

THE COMMONWEAL

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WEEKLY; ONE PENNY.

NOTES ON NEWS.

THE *Daily News*, in giving a glowing account of the Gladstonian meeting, of which William O'Brien and John Morley were the bosses, says that it would be a great mistake to suppose that the country is tired of the Irish question; that this feeling of weariness does not exist outside the London clubs, etc. Perhaps a Tory would answer with the proverb, "He who excuses himself accuses himself." Why should the *Daily News* suppose that people are tired of the Irish question? To speak plainly there is no doubt that everybody that is not a professional politician is heartily tired of the Irish question as it has been presented to us. In other words, it has about served the business for which it was taken up by the politicians, *i.e.*, a game over which people could get desperately angry so that they might forget the real matters of importance—matters of life and death that are crying out to us.

The Irish are beaten then? All this excitement has been for nothing? No, surely not. On the contrary the English democrat has made up his mind, and for him the Anglo-Irish tyranny is a thing of the past. I suspect also that the intelligent Tory (if there be such a thing) has made up his mind also, and is preparing for a climb down by means of the inevitable ladder of compromise.

The real point to be noticed in the lull on the subject of Home Rule is this, it has lost its relative importance because of the advance of opinion within these last years. It is no longer the Great Wrong to be righted by the Great Redresser of Wrongs, the Great Liberal Party under the leadership of the G.O.M. Many Radicals, I think, honestly believed in this once, and thought that they, the freemen, could set this nation of slaves free.

All that is gone indeed! How fast the "wide-roaring loom of time" goes! How the web is changing! The Irish peasant oppressed by his landlord is not the only figure that the English workman sees on whom to exercise his political heroism, for he sees himself also in pretty much the same condition as his Irish brother, and for him to give freedom to any one before he has got it for himself is beginning to seem to him a dull job. The Irish question is getting to be swallowed up in the one question of classes. As a political football it has been pretty much kicked to pieces. But the Irish working-man, under whatever name, need not trouble himself about that. That he could be freed from his exploiter while other workmen were groaning under theirs, was a mere delusion of his, and the only hope for his freedom lies in the awakening of his English brethren.

In commenting on the proceedings of the Society for the Preservation of Footpaths, the *Daily News* says of the stealers of footpaths: "Generally the attempt is made more from want of thought than from any desire to rob the public." H'm, well; I don't think landowners do these things in their sleep. I remember a country lawyer telling me that the chief part of his business came from his devising means for the shutting up of rights of way. I asked him what he thought of his career set beside that of Jack Sheppard, and he replied that he must live. He seemed rather hurt by my views on that question.

W. M.

The *Labour Elector* has, if trades-unionists are not the curs which they are sometimes said to be, finally broken with any large body of workmen whom it may hitherto had some claim to speak for. In its last number it repeated the offence of the week before, by again attacking Mr. Parke, who, being in prison, is unable to speak for himself. One thing which I note with pleasure is the withdrawal of John Burns and George Bateman from connection with the *Labour Elector*. This is what might have been looked for; the last accusation that could have been brought against either of these men was cowardice. What the reactionary sheet will do now, deprived of the only name which gained it recognition or support, remains to be seen.

John Burns's letter in the *Star* showed what he felt; in it he spoke

of another sent by him to the *Labour Elector*, to which, however, that estimable paper made no reference, treating other similar letters in the same way. If this were done to conceal the receipt of Burns's letter, it was certainly useless; for "after all," like Mrs. Wilfer's underpetticoat, "we know it's there!" S.

We have been told that even Homer nods sometimes; but one is forced to think that Huxley was not only nodding, but fast asleep, when he wrote his profoundly illogical article in the *Nineteenth Century*, in which he makes such game of Rousseauism, as he calls the latter-day demand for equality of opportunity, or what a Yankee would call "a square deal."

To some it will sound like heresy to suggest that Prof. Huxley has, to use Oliver Wendell Holmes's phrase, only a one-story intellect. "All fact-collectors who have no aim beyond their facts are one-story men. Two-story men compare, reason, generalise, using the labours of the fact-collectors as well as their own. Three-story men idealise, imagine, predict. . . . Specialists are the coral-insects that build up a reef. . . . I had rather be a voyager that visits all the reefs. . . . I am a little afraid that science is breeding us down too fast into coral-insects."

Prof. Huxley's latest seems to be a very sad proof of the truth of the above estimate, and of the statement which Holmes makes in another place that logic is not everything: "You can hire logic, in the shape of a lawyer, to prove anything that you want to prove." The correctness of this has seldom been proved so completely as when Prof. Huxley, starting with the fact that a new born baby is the slave of its nurse, ends up by agreeing that "there is much to be said for the opinion that force, effectually and thoroughly used, so as to render further opposition hopeless, established an ownership which should be recognised as soon as possible."

Physical-force revolutionists have not for a long time been provided with an authoritative sanction more complete than this of Prof. Huxley. As an incitement, it is as frank as when the *Times* said "that Liberty is a serious game, to be played out, as the Greek told the Persian, with knives and hatchets, and not with drawled epigrams and soft petitions." It is also a warning for the force to be justified must be strong enough to render further opposition hopeless. War à l'outrance means war justifiable and justified. It is support to what has been urged before, that had the men who took off Charles I.'s head have taken off a few more, there would have been no anti-revolution, no Charles II. It very considerably extenuates the later period of the French Revolution and its so-called excesses.

Prof. Huxley's method of unreason has done one little service, in that it has brought out two very eloquent letters from Robert Buchanan, who in the *Daily Telegraph* has shown that the son of one of Robert Owen's Socialist missionaries has still some lively sympathy with the views so ably expounded on the platform and in the Glasgow *Sentinel* of forty odd years ago by the Robert Buchanan of that day.

"Great wits jump, and poets are always allowed some prophetic instinct," says Buchanan. "Men advance more surely by freedom than by restraint, necessary as certain restraints may be. Before the outbreak of the English Revolution, personal prerogative, the arbitrary will of one sincere political bigot, had strangled English liberty. Englishmen rose en masse, and liberty, in the political sense, was saved. Before the outbreak of the great French Revolution, Catholicism had almost destroyed the commerce of a great nation. The inevitable cataclysm came, with what terrible accompaniments we all know. At the present hour, at the very time when the free thought of England is at its brightest and best, when the scientific and historic method have disintegrated the whole mass of religious superstition, still another great upheaval is imminent, to the peril, perhaps to the destruction, of our whole social system. . . . A colossal Hand, which some call the hand of destiny and others that of humanity, is putting out the lights of heaven one by one, like the candles after a feast."

It behoves us, then, to watch heedfully that the same hand, having emptied the heavens, does not touch the lowly but life-illuminating lights of earth. The fairest of these lights is Liberty, the principle of natural freedom and equality, without which individual growth would be impossible, and social organisation, as we now understand it, an impossibility." T. S.

NEWS FROM NOWHERE:

OR,

AN EPOCH OF REST.

BEING SOME CHAPTERS FROM A UTOPIAN ROMANCE.

CHAP. V.—CHILDREN ON THE ROAD.

PAST the Broadway there were fewer houses on either side. We presently crossed a pretty little brook that ran across a piece of land dotted over with trees, and a while after came to another market and town-hall, as we should call it. Although there was nothing familiar to me in its surroundings, I knew pretty well where we were, and was not surprised when my guide said briefly, "Kensington Market."

Just after this we came into a short street of houses; or rather, one long house on either side of the way, built of timber and plaster, and with a pretty arcade over the footway before it.

Quoth Dick: "This is Kensington proper. People are apt to gather here rather thick, for they like the romance of the wood; and naturalists haunt it, too; or it is a wild spot even here, what there is of it; for it does not go far to the south: it goes from here northward and west right over Paddington and a little way down Notting Hill: thence it runs east to Primrose Hill, and so on; rather a narrow strip of it gets through Kingsland to Stoke-Newington and Clapton, where it spreads out along the heights above the Lea marshes, on the other side of which, as you know, is Epping Forest holding out a hand to it. This part we are just coming to is called Kensington Gardens; though why 'gardens' I don't know."

I rather longed to say, "Well, I know"; but there were so many things about me which I did *not* know, in spite of his assumptions, that I thought it better to hold my tongue.

The road plunged at once into a beautiful wood spreading out on either side, but obviously much further on the north side, where even the oaks and sweet chestnuts were of a good growth; while the quicker-growing trees (amongst which I thought the planes and sycamores too numerous) were very big and fine-grown.

It was exceedingly pleasant in the dappled shadow, for the day was growing as hot as need be, and the coolness and shade soothed my excited mind into a condition of dreamy pleasure, so that I felt as if I should like to go on for ever through that balmy freshness. My companion seemed to share in my feelings, and let the horse go slower and slower as he sat inhaling the green forest scents, chief amongst which was the smell of the trodden bracken near the way-side.

Romantic as this Kensington wood was, however, it was not lonely. We came on many groups both coming and going, or wandering in the edges of the wood. Amongst these were many children from six or eight years old up to sixteen or seventeen. They seemed to me especially fine specimens of their race, and were clearly enjoying themselves to the utmost; some of them were hanging about little tents pitched on the greensward, and by some of these fires were burning, with pots hanging over them gipsy fashion. Dick explained to me that there were scattered houses in the forest, and indeed we caught a glimpse of one or two. He said they were mostly quite small, such as used to be called cottages when there were slaves in the land, but they were pleasant enough and fitting for the wood.

"They must be pretty well stocked with children," said I, pointing to the many youngsters about the way.

"O," said he, "these children do not all come from the near houses, the woodland houses, but from the countryside generally. They often make up parties and come to play in the woods for weeks together in summer-time, living in tents, as you see. We rather encourage them to it; they learn to do things for themselves, and get to notice the wild creatures; and, you see, the less they stew inside houses the better for them. Indeed, I must tell you that many grown people will go to live in the forests through the summer; though they for the most part go to the bigger ones, like Windsor or the Forest of Dean or the northern wastes. Apart from the other pleasures of it, it gives them a little rough work, which I am sorry to say is getting a little scarce for these last fifty years."

He broke off, and then said, "I tell you all this, because I see that if I talk I must be answering questions, which you are thinking, even if you are not speaking them out; but my kinsman will tell you more about it."

I saw that I was likely to get out of my depth again, and so merely for the sake of tiding over an awkwardness and to say something, I said—

"Well, the youngsters here will be all the fresher for school when the summer gets over and they have to go back again."

"School?" he said; "yes, what do you mean by that word? I don't see how it can have anything to do with children. We talk, indeed, of a school of herring, and a school of painting, and in the former sense we might talk of a school of children—but otherwise," said he, laughing, "I must own myself beaten."

Hang it! thought I, I can't open my mouth without digging up

some new complexity. I wouldn't try to set my friend right in his etymology; and I thought I had best say nothing about the boy-farms which I had used to call schools, as I saw pretty clearly that they had disappeared; so I said after a little fumbling, "I was using the word in the sense of a system of education."

"Education?" said he, meditatively, "I know enough Latin to know that the word must come from *educere*, to lead out; and I have heard it used; but I have never met anybody who could give me a clear explanation of what it means."

You may imagine how my new friends fell in my esteem when I heard this frank avowal; and I said, rather contemptuously, "Well, education means a system of teaching young people."

"Why not old people also?" said he, with a twinkle in his eye. "But," he went on, "I can assure you our children learn, whether they go through a 'system of teaching' or not. Why you will not find one of these children about here, boy or girl, who cannot swim; and every one of them has been used to tumbling about the little forest ponies—there's one of them now! They all of them know how to cook; the bigger lads can mow; many can thatch and do odd jobs at carpentering; or they know how to keep shop. I can tell you they know plenty of things."

"Yes, but their mental education, the teaching of their minds," said I, kindly translating my phrase.

"Guest," said he, "perhaps you have not learned to do these things I have been speaking about; and if that's the case, don't you run away with the idea that it doesn't take some skill to do them, and doesn't give plenty of work for one's mind: you would change your opinion if you saw a Dorsetshire lad thatching, for instance. But however, I understand you to be speaking of book-learning; and as to that, it is a simple affair. Most children, seeing books lying about, manage to read by the time they are four years old; though I am told it has not always been so. As to writing, we do not encourage them to scrawl too early, though scrawl a little they will, because it gets them into a habit of ugly writing; and what's the use of a lot of ugly writing being done, when rough printing can be done so easily. You understand that handsome writing we like, and many people will write their books out when they make them, or get them written; I mean books of which only a few copies are needed—poems, and such like, you know. However, I am wandering from my lambs; but you must excuse me, for I am interested in this matter of writing, being myself a fair writer."

"Well," said I, "about the children; when they know how to read and write, don't they learn something else—languages, for instance?"

"Of course," he said; "sometimes even before they can read, they can talk French, which is the nearest language talked on the other side of the water; and they soon get to know German also, which is talked by a huge number of communes and colleges on the mainland. These are the principal languages we speak in these islands, along with English and Welsh; and children pick them up very quickly, because their elders all know them; and besides our guests from over sea often bring their children with them, and the little ones get together and rub their speech into one another."

"And the older languages?" said I.

"O, yes," said he, "they mostly learn Latin and Greek along with the modern ones, when they do anything more than merely pick up the latter."

"And history?" said I; "how do you teach history?"

"Well," said he, "when a person can read, of course he reads what he likes to; and he can easily get someone to tell him what are the best books to read on such or such a subject, or to explain what he doesn't understand in the books when he is reading them."

"Well," said I, "what else do they learn? I suppose they don't all learn history?"

"No, no," said he; "some don't care about it; in fact, I don't think many do. I have heard my great-grandfather say that it was mostly in periods of turmoil and strife and confusion that people cared much about history; and you know," said my friend, with an amiable smile, "we are not like that now. No; many people study facts about the make of things and the matters of cause and effect, so that knowledge increases on us, if that be good; and some, as you heard about friend Bob yonder, will spend time over mathematics. 'Tis no use forcing people's tastes."

Said I: "But you don't mean that children learn all these things?"

Said he: "That depends on what you mean by children; and also you must remember how much they differ. As a rule, they don't do much reading, except for a few story-books, till they are about fifteen years old; we don't encourage early bookishness: though you will find some children who *will* take to books very early; which perhaps is not good for them; but its no use thwarting them; and very often it doesn't last long with them, and they find their level before they are twenty years old. You see, children are mostly given to imitating their elders, and when they see most people about them engaged in genuinely amusing work, like house-building and street-paving, and gardening, and the like, that is what they want to be doing; so I don't think we need fear having too many book-learned men."

What could I say? I sat and held my peace, for fear of fresh entanglements. Besides, I was using my eyes with all my might, wondering as the old horse jogged on when I should come into London proper, and what it would be like now.

But my companion couldn't let his subject quite drop, and went on meditatively:

"After all, I don't know that it does them much harm, even if they grow up book-students. Such people as that, 'tis a great pleasure

seeing them so happy over work which is not much sought for. And besides, these students are generally such pleasant people; so kind and sweet-tempered, so humble, and at the same time so anxious to teach everybody all that they know. Really, I like those that I have met prodigiously."

This seemed to me such *very* queer talk that I was on the point of asking him another question; when just as we came to the top of a rising ground, down a long glade of the wood on my right I caught sight of a stately building whose outline was familiar to me, and I cried out, "Westminster Abbey!"

"Yes," said Dick, "Westminster Abbey—what there is left of it."

"Why," said I, "what have you done with it?"

"What have *we* done with it?" said he; "nothing much, save clean it. But you know the whole outside was spoiled centuries ago: as to the inside, that remains in its beauty after the great clearance, which took place over a hundred years ago, of the beastly monuments to fools and knaves, which once blocked it up, as great-grandfather says."

We went on a little further, and I looked to the right again, and said, in rather a doubtful tone of voice, "Why, there are the Houses of Parliament! Do you still use them?"

He burst out laughing, and was some time before he could control himself; then he clapped me on the back and said:

"I take you, neighbour; you may well wonder at our keeping them standing; and I know something about that, and my old kinsman has given me books to read about the games that went on there. Use them! Well, yes, they are used for a sort of subsidiary market, and a storage place for manure, and they are handy for that, being on the water-side. I believe it was intended to pull them down quite at the beginning of our days; but there was, I am told, a queer antiquarian society, which had done some service in past times, and which straightway set up its pipe against their destruction, as it has done with many other buildings, which most people looked upon as worthless and public nuisances; and it was so energetic, and had such good reasons to give, that it generally gained its point; and I must say that when all is said I am glad of it: because you know at the worst these silly old buildings serve as a kind of foil to the beautiful ones which we build now. You will see several others in these parts; the place my great-grandfather lives in, for instance, and a big building called St. Pauls. And you see, in this matter we need not grudge a few poorish buildings standing, because we can always build elsewhere; nor need we be anxious as to the breeding of pleasant work in such matters, for there is always room for more and more work in a new building, even without making it pretentious. For instance, elbow-room *within* doors is to me so delightful that if I were driven to it I would almost sacrifice out-door space to it. Then, of course, there is the ornament, which, as we must all allow, may easily be overdone in mere living houses, but can hardly be in mote-halls and markets, and so forth. I must tell you though that my great-grandfather sometimes tells me I am a little cracked on this subject of fine building; and indeed I *do* think that the energies of mankind are chiefly of use to them for such work, for in that direction I can see no end to the work, while in many others a limit does seem possible."

WILLIAM MORRIS.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

INTERNATIONAL NOTES.

DENMARK.

One of our comrades in Stockholm visited Copenhagen when the elections to Parliament were on, and made a special point of studying the tactics of the party leaders and their organ, *Social-Demokraten*. He says:—"The tactics have been: (1) To criticise the proposals and doings of the Government; (2) To point out the standpoint of the Danish Social Democratic party in regard to these proposals and doings; (3) Besides that, *not to point out any measures* that the candidates of the working-men party would struggle for if they were elected." And our Swedish comrade says he is utterly astonished to find that the Danish elections are not at all used for Socialistic propaganda, not even for agitation against the Liberals, but merely for discussion of the Conservative policy of the government and their party. Not even a word about the resolutions of the Paris Congress, eight hours working-day, and laws protecting the workers against some of the worst forms of capitalistic oppression. Not even that! These Danish Social Democrats explain that we shall get Socialism (the Social Democratic reforms) through reform legislation by Parliament. That may be some sort of standpoint, but it is socialistic?

Arbeideren has begun a very good and interesting series of critical articles upon "The Programme of the Danish Social Democracy." It would only be reasonable and evolutionistic if every party that has a programme revised and criticised it at least once every two or three years. Such "house-cleaning" will always be found healthy and necessary. Anybody doubting this will change his opinions when reading the above-mentioned partly amusing, partly astonishing articles in *Arbeideren*.

What I said last week about *Social-Demokraten* leaving *Arbeideren* and its group in peace, is no longer true. There have again lately been some most vile personal attacks in the former paper upon the principal supporters of the latter, who are again and again by means of evidence, that the latter has proved false, denounced as hirelings of the Conservatives and of the Government.

STN.

Every serious thinker, and the great body of the working-men, who are, if they will, the real rulers of the land, look steadily to the inevitable and noble outcome of the Australian Republic. The wise among us regard the Imperial Federation League as an important ally of republicans, because it has aroused the just and vigilant suspicion of people that it and similar enterprises are intended to impede and defeat the national aspirations for independence.—*Chief Justice Lilley.*

IN AUSTRALIA.

THE Western Queensland drovers are organising; and the following suggestions are to be submitted to a general meeting of drovers called for December 28th, at Tambo:

RATES OF WAGES, AT PER WEEK.—For sheep, 10,000 or under, not less than 80s.; over 10,000, not less than 100s. For cattle, 500 or under, not less than 80s.; over 500, not less than 100s.

CONTRACT RATES.—For cattle, at per hundred miles, for 500 head, not less than 1s. 6d. per head; over 500 head, not less than 1s. 3d. per head. For sheep, 10,000 or under, not less than 55s. per week per thousand; over 10,000, not less than 50s. per week per thousand. And that the annual subscription be £2 2s.

As considerable enthusiasm prevails successful organisation seems certain.

The Darlings Downs shearing dispute still drags on, several stations being seriously crippled by the severe letting alone they are getting. In the *Toowoomba Chronicle*, "A Shearer" has pointed out that if the squatters offered to meet the shearers in a fair way they would find the trouble easily got over, as the union rules do not prevent the manager being boss of his own shed but simply prevent him imposing on the men. Some of the shed rules have been the grossest imposition, notably one clause which enabled an overseer to forfeit a whole pen of ten or twelve sheep if in his opinion one was improperly shorn. Such a rule is one of the many reasons why the shearers are sticking to the union.

A conference was held at the Maritime Hall, Brisbane, on Saturday last, to discuss the starting of a labour paper, which was attended by delegates from the Charters Towers and Gympie miners, Queensland railway employes, Brisbane Early Closing Association, Maritime Council, Central Queensland Labourers and Carriers, Building Trades Council, Australian Labour Federation, Boilermakers, and Butchers. Over 20,000 workmen were represented. After a long discussion a scheme was recommended to the various societies which provides for a monthly journal to be circulated free of charge among all members of co-operating societies, and to be supported by a payment of 1s. per member per annum from such societies. This paper will be the sole property of the societies supporting it, and be in charge of a board of trustees to be elected by the societies. The question will be submitted to the shearers, carriers, and labourers at their annual meetings, and it is generally thought that such advanced bodies cannot fail to lead the way by carrying a resolution to co-operate *nem. con.* The indications seem to be that most of the other societies represented will be similarly and spontaneously favourable, particularly as the scheme has the joint advantages of excluding every interest detrimental to labour, and of placing the finances of the concern at once on a sound and truly co-operative footing. The name suggested, by the way, is the *Swagsman*, the Australian term for a workman tramping in search of work, a popular and topical name that should "take."

The *Australian Trades and Labour Journal*, of Melbourne, has gone to pieces on the financial rocks. The *Sydney Trades and Labour Advocate* celebrated its tenth weekly issue by announcing the receipt of a writ for libel. Its editor, W. G. Higgs, was for a long while secretary of the Typographical Association, and was given a testimonial the other day by the members for long and good service.

At the meeting of the Council of the Queensland Labour Federation held on November 26th, the secretary was elected delegate to visit the annual meetings of the Labourers, Carriers, and Shearers Unions to be held at Barcaldine and Blackall on the 2nd, 3rd, and 6th of January next; he will endeavour to secure the affiliation of these societies, and, judging from the feeling which is manifesting itself in all parts of the colony, there will be no difficulty in doing so. At a meeting of shearers held on the Downs the other day, it was unanimously agreed to instruct their delegate to the Blackall annual meeting to vote for the federation of their union with all other unions in the colony. This in itself speaks well for the success likely to attend the secretary's efforts.

The rules of the Sydney Tailoresses' Union contain provisions for the payment of 7s. 6d. per week to each member who may be ill, this sick pay to continue for the first thirteen weeks, after which 5s. per week will be paid for the following thirteen weeks. The Sydney Journeymen Butchers have formed a union, which starts with 300 members. The Journeyman Bakers are following suit. The Cutters and Trimmers are also organising, and have about 30 members in their Provisional Union.

On Saturday, a meeting of the Operative Bakers' Association and non-union men connected with the trade took place at the Temperance Hall, about 400 being present. The object was, to invite the non-union men to join the Operative Bakers' Association in consequence of the defiant attitude shown by the master bakers towards trades-unionism. The following resolutions were passed *nem. con.*:

"That the non-union bakers of Sydney and suburbs agree to join the Bakers' Union; that five non-union members be appointed from the meeting to meet the committee of the Bakers' Union to arrange for entrance fees and any other business necessary to further the one object they have in view."

"That the committee appointed report to the Executive of the Trades and Labour Council and request them to take the matter up, and get an interview with the employers with the object of bringing about a settlement of the bakers' question."

About 70 men handed in their names to join the union, and a committee of five was appointed to meet the union committee, and the operative bakers now seem in a fair way of being united at last.

The movement for Australian independence is growing fast. This is the sort of paragraph one comes across:—"France has recognised the Brazilian Republic. Of course it has, but Britain has as yet—witness the last Exhibition—not fully recognised the French Republic, and will probably feel disinclined at first to recognise the Federated States of Australia." But then one also sees items like this taken from the Cairns (Queensland) *Post*:—"Before Mr. O'Malley, P.M., at the Police-court, an *aboriginal*, the property of Mr. A—, was charged with having stolen a coat with a watch and chain in the pocket from one Ah Fee, a cook in the Cairns hotel."

What with wage-slavery and chattel-slavery, the working-classes here won't be much better off for their new Republic, unless they take warning in time and prepare for it.

Sydney, N.S.W., Dec. 14, 1889.

CORNSTALK.

"If the *Commonweal* should succeed in its purpose, important and permanent will be the benefits accruing to those who have hitherto satisfied themselves with creating and accumulating wealth, of which they obtain but a very small and precarious share."—*Lloyd's Weekly London Newspaper*, June-July, 1845.



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

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

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

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

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MEN WHO ARE NOT SOCIALISTS.

V.

HIS GRACE THE DUKE OF HAMILTON.

I HAVE never had the pleasure of meeting His Grace,—one of the reasons being that he is so seldom in this part of the country—but if I should ever have that pleasure, I will cordially grasp his hand. It is true he is a duke, and that he steals £120,000 a year from his poor neighbours; but there is no need of our affecting to be fastidiously virtuous, so long as things are as they are. We are all thieves, if it comes to that; and if we don't steal as much as the Duke of Hamilton, it is chiefly because we have not got the chance. If we could all be dukes the thing would be right enough. After all, there is not so much harm in stealing; it is the monopoly of stealing—the preventing others having an equal opportunity—that does the mischief. If stealing were universalized, (Kant says that true morality is to act so that your actions may be universalized) it would be Socialism. (The editors of some capitalist advertising prints, will no doubt drag this little sentence from its home, and stick it in the pillory of their leader columns as a mark for the brick-bats of ignorant slander and abuse; it is foredoomed, I know, to become a martyr in the cause, nevertheless let it go bravely forth to do its duty.) The Duke of Hamilton is not

a Socialist so far as I am aware; but he is better than being a Socialist—he makes other people become Socialists. He is one of the biggest propaganda forces in the country. I know many people who call themselves Socialists, who might as well call themselves cabbages for all the good they do. It doesn't matter a rap what a man is, it is what a man *does* that tells on the progress of the cause. There are some Socialists who have so little energy, generosity and courage, that they could better serve Socialism by dying right off, and having the words, "Here lies a Socialist," inscribed on their tombstones, than by living to the age of Methuselah; (and here let me suggest that every Socialist should stipulate on his death-bed that a text from the *Socialist Catechism*, or a verse from one of Morris' songs, should be engraved on the slab that decorates the sward above his mortal clay. I especially commend this idea to timid Socialists, who are afraid to avow their principles when alive—a man can say what he likes after he is dead—they don't hang corpses now-a-days.)

The Duke of Hamilton filches £120,000 from the labourers and miners of Lanarkshire. He has a magnificent palace at Hamilton, in which he has not resided for many years. He has a castle on one side of the Island of Arran, and a grand shooting lodge on the other; neither of which he inhabits for more than a couple of weeks in the year. He cruises on the Mediterranean; gambles at Baden-Baden and Monte Carlo; shoots buffaloes on the Rocky Mountains; attends race-meetings, and does anything "he damn'd well pleases," to use a favourite phrase of an Anarchist friend of mine. He is thus a living monument of the iniquity of the existing state of society; and his career speaks more eloquently than a hundred unemployed socialist agitators, in behalf of the subversion of landlordism and capitalism, and the institution of a "general divide."

A Lanarkshire miner gets on the average 1s. for hewing a ton of coal; and his work is hard, unhealthy and dangerous. For every ton of coal the miner hews, the Duke gets 1s. in the form of royalty; yet the Duke does not move a muscle or do anything in the least to produce the coal. The Duke has never worked, and never intends to work, with the help of Providence, the political parties, and the stupidity of the people! Of course, this 1s. per ton royalty, is downright, flagrant, clamorously crying-out robbery, and the Duke himself would, I suppose, be the first to admit the fact. But the Duke has to do this robbery business—people would laugh at him if he refused, and someone else would be got to do it in his stead. Even the miners who are presently being plundered, would only be too glad to step into his shoes if they could. Supposing the Duke wanted to stop the thing, he couldn't; he would just require to wait till the social revolution came, like the rest of us.

Whenever therefore I feel the interest of my audience flagging, I trot out the Duke as it were, and show him round, metaphorically. I make him take off his hat, and show his carrotty hair and low forehead. I unbutton his great-coat, to exhibit the grand dimensions of his neck and waist. I then turn his trousers-pockets inside out, and count his £120,000 in gold and bank-notes, and ask him to tell the audience where he got it all, and how he intends spending it. I ask him a few questions in elementary arithmetic, geography, history and mineralogy, to show that as a clerk or a check-weight man at a pit-head, he would not be tolerated for ten minutes. I give him a spade to dig the ground; a pick to hew coal; a saw to cut wood, to show that he could not make two pence a day at any manual craft. Of course the audience gets mad at the Duke; and if I had the real Duke, and not merely the theosophical part of him beside me, I have little doubt but that he would "fare rather roughly" at its hands—to use a happy phrase of the capitalist press, when describing how a Socialist speaker got dipped in a horse-pond, stripped of nine-tenths of his clothes, robbed of ten-tenths of his railway fare money, and afterwards pitched over an embankment on to a dung-heap.

But I would not allow the mob to harm a single hair of the Duke's head if I could help it, so long, at least, as they are fools enough to tolerate dukes and lords and capitalists at all. He is very useful to us, as I have already said, so handy for being shown round the ring; and, besides, he is quite free from the usual cant and hypocrisy of his class. He does not build churches or preside at political meetings. If he steals he does it because he has the power, and he makes no justification or apology. He doesn't attempt to prove that stealing is a virtue, and that those who allow him to pick their pockets are particularly wise and pious for so doing, or that it is the will of providence that he should steal and that they should be stolen from. He simply takes what he can get and looks for more, and allows snobbish clergymen and politicians to do the preaching and pacifying if they choose.

I will now mention an occurrence which has given me great joy, and has caused me to bless the name of the Duke of Hamilton and Brandon. The town of Motherwell is falling down! or rather, to speak by the newspaper reports, one half of it is! That half is the villadom half. The gables are cracking, the chimney stacks twisting, and the internal stucco ornamentation dropping down like April showers! There is every likelihood, says the newspaper report, of many houses becoming total wrecks, and their front gardens converted into unpicturesque heaps of *débris*. And not a farthing of compensation will the villa holders get! I fervently hope the news is true, that it is not exaggerated but rather understated. This wish may appear somewhat uncharitable, if not positively wicked, but I will explain.

First, the Motherwell villa residents are not Socialists, therefore I don't like them; any misfortune that may happen them brings me joy. All people delight more or less in the discomfiture of their enemies, but few have the courage like me to say so.

Secondly, the only thing that will ever make the Motherwell villa residents become Socialists, is to see their houses cracking and falling about their ears without getting a penny of compensation, or some similar catastrophe.

And that, luckily, is what is happening. The Duke in leasing them the ground, reserved the right to work out the coal underneath it. Some time ago he intimated to them that he was about to do so, and that if they wished to secure the stability of their houses they would require to purchase the necessary "stoops" of coal beneath. The cost was too great for the leaseholders, so they took their chance, trusted in Providence, and hoped for the best. But the worst came—and now they have no redress, no compensation! I just feel quite happy about the occurrence, and hope the newspapers will have pleasant reports of villas—self-contained and semi-detached—falling down every week for a couple of years or so. It will do as much for Socialism as a cholera plague does for religion.

The last time I held a meeting at Motherwell I was threatened with dislocation of the upper vertebrae, because I ventured to speak somewhat disrespectfully of the Duke and the law behind him. Now that "much has happened since then," and that "new conditions present themselves for consideration and debate," as the graceful circumlocution of the politician puts it, I am afraid my speechifying would be still less acceptable in that district; for if I attempted to say a few words in commendation of the Duke as I have ventured to do here, they might not merely threaten to break my neck; they might attempt to do it.

But we don't need to preach Socialism to the villa holders of Motherwell for some time to come. Every crack in their walls, every falling flake of plaster, speaks eloquently to their acquisitive ears against the monopoly of land and minerals. There is not, perhaps, a great deal of Socialism in that, but it is about as much as the majority of them will ever accept until the revolution comes.

I will conclude, seeing we are not quite out of the festive season, by asking every Socialist who is not a teetotaler "on principle—not because, etc.," to join with me in drinking "To the subsidence of the ground and the fall of the villas at Motherwell, and many more of them! coupled with the health of his Grace the Duke of Hamilton and Brandon!"

J. BRUCE GLASIER.

IN SOUTHERN AFRICA.

How much sympathy the workers at home may expect from the colonial press may be well judged by the following comment, which I cut from a recent article in the *Cape Times* on one of the London strikes. The writer says: "A striker with a grievance is a man with whom to reason, but a striker with a grudge is a victim to be scourged." The thought came to me at the time that the writer of the article from which the comment is cut knew, or sought to know, very little of what he was writing about, knew nothing of the "gospel of discontent" which is taking hold of the workers in all countries, and which will not rest till it has wrought out a happier condition of life for all. It may be that before this happens the "scourging" which the writer refers to may have to be resorted to, and I am much mistaken if the stripes do not fall upon the right backs when the time comes.

I have just returned from a visit to Robben Island, where there is a leper hospital and lunatic asylum. The article in *Blackwood's* a couple of months ago has brought about a little improvement in the general arrangements made for the inmates; but let the Government do what they will—and they are not over likely to do very much—one thing they will never be able to do, and that is to make the island a fit place for a human being to pass his or her lifetime. *Ach mein Gott!* I would not land a mad dog upon it to end its days, let alone a human being—though only a Kaffir! There seemed to be only one opinion amongst the whole of the passengers coming back, and that was, that a month or so on Robben Island would send the sanest man that ever lived—Solomon included—hopelessly mad. I should like to banish the whole Legislative Assembly for one short month to the island, with this proviso, that if they found it comfortable they could stop there, but if not, that they would shift the lepers and lunatics to some other place. I will pass my word that not a soul would be found in the island at the end of the month. From the deck of the small steamer it looks as if the ground had been thickly strewn with broken sandstone, and the glare of the sun on the white sand hurts one's eyes as much as looking into a huge furnace would. The Government seems to have found out—but mark, this is only since the brutal treatment and filthy surroundings of the inmates were exposed—that the friends of the natives do not wish visitors to be admitted. Had the article in *Blackwood's* never been penned, one could have almost driven a horse and cart through the wards and no notice would have been taken; but now the doors are shut, and the visitor is told that the inmates are well cared for, which is lie number one; and that they are comfortably housed, which is lie number two; and that they do not wish for any change, which is lie three. As for the friends of the inmates, well, there is nothing to fear from them; they belong to the class which does not as a rule write leading articles, and which if they did would find it a difficult matter to get any paper to print them.

I noticed some suggestive remarks in the different magistrates' reports to be found in the Blue Book of Native Affairs for 1889. From a magistrate in the district of Mganduli comes the following: "There is but little progress in civilisation worthy of remark amongst the natives during the past year; they seem contented to go on in the same course, to plant their gardens and herd a few cows." Let me here hazard a remark: I wonder if said magistrate imagines the natives have aught to gain by accepting the civilisation which the Government are trying to foist upon them. If he imagines so—but he can hardly be thick enough in the head to imagine that—I pity him. However, I should like to say to the natives—Go on planting your gardens and herding your cows, for if you accept the rotten civilisation offered you, you will very soon have no gardens to plant and precious few cows to herd.

W. E. Shanford, chief magistrate of Griqualand East, speaking of the excitement caused by a rising among the natives, says: "With the change in the form of government and the cessation of quarrels the opportunity of the European dealers and speculators came. Farms were sold for a case of

gin—for a small debt due at the local store—for a trifling sum of money advanced—for a few head of stock—and after a time there was the reaction. Of course the Griquas did not blame themselves for the landless destitute condition into which they were falling. First it was the dealers and speculators who had cheated them; but the bargains were shown to have been openly entered into, and could not be upset. Then the discontent became political; 'Under our own government we were prosperous,' they said, 'but now how different.' The wilder spirits went into rebellion, but the land had gone for ever, and the last phase has been the immigration into Pondoland of the remnants of the tribe under Wm. Kook, a stepson of the old Kaptin. They have settled down in a strip of country given them by the late chief Umqakela, and are comparatively happy again." And this tale can be told of most of the tribal risings which have taken place in years past, and the same thing will no doubt occur wherever and whenever the speculator and British syndicate maker appears.

The magistrate of Bathurst reports: "As a general conclusion, I have the satisfaction of saying that the natives of this division are quiet and contented, living peaceably with one another. I heard of little distress among them, but I do not know of any who are really well-to-do. There have been no diseases except the ordinary maladies, such as measles. The state of affairs is fairly satisfactory, and the only thing that causes any anxiety is the collection of the hut-tax." This magistrate, to whom the "collection of the hut-tax" is the only cause of anxiety, seems to think it a matter of surprise that there are no millionaires to be found amongst the natives. Well, Mr. Magistrate, let me tell you that when the presence of "well-to-do" men figures in your report, that day there will also appear a statement that the natives no longer live peaceably with one another, no longer are quiet and contented, and instead of little, that there is much distress amongst them, and more maladies than measles. The state of affairs won't then be "fairly satisfactory," and other causes than the "collection of the hut-tax" will give you or your successors cause for anxiety.

From the district of Bedford comes the report that the "return of the Kaffir chiefs from transportation gladdened their countrymen, who have been since then living in expectation of hearing where they are to be located, presumably with the intention of going there too."

From all of the different districts almost an entire absence of disease and very little crime of any kind is reported. The "triumphant march of the white man" is all that is required to alter all this; a few speculators, with their "fair and open bargains," will cause more crime than shiploads of missionaries can ever hope to cure—i.e., if one put any faith in the usefulness of these people.

In an article which appeared in the *Cape Times* of December 31st, the writer admits that "the influence of Socialism upon the political development in England will be widely recognised before the close of another year. And the numbers of earnest politicians who are adopting Socialist views of certain questions relating to labour—who are avowing a modified Socialism—is increasing day by day." So much for the editor of the *Cape Times'* opinion. If I thought that the influence of Socialism was going to rest with the "political development," why, I would join a branch of the Primrose League at once and be done with it. As for the said "political development," it can well be let go where it is fast going—viz., to the devil. Let us look to the industrial development.

In the meanwhile, just to show you that there is no slavery in this part of Africa, I cut this from a daily paper. Somehow it had a sound about it that puts one in mind of "down South" during the old slavery days.

"LEFT HER HOME.—Amina Mobarra, a Malay Girl, aged 18 years, having run away from Stall No. 22, New Market, Cape Town, on the 9th inst. Anyone possessing information of her whereabouts kindly communicate with that address. Any person harbouring her after this date will be prosecuted."

Cape Town, Jan. 8, 1890.

J. BAIN.

STRIKE OF STICKMAKERS IN THE EAST-END.

It seems for some time past there has been a strike amongst the stickmakers of this district, and, strange to say, the capitalist press have ignored all communications sent to it by the secretary of the union. The greatest offenders in this matter have been the *Star* and the *North London Press*, perhaps this may be owing to the fact that most of the men are "foreigners." The chairman of the South London Gas Company is not the only one to break up the recently formed unions, most desperate efforts having been made by two stick-making sweaters, viz., Strouss and Metz. It seems that these two sweaters have seen what effect the union would ultimately have upon the robbery of labour, that cost what it would, they would use every effort to smash the organisation. The finishers can earn at the utmost an average wage of 12s. per week of 15 and 18 hours per day, with a reduction of 4d. to 6d. for the use of gas according to wages earned, 1d. for cleaning the shop, and 1d. interest in the 1s. is charged on all money lent during the week. Filers and benders can earn from 20s. to 25s. per week, with the reductions at above rate. Notwithstanding the sweating wages paid, Metz, of 20, Worship Street, and Strauss, of Playhouse Yard, Golden Lane, insist upon a reduction of 45 per cent. on these miserable wages, which will render it impossible for any of the employes an opportunity of bare existence. The men ask that the masters should receive a deputation. No answer being received to the first letter, a second was written to these firms, and met with the following treatment. The blank half was sent as an insult to the English society, and the other half containing the suggestions of the men was scribbled over and sent to the International Society of Stickmakers, with an intimation from Strauss that he would have nothing to do with the "damn union" at all. This is a matter affecting trades unionism as a whole in a most vital manner, and if the present indifferent attitude of the trades unions of London is kept up it will be one of the most effective means of retarding the movement. We appeal, therefore, to all workers, of whatever nationality, to aid the stickmakers against tyranny of the most brutal kind ever adopted against workers' organisations. This is not merely an attempt on the part of the masters to resist increased wages, but is part of a deep-laid scheme to break up all organisations, knowing that the workers have learnt that their unions are but a preliminary to the great battle of the future, which will emancipate labour.

But legal (Imperial) Federation would, if ever created, be the beginning of the end—a separation inevitably violent and unfriendly. There would be a rupture, because all experience shows that Great Britain would then endeavour to maintain the legal bond by military coercion, and with that show of right which legality gives to the wrong.—*Chief Justice Lilley.*

THE LABOUR STRUGGLE.

The Strike at the Wharves.

It is likely that the struggle at Hay's Wharf may have some serious developments. It is evident that the attack by Mr. Livesey on the gas-stokers' union has inspired Mr. Norwood and his fellow capitalists with the idea of "smashing" the Dockers' Union. Mr. Norwood has shown in all his recent speeches that he has been writhing for some considerable time under his recent defeat; but in the speech to the shareholders last week he practically declared war against the union. After complaining bitterly that the company, through the formation of the union, had lost control over their own property, he went on to say that "the Joint-Committee must regain the control over the management of their own affairs, whatever may be the cost of their struggle." This means in plain English that the docker must be plunged into his former slavery by forcing on a quarrel with the union and locking out every man. But the quarrel must be of such a nature that public sympathy shall not be engaged on the side of the men, so that they shall be left to fight their battle with the scanty funds of a young trade union. Mr. Norwood imagines that he has such a quarrel in the fight at Hay's Wharf, and he, through the agency of his fellow conspirators—dock directors and wharf-owners—is bombarding the middle-class press with accusations against the men of breaking the sacred agreement of 14th Sept. Now, for my part, I should not regard that as a very great offence, as that agreement was in every way a most unsatisfactory one; but it just happens that the men have not broken that agreement, for the very simple reason that these men had concluded an agreement of their own with the proprietors of the wharf, and had gone back to work on 7th Sept., seven days before the Mansion House agreement was signed. Therefore the accusation falls to the ground. But no doubt this will make little difference to Mr. Norwood and his friends; they will go on repeating the same stale old lie about the "breach of agreement," and if the facts are against them—well, so much the worse for the facts!

We are glad to see that the men hold well together, and are well backed up by the Dockers' and Carmen's unions, the members of these unions refusing to take goods from the wharf. Both unions have issued a manifesto, calling on their members after the 10th February to refuse to work with non-union men. The secretary of the South Side Labour League has issued a similar notice. This is an excellent answer to Mr. Norwood's gage of battle.

At Cutler Street Tea Warehouse the men refused to load a van from the wharf, and though a hundred of them were dismissed, yet the van had to go away empty. A hundred men struck at Brooks' Wharf on Friday 31st Jan., on being asked to load tea for Hay's Wharf. The stevedores have also refused to handle goods from steamer "Bellaini," berthed beside the wharf. The boycott promises to be very effective. The enraged masters are endeavouring to get up a case against Tom Mann for intimidation; but should he be arrested John Burns, who spoke at a large meeting held in Southwark Park on Sunday, is ready to take his place.

Later.—The dock directors and wharf-owners decided on Tuesday to form a union of masters, and to sack any men who refuse to load the vans of blackleg carmen. This will bring matters to a crisis.

The Gas-stokers.

A deputation from the Gas-stokers' Union attended at the London Trades Council on Thursday Jan. 30. The Council has decided to help them to bring the strike to a successful issue, though it has not stated publicly what form that help will take. There are already signs that the other trade unions are beginning to take an interest in the gallant fight which the gas-stokers are making. The Strike Committee have received £30 from the Ironfounders; the London Journeymen Basket-makers, numbering over 400 members, have subscribed a sum averaging 4s. a-head; the Hatters, numbering 800, have promised a levy of 1s. a-man; the Glass-blowers a sum of £5 a-week till the strike is over; and the London Compositors will also probably subscribe £100 to the strike fund. We hope that other unions who are thinking about helping the gas-stokers will do so at once, as this is probably the worst part of the struggle.

The Sailors and Firemen's Union are still loyally helping the strikers. They have sent a steam launch from the north, which they expect will be very useful in the task of calling out the men from the colliers. There is trouble, too, among the blacklegs at Rotherhithe and East Greenwich. They are holding meetings and carrying on a vigorous agitation against the reduction of their wages by Livesey taking away the £1 a-week bonus they received in the earlier weeks of the strike. On the whole, it seems that the men have still a good chance if the other unions continue to support them.

Unskilled Labour in Mines.

The recent conference of miners in Birmingham have passed a resolution amending the Mines Act, which will enact, if passed through Parliament, that no person shall be allowed to work in an ironstone or coal mine who has not entered the mine as a worker before attaining the age of 20 years, and any manager admitting such people to work in the mine to be subject to six months' imprisonment. The reckless way in which mine-owners are willing to risk the lives of their men by flooding the mines with a mass of unskilled labour from the agricultural districts, is one of the chief grievances of the miners. Great lumbering country bumpkins, 30 or 40 years of age, who have never seen a mine in their lives before, are sent down to risk their own lives and the lives of the miners in a place where a blunder frequently means death. This is done by mine owners to lower wages, the lives of the workers being a matter of very small consequence. To such a pitch has this evil gone in some cases, that a delegate stated at the conference that at one colliery in South Wales there were so many agriculturists employed, that it was known as the "farm labourers' mine." There can be no question that many of the fearful calamities that frequently startle us in the mining districts, are caused by the ignorance and stupidity of these "new hands." We fear, however, that this proposed amendment of the Mines Act will have a small chance of passing through a House of Commons composed of capitalists with a love for "cheap" labour. We think, however, that the miners would be quite within their rights in treating this as part of the great "blackleg" question, by refusing to work with people who increase to such a terrible extent the risks of a most dangerous occupation.

BUYING OUT LANDLORDS.

At the protest meeting in St. James's Hall the other evening, the following resolution was carried:

"That this meeting strongly condemns any scheme of land purchase which would entail a risk of burdening the British taxpayers for the benefit of Irish landlords."

John Burns, in seconding it, said that that meeting was called to protest against English landlords in Ireland being compensated out of the money English labourers contributed to the rates and treasury of this country. He would further say that he would object to money being paid by the English people to compensate English landlords in England, but, as sufficient for the day was the evil thereof, they could confine themselves to the iniquity of exploiting the labour of the English workpeople, so that the Irish landlords could be ransomed for having exploited too well in the past the Irish proletariat by means of rack rents, famine, disease, and civil war. A few thousand landlords, mostly Englishmen, now demanded what would be equivalent to £5,000,000 of interest to be paid by the taxpayers yearly. Having wrung from the Irish peasant all that meant a decent life, they now wanted to extract 150 millions from the English workman, and for what? for the privilege of ceasing to rob other people. Yet in Parliament, and to some extent in the County Council, men came to them saying, "In the name of justice and liberty would you expropriate the Irish landlord?" and ask them to submit quietly to the charge of 150 millions; whilst in the same breath they objected to spend a few millions to perfect the London sewerage, to provide improved workmen's dwellings, or to build a town hall on the Embankment. He called upon the English working-men, who, he said, if they knew their power, could be the arbiters for the Irish people, not to yield to the demand. The Irish landlords were to be compensated up to the hilt, in order that they might have an opportunity of doing something to justify their existence. The men who compromised on a question like this betrayed a cause, and deluded a people. The time had come to talk plainly and openly, and the truth was that private property in land was an anomaly, an injustice, and an unmitigated curse to the community. He trusted the day was not far distant when the working-men of London would hold a meeting in that hall to celebrate the downfall of the system of compensation being paid to landlords, whether they were labelled English, Irish, Scotch, or French. Private ownership in land was doomed six years ago, when Michael Davitt, Henry George, and himself stood on that platform, and he called attention to the adherence now given to this view by the Radical candidates for London constituencies, by certain members of Parliament. He contrasted this adhesion with the manner in which the doctrine of land nationalisation was scouted six years ago. He was willing to forgive all the injustice which the landlords had committed in the past provided they should have the privilege to rob no longer, and do no more injustice to their fellow men. The economic development of society tended to the abolition of all monopolies; landlordism was essentially a monopoly, and they protested against it, and objected to compensation being given for past holding. They must resolve that there should be no peasant proprietors, no leasehold enfranchisement, and no free sale of land, for this, he said, would make the work of land nationalisation more difficult, and he called upon the working-men not to content themselves with mere shouting at public meetings, but to throw aside the hereditary subserviency of the frock coat and high hat. As a Socialist and workman, he told them that the enemy they had to meet was not landlord tyranny in itself, but their own apathy, ignorance, mistrust, selfishness, and suspicion. What a year the past had been! In Brazil slavery had been abolished, and the slave-master had got the sack with a month's notice paid in advance to clear out. Forced labour had been abolished in Egypt, slavery had been done away with in more than half of the Turkish dominions, and in America and the Colonies workmen were arousing themselves with an enthusiasm that was really extraordinary. In this grand old London they had shaken up, and 200,000 men and women had combined for paltry palliatives, for higher wages, and shorter working hours. In that they had done the best as a precursor to organisation towards the further things that would inevitably follow. It had been said by Tories and Liberals that the price of denying Home Rule to Ireland was socialist legislation as bribes to the English workmen. As a Socialist and a workman he denied that that was the truth. They would take from both parties what they could get, and would force from either all they possibly could, but if what was offered was meant as a blind to prevent those who agreed with him in extending their sympathy to the Irish people, it would only make English working-men more discontented and more determined to get justice for themselves, and whilst endeavouring to obtain justice for themselves were determined to secure for the Irish people what they had a right to demand.

CORRESPONDENCE.

THE TRAM MEN.

Dear Comrade,—In the *Weal* for January 25th, *re* "Labour Struggle," some remarks are made on the tramway men and their union; I should like to supplement them with a few of mine. The union is managed similar to the Dockers' Union, the men having little or no voice in the management. They pay 3d. per week to the union, which is sent to headquarters. They do not, as far as I can gather, know what they are paying it for as far as I can learn except for out-of-work pay which they are to receive, or what the objects of the union are, except to find a job for the secretary and allowing the Rev. Mr. Barclay to pose as a philanthropist. When tram men belonging to the union leave their job on the Woolwich and South-Eastern London line to go to the gun factory at Erith to act as "blacklegs," it shows that the union is not worth much. In fact, tram men are slaves, and only fit to be slaves, as they are afraid of one another, have no pluck, and put up with all sorts of insults from inspectors, clerks, and passengers alike. The managers play with them, as they like putting extra work on to them and other inconveniences, which they accept without a murmur. All their thoughts are centred on betting and horseracing; they are composed mostly of pensioners and country yokels, in fact, the trams are next to the docks, their last resort.—Yours fraternally,

H. PAUL,

"One who has been Behind."

EDINBURGH—SCOTTISH SOCIALIST FEDERATION.—In Moulders' Hall, High St., Sunday February 9, at 6.30, lecture, "A Criticism of the Present System."

THE SOCIALIST LEAGUE.

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

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

Executive.—The Council of the League have decided to invite speakers from the Provincial Branches to take part in the Celebration of the Commune this year, and also to solicit help towards defraying the expenses of the meeting, which will be exceptionally heavy this year.

Branch Subscriptions Paid.—1888:—Oxford, to end of September. 1889:—Bradford and Hammersmith, to end of April. Norwich, Glasgow, and Yarmouth, to end of May. East London, to end of October. North London and Mitcham, to end of November. St. Georges East, and Leicester, to end of December. 1890:—North Kensington and Manchester, to end of January. 'Commonweal' Branch, to end of February.

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

"COMMONWEAL" GUARANTEE FUND.

The following further sums have been received towards this fund:—H. R., 1s.; F. C. S. S., 1s.; J. Presburg, 6d.; B. W., 6d.; F. Kitz, 6d.; Nicoll (2 weeks), 1s.; A. Seglie, 6d.; P. Webb (2 weeks), 2s.; and C. Saunders (2 weeks), 2s.

REPORTS.

'COMMONWEAL.'—Good meeting at Broad Street, where Mowbray spoke to a very attentive audience; 17 *Weals* sold. We believe that this will be a good station if worked well. On Sunday, Feb. 2nd, comrade G. Netlow delivered an interesting lecture on "A Glance at the History of Anarchism;" good attendance; 1s. 8½d. collected.—S. P.

NORTH LONDON.—A good audience turned up on Wednesday, Jan. 29th, to hear Nicoll on "Law and Order;" very good discussion and good sale of *Weal*. On Sunday afternoon, Mowbray and Nicoll spoke at Hyde Park; about 30 *Weal* and other literature sold; 1s. 4½d. collected.—T. C.

ABERDEEN.—At weekly meeting on Monday, Morris's lecture on "Monopoly" was read and discussed. At the meetings held on Thursdays we have taken up the study and discussion of Spencer's "Study of Sociology," and mean to go over it chapter by chapter. The first has already gone well.—L.

GLASGOW.—On Sunday at 2 o'clock, we held a meeting on Jail Square, Glasier being the speaker. At 5 o'clock, Joe Burgoyne addressed a good meeting at Paisley Road Toll. In connection with the County Council elections, Glasier spoke at a miner's meeting at Springside, Kilmarnock, on Friday night, and at a mass meeting in Dalry on Saturday evening.

HALIFAX.—On Sunday evening, Samuels (of London) lectured here to an appreciative audience on "Socialism and the Political Economists." There was afterwards a most spirited and interesting discussion. Good sale of pamphlets.

LEEDS.—On Sunday morning in the Market, Samuels spoke to an attentive audience for an hour on "Reasons for Discontent." There was over 3s. worth of literature sold.

LEICESTER.—Sunday last, Barclay and Chambers spoke in the Square. In the afternoon, William Morris lectured at the Radical Club, Vine Street, on "How We Shall Live Then." There was a very good attendance, and Morris's ideal, a lucid and logical demonstration of the desirability and necessity of putting it into practice, was listened to eagerly, and frequently applauded; 12s. 6d. was collected. A sharp discussion followed the discourse, as also in the evening at the Secular Hall, where Morris addressed a full audience on "What Socialists Want." Monday night, Sparling spoke at Humberstone Gate; good attendance again. Sale of *Commonweal* and other literature amounted to 6s. 10½d.—T. B.

EDINBURGH (SCOTTISH SOCIALIST FEDERATION).—Comrade Gilray lectured to a good audience on Sunday in the Moulders' Hall. "The Place of Syndicates in Social Evolution" was interesting and instructive to all. A good discussion followed.

PLAISTOW.—On Thursday 16th January, at Secular Hall, Plaistow Broadway, H. Paul opened an adjourned debate on "Is Trade necessary to Civilisation?" in the negative, and advocated Communism; which was opposed by brain-working clerks and little shop keepers, who thought that the human race would degenerate and die out without commercialism. There are a few Socialists and one or two Individualist-Anarchists in this branch of the N.S.S. Very good discussions on social questions have taken place.—H. P.

HALLAMSHIRE HALL, SHEFFIELD.—On Feb. 2, J. Sketchley lectured in the above hall—in the morning on "Free Trade v. Fair Trade from a Workman's point of view"; in the evening on "Work and Wages." We have a good piano, and hope in a week or two to get together a good choir. It is also intended to organise a band of our own.—S.

SHEFFIELD SOCIALISTS.—A good meeting was held Sunday morning at the Monolith, addressed by Mrs. Usher and Charles. In the afternoon we went down to Rotherham, where Mrs. Usher and Charles held another meeting. In the evening, at the Westbar, a very attentive audience listened to the reading of 'A King's Lesson,' and addresses by Shortland, Smith, and Charles. *Commonweal* sold out, also good sale of other literature. Last week a warrant was applied for against one of our comrades, but the magistrates only granted a summons returnable next Friday, when he is to be charged with persuading, inciting, etc., etc., divers persons to murder a blackleg. We hold special meetings in connection with this affair next week, and are probably in for some lively times with the authorities here, as we understand from a good source that these proceedings are being instituted on the instructions of the Home Office, and are to be taken up by the Public Prosecutor.

LIVERPOOL SOCIALIST SOCIETY.—On Saturday evening last, a paper was given to the members of the Institute Debating Society, united for the evening with the Rathbone Literary Club, Liverpool, by the Rev. J. E. Stronge (Unitarian) of Birkenhead, the subject being "Is Socialism, or complete Individualism, likely to be the ultimate goal of human development?" Several of our members attended by invitation. Mr. Stronge answered the question entirely in our favour, maintaining that the whole tendency of modern events is towards Socialism. Comrades Nance, W. H. Chapman, sen., Reeves, and Lawrence Small supported the paper. No opposition worthy of record was offered, with the exception of that from the Rev. L. P. Jacks, M.A., of Liverpool (Unitarian minister), who out-Giffened Giffen in dealing with figures relating to the comparative wealth of the capitalist and working classes. Comrade J. C. Kenworthy replied to our opponent in a short but telling manner. We hope to number Mr. Stronge among our members ere long.

SOCIALIST CO-OPERATIVE FEDERATION, LTD. (Stores: 49 Southampton Row, W.C.)—The Half-Yearly General Meeting of the members will be held on Wednesday February 12th, at 8 p.m., in the Hall of the Social Democratic Federation, 337 Strand; William Morris in the chair. Please bring subscription card for audit.

LECTURE DIARY.

LONDON.

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

Commonweal Branch.—24 Great Queen Street, Holborn, W.C. Business meeting of members every Thursday evening at 8. Lectures every Sunday at 8 p.m. Hall open every evening from 7 till 10 to all members of the League; cards of membership must be produced to steward of branch on entering. Entertainments on last Sunday of every month. Membership: 6d. entrance fee and 6d. per month. On Sunday February 9, at 8.30 p.m., C. W. Mowbray, "Fair Day's Wage for a Fair Day's Work."

East London.—A meeting of members will be held on Sunday February 9th, for the purpose of reorganising the branch. Comrades willing to help in the propaganda are requested to attend. 12 Basing Place, Kingsland Road.

Hammersmith.—Kelmscott House, Upper Mall, W. Sunday Feb. 9, at 8 p.m., William Morris, "Equality."

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

North Kensington.—Clarendon Coffee Palace, Clarendon Road. Meets every Wednesday at 8 p.m. On Sunday Feb. 9, at 8 p.m., D. J. Nicoll, "The Commune of Paris."

North London.—6 Windmill Street, Tottenham Court Road. Meets every Wednesday evening at 8 o'clock. Wednesday Feb. 12, a Lecture.

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

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

PROVINCES.

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

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

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

Glasgow.—Ram's Horn Hall, 122 Ingram Street. Branch meets on Thursday evenings at 8 o'clock and Sundays at 7 o'clock.

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

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

Leicester.—Exchange Buildings, Rutland Street. Branch meets on Monday and Thursday, at 8 p.m. On Sunday Feb. 9, at 6.30 p.m., George Bernard Shaw will lecture in the Secular Hall, Humberstone Gate—"Socialist Individualism." Tuesday Feb. 11, in the Co-operative Hall, High Street, at 8 p.m., Annie Besant, "The Basis of Socialism."

Manchester.—Branch meets temporarily at the Secretary's, 52 Miller Street, on Tuesdays at 8 p.m.

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

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

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

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

OPEN-AIR PROPAGANDA.

SATURDAY 8.

8.30..... Mile-end Waste Cores and Presburg

SUNDAY 9.

11 Latimer Road Station Dean, Maughan, and Crouch
 11.30 Broad Street, Golden Square Nicoll
 11.30 Kilburn—"Old Plough," Kilburn Lane The Branch
 11.30 Mitcham—Fair Green The Branch
 11.30 Regent's Park Cantwell and Mowbray
 3.30 Hyde Park—Marble Arch Cantwell and Mowbray
 3.30 Victoria Park The Branch
 7 Weltje Road, Ravenscourt Park Hammersmith Branch
 7.30 Waltham Green—back of Church Hammersmith Branch

TUESDAY 11.

8 Waltham Green—back of Church Hammersmith Branch

THURSDAY 13.

8.15..... Hoxton Church The Branch

PROVINCES.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

DUBLIN.—At Progressist Club, 87 Marlboro' Street, Saturday Feb. 8, at 8 p.m., B. McGuinness, "Dublin Municipal Reform."

CHELSEA S.D.F., Co-operative Lecture Hall, 312 Kings Road, Chelsea.—Sunday February 9, at 8 p.m., Daniel McEwen, "Co-operation and Socialism."

THE NEW FELLOWSHIP, 267 Strand (rooms of the National Vigilance Association).—Tuesday Feb. 11, Hubert Bland, "A Criticism of the Woman Movement."

MANHOOD SUFFRAGE LEAGUE, "Three Doves," Berwick St., Oxford St., W.—Sunday February 9, at 8.30 p.m., J. D. Bouran, "Climbing the Steepes."

SHEFFIELD.—At Hallamshire Hall, Westbar, on Sunday February 9, J. Sketchley, 11 a.m., "Trade Unions, Present and Future"; at 6.30, "Insufficient Remedies for Existing Evils."

IRELAND.—A new Socialistic Society, called the "Irish Socialist Union," has been started in Dublin. Basis: The union on a common Platform of representatives of the various schools of Socialistic thought, with a view to the more effective propaganda of the principles on which all are agreed. Address: 87 Marlboro' Street, Dublin.

LANCASHIRE AND YORKSHIRE SOCIALISTS.—All those branches and societies who are wishful to be represented on the lecture-list to be drawn up in accordance with the resolution of the Liverpool Conference, as reported Jan. 25, are to send the names and addresses of their secretaries to Edw. C. Chapman, 1 Stanley Street, Liverpool.

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STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLES.

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

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

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

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

Thus, while we abide by the old motto:

Liberty, Fraternity, Equality,

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

We add to the first motto then this other one—

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

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

COUNCIL OF THE SOCIALIST LEAGUE.

NOTICE.

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

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