round the body of one who was a deaf mute; who had never heard the sound of a human voice; who breathed, moved, and had a being, but never knew what it was to live. Do you realise the misery, the pathos, the hopelessness of it?

"I was born a deaf mute. My earliest recollection is of a large schoolroom full of silent lads of various ages. It seemed to me natural to find the world soundless, speechless, as no

doubt it was to my school-mates. I was a fairly big boy before it dawned on me that something was amiss with us all. We had occasional visitors to see us, and I began to notice that our teachers communicated with them by some invisible method. I was not long afterwards in discovering that our visiting friends possessed the power of speech and the sense of hearing, and that we were a school of physically unfinished beings, differentiated from the rest of humanity by our lack of those two important faculties.

" Such companionship as may be found among dumb animals was ours at the school. The youngsters, happy in their ignorance, frolicked their happy hours away. The older lads, sensible of their misfortune, were bound more or less together by depressing bonds of sympathy. Our general education was a painfully slow process. It takes a trinity of faculties to keep pace with an active brain. The eye sees, and if the brain does not comprehend, the tongue inquires, and the ear conveys the answer to the brain. But in our case there was no such simple method possible, inquiry was complex and difficult, replies were vague and frequently meaningless. Thus the eager desire to know and understand things was quelled by degrees, until, in the long run, our minds were mainly given up to the mastery of such mechanical arts as were considered essential to our individual training. Our companionship was, therefore, of a strictly limited and commonplace character, but it served.

" Years of laborious study put me in possession of some glimmering of the meaning of letters, but the books I had to read were of a choice order, not calculated to disturb one's peace of mind much. In due course I was considered qualified to quit school and take the position of assistant book-

keeper at a philanthropist's establishment in Drudgtown. Up to this, matters had gone fairly smooth with me. I had lived a healthy, animal life in common with people similarly afflicted to myself. Our ideas of life were simple and few; no sense of physical inferiority troubled us. But here was I now, in the great world, mixing with fully endowed and miraculously enlightened men and women—me, a poor, weak, maimed remnant of a man!

"I took my place at the desk. Communications were made to me on slips of paper. I noticed—deaf mutes are quick-sighted—the curious glances of my fellow-clerks; caught them in the act of grimacing at me and making queer signs evidently relating to myself; and I wondered. What had I done to merit their contempt? They could speak to one another, and hear each other speak, but all was silent to me; I could utter neither prayer for their goodwill nor word of reproach. One day I discovered they had coined a name for me. It was 'Dummy.' That night, Mr. Coroner and gentlemen of the jury, I went home to my bedroom and cried some foolish tears—an act of temporary insanity truly. But I felt then that to be an outcast dwelling in the midst of men was worse than death.

"My life in the lodgings which had been taken for me was dull and companionless, though the people were good and kind to me, and did their best to make matters cheerful. Social parties were in great demand—for there were other lodgers besides me in the house—and to these parties came joyous young fellows and their sweethearts, or their sisters, who made merry with music and dancing and singing the night long. To all these parties I had an open invitation, but, after one or two attendances, I ceased going altogether.

I was the skeleton at the feast. There I sat, pulseless, motionless, a galvanised corpse, while jest after jest, and laugh after laugh circulated round the table. When the singing and playing commenced it was worse still. Here was a subtle influence called music of which I had not the shadow of a conception. Yet I saw the faces of the others telling eloquently of the varying emotions called into play by the efforts of the singers and players. Quietly then I crept to my bedroom to sit alone and think, and think, and think.

"I thought it was cruel that God should allow a creature like myself to be dragged into an existence which was nothing short of exquisite torture. What was my sin that I should be so visited? Had I in some previous existence made foul and slanderous use of the faculty of speech or lent my ear to base and degrading suggestions? And was my present condition the penalty? Ah! no. I knew better. I knew well enough that physical infirmity has physical cause at the bottom of it. But still these curious fancies were my constant companions.

"About this time it was that a fellow-lodger began to pay visits to me. He was a quiet, thoughtful young man, and had the reputation of the household, being a man of views and advanced opinions. Indeed, the other lodgers had nick-named him "Viewy" on account of his peculiarity in that respect. Well, "Viewy" paid me a number of visits, and brought with him a number of books to read; poetical and imaginative works most of them were. They opened a new world to me —an unreal world, it might be, but a beautiful, bright world for all that, peopled with loving men and women whose language I could hear and whose emotions I could fervently share. "Viewy" was delighted with the changes they wrought in me; he encouraged me to go on reading, promising

a richer and richer store of thought as I progressed. One day he came to me in a great hurry and laid a book on the table. 'There,' he said, 'while those donkeys below are dancing, do you read that and learn to see nature. Not one in a thousand has managed that. If you are deaf and dumb, my lad, all the more reason there is for you to see with the widest possible vision!' Saying which he left me. I could follow "Viewy" by watching the action of his lips better than I could follow most people, and so I at once picked up the book. It was a volume of Ruskin.

"Acting on the advice of 'Viewy,' I took long walks into the country. Seeing, partly through the poet's, and partly through Ruskin's media, I was for a time transformed from a dull, introspective clod into an enchanted child of nature. Too soon, however, the sense of my incompleteness once more enshrouded me. I saw the pure streams dancing and hurrying along, the sunlight striking across them and reflecting the tints of the sky and the colours of the landscape, but I heard no musical ripple, no sound of laughing waters. The leaves of the trees quivering, brown, gold, green, and purple, spoke not to me in the soft rustle about which my poets sang. I saw the lark dart out of the grass and begin his slow, swaying ascent, and I knew he was pulsating with divine song—the delight of all ages—but to me it was only a drunken, staggering attempt to scale the thin air. No, it is by her sweet sounds that nature lives to the human sense. She is no more to the deaf mute than a clever landscape is to the complete man. So would my thoughts revert from the handiwork of God to my own ignominious, misbegotten body—twice cursed and hateful in my own sight.

"By this, however, I had habituated myself to country

rambles, my favourite resort being a public park some few miles from the centre of Drudgtown. This park possessed a beautiful stretch of water, a portion of which was used for boating and another portion for angling. Here by the side of the water I used to sit and watch the swift, gliding minnows, and the sullen, sleeping perch, that lay in the clear shadows at my feet. Gazing into the pure water and watching the graceful movements of its denizens had a tranquillising effect on me. Here I could look on creatures like to myself—silent in the great world of sounds.

Seated thus one day, my eyes lifted by impulse, and I saw a boat speeding perilously in the direction of the wire netting which separated the boating from the fishing water. I jumped to my feet and beckoned frantically, but the rower had his back to me, and the young woman who was steering saw me too late. The laugh died on her lips ; she must have screamed, for the young man turned to see what was the danger. But the boat was on the netting even as he turned, and it capsized, throwing both occupants into the water. Although a good swimmer, I paused a moment to see what would happen. The boat righted, and the young man came to the top within arm's reach of it. He at once threw out his arms, clutched the side of the boat, and clung to it with the desperation of a thoroughly frightened man. The girl drifted away from the boat, and then I jumped into the water.

" It is no slight matter to drag a limp, heavy body through seventy or eighty yards of water, encumbered at the same time with your own clothing, and I was well-nigh exhausted when I landed with my burden. Glancing across at the young fellow clinging to the boat, I found he had attracted assistance—probably by his shouts—so I was at liberty to

give undivided attention to the inanimate creature at my feet. Stooping to pick her up, I was struck, at first sight, by the marvellous beauty of her countenance, notwithstanding the tightly-drawn lips, swollen neck, and other signs of semi-suffocation. Tenderly, therefore, and with as much speed as I could summon, I bore her to the refreshment rooms which were close at hand, where many willing helpers bestirred themselves chafing her palms and anointing her temples with brandy and doing such services as would tend to restore animation. Soon after her companion was assisted—shivering and chattering with the cold—to the same room. He was a tall, fair, muscular-looking fellow, and was genuinely distressed at the plight of the lady. He beseeched one to fetch a doctor, another to hire a cab, and, on seeing me, he came forward, shook my hand, and uttered some words of thanks, but what they were I was at a loss to make out on account of the chattering of his teeth. I stayed near the young lady until she began to show signs of returning consciousness, and then I went home.

"I was now on the threshold of your fool's paradise, but I hesitated before daring to enter. I felt warmed and elated in the knowledge of having saved a precious human life—not warped and stunted, but beautiful and complete. So my imaginings ran on. Nature, I thought, loves to present her best works in the fairest colours, and the beautiful face I had seen, mirrored, in my heated fancy, the beautiful soul and noble character of a perfect being. This thought gave me pause. There could be nothing in common between myself and such a creature—I could but gaze in speechless worship without exciting any responsive feelings save perhaps, pity, or it might be contempt. Still I had saved her life.

" Therein lay my delusive hope. I felt an absurd sort of claim on the life I had plucked from the water, and I gloried in it. I did not know her name ; whether she was maid, wife, or widow, never troubled me ; but when my imagination had pourtrayed her manifold excellences—the sweetest, most expressive of voices ; quick to hear and see ; divinely gentle, tender, and sympathetic—then would the little common-sense I possessed drag me despairingly from the paragon I had conjured. Alas, that I had saved her life !

" Deaf mutes fall in love on the slightest provocation. I knew this ; had been warned about it, but one might as well fight against the law of gravity. The poor dumb and deaf creature, shut off from free converse with his or her kind, isolated in the thick of the social world, unable to participate in any of the common amusements which lend variety to the existence of the most sluggish of hearing beings, inevitably turns to what, after all, is the ideal of human relations—to wit, the union of two beings in one all-absorbing love. There is no other satisfactory communion possible for the deaf mute whose love is the more intense in that outside influences rarely divert its course.

" By which reasoning, at such a juncture, you will rightly conclude, Mr. Coroner, that I was now well into the maze of my fool's paradise. Even so. The face I had seen had bewitched me. Out in the street I sought for it in every woman that passed me. Again and again I made my way to the park aforesaid, in the hope of encountering my enchantress. But it was not to be in that manner.

" It would be fully six months after the boating incident that a neat missive, containing an invitation to a party at my employer's house, was put into my hand. It transpired that

all the employees in the establishment had been invited in order to celebrate the coming of age of our employer's only daughter. At first I was very much disinclined to go, and I put the matter before 'Viewy,' who said it would be an act of churlish discourtesy to absent one's self in such circumstances. I accordingly resigned myself to fate, and on the arrival of the date of the affair, I presented myself at the house, which was quite lively with gaily dressed women and superbly starched men. I kept well in the background—which appears a very easy thing to do at grand parties—until my attention was drawn to the curious desire of our host to introduce us severally to his daughter. My employer was somewhat eccentric in his ways, and, as I have already remarked, passed for a philanthropist in the public estimation. I was the last to go through this formal ceremony, feeling a little nervous at the ordeal, which was certainly stupid, since I learned that you were simply bowed in and bowed out and the affair ended. In accordingly I went; our host was standing beside his daughter, who was seated with her head bent, seemingly wrapt in the contemplation of her dainty slippers, so that I only caught a glimpse of her golden hair. Lightly he touched her on the shoulder and quickly she lifted her face to him, my eyes following. His lips pronounced my name, adding also that I was a deaf mute. With a swift movement she turned her face to mine, her eyes looking inexpressible tenderness, and rising from her seat, she advanced with outstretched hand. For an instant I reeled, my senses were clouded, and after mechanically clasping her hand I stumbled out of the apartment.

"It was she whose life I had saved!

"I passed out into the open like one in a dream; my mind

was a chaos of conflicting thoughts, in the midst of which was the constant image of a heavenly face shining with radiant tenderness. The touch of her hand still warm upon mine, and the look of her eyes drawing tears from my heart—how should I contain myself? Gradually, however, I cooled down, and the sound of the gong brought clusters of folk from all parts of the grounds. I joined them and went into the house.

"On entering the dining-hall I was arrested by an imposing person and led to a seat near the head of the table. Our host had taken his place; his daughter sat near, and by her side was the young man who caused the unfortunate disaster in which the three of us had played a part. Presently he saw me and, starting from his seat, he impulsively stretched his hand across the table so that I was compelled to take it. Then turning to the others he commenced to talk eagerly, evidently describing my rescue of his companion. To my intense confusion the father rose from his chair and rushed towards me, flinging his arms round my neck and hugging me near to suffocation, grunting thanks and praises, I suppose, all the time, for though his lips worked they conveyed no clear meaning. After a while this ceased and his daughter, with tears glistening in her eyes, handed me a slip of paper on which were the following words:—

"'*May God bless you as I would! Like yourself I too am a deaf mute.*'

"Again I felt as one stunned, though on this occasion the sensation lasted much longer. Oh! what a world of unspeakable, unthinkable emotions those words awakened in my heart. The tears sprang to my eyes, and it was with difficulty that I kept from breaking down altogether. Turning at the touch of

someone behind me, the form of the young man loomed before me. He grasped both my hands and earnestly proceeded to thank me, etc., for having saved his—what? Great God! did he say 'affianced bride?' He observed my intensely interrogative look, and added: 'Yes, we are to be married a month from now.'

"There could be no mistaking his meaning. I had watched his lips too closely for that. I sank into my chair dazed and stupified.

. . . .

"I remember waking as from a troubled sleep; all round me was dark; I concluded it was dead of night. Patiently I waited for the day to break, and hours seemed to pass without bringing the slightest change in the all-pervading gloom. I tried to rise, but weakness held me in its invisible bonds. I turned on my side to see if a fire burned in the grate—anything which broke the monotony of my dark surroundings would be a relief—no fire was visible. My stirring had attracted someone; I felt a light hand on my pulse; a soothing draught was placed to my lips and I drank. With all the strength at my disposal I made motions calling for a light, but none was forthcoming. (With all the strength at my disposal I made motions calling for a light, but none was forthcoming.) It flashed on me that my attendant had held my pulse and given me a medicinal drink! Words cannot depict the agony of that thought—*I must be blind!* Luckily it was a sleeping potion which I had drunk; a drowsiness came over me—my consciousness gradually fading away. Had it been otherwise I should have gone incurably mad.

"During this sleep I experienced a remarkable dream

which left an indelible impression on my mind. I dreamed I saw myself lying pale and emaciated on my bed, and that hanging over me was an indescribable shape the like of which I had never before seen. It seemed like the manifestation of thought, for, although without countenance or human shape, one was sensible, almost intuitively, of its emotions. Reproachfully it addressed my motionless body: 'So you are still enamoured of your less than animal existence, an existence which is a misery at once to yourself and to me your helpless prisoner. When I saw the fever raging through your blood, eating the flesh off your limbs and draining the marrow of your bones, I rejoiced in the prospect of liberty that lay before me. But it was otherwise ordained, and I saw, with increasing anxiety, the fever gradually subside. One hope still remained, and it was that when you realised your blindness, insanity would supervene, in which event freedom would at least be mine. But I was again deceived. You have passed the ordeal, and will live "cribbed, cabined, and confined," slowly rusting into dissolution. I, who could have inspired any ordinarily endowed human being with impulses which would have led to wise words and noble deeds; who from the treasury of my past struggles and experiences could have added to the stock of human knowledge and enhanced the chances of human happiness must needs back to the trap from which I vainly thought to emerge, and wait my appointed time.' Every syllable of this harangue was as clear to me as if written in the most luminous text. The vision faded away, but the words were ever before me.

"On my next regaining consciousness my eyes were bandaged. I had undergone some treatment or other, and

after many weary weeks I was at length able to see somewhat dimly. I was warned to exercise the greatest care as to my eyes, to wear shades, to avoid reading, etc., as the slightest strain, or accident, might induce a recurrence of blindness, which might possibly result in permanent loss of sight. And I thought of my dream and the bitter words of my captive spirit.

"'Viewy' had attended me through the greater part of my illness, and now he did his utmost to cheer my desponding humour. He told me that regular inquiries, as to my condition, came from my employer, who had behaved handsomely in not deducting from my wages during my absence from work. Also, he told me my employer's daughter had called, accompanied by her future husband, and that both were exceedingly distressed at my condition. They were now away on their honeymoon, but had promised to visit me when they came home. Again my dream came back to me.

"Slowly, but how surely! Mr. Coroner and gentlemen of the jury, the idea grew upon me that life was intolerable, impossible, under my then conditions. Day after day the resolution grew with my strength of body. 'I had lived long enough—my way of life.' Then a curious justification for the step I meditated came into my head. I would set free the imprisoned spirit of my dream. It was my duty.

"Finally, I decided on my course of action. I made out a sort of will, leaving all my belongings to 'Viewy,' the only being with whom I sincerely grieved to part. Then I deter-

mined to walk to the park, where I first saw the beautiful deaf mute, and consign myself to the waters from which I had saved her. Carefully packed in my breast pocket will be found this statement, addressed to the Coroner, containing all that is of interest in the story of 'Dummy.'

" Now, Mr. Coroner, and gentlemen of the jury, what is your verdict ? "

—*Labour Champion*, October 1893.

WAS IT A DREAM?

I DREAMED a dream of an enlightened people who worshipped an idol of Gold. They were not particular, as were the Israelites, what form their idol took, so long as it was red or yellow Gold. It might be a calf—the Israelites preferred it so—or it might be a donkey, as indeed it generally was; but shape made no manner of difference whatever, though size did. The bigger the idol the greater was the deference paid. Still, for all that, they were a very superior style of people and mighty clever—some of them. Some of them dwelled on high, dry, sillery ground, so to speak; the rest of them pigged in the muck-sties of the lowlands. Some of them were the children of Capital, the rest were the children of Labour; but they all worshipped the one god—viz., Gold. And they were extremely proud of this, you must know, and had nice names by which to make it known to themselves, such as "Unity of Faith," "Identity of Interests," "Integrity of the Empire," phrases without which no civilised nation is complete.

The children of Capital on the high, dry land, as you may suppose, were the choicest possible blend of the human breed—a little over-blended it might be, but still very choice—and they had nice views from the hill-top, nice breezes to keep their blood well oxydised, a nice bright sky to charm ill-humours away, and they bore the heat and burden of the day invariably in their stomachs. Poor things, for with all their breezes and blue pills the great concern of their lives was to

keep their poor over-worked stomachs in order, and sometimes one of their tender hearts (some of them had tender hearts) would gaze into the black welter of Labour in the lowlands and sigh for the sweet contentment of honest, silly poverty. But none of them ever emigrated in that direction.

The children of Labour down in the dismal swamps of the valley had a very poor time of it indeed. They made everything except the laws. They digged and shaped and contrived for themselves as well as for those above them; and they did not grumble at that. Oh, dear, no! On the contrary they fought with each other for the privilege (yes, it was a privilege) of doing service to the children of Capital. You see, the children of Capital had so ordered it that the folk below them could not dig or grow, or weave for themselves alone; that would encourage selfishness. So the children of Labour were *contracted* to surrender two-thirds of their earnings and makings as a sort of thanks-offering to the children of Capital, who assured them that it was good for trade. Don't think the children of Labour were slaves. Nothing of the kind! Observe the terms of the contract. Besides, they need not labour if they did not like. What then? They could beg or steal or starve, couldn't they? Of course they could. Knowing this they were immensely proud of their freedom, these people were. If anyone called them slaves they did not regard it in the light of a joke. They got blazing mad, those people did; for they took their freedom seriously, not being troubled with much sense of humour—very little of humour, and practically no sense at all.

Well, Mr. Editor, I was just on the point of waking from my dream when my attention was attracted by a crowd of people gathered on a great space in the lowlands. So I settled

down to see what might be seen. I approached the crowd instinctively, and found that they were all, or nearly so, children of Labour. They were loud in their complaints of Capital, whose children, said they, "have taken our idol from us and secreted him away in all his semblances." "We never get a glimpse of even half-a-nicker," said one. "Half-a-nicker" was a distinctive title for their idol in his humblest shape. "It is not right," said another, "that we should worship without seeing or handling. Are we not also true believers?"

Then a humourist (they call him an economist) spoke, and he said, "People, you are mistaken in thinking that there can only be but one god. Gold is good, and of course good is gold. But then Gold is not the only good, else Silver would be of no value at all. Therefore, make to yourselves a god of Silver, and all will yet be well. Bimetallism is what this country stands in need of!" But no one seemed to understand. Then a tumult of voices sounded: "Make way, make way: there is but one god, and Ikimo says it is Profit;" and I beheld a sombre-looking person with a flat head elbowing his way through the crowd. I saw him mount an up-ended barrel by means of his own self-efforts, and drawing near to hear what he had to say, I asked his name of a bystander. "Mr. Platitude Sniggers, the author of Self-assistance," he replied.

"Fellow-countrymen," began the orator, "for whatever be your faults, you are the greatest folk on earth, and fellow-countrymen of mine—why do you complain of the absence of the god it is our proudest privilege to adore? Surely you don't expect him to reveal himself in the squalid swamps of Labour-land. Have I not written, and should you not know,

that he is manifest only in the presence of those who dwell on the hill, and are called the children of Capital? What, let me ask, is this god—what but the reward of industry, abstinence, and thrift?—never mind whose! No sentimentality, no stables and mangers, and stuff about Gold; he is partial to swell places. And why not? But fellow-countrymen, he is accessible to all who have got the talent to find him. You may all scale the heights of Capital—that is, you may all try. It's a free country, my friends. Every one is free to speak what he thinks, or what he doesn't think, if he dare. Friends, what a glorious constitution it is which permits us the liberty to think and to speak if we dare. Let us all be industrious and thrifty and abstinent, and when we are these I do not hesitate to say that we may all become children of Capital and dwell in our own mansions on the hill-top, besides owning two or three rows of cottages to be let in the swamps below. That is the way to work, my friends, not by strikes, not by trade unions, not by Parliament —O dear no! A friend will now go round and distribute some leaflets containing the ten commandments, specially revised, as revealed by Capital (the father of all true believers and the goose that lays the golden eggs) to Ikimo, the profit-economist, at the beginning of the industrial era."

The speech was received with great applause, and the following is a copy of the leaflet:—

THE TEN COMMANDMENTS OF CAPITAL.

(A Revised Edition of Ikimo.)

I am the lord thy god, O labourer!
Thou art my serf and bondsman.
None other as master shalt thou serve,

Nor make to thyself any brazen image
Or substitute in my stead.
Behold, I am the proprietor of the show—
The heavens above, the earth beneath,
And even the waters that are under the earth,
With all that aboundeth therein.

I. Thou shalt not work, save to my particular profit.

II. Thou shalt not rest for all that.

III. Thou shalt not beg for thyself, thy wife, or thy children—the law is so constructed to give the missionary a chance.

IV. Thou shalt not steal, but shall be stolen from. Stealing is a fine art.

V. Thou shalt not join or give countenance to any union save the one which I have established for thy old age.

VI. Thou shalt not strike, or I will forsake thee, together with my heavens above and my earth beneath and my waters which are under the earth—and don't you forget it !

VII. Thou shalt not hearken to the voice of the Socialist, nor stray from home unless thy mother knoweth thereof.

VIII. Thou shalt not marry and beget children unless the stock of fools runs low.

IX. Thou shalt not be discontented with thy lot, however little, nor must thou incline thy tastes to extravagance—wine is sour grapes, and look at the price of meat !

X. Thou shalt not live too long, but—long enough.

—*Labour Champion*, December 2, 1893.

IN THE LISTS:

An Inquiry into the Causes of Trade Depressions, their Growth, Development, and Remedy.

I.—The Problem.

In olden times people took the plagues, famines and pestilences which periodically visited them with sad and simple resignation, assigning them to the will of God and accepting them as the just deserts of erring sinners. But in these days, plagues and pestilences at all events, are differently regarded —scientists exonerating the will of God from all blame in the matter, and declaring that such mischiefs arise rather from the ill-will and ignorance of man. True, we are at the same time taught to believe that every plague has its own peculiar bacillus, but, as a set-off to that, every bacillus has now its own peculiar scientist intent on identifying, capturing, and destroying it at all hazards, and with a singleness of purpose, joined to a combative cock-certainty which would be reassur- if it were not for disappointments. If the same amount of energy and intelligence were only exerted to discover and destroy the bacillus of famine (if such there be) there might be far more immediate and desirable conclusions.

Thus far, however, university scientists have failed to take particular notice of famine and its causes; possibly because a merciful dispensation of things has exempted them and their associates from that most deplorable form of human suffering; an exemption which is further safe-guarded by the fact that famine is an economic disease, and consequently not contagious. So that periodic famines are still accepted with the same feeling

of helplessness that overpowered our benighted predecessors. We have accustomed ourselves to look upon the ebb and flow of trade just as we do upon the ebb and flow of the tide, as inevitable as natural law, partly because the newspapers say it is so, and partly because we have all of us heard of the seven fat years and seven lean years which perplexed the ancient Egyptians.

When, however, we set ourselves to enquire into the causes of modern famines we are struck at first sight by what, to serfs in the Middle Ages, would have been a monstrous paradox, but which, to our end of the century free-voters, is merciless matter-of-fact—to wit, the prime cause of starvation is an overplus of goods. The Egyptians starved for the very sufficient reason that there was no corn in Egypt. The enlightened Briton starves because the warehouses and granaries of his tight little island are too plenteously stocked.

Now that we are in the grip of another depression in trade it may be helpful and useful, as it is certainly desirable, for us to find out how and why these famines periodically assail us and the means and ways (if any such exist) of escape from them.

In order to do this, it is essential in the first place to keep well in view the relation of the workman to his employer, and of the latter to what is known as the market, but, above all, it is important to clearly define the prime object of production as at present carried on.

The position of the workman is one of sufferance and insecurity. It is doubtful if there is a creature in the animal world to-day with less positive hold on the means of living than the workman. He has not the same claims to the consideration of his employer as has the latter's ox, or his ass,

or anything that is his employer's. The workman is free, nobody but himself is responsible for his ill or well-doing ; he is his own property, which doesn't go for much, since, although he values himself dirt cheap, the great concern of his life is to find a bidder at any price. His sole relation to the employer is this : If his labour can be utilised so as to produce in excess of the wages he receives a substantial profit to his employer, then he is allowed to work, and thus obtain something of a living. If, on the contrary, his labour cannot be profitably employed, he is not permitted to labour at all, and is consequently deprived of the means of earning his own living. The relation of the employer to the market is no less arbitrary. If there be a demand for his goods in the market he can sell, and go on producing; if however, the supply of goods be in excess of the demand, he may do one of two things. He may stop further production and wait until a demand arises, or he may attempt to force a sale by reducing the current price on the article he has to dispose of.

The prime object of production, as at present carried on, is profit. The requirements of the community are entirely beside the question; the employment of the people is an accidental and vexatious circumstance entering reluctantly and lastly into the business. The people on whose word production proceeds or is brought to a standstill, are a not very numerous class who live by profits obtained from other people's labouring. They have possession of the land and capital, and are unable because they are unwilling, to see any possible use in their possessions unless, in the first instance, the said possessions supply them with an easy, idle, ample, subsistence. Accordingly, when production is unprofitable to them, they turn the producers adrift; land which might be supplying

thousands with honest livings may run wild; factories which might be used by busy hands to clothe naked backs may rust into ruin, and the people who have made the world rich for their masters are shut out, to rough it in a stony, weary wilderness, compared with which the backwoods of the anthropoid ape are a paradise of plenty.

Such, briefly, are the conditions by which modern industry is moved and guided. A depression in trade, then, means that the industry of the workers is no longer profitable to the possessors of capital, that the markets are over-supplied with goods, which are not to be got rid of without delay and difficulty. Buyers hang back waiting for prices to fall, employers with a good back-set of capital wait for a demand to set in. It is well for those who can wait. Meanwhile, while the merchant and manufacturer are waiting, the workman is starving.

II.—The Industrial Revolution.

According to Arnold Toynbee, trade depressions were not known before the beginning of the present century. Bad harvests, short periods of distress, and partial famine, were familiar enough; but over-production resulting in protracted depression, was a condition of things as foreign to our forefathers as truth is to the average party politician. Up to the end of the eighteenth century the staple trade of England had been agriculture and the manufacture of woollens. It is worthy of notice how, towards the end of the eighteenth century, agricultural conditions, by something approaching to fatality, had reached so peculiar a pass that a population was ready to

hand for exploitation at the very commencement of the industrial era. The large landed proprietors and farmers had been making systematic raids on the common and waste lands of the people. Freeholders of small estates were coerced and bought out. These Freeholders, or Yeomanry, as they were called, formed one-sixth of the population down to the close of the seventeenth century. One hundred years later Arthur Young speaks of them as practically gone. History has little to say as to how this wholesale extinction of a once powerful class was accomplished. Numerous and prosperous as they were in the fifteenth century, they had suffered somewhat by the enclosures of the sixteenth. "Of the Freeholders of England," says Chamberlayne in his 'State of Great Britain,' "these are more in number and richer than in any country of the like extent in Europe." "The chief cause of their disappearance," says Toynbee, "lay in our own peculiar form of Government. After the Revolution the landed gentry were supreme. Not only national, but local administration was entirely in their hands." According to Shaw Lefevre, 334,974 acres of land were enclosed between 1710 and 1760, while nearly 7,000,000 were enclosed between 1760 and 1843.

Prior to the middle of the eighteenth century farm labourers lodged and boarded in the farmers' houses. There was to all intents and purposes a domestic equality existing between farmer and labourer. But with the destruction of the Yeomanry and the enclosure of commons, a more extensive system of farming was introduced. Rents increased, and the farmers expelled the labourers from their houses, seeking to meet their extra expenses by sub-letting houses to their servants. By this means a number of people who had previously been secure of their housing, and who had passively

witnessed the spoliation of the commons—probably on account of this feeling of security—were at one stroke deprived of shelter and the means of providing homes of their own. "When," says Toynbee, "the labourers, to meet this deficiency, built cottages for themselves, the farmers pulled them down, and if the labourers rebuilt them, refused to employ them; with the result that such labourers became thieves and poachers." In 1771 an open war against such cottages was carried on, "that they might never become the nests, as they are called, of beggar brats," said Arthur Young.

Pretty much the same changes came over the manufacture of cloth, though they were not severely felt until a later date. At that time the manufacturer himself was generally a workman. He made use of a few acres for grazing purposes. The workmen he employed were necessarily few, and these were on the most familiar and friendly terms with him. It was a usual thing for such workmen to serve their apprenticeships and remain the rest of their lives in the service of the same employer. They were mostly employed by the year, and when there was no work the employer maintained them. In 1760 wages were high and food was cheap. Toynbee writes: "Nor were high wages and cheap food their only advantages. Their cottages were often rent free, being built on the waste. Each cottage had its piece of ground attached, though the piece was often a very small one, for the Act of Elizabeth, providing that every cottage should have four acres of land, was doubtless unobserved, and was repealed in 1775. Their common rights, besides providing fuel, enabled them to keep cows and pigs and poultry on the waste, and sheep on the fallows and stubble. But these rights were steadily being curtailed."

In 1769 Watt had taken out a patent for the steam

engine— the engine which effected the industrial revolution. Contemporaneously Arkwright, Crompton, and Hargreaves introduced their several inventions, while, as if the change had been premeditated and carefully planned, water-ways were cut, roads improved, and the means of transit and communication made incalculably swifter and surer. Steam was soon applied as a motor; pit coal was brought into general use; the disinherited agriculturalists were eager to be released from the bondage into which they had fallen, and so the transition from feudalism to commercialism was rapidly consummated. In less than thirty years domestic manufactures were practically dissipated, and in their stead arose the new and unlovely factory.

People flocked to the factories. Wages for a time reached phenomenal heights, varying from £2 to £6 weekly for ordinary operatives. The Napoleonic wars were terrorising Europe, but England, thanks to her geographical position, was more happily circumstanced. The markets of the world were opened to our goods. Invention succeeded invention, our foreign trade extending year by year till, in 1818, with a population of 11,876,000, we had a poor rate of £7,870,000, or 13s. 4d. per head of the population, the highest rate we have ever known. This deplorable condition of things is variously accounted for, the real reasons being that the extirpation of the people from the land and the break-up of their handicraft industry, produced a greater number of unemployed than the new system could readily absorb; further, the new system of production turned out immense quantities of goods per operative, as compared with the old; hence the Luddite movement by which the people sought to destroy machinery altogether. Besides, rents in an incredibly short

time had doubled. The price of corn was also vastly increased, and even as late as 1834 half the labourer's wages went in taxes—*i.e.*, in payment of loans which, in great measure, were never received by the nation. Finally, the manufacturers—in emulation doubtless of their landed examplars—finding that flesh and blood was plentiful, determined it should be cheap. Accordingly wages were cut down, and to make matters still better for the masters the labourer was often actually paid in bad coin, "quantities of which," says Toynbee, "were bought by the manufacturers for the purpose, and he was robbed by the truck system, through which his employer became a retail trader with power to over-price his goods to an indefinite extent."

III.—Socialised Production.

We pass without comment the hideous condition obtaining in the factories during the early part of the century, and it is scarcely to our purpose to detail the movements which were started to deal with the grievances of the time. Suffice it to say, that trade depressions began to make their appearance at irregular intervals from this period and onward, until the complete establishment of the industrial system in 1846. Since the latter period, depressions have occurred at more regular intervals, but they have naturally been less harmful than those which accompanied the dark period of transition.

By the repeal of the Corn Laws a great impetus was given to English foreign trade (by no means an inconsiderable trade previously), and the eventual establishment of Free Trade helped it still further. So great was the mechanical genius of

this country, and so long the start before all other continental competitors, that we practically monopolised the industrial work of the world. People were again induced to desert the agricultural districts; frequently they had no choice in the matter, since the repeal of the Corn Laws had really dealt a serious blow at the corn-growing interest. As it happened, however, the agricultural labourer preferred the town and its higher wages, especially after the cheapening of bread. So our great foreign trade continued to grow greater, together with our capacity of production. Machinery was made the means of subdividing craft intricacies into simple parts, so that the labour of semi-skilled workmen, not to speak of women and children, could be effectively utilised. It was about this time that continental countries entered into trade rivalry with us. The nations had witnessed the rapid rise of English manufacturers, and naturally, as soon as their political difficulties were smoothed down they set about emulating their more flourishing neighbour.

At present not only is England menaced in her industrial supremacy by the rival nations around her, but she also suffers from the enormous growth of her own capital. It is estimated that English capital increases at the rate of £200,000,000 annually, this sum being the surplus wealth which the monied classes, with all the elaborate machinery of an organised system of wastefulness, are unable to dissipate. This surplus capital finds various investments—good, bad, and indifferent. It sets up woollen mills in Africa, cotton mills in Asia, silk and flax mills in America, careless of the consequences to home industries. When we speak of the keenness of foreign competition we are too apt to forget that much of that competition is the direct result of English

capital abroad—a fertile source of unexampled dividends to patriotic English gentlemen at home.

The capital of the world increases at an extraordinary rate. It is perhaps impossible to say what the increase amounts to in cash. It will be enough for our purposes to know what the increase in production amounts to. In 1886, Mr. Giffen calculated that the power of production increased at the rate of 20 per cent. per annum. In the same estimate Mr. Giffen gave the increase of population over the whole globe, as at the rate of one per cent. The same authority, speaking of England, states that in 1848 the total annual production amounted to £520,000,000, of which the workers received £278,000,000, or about half. In 1882, the national income was £1,300,000,000, of which Labour received £338,000,000, or about one fourth. Thus, in 34 years £800,000,000 had been added to the national wealth. Now, this enormous growth in the means of production is of immense consequence to us, dependent, as we are, on an unhealthy and abnormal foreign trade. But it will be as well to remember the distinction between the power of production and production itself. Man's means of supplying himself with the necessaries of life are abundant enough; not so the necessaries of life. To the bulk of the workers every additional improvement in production practically results in lessening the chances of getting a living at all.

We have reviewed as briefly as might be the circumstances which led from the system of individual and domestic handicrafts with its limited home trade, simple, manageable and measurable, to the vast industrial organisation of to-day, which reaches across continents, incalculable in the infinite variety of its operations and bewildering in its legion interests. We are able to form some idea as to the immense capital

which is always seeking investment in the most promising businesses, and also of the immense powers of production available whenever a demand arises in the markets. We know that this fleeting, indefinite, soulless abstraction, "demand," is as the main belt to the fly-wheel of production —the connecting-link, without which the machinery of society is silent and motionless.

What then is demand, cleared of economic cobwebs? Precisely, it is the wants of the people circumscribed by their buying powers. People's requirements may be greatly in excess of their means of buying, but economic demand cannot be influenced by any wants save those which are determinately expressed in hard cash or some current equivalent. When, therefore, the absence of demand produces cessation of industry and depression in trade, we must not assume that it is because everybody's requirements are satisfied. The contrary would be nearer the fact, but the truth is that our powers of production largely exceed our restricted means of consumption. The absence of demand, in short, means a money famine among the people (which by no means implies a national famine of money) and a supply-glut among merchants. Let us see how mercantile and manufacturing economists treat the matter.

IV.—Dry as Dust Explanations.

From 1839 to 1841 English trade was in a terribly depressed condition. The Corn Laws prohibited the importation of foreign wheat, and food-stuffs were exorbitantly high in price. Manufacturers accordingly sought the repeal of the

Corn Laws as the only way out of depression, and they rallied their forces and subscribed immense sums of money to further that end. Cobden, as the head and front of the Manchester movement, never wearied of sounding the praises of Free Trade as the only panacea for bad trade. The object of the Manchester school was, in the words of John Morley, "to invite the world to become our customers by opening our ports to their products in exchange." In 1842, Peel, who was then Prime Minister, attempted to give an artificial stimulus to trade by his celebrated budget of abatements on the duty on imports. The attempt was partially successful, and the good harvests of the two succeeding years further improved matters. Wheat fell from 60s. to 40s. per quarter. Free Traders were jubilant.

"What good harvests had done in two years the repeal of the Corn Laws would do in perpetuity," they said. Their economic gospel, according to Cobden, is summed up in the following criticism of Peel's Budget :—

"The price of commodities may spring from two causes: a temporary, fleeting, and retributive high price, produced by scarcity; or a permanent and natural high price, produced by prosperity. Peel, therefore, took the least comprehensive and statesmanlike view of his measures when he proposed to lower them, instead of aiming to maintain them by enlarging the circle of exchange."

Cobden would have been nearer the mark if he had accused Peel of taking the least comprehensive view of the Bagman's economy, for since the establishment of Free Trade "the circle of exchange" has been widened to the limits of the known globe, but we look in vain for a permanent and natural high price produced by prosperity.

Good trade in perpetuity, which was to follow the repeal of the Corn Laws, is still no more than a desert mirage. Referring to the great depression which occurred in 1877, Toynbee writes: "I believe the answer is because other nations to which we sell our goods have been suffering from bad harvests and have less capacity for buying." So that a bad harvest in Western America reacts disastrously on the iron, cotton, and cloth workers at home.

The depression which showed itself with such startling severity in 1884, and led to the unemployed riots of 1886, was variously diagnosed and commented on by economic specialists, to no earthly purpose save a more general confusion of thought than had heretofore existed on the matter, which is, perhaps, the most obvious earthly purpose for which economic specialists are fitted.

Mr. Mongredien, in a Cobden Club tract, stated that the good harvest of 1884 was the cause of our depressed industry. Fifteen and a half million pounds worth of grain being produced in excess of the average home harvest, resulted in so much less grain imported, and consequently so much less of other kinds of wealth exported. So, then, we have it on the authority of good sound orthodox economists that good harvests at home produced prosperity in 1844 and 1845, forty years later a good harvest produced untold want and suffering; while in 1877 bad harvests abroad are accounted the direful source of scarcity at home. In a multitude of counsellors there is much perplexity.

According to Mr. Mongredien, a bountiful harvest in this country is to be regarded as a national calamity; the prosperity of the British farmer becomes a curse to his country; it is only by the free and plentiful importation of foreign wheat that we

may hope to maintain any degree of activity in our industries. Surely the Cobden Club can present a more common-sense Free Trade than this; for surely those 15½ millions in the hands of the British farmers would serve to stimulate British trade at home and thus compensate for any supposititious loss abroad. Farming here is done on a smaller scale and demands more labour and, relatively, better wages (bad as they are) than in America or India. Hence the probabilities are that British trade would receive a direct impetus rather than a repulse from our agricultural prosperity, leaving entirely out of account (as becomes even the veriest tyro in economics) the improved conditions, which should follow such prosperity, in the homes and lives of agriculturalists generally. But Mr. Mongredien advanced a few interesting figures considerably more to the point, it seems to me, than his lame and impotent theory of harvests. In 1884 our foreign trade was £25,000,000 less than the average of the four preceding years, and nearly £46,000,000 less than in 1883; that is to say, the falling off in our foreign trade exceeded by about three times the excess in grain resulting from the harvest of that year. Clearly, then, there were other and greater causes at work. Granting that the 15½ million pounds worth of grain grown here was dead loss to British trade, there was still a deficiency of £30,000,000 demanding some explanation.

It is customary, when a question forces itself obtrusively to the front, for the Government to appoint a Royal Commission of inquiry in order to discover how most effectually "not to do it." The depression of 1884-5-6 was even such a question, and a Royal Commission was accordingly appointed to sit on it. The following was the hatchment: "There is a tendency in the supply of commodities to outrun demand, and conse-

quently the great object to be aimed at is to diminish the cost of production so far as it can be done consistently with sound quality and good workmanship." In other words the object to be aimed at is to reduce the purchasing power of the workers, and at the same time increase their producing capacities. But would this restrain the tendency of supply to outrun demand, or would it not rather have the contrary effect? The answer is obvious, which is probably the reason why the Commissioners missed it.

The Special Commission did, however, deliberately commit itself to the fact, well known and proved beyond question years before the Commission was called together, that "there is a tendency in the supply to outrun the demand," and Mr. Mongredien clinches the matter by his statement that in 1883 our foreign trade had reached abnormally high dimensions. In these two bald matters of fact lies the gist of the problem.

How comes this "tendency in the supply of commodities to outrun demand?" as the Commission gingerly phrases it. The answer has been partly given already, but not quite so specifically as is doubtless necessary. Over-production arises firstly, from the inability of the workers, who are the most numerous and should therefore be the greatest consumers, to buy back the equivalent of the products of their labour on account of insufficient wages; secondly, from the enormous improvements in the means of production, and lastly, from the impossibility to regulate supply and demand in a mad system of universal competition to be first in the markets with saleable commodities.

V.—Popular Ideas.

The explanations of orthodox economists are all of them relative and incomplete. Mr. Stanley Jevons capped the climax by seeking to establish a connection between trade depressions and the appearance of spots in the sun. But there are other and more popular conceptions of trade-depressions with which it will be as well to deal before finally attempting to determine the real solution of the problem. First there is the popular notion that the function of the monied classes is to encourage trade by lavish expenditure, " setting the fashion," and the like. Of course, at the bottom of this notion there is the dim idea that wealthy people in finding employment for flunkeys, jockeys, bishops, and burlesque actresses, keep a certain number of persons uselessly engaged who might otherwise come into competition with the workers in the industrial world.

A dim idea indeed! The Old Man of the sea fastened round the neck of Sindbad never quite succeeded in convincing the unlucky sailor that his object was quite a disinterested and laudable one. But the modern Old Man of the sea has discovered a more convenient mode of jockeying his victim, and the victim rather likes it.

The great landowner whose £50,000 rental is drawn from the labour of 5,000 farmers and labourers, spends but a moiety of his income on his own subsistence and on those about him. The keeping up of his establishment involves wasteful display, unseasonable delicacies, fancy priced paintings, costly china, a bloodstock of horses and hounds, or just as his bent is so he dissipates his income. The £50,000 spread over the agriculturalists who have earned it and have the justest title to it

would mean the consumption of more food, fuel, clothing, and the necessaries which partly make up our staple home trade and are partly products imported in exchange for products exported. So with the cotton-lord, the iron-master, and the railway king, who draw on industrial labour in pretty much the same parasitic fashion.

Another popular economic notion—perhaps the only other, for the people's economy is sweet simplicity itself—which crops up now and then, is that a good big war would brighten up trade. Guns would be required, ships, ammunition, and what not; property would be destroyed, large sums of money borrowed, and a host of people would be killed off, making it easier for the survivors to live. The prospect from a distance is pleasing; enthusiasm kindles, and then, O for a Minister with a spirited foreign policy!

Again, what is at the bottom of this crazy conception? A desire for trade, for work, for some means of escape from stagnation and starvation. And now, what happens in a "good big war" economically speaking? So much muscle and brain labour has been transforming ore into metal, metal into guns and bayonets, wool into cloth, cloth into clothing, hide into leather, and leather into shoes, until 50,000 men are well-shod, well-clothed, and well-armed. For years past these 50,000 men have been supplied with a regulation subsistence consisting of beef, bread, vegetables, and beer, which has cost thousands of men some effort of brain and body to procure for them, and in return for which the 50,000 have shouldered arms, pipeclayed their belts, and marched and countermarched assiduously. But the "good big war" breaks out, and speedily there are 50,000 ragged corpses ready for the worms. What has the world had in return for the mechanical genius

spent in divising guns and explosives, for the millions sunk too literally in foundered ironclads, for the careful training, feeding and clothing of 50,000 men? Simply this: a great waste of gunpowder and a great letting of blood. Actually the world is so much the poorer. But the spirited foreign policy lover may reply: "Trade receives an impetus all the same. New ironclads will be wanted, new torpedoes, and new guns." Yes, indeed, and the happy survivors will have them to pay for—but then that is a detail. What is wanted evidently is some vast comprehensive product destroyer, which at stated intervals will burn down property, destroy grain, sink ships, and play havoc generally. It would be cheaper and less revolting than training and keeping men for the purpose. Such is the popular notion of how to revive flagging industry. It seems to be a much easier and more practical way than to demand the use of vacant lands or idle factories, or to reduce the hours of labour, and thus enable a larger number of people to share in the work and wealth of the community. Responsible Ministers of the Crown think nothing of spending a million of money to equip the forces of war with a new and deadly instrument of destruction, and bloody ruinous wars are entered into with a cheerful alacrity which would be puzzling to the savage who didn't happen to know what a missionary was. But to demand a million of money to provide people with the means of maintaining themselves decently would be madness, confiscatory, demoralising, impracticable. Responsible Ministers of the Crown would smile at so preposterous an idea.

VI.—The Remedy.

In order then to obtain "permanent and natural high prices produced by prosperity," to recur to Cobden's famous phrase, something more than widening the "circle of exchange" is necessary. Exchanges must be strengthened and stimulated so that they will circulate uniformly from centre to circumference. In the physiological economy of man, the heart, which is the great motor of distribution, supplies brain and tissue with vitalising fluid in such measure as each essential part demands. Such is the natural and rational supply and demand and so must it be in the economy of society before a healthy and happy condition is possible. In plain English, the wealth annually produced in this, as in any other country must be more equitably distributed.

The tendency of competitive industrialism is, however, directly and strongly towards the concentration of wealth in fewer hands. Practically the whole of the profits resulting from improved mechanical appliances are appropriated by the capitalist and landowning classes. Mr. Giffen's statistics bear eloquent testimony to this fact. As before quoted, in 1848 the workers received half the national annual income, while in 1882, when £800,000,000 had been added to the annual value of production they only received one-fourth, that is to say, they obtained one-twelfth of the added wealth. Taking the rate of payment for labour in 1848 as a fair working basis (which is assuming a lot), the workers in 1882 ought to have been receiving £357,000,000 more in wages than was allotted them, more than double the amount they were paid.

Consider for a moment what such an enhanced purchasing power in the hands of the people would mean to the community

at large. The old dog-hutch cottage would have disappeared long ago, to make way for a superior dwelling-house; the wants of the people would have been met in many material ways now beyond the hopes of the vast bulk, and trades which are at present in a chronic condition of slackness would have received an impetus sufficient to maintain them in year-long activity. But the wealth was diverted into other channels to serve less desirable and wholesome ends, and trade depression became a chronic industrial complaint. How was this mass of wealth so cleverly transferred to the exploiting classes? Chiefly by means of improved machinery and the break-up and sub-division of handicrafts. The producing power of the organised units in the factory increased in some instances a hundred-fold without any added remuneration by way of a balance. Indeed, it frequently happened by the introduction of women and child labour that wages suffered considerable reductions, and so, although year by year the labour of the individual became more productive wages and hours remained stationary.

In 1874 the miners obtained 261 tons of coal per man; in 1883 they produced 334 tons per man, and in the latter year 53,896 of them were out of work—a natural and necessary consequence. In ten years the workers in iron and steel, with practically no increase in the number of men employed, increased their output by 1,750,000 tons. The output in Carnegie's bar mills (the scene of the recent labour war) increased in seventeen years (1875 to 1892) from twelve tons per turn to twenty-two tons—though in this instance the workers shared somewhat in the results by means of a unique sliding scale, since forcibly taken from them. Instances innumerable might, however, be cited showing increased pro-

ductiveness on the part of labour, while wages have remained stationary or receded. And actually wherever production is accelerated without some corresponding reward to labour, either in the shape of reduced hours or advanced wages, an indirect loss is suffered by the workers. The purchasing capacity of the people in relation to the product is lessened to a degree for which no diminution in selling can, or at least does, ever approximately compensate. The most optimist estimates of the income of the working class at all events prove that much. What then is the way out? How can we adjust this complicated tangle of interests known as competitivism so as to restore order in industry and wealth to the worker?

It is easy to say by Socialism, but Socialism cannot be applied with the slap and simplicity of a poor man's chest plaster. Still the final and only way out of trade depressions is through Socialism. But there are many by-paths to cut through before we reach the final one, and the question with us just now ought to be in which direction can we best spend our energies.

The miners with a great national instinct appear to have hit upon the best immediate course. As stated above, in 1883 they reached their maximum output per man of 334 tons. In 1886 this was sensibly reduced, 519,106 men producing 157,412,919 tons of coal, or roughly, about 303 tons per head. In 1892 their numbers had increased to 663,462, and the total output to 181,674,990 tons, or roughly, 273 tons per head. Thus the miners have succeeded in absorbing their unemployed by lessening the amount of coal produced per man. It has meant the sacrifice of a full week for the more favoured ones, but it has kept up wages and put down competition. In so

far the miners are on a sound economic tack, but more remains to be done, as most of them are shrewd enough to recognise. They therefore demand an eight hours working day from bank to bank by legal enactment, thus joining their industrial organisation to politics, and making their movement the most vital and effective of modern Labour movements.

It is by reducing the hours of labour generally that the workers will most easily obtain a greater share of the national wealth. It is the safest and surest means of combating the competition of machinery, and it is peculiarly the most expedient and practical method of dealing with the unemployed problem in a highly organised commercial and industrial country like England.

Every year large numbers of men are thrown out of productive employment to swell the army of unemployed, and pick up the scraps of a subsistence as opportunity arises. These men are replaced by iron substitutes that require no wages. They have ceased to draw on the national income, and live for the most part on the diminished earnings of the workers. Many of them become commission agents for all sorts of domestic articles, but what they obtain is drawn directly from the class which can least afford to use its money in their support. The number of producers is diminished, and along with that their income, but the income is diffused over a wider area in support of others compulsorily non-productive.

By reducing the hours of labour more productive labourers will be required, and their wages must necessarily come from the profits now pouring into the exploiters' coffers. And with the absorption of the unemployed will come a strengthening of the hands of Trade Unionists and a certain advance in

wages, together with a steadying of industry and a perceptible lessening of the intensity of trade depressions. Proceeding on such lines the tenure of capitalist competition would gradually be shortened, and such readjustments in the land system as could be undertaken without plunging our false and rotten foreign trade into sudden chaos with consequent suffering to the community, could be entered on. International trade complications will do much to break down commercialism. In the meantime the workers of all countries must set about straightening their own affairs in their own particular localities in accordance with the industrial circumstances surrounding them.

The task before the workers of Great Britain is no slight one. Trade Unionism must be widened into Labour federation, based on the broadest democratic basis. John Ruskin relates an instance in one of his books of certain villagers in a place called Ticino who were troubled by periodical floods from the river hard by. Instead of combining their labour and pence and erecting an embankment sufficiently high to wall in the flood, the peasants built puny barriers each round his own little plot of land, and every year that the river rose their crops, sometimes their homes, together with their useless barriers, were swept away. It has been pretty much the same with Trade Unionism in the past, and the time calls for bigger things.

Whether or not the system of federation is destined to come into operation the hour of the political Labour Party has struck. Nothing short of complete capture of Parliamentary and municipal government will content the new party, and those paramount forces must be worked to advance the cause of labour in every conceivable direction. Trade

Unionism must be helped by them as in the past the employers have used them to destroy it. Monopolies must be nationalised and municipalised, and the people trained to initiate and manage their own work without the assistance of intermediary fleecers. By such means a tangible hold on the industries of the nation would gradually be obtained, and any depression which might occur in the process of transition would be deprived of serious consequences by prompt attention being paid to the unemployed and useful work allotted them.

—*Labour Champion*, 1893.

THE END

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