

THE COMMONWEAL

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CONTENTS.

	PAGE.
The "Legal" Eight Hours Day	289
The Agricultural Labourer	289
The Enemy's Testimony	290
Socialism in Scotland and Ireland	290
Notes on News	291
Socialism in the Provinces	291
News from Nowhere; or, an Epoch of Rest (continued)	292
The Great Land Thieves (III)	293
Free Speech at Short Street	293
The Labour Struggle	294
Correspondence	294
Executive Announcements, Reports, Lecture Diary, and Notices of Meetings	295
Statement of Principles, New Publications, Advertisements, etc.	296

THE "LEGAL" EIGHT HOURS DAY.

The great event of the week at the Trades Congress was the carrying of the Legal Eight Hours motion by a majority of 38. It has had one great result—an almost unanimous yell of disapprobation from all sections of the middle-class press. Even the *Star* and *Daily Chronicle*, which are both supposed to be friendly to the working class, receive the news with such cold approval that it is evident the proprietors of these papers do not like the prospect. Of course, the New Unionists will not allow the proposal to remain a dead letter, and all parliamentary candidates will be heckled at the next election as to whether they will vote for an Eight Hours Bill or not. We are sure, however, that though even some capitalists who sit for working-class constituencies may "pledge" themselves—and we know what "election pledges" are worth—yet the measure is certain to meet determined opposition from both political parties.

Any workman who believes that the Conservative Party, with all their love of State aid for the rich, will carry an Eight Hours Bill for the poor, may be recommended to read the *Standard* and *St. James's Gazette* of last Friday; this will be quite enough to shatter his simple faith. And as to the "intelligent Radical," we ask him if he is still green enough to imagine that Gladstone, Morley, Harcourt, and Co., are going to advocate Eight Hours with enthusiastic bursts of parliamentary eloquence, should read the organ of the official Liberals, the *Daily News*, of the same date, and then to ask themselves this question—even supposing, in their thirst for office, these gentlemen agreed to this measure, can the Great Liberal Party afford to send all its wealthy members over to the Conservative side? Why, even with the Unionist secession hard cash has begun to run short, and how many more capitalists would follow them if Eight Hours was inscribed on the Liberal banner? No; it is evident that, save in a few instances, both the political parties will form in a solid front against the oncoming tide of Labour.

But some will answer us with the cry that a Labour Party must be formed. But have trade-unionists sufficient funds to send a majority of labour members into the House of Commons? I don't think so, and at any rate, if they had, it would be a work of years to carry this measure. When all the rich men are united, every means would be used against the Labour Party—bribery, corruption, and intimidation, and it would be a long and bitter fight. Remember that to the solidarity of labour the rich oppose the solidarity of capital, and before that a minority of labour members would be powerless in Parliament. I am sure the political game of the Irish Home Rulers cannot be played again. However corrupt our political parties may be, however eager for place and office, they have too keen an eye to their then commercial interests to played off one against the other. They are landlords and capitalists first, and politicians afterwards. They remember, too, that the men who head the eight hours agitation also voted for the *nationalisation of the land and means of production*, and the sneaking gang of swindlers and pickpockets—we won't dignify them by calling them robbers; for they have not courage enough to *take with the strong hand*—will fight the "beginnings of evil," for they know that Socialism, which would force them to earn their living honestly, would be a very great evil for them. Therefore we shall see

landlord and capitalist prepared to fight in mass in defence of their rights and privileges; and it will be useless attacking them in a place where they will have a majority for years to come, and where even a strong minority of labour representatives would be useless.

But "while the grass grows the steed starves," and probably before the Labour Party has even got an active minority in the House of Commons another commercial crisis will be upon us. Our present commercial prosperity is nearly at an end. On the day the Trades Congress met, a procession of the unemployed appeared again in the streets of London; an ominous sign for the coming winter. The storms, the floods, the heavy rains, have spread the potato blight in Ireland, and will make bread dear when the cold weather is upon us. These calamities affect not only England, but the whole civilised world. We seem to be approaching another year of revolution, such as our fathers saw in 1848. In that year also there was a serious commercial crisis; bread was dear; there was a terrible potato famine in Ireland; and the man who might be looked upon as the embodiment and type of despotism and "divine right," Pope Pious IX., declared in favour of a reforming policy. So to-day the German Emperor, the head-centre of the military despotism of the Continent, says he is a Socialist. He may also, like Pope Pious IX., be lighting the match which will fire the powder magazine. But in 1848, although Socialism was talked of, yet the leaders of the revolt in all countries were middle-class constitutionalists, who were fighting merely for the interests of the bourgeois. To-day the Revolution, when it comes, will be Socialist; it is a working-class movement; the middle classes take no part, they do not even stand aside in indifference, but they stand shoulder to shoulder with their old enemies the landed proprietors to resist the advancing peril.

It is therefore quite possible, when we are plunged into the coming commercial crisis, with closed factories, sharp starvation among thousands of unemployed, and reduced wages, and fierce discontent among all sections of labour, from engineers down to sandwich-men—that events may move a little too quickly for Parliament and Parliamentarians, and that their sage deliberations concerning Eight Hour Bills and the future of labour may be rudely interrupted by the roar of the revolutionary torrent which will sweep babbling chatters and thievish humbugs into well-deserved oblivion. Not a "legal eight hours day," but "The land and all that is therein for the people," will then be the battle-cry of the working classes.

D. J. NICOLL.

THE AGRICULTURAL LABOURER.

WE hear much now about the agricultural labourer. It has been found by leaders of the New Unionism that it will not do to ignore him, that leaving him alone simply means that he becomes an ally of the Liveseys and Norwoods, to be used with crushing effect in a big strike or lock-out; so they are now talking of organising him, although that at first was not included in their programme.

We Revolutionary Socialists have for a long time endeavoured to spread our doctrines in the country districts, but we have been crippled for want of funds, and what work has been done is nothing to what remains to do. Seeing the agricultural labourer is likely to have much attention bestowed upon him in future by all sections of the Socialist and semi-Socialist party, I thought that an article from one who has lived in the country for some time and understands the conditions under which the labourer works and lives, would be of interest to the readers of the *Commonweal*.

I will begin by describing the man and the conditions in which he lives at Newnham, a village in North Hertfordshire. He begins the day's work at six and leaves at six; two hours are taken for meals. This is the normal day; in the depth of winter, when it is impossible to see as early or as late as six o'clock, the hours are less; in summer it is usual to do some of the work by the piece, when the hours are pretty much what the men like to make them. They can begin at 3 or 4 a.m. and take a long dinner-hour. By steadily toiling through all the hours that he can stand the man may obtain as much as 3s., and for one month in harvest he may secure 5s., a-day, but this is when there is no "reserve army of labour." But it must be clearly understood that every shower of rain stops his work and his pay; sometimes a night's rain prevents two days' work; during these two days there

may or may not be other work to which he can put himself—it may happen that it is not convenient for it to be done. Certainly the day's rest is a great boon to the worker; it would be greater still if he had more facilities to amuse or instruct himself.

The normal day's pay (not piecework) has been as low as 1s. 10d., and in some villages near Newnham it has been as little as 1s. 8d., but as a general rule a week's continuous work would follow, regardless of the state of the weather. In fact, the men in this particular place very seldom lose any time, in which respect it is totally different from most villages. This arises from the small number of resident workers for the 950 acres of arable land, held by two farmers.

There are twenty-three work-people's cabins, for which they pay 1s. a-week rent. Fourteen of these twenty-three cabins have only one door. I do not know how many have only one bedroom; but it is a fact that in one of them a man, his wife, two sons, and a daughter sleep in one small bedroom. The oldest son is fourteen and the youngest nine. There are, of course, thousands of cases of greater "crowding," but this particular case is in a small village. This man is one whom the clergymen and members of "county families" would term a "very respectable person"; so much so that his employer has asked the agent of the "owner" of the "property" to have the space over the wood-barn converted into a bedroom for the children at a cost of £16. The agent requires 10s. a-year more rent if the outlay is made. The employer protests that the man ought not to be asked for more rent; then the agent offers to find material if the man's employer will pay for the carpenter's time fixing it into the landlord's "cabin," to remain the landlord's "property" for all time. The employer having no other interest than that which exists between employer and employed, the work remains undone.

These workers exist upon the wages stated. They cannot exactly tell you *how* they exist; I do not think they know: they have been brought up to it. In addition to existing and paying the shilling rent, they clothe themselves also. I have never seen a Newnham man in rags. You very seldom see an agricultural worker in actual rags; at the same time it is the rare exception for him to possess two complete sets of clothes to work in. If he gets wet, he gets dry again as he moves. Rheumatism is common, but is *not complained of* so much as might reasonably be expected.

Of amusement I cannot find a trace. Undoubtedly the people *have* amusement of some kind, but I do not know what it is.

Anything in the shape of a country lane is not to be found. There are no nooks in which to look for brambles—you may not go off the public road without a shiver. It is *all* private property, straight and stiff; as formal as a coffin; private property always is. But for all that, if you bring proper letters of introduction you will find the custodians of property are very nice people indeed. The fact remains, however, that you do not get "letters of introduction" very often.

The sale of alcoholic liquors is very strictly forbidden; but the secret consumption of laudanum is not. It would amount to exactly the same thing if it were prohibited, and all the pains of hell threatened against those who took it.

This is part of the inner life of Newnham, Hertfordshire, in 1890. It is really a great deal better than that of an average agricultural village. Take the case of the adjoining parish—Stotford. Men walk thence to Newnham to dig potatoes, by the day or the piece. Having raised a few tons for very little wage, they naturally carry a few home in their dinner-baskets—not in wheelbarrows; they are too much toll-worn to carry home a "load" of goods worth only a farthing a-pound—but still they have helped themselves to some few potatoes out of some scores of tons which their labour has secured from the rapidly approaching frost, having no land of their own on which to grow potatoes or any other thing, and having little, if any, prospect of regular work for six months to come. Tramping their weary way towards Stotford in Indian file on the narrow footpath, they meet an enemy of the human race wearing a blue suit. This representative of Law-'n'-order has lately been moved into the locality, and wants to make his little self a name and get his self-conceit puffed out by a little promotion. He is then and there seized with the idea that the men's dinner-baskets look like Mark Twain's Mr. Smiley's frog—*i.e.*, "mighty baggy"—and his inquisitiveness goes as far as taking the names of the useful men into his useless and harmful pocket-book, from which he makes an elaborate "report" to his superintendent.

Now I have no love for farmers as a class, but the particular farmer whose potatoes are in question, would in my opinion heartily wish the policeman and his report at the devil. He does not wish to go seven miles to be witness against men who dig potatoes. He will be expected to ask the Nupkinses to be lenient; *he* does not wish to press the case. Finally, he pays the small fines and large costs, amounting together to more than all the potatoes that all Stotford could have carried home in the way these few were "lifted."

I am of opinion that the lot of the occasional labourer, agricultural or other, is worse than that of the 23 cabin-holders at Newnham, although it is a lonely place. These 23 and their families have the sympathy of thousands of people, who are rapidly becoming very indignant at the system carried on for the benefit of a landlord who so seldom visits the place that he actually lets the shooting—and lets it to a person other than either of the two farmers. Here we see the case put by Carlyle of the Worker, the Master-Worker, and the UN-WORKER. The latter is believed to possess four millions worth of property of one sort or another. A kindly man in his way he does actually *give* to the poor every Christmas, and at other times, if asked to help through a hard winter or an exceptional difficulty. The two farmers are also kindly men, and the workers are all most amiable

people. But the fact remains that these 950 acres produce three or four times the value that reaches the actual workers, who could very well manage all the business without the parish constable. They know when and how to do the work, but the system leaves them with only one tool of their own—the hoe. The corn and clover are cut by "reapers" of the Hornsby and Samuelson sort.¹ For all which these men's lot is more free from actual dire necessity than that of the majority of those who work in the adjoining parish of Bygrave. This little parish is "owned" by the present Chancellor of the ever sun-lit British Empire, and the 1,100 acres are in the occupation of one farmer. Not a bad sort in the heart of him. He would have it all ploughed without hurting a worm if he could, but the "system" holds all his community in the same grip; the workers for the most part walk from Baldock or Ashwell to work *when required*. At other times they are free to help the South Metropolitan or any other gas company. They know that weeds remain in the Bygrave land, and they also know that those weeds are to be removed on a system of which they form part, but not that part which has the direction, of agriculture. They are always paid the amount of their contract wages; the Chancellor's agent is not troubled about the cabins in which they live, those cabins are not on the Chancellor's estate.

C. WALKDEN.

(To be continued.)

THE ENEMY'S TESTIMONY.

THROUGHOUT the world to-day the progress of Socialism is the central phenomenon, and even the enemy, Clericalism, has to testify to the "growth" of our ideas. Curiously enough, it is the Roman Catholic Church that has first awakened to this fact, and with characteristic astuteness has attempted to turn it to its own advantage. I came across the other day a little twelve-page tract issued by the Catholic Truth Society, entitled, "Modern Socialists on the History of the Church." It is written by Mr. A. Hilliard Alleridge, and although he is innocent enough to describe Henry George as a Socialist, his production is not, I think, uninteresting. Premising that "Socialist writers of the revolutionary type" are not likely to be prejudiced in favour of the Church of Rome, he says: "It is curious to note the recent progress of Socialist views among English speaking peoples. Ten years ago English Socialists were almost unknown—to-day they are a large and an increasing body of men. English names that have a world-wide reputation in literature and science appear on the lists of adherents of this or that Socialist programme; not a week passes without a number of Socialist meetings and lectures, and the literature of the party is a rapidly growing one and has a wide circulation." He then proceeds to quote from the writings of Henry George (who, I suppose, is a Socialist "of the revolutionary type" ?), Morris, and Hyndman, passages which denounce that pious fraud "the Reformation," and give the Roman Church credit for what really social work it performed in the Middle Ages.

Mr. Alleridge is kind enough to add that on these matters "the would-be organisers of a Socialist Utopia are teaching plain and simple truth." Not a few of their objections "to the pet maxims of current political economy are sound and valid," and we hear that "on the negative side Catholic economists have several points of contact with their teachings, especially in the recognition of the evils resulting from the present relations of labour and capital, the so-called freedom of contract in the labour market, and the unequal sharing of the profits of labour." All this is, of course, very pretty, and one expects to hear that Grant Pope has doffed the tiara for the *bonnet rouge*. But, alas! the mountain is in labour again! I find, after all, that "confiscation" cannot be accepted, and phrases like "bureaucratic tyranny," "brotherhood of rich and poor," "linking of class with class," bob up with a cork-like persistency throughout the last few pages of the tract. Clerical sympathy with Labour is generally a swindle, but still it is worth noting as a sign of the times. Rome has never lacked foresight, and this recognition of our progress from one of our most powerful enemies—let no Socialist under-rate the power of Clericalism to chloroform the workers—must be interesting and encouraging. X.

DUBLIN.—On Monday, September 1st, most of the coal merchants locked out their workmen as a reply to a demand for an increase of wages. Their present object is to break up the union. A meeting of 18,000 to 20,000 people was held in the Phoenix Park Sunday, September 7th, the principal speaker being Wm. Thorne, general secretary National Union of Gas-workers; Shields, Graham, Canty, Dench, and Poole also addressed the meeting.

SCOTTISH SOCIALIST FEDERATION—EDINBURGH.—We have for the past month been holding very successful meetings at Leith and on the Edinburgh Meadows. Considering the material which we have got to work upon here, we have every reason to feel gratified at the results of the propaganda, which is not by any means of the milk-and-water kind which our comrade Kitz may imagine it to be. It is our purpose to form a branch in Leith during the incoming winter, and there is no doubt a strong one can be set agoing there. Last Sunday comrade Hamilton spoke well on Leith Links to a large crowd, and the attention and liberality displayed augurs well for a successful winter campaign in Leith. On the Meadows Smith dealt with the tramways question, which is exercising the minds of our civic misrulers at the present time, and which we intend to have discussed publicly in our new hall in a short time. Bell was in splendid form, his scathing criticism of Carnegie's Dundee speech being much relished. Hamilton also spoke of that triumph of hypocrisy, the *Scottish Leader*. When the stool was taken down the crowd divided itself into groups, in the centre of which some comrades were tackled on the subject of Socialism by persons who had not the courage to mount the rostrum when questions were called for. We continued in disputation till a late hour. Good collections and sales of literature.—T.

¹Hornsby (of Grantham) and Samuelson (of Banbury), manufacturers of agricultural machinery.

NOTES ON NEWS.

Most of our readers have heard of the false and shameful charge brought against our comrade Miss Lupton by those blue coated scoundrels, who make a trade of perjury and brutality. Those who know Miss Lupton know how utterly ridiculous and shameless this charge was. We wonder that the slinking cowards who made it was not ashamed to crawl upon the earth in the sight of other men. We all know that it is always been the practice of those in power to try and throw disgrace and dishonour upon those they cannot corrupt or bribe. Our comrade has our sincere sympathy, and we are sure she will persevere, despite the cowardly brutality of ruffianly policemen, in carrying the glad tidings of Socialism to the poor and oppressed.

Eds.

The arrest of our comrade Miss Lupton, when holding a meeting, on a false charge of being "drunk and disorderly," is an instructive example of police methods. Our comrade has made herself especially obnoxious to Bradford's boys in blue,—as much by making them look silly when hanging about our gatherings as by any other means. Nothing annoys a bobby so much as that he (with his helmet and his truncheon and his "ammunition" boots) should be turned into ridicule by a mere "civilian." He feels then that the very foundations of society are indeed being undermined by insolent iconoclasts.

Miss Lupton accordingly made herself the mark for the vengeance of the first "active and intelligent" officer who could take her at what he conceived to be a disadvantage. 11 L R and 317 L (it may be just as well to note these numbers) thought they saw such an opportunity on Thursday week last. They found our comrade addressing a meeting without any others of the League to support her. Here was a woman all alone. There were no hard knocks from male fists to be feared, and not much chance of any independent witness, likely to be credited by a magistrate, turning up. 11 L R and 317 L felt that the time had come for action.

The question remained, however,—what action should they take? It was then that a brilliant idea struck one or both of these twin heroes of "the Force." The old plan of charging speakers with "causing an obstruction" was distinctly *rococo*, and had had its day. Besides, it was desirable to select a charge which, it might be supposed, would annoy Miss Lupton, and perhaps cause her to lose her temper. Accordingly, the constabular imagination (proving equal to its task) evolved the daring conception of a charge of drunkenness, and the constabular arms and legs marched the speaker to the station, where she was detained for some hours before she was allowed to send for bail.

Unhappily, accidents will happen to the best arranged police cases. Our uniformed friends had relied too implicitly upon the loyalty of their divisional surgeon,—perhaps had thought that an "unprotected female" would never dream of demanding to see him. Both expectations were disappointed. Miss Lupton insisted upon her right, and the very police doctor was compelled to certify that she was perfectly sober.

Nevertheless, with a courage worthy of a better cause, our two gallant constables refused to confess themselves beaten. They had made a charge, and when a policeman makes a charge he sticks to it. With the sanction, doubtless, of their inspector, they duly appeared to prosecute next morning before Mr. Fenwick, and, upon the insidious invitation of counsel for the defence, 317 L covered himself with ridicule by swearing that, despite his divisional surgeon, he still thought that our comrade was drunk, or (he added by way of saving clause) "if not drunk, mad"! Of course, the magistrate was compelled to dismiss the case, and the gentlemen in blue "took nothing by their motion."

R. W. B.

The *Scots Observer*, an Imperial magazine, has a fling at the Socialists in an article ironically entitled "The Good Time Coming," wherein the writer says when England is a vast convict establishment the iconoclasts will give Art the shortest shrift in history. When we have lost our individuality, and are known to the officials who supply our barest necessities by a number branded upon our foreheads or stitched upon our attire, we must needs live out our lives of dulness and despair. We may then, he says in conclusion, see Mr. Crane doling out slabs of coarse beef in a booth, and the earnest Mr. Sanderson officiating with a broom and a shovel at the tail-board of a scavenger's cart. Appropriately enough, this journal has as a tag an article on stocks and shares and the money market.

Really, the scribe must have had the present system in his mind (*sic*) when he penned his pitiful plea for Art. The convict establishments abound; the hideous blocks of "dwellings," and the railway-arch, and the advertising screen are here; so also are the slums, the true products of this "art-loving" age. It excites no surprise that this aristocratic publication sneers at the sandwich-men's attempt to wring a better wage out of the sweater for their wretched occupation. To become advertising mediums between two boards is frequently the fate of broken-down literary flunkies and paragraph-mongers, and this will be increasingly so as their commercial ink-slinging fails; therefore it is rather hard that the writers for the imperial magazine should deride attempts to increase the pay for what may after all be their last and certainly most fitting occupation.

F. K.

SOCIALISM IN THE PROVINCES.

MIDLAND COUNTIES SOCIALIST FEDERATION.

The movement is looking up in the Midlands. Everywhere the greatest activity is being displayed by our comrades. The propaganda goes on at an increasing rate, notwithstanding all the obstacles which are placed in the path of all who are ready to fight for Freedom. The Sheffield comrades hold about thirteen meetings every week, and sell about an average of fifteen quires of *Commonweal*, a great number of pamphlets, besides carrying on the propaganda in various other ways. Meetings are also held in Clay Cross and Chesterfield every Sunday and during the week. Andrew Hall and John Furniss have been very active in carrying on the fight in these two places, and through their efforts good societies have been formed. They have now a comrade from some other town to address the meetings every Sunday. The revolutionary propaganda has certainly caught on at these places. The Leicester comrades are also very active, holding about eight meetings per week and selling a large amount of literature. The Socialist Cause has been started in Derby and Loughborough, places where no meetings were ever held, and the most astonishing results have followed.

LOUGHBOROUGH.

The meetings were started here on Friday, August 8, by C. W. Mowbray and W. Taylor (Leicester), who had a most successful meeting. On Friday, Aug. 15, W. Doleman and J. Peacock were the speakers. Our comrades created quite a stir, discussion having started in the columns of a local paper as the result of their speeches. On Friday, August 22, T. Barclay and J. C. Chambers (of Leicester) journeyed there, but the meeting was unfortunately interfered with by a heavy downpour of rain, which also stopped the sale of literature. On Friday, August 29, T. Proctor and P. H. Knight paid them a visit, and there was a slight scrimmage with some of the crowd at the conclusion of comrade Knight's speech. On Friday, September 5, comrade Peacock again paid a visit there, effectually silencing the opposition, holding a discussion extending over an hour and a quarter, and replying to the arguments urged against Socialism to the entire satisfaction of the meeting.

DERBY.

This is one of the large towns which has until recently been overlooked by the Socialist missionaries, but which promises to take a foremost position in the Socialist movement of the future. It has been the despair of all reformers; but the workers are rapidly awaking from their apathy, and enthusiastically embrace Revolutionary Socialism. It is one of the most hopeful signs of the progress of our propaganda, and gives more courage to those who are fighting this battle. The first meeting was held on Saturday, August 9, when comrades Mowbray, Barclay (Leicester), Proctor (Nottingham), and Purcell (Derby), spoke on the "Aims of Socialism." Their remarks were taken up by the crowd, who gave to the collection £1 0s. 3½d., the sale of literature amounting to 17s. On Saturday, August 16, comrade Harry Carless (of Walsall) gave a very able address, which won the sympathy of the crowd. Our comrade on the Sunday morning turned up at the meeting of the temperance party, and after hearing the quack remedies for poverty put forward by the speakers, proceeded to go for them and spoke for upwards of an hour, completely pulling their arguments to pieces, the audience taking up and cheering every fresh plea made for Socialism. Our comrade also held a meeting in the evening, when he addressed about 2,000 people. This in a town where it was openly boasted that the Socialists were frightened of holding any meetings whatever, and that Sunday meetings were not at all possible. One amusing incident occurred during our comrades visit. As he was in the Market Place in the afternoon, he was asked by a constable of the police if he was the "Socialist chap" who had been speaking in the morning. On his replying in the affirmative, our comrade was asked if he had any literature he could give him, and he gave the policeman his *Commonweal*. The man in blue then thanked our comrade, and wished him and the Cause good luck and withdrew, after telling the small crowd who had assembled to move on. On Saturday, August 23, comrade Chambers (Leicester) paid Derby a visit. He met with a very good reception, and made a strong appeal to the audience to join the local society. On August 30, comrades Leonard Hall (Manchester) and H. Davis (London) were the speakers; good addresses were given, and the remarks of our comrades listened to with attention. On September 6, comrade George Cores journeyed from Leeds and held a splendid meeting, his rendering of the song for Socialism—

"When the Worker has his place at the top of the tree,
And the Loafer is somewhere down below,"

bringing forth cheers from the crowd. He was listened to with rapt attention. Good help has been rendered in Derby by comrades Goodwin and Purcell in helping at these meetings and organising a Socialist Society. These results of our propaganda put new life into our comrades, and make them more determined to overthrow the rotten state of society, and place in the labourer's hands the full result of his toil. It is a pity there were not more speakers for Socialism in the Midlands than there are, as there is the most splendid ground for preaching our ideal and converting the workers. The comrades of the League in London would do well to try a scheme of sending out more missionaries into the provinces, and to try and obtain work and stop there if possible.

NOTTINGHAM.

We still keep the ball rolling here with the spread of the spirit of revolt. On Sunday, August 17, our comrade Proctor, Peacock, and Knight spoke at both our meetings. On Sunday, August 24, comrade S. Bingham (Sheffield) paid us a visit, his very pointed remarks calling for the opposition from some trades union leaders as to his attack upon them and their methods. The meetings which he addressed were very lively. On Sunday, August 31, Leonard Hall (Manchester) was the speaker for the day. Our comrades two addresses were given in a very able manner, his address in the morning on "The Cause of Poverty" being delivered in very clear and convincing language, and his revolutionary remarks being enthusiastically received. In the evening, in advocating his "Remedies for Poverty," the S.D.F. policy was given in the best manner ever heard in Nottingham, being put before the people in the plainest possible form; he held the best audiences we have had for some time. On Sunday, September 7, comrade George Cores gave two very able addresses, his remarks on "The Money Question" being exceptionally good, and were eagerly taken up by the crowd. At the conclusion of the meeting Cores sang his "Song for Socialism," Peacock singing "The Coming of the Light" and the "Ninety and Nine." This is an excellent means of keeping an audience interested. Our comrade Peacock has done good service by taking the chair for the speakers and addressing the crowd on local topics. Comrade Proctor has also been busy at organising the unskilled labourers of the town and district. The sale of literature still keeps up to the standard, *Commonweal* selling out every week and the collections being good. At the half-yearly meeting of our club, recently held, Clifton was again elected secretary, Peacock treasurer, Mrs. Shakleton being elected president; a strong committee was also formed. The question of deciding on the future work of the club was adjourned until next Sunday. It is our intention to go in for a very vigorous propaganda during the winter months, and use all the means at our disposal in spreading discontent. The speakers appointed for the ensuing months are Chambers (Leicester), Mrs. Lahr, Joe Tanner (Birmingham), Andrew Hall, and Mrs. Schack. "Success to our comrades in all countries, and three cheers for the Social Revolution!" are the greetings sent from the comrades in the Midlands.

A. CLIFTON.



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.

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

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WILL Branch Secretaries please write Reports and Orders for Literature on separate pieces of paper.

BOOKS RECEIVED:—'Fabian Essays,' cheap edition (Walter Scott). 'Mines and the Mining Industries.' 'South Australia.'

Periodicals received during the week ending Wednesday September 10.

ENGLAND Belfast Weekly Star Democrat Freedom Labour Tribune People's Press Railway Review Sozial Demokrat Seafaring Worker's Friend	IRELAND Phladel.—Knights of Labour Paterson Labour Standard San Francisco Arbeiter Zeitung Pacific Union S.F.—Coast Seamen's Journal	BELGIUM Antwerp—De Werker Ghent—Vooruit
UNITED STATES New York—Truthseeker New York—Freiheit New York—Der Sozialist Freie Arbeiter Stimme Twentieth Century Volkszeitung Bakers' Journal Workmen's Advocate Boston—Woman's Journal Buffalo—Arbeiter Zeitung Chicago—Rights of Labour Vorbote Detroit—Der Arme Teufel Los Angeles—Cal. Nationalist	FRANCE Paris—Bourse du Travail Paris—La Revoltue Le Parti ouvrier La Revue Europeenne La Societe Nouvelle Le Proletariat Nancy—Le Tire-Pied Charleville—L'Emancipation Lyon—L'Action Sociale Lille—Le Cri du Travailleur Rouen—Le Salariat	GERMANY Berlin—Volks Tribune Austria Vienna—Arbeiter Zeitung Brunn—Arbeiterstimme HUNGARY Arbeiter Wochen-Chronik SWEDEN Stockholm, Social-Demokraten Malmo—Arbetet
	HOLLAND Hague—Recht voor Allen SWITZERLAND Arbeiterstimme ITALY Milan—Il Fascio Operaio Milan—Cuore e Critica Palermo—Avanti	SPAIN Madrid—El Socialista Barcelona—El Productor Madrid—La Anarquia PORTUGAL Lisbon—O Protesto Operario WEST INDIES Cuba—El Productor CAPE COLONY Cape Times ARGENTINE REPUBLIC Weekly Herald

NEWS FROM NOWHERE:

OR,

AN EPOCH OF REST.

BEING SOME CHAPTERS FROM A UTOPIAN ROMANCE.

CHAP. XXVII.—A RESTING-PLACE ON THE UPPER THAMES.

At a place where the river flowed round a headland of the meadows, we stopped a while for rest and victuals on a beautiful bank which almost reached the dignity of a hill-side: the wide meadows spread before us, and already the scythe was busy amidst the hay. One change I noticed amidst the quiet beauty of the fields—to wit, that they were planted with trees here and there, often fruit-trees, and that there was none of the niggardly begrudging of space to a handsome tree which I remembered too well; and though the willows were often polled (or shrowded, as they call it in that country-side), this was done with some regard to beauty: I mean that there was no polling of rows on rows so as to destroy the pleasantness of half a mile of country, but a thoughtful sequence in the cutting that prevented a sudden bareness anywhere. To be short, the fields were everywhere treated as a garden made for the pleasure as well as the livelihood of all, as old Hammond told me was the case.

On this bank or bent of the hill, then, we had our mid-day meal; somewhat early for dinner, if that mattered, but we had been stirring early: the slender stream of the Thames winding below us between the garden of a country I have been telling of; a furlong from us was

a beautiful little islet begrown with graceful trees; on the slopes westward of us was a wood of varied growth overhanging the narrow meadow on the south side of the river; while to the north was a wide stretch of mead rising very gradually from the river's edge. A delicate spire of an ancient building rose up from out of the trees in the middle distance, with a few grey houses clustered about it; while nearer to us, in fact not half a furlong from the water, was a quite modern house—a wide quadrangle of one story, the buildings that made it being quite low. There was no garden between it and the river, nothing but a row of pear-trees still quite young and slender; and though there did not seem to be much ornament about it, it had a sort of natural elegance, like that of the trees themselves.

As we sat looking down on all this in the sweet June day, rather happy than merry, Ellen, who sat next me, her hand clasped about one knee, leaned sideways to me, and said in a low voice which Dick and Clara might have noted if they had not been busy in happy wordless love-making: "Friend, in your country were the houses of your field-labourers anything like that?"

I said: "Well, at any rate the houses of our rich men were not; they were mere blots upon the face of the land."

"I find that hard to understand," she said. "I can see why the workmen, who were so oppressed, should not have been able to live in beautiful houses; for it takes time and leisure, and minds not overburdened with cares, to make beautiful dwellings; and I quite understand that these poor people were not allowed to live in such a way as to have these (to us) necessary good things. But why the rich men, who had the time and the leisure and the materials for building, as it would be in this case, should not have housed themselves well, I do not understand, as yet. Of course, I know," she said, looking me full in the eyes and blushing, "that you mean to say that their houses and all belonging to them were generally ugly and base, unless they chanced to be ancient like yonder remnant of our forefathers' work" (pointing to the spire); "that they were—let me see; what is the word?"

"Vulgar," said I. "We used to say," said I, "that the ugliness and vulgarity of the rich men's dwellings was a necessary reflection from the sordidness and bareness of life which they forced upon the poor people."

She knit her brows as in thought; then turned a brightened face on me, as if she had caught the idea, and said: "Yes, friend, I see what you mean. We have sometimes—those of us who look into these things—talked this very matter over; because, to say the truth, we have plenty of record of the so-called arts of the time before Equality of Life: and there are not wanting people who say that the state of that society was not the cause of all that ugliness; that they were ugly in their life because they liked to be, and could have had beautiful things about them if they had chosen; just as a man or body of men now may, if they please, make things more or less beautiful—"

"Stop! I know what you are going to say."

"Do you?" said I, smiling, yet with a beating heart.

"Yes," she said; "you are answering me, teaching me, in some way or another, although you have not spoken the words aloud. You were going to say that in times of inequality it was an essential condition of the life of these rich men that they should not themselves make what they wanted for the adornment of their lives, but should force those to make them whom they forced to live pinched and sordid lives; and that as a necessary consequence the sordidness and pinching, the ugly barrenness of those ruined lives, were worked up even into the adornment of the lives of the rich, and art died out amongst men? Was that what you would say, my friend?"

"Yes, yes," I said, looking at her eagerly; for she had risen and was standing on the edge of the bent, the light wind stirring her dainty raiment, one hand laid on her bosom, the other arm stretched downward and clenched in her earnestness.

"It is true," she said, "it is true! We have proved it true."

I think amidst my—something more than interest in her, and admiration for her, I was beginning to wonder how it would all end. I had a glimmering of fear of what might follow, of anxiety as to the remedy of that age for the missing of something one might set one's heart on, when Dick rose to his feet and cried out in his hearty manner: "Neighbour Ellen, are you quarrelling with the guest, or are you worrying him to tell you things which he cannot properly explain to our ignorance?"

"Neither, dear neighbour," she said. "I was so far from quarrelling with him that I think I have been making him good friends both with himself and me. Is it so, dear guest?" she said, looking down at me with a delightful smile of confidence in being understood.

"Indeed it is," said I.

"Well, moreover," she said, "I must say for him that he has explained himself to me very well indeed, so that I quite understand him."

"All right," quoth Dick. "When I first set eyes on you at Runnymede I knew that there was something wonderful in your keenness of wits. I don't say that as a mere pretty speech to please you," said he quickly, but because it is true; and it made me want to see more of you. But, come, we ought to be going; for we are not half way, and we ought to be in well before sunset."

And therewith he took Clara's hand, and led her down the bent. But Ellen stood thoughtfully looking down for a little, and as I took her hand to follow Dick, she turned round to me and said:

"You might tell me a great deal and make many things clear to me, if you would."

"Yes," said I, "I am pretty well fit for that,—and for nothing else—an old man like me."

She did not notice the bitterness that, whether I liked it or not

was in my voice as I spoke, but went on. "It is not so much for myself; I should be quite content to dream about past times, and if I could not idealise them, idealise some of the people who lived in them. But I think sometimes people are too careless of the history of the past—too apt to leave it in the hands of old learned men like Hammond. Who knows? happy as we are, times may change; we may be bitten with some impulse towards change, and many things may seem too wonderful for us to resist, too exciting not to catch at, if we do not know that they are but phases of what has been before; and withal ruinous, deceitful, and sordid."

As we went slowly down toward the boats she said again: "Not for myself alone, dear friend; I shall have children; perhaps before the end a good many—I hope so. And though of course I cannot force any special kind of knowledge upon them, yet, my friend, I cannot help thinking that just as they might be like me in body, so I might impress upon them some part of my ways of thinking; that is, indeed, some of the essential part of myself; that part which was not mere moods, created by the matters and events round about me. What do you think?"

Of one thing I was sure, that her beauty and kindness and eagerness combined forced me to think as she did, when she was not earnestly laying herself open to receive my thoughts. I said, what at the time was true, that I thought it most important; and presently stood entranced by the wonder of her grace as she stepped into the light boat, and held out her hand to me. And so on we went up the Thames still—or whither?

WILLIAM MORRIS.

TO BE CONTINUED.

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

THE GREAT LAND THIEVES.

LETTER III.—CYMRU FYFD.

"The proud throne shall crumble,
The diadem shall wane,
The tribes of earth shall humble
The pride of those who reign;
And War shall lay his pomp away,
The fame that heroes cherish
The glory earned in deadly fray
Shall fade, decay, and perish;
(But) Honour waits o'er all the earth,
Through endless generations,
The art that calls her harvests forth
And feeds the expectant nations."

In turning one's attention to Wales as a scene of landlord domination and capitalist exploitation, one is struck by the present passiveness of a once brave and hardy race in the hands of their despoilers. To see the descendants of the wild and daring Celtic tribes imprisoned in mine and factory, slaving for a pittance, and to traverse their once beautiful hills and vales, but now disfigured by blast-furnaces and prodigious accumulations of filth; to see (and smell) what were once pure gushing mountain streams turned into faecal disgusting sewers,—then truly can we say with Marx that commercialism shapes the world after its own image.

As a writer in a local Glamorgan journal has remarked, the once lonely vales have been converted into teeming hives, resonant with the clash and whirr of great industries, increasing its resources and population at an amazing rate. It is enlarging everything except its sanitation. Beauty and purity have fled the scene, but commerce and typhus reign in their stead.

Hireling capitalist scribes and political economists wax ecstatic over the impetus given to trade by the utilisation of the vast mineral resources of Wales, but the other side of the shield is carefully kept out of view. The hideous disfigurement of the country, the waste of life and limb, the overwork and scanty pay, are gazed over, if not ignored. Moreover, the same sage writers carefully keep silent upon the monstrous pretensions of landlordism, which claims the minerals beneath the soil. It is computed that the landlords of these islands receive £36,000,000 per annum from mining rents and royalties, and of this enormous tribute paid to idle thieves who have never mined a shovelful of coal or an ounce of ore Wales pays a large proportion. My Lord Marquis of Bute, owner of 116,683 acres of land, claims eightpence per ton royalty upon coal raised in Glamorganshire Valley. His lordly castle at Cardiff stands out in strange contrast to the wretched cottages of the miners in the Rhondda Vawr.

The swarms of men and boys who daily descend the mines and pursue their deadly calling, to emerge again only at nightfall, must first earn this tribute to an idler and his fellows. Nor is this the whole of the tax levied upon their labour by the land thieves. Before a mine can be sunk an enormous bonus must be paid the landowner. The mining lease is frequently so high, and bristles with so many pitfalls, that by a delightful arrangement peculiar to landlordism, the mines, after having been opened by the labour of others, lapses into the landlord's hands. My Lord Dunraven demands £40 per acre for land upon which it was necessary to build cottages; the pasture value was 5s. per acre, and he in common with the landlords of North and South Wales claim the cottages built by others upon the expiry of the leases. And thus a society which punishes the theft of a loaf with imprisonment erects into lawgivers and legislators those who thieve legally the results of other men's labour.

The question of Way Leaves, *i.e.*, the tax or fine paid to the landowner before the soil can be touched for mining, also the rents and royalties, is a sore one with the mine-owners; but both mine-owner and landowner are an incubus upon the bent shoulders of the miner. At present he pins his hopes on Mabon, and other House of Commons debaters. Some day he will divest himself of Parliamentary hallucinations, and take a sharp and decisive method of ridding himself of both.

If we leave the underpaid miners and quarrymen, and turn to agricultural Wales, we find Landlordism pressing like a blight upon the land. Lord Cranbrook has insisted upon the need of greater attention being paid to agriculture in Wales. The class to which his lordship belongs are responsible in Wales, as elsewhere, for the neglected state of agriculture. Of the 4,700,431 acres of common lands, once completely wild, the greater portion has been seized by the land thieves. 270 odd persons claim 4,000,000 acres of the soil. One wonders at the ancient and dilapidated cottages that are to be seen about the country, and the explanation is Landlordism. By the most unscrupulous use of their power to grant or withhold leases, except upon their own terms, they have confiscated the cottages built by the tenantry; and in this way some of the best portions of Holyhead, Cardiff, and other towns are OWNED by patrician robbers.

The thrifty quarrymen and labourers have, by self-denial and tremendous exertion, brought great tracts of barren hill-side into cultivation, and built cottages worth £110,000, with the result that the land thieves have increased their rents fourfold, and charged them for "improvements." In Carnarvonshire and Merionethshire, half a million worth of property thus created lies at the mercy of peers and patricians.

A few samples of landlord tyranny are sufficient to illustrate the question. B grants a lease to A, A must keep a dog for the behoof of his landlord; he may not, however, keep one for his own sheep. He must agree to allow a suit to be instituted in his name, but by the landlord, against anyone whom it may please the landowner to prosecute. In this way a tenant may be compelled to prosecute his own kith and kin. The landlord may shoot or hunt over his tenant's land, but the tenant must not kill or snare the game which destroys his crops. For each and all the things which the tenant may not do there are fines varying from £20 to £100.

Superadded to landlord and capitalist is the parson of the Established Church. He exacts tithes from a people who neither desire nor receive his ministrations. Bodies of police and troops, with emergency men, are being moved about the country, valiantly seizing upon the chattels and stock in satisfaction of the claims of a State parson. Truly the spectacle is a strange one to see the followers of the lowly Nazarene enforcing their claims with the aid of truncheon and sabre, and enlisting in their service hired bullies in the shape of scoundrelly emergency men!

Religious and political Nonconformity is punished in the most arbitrary manner. Wholesale evictions, ending frequently in the death of the victims, are the penalty for disobedience to landlord mandates. Legislation is supposed to have given the tenantry some protection in respect to game and holdings, but they dare not avail themselves of the provisions of the Acts without incurring the risk of eviction. So a tenant may have his garden produce eaten in a night by hares and rabbits, and yet must not harm one; in short, the fish of the rivers, the birds of the air, the land above and the minerals below are mine, saith the lord of the soil.

The pettifogging politicians who crawl at the heels of the Great Liberal Party, delude the Welsh people with the hope that with their advent to power, the evils under which they groan will disappear. Yet, singular to relate, the list of the great landowners of the country show Liberals and Tories in nearly equal proportions, and the most exacting and tyrannical are the "Liberals."

Socialism has found a foothold in Wales. As it grows in strength the old political and religious fetishes will lose their worshippers, and Wales will truly advance towards the Social Revolution.

F. KITZ.

FREE SPEECH MEETING AT SHORT STREET.

LAST Sunday morning, a demonstration was held by the Socialist League in Short Street, New Cut, to protest against Miss Lupton's arrest at that place on the previous Thursday. Our comrades brought a van and banners, but though costermonger's barrows habitually stand in the street, and though a teetotaller on a hansom cab occupies every Sunday the next opening, the Socialists were not allowed to use their van. Comrade Buckridge took the chair, and was ably supported by Parker, Kitz, Mrs. Lahr, and Miss Lupton. A large and enthusiastic crowd assembled, who encouraged the speakers, and showed every sympathy with the meeting. A resolution condemning not only Miss Lupton's arrest, but also the attack on Free Speech, was passed with acclamation.

ABERDEEN.—On Sunday night, 31st August, Leatham lectured to an unusually large audience on "Is Marriage a Failure?" A lively discussion followed. Duncan and Leatham addressed an open-air meeting on Castle Street on Thursday night. On Saturday night W. Cooper, Rennie, and Leatham spoke in the same place to a large audience. Our new red flag apparently added to the enthusiasm both of the speakers and the audience. The literature sold well.

LEEDS.—On Sunday last we held three splendid meetings—morning Hunslet Moor, afternoon Woodhouse Moor, evening Vicars Croft—when Mowbray was the principal speaker. We were unable to get any opposition, although we had been threatened seriously. We sold 133 *Commonweal* and some copies of *Freedom* and pamphlets, and we collected 19s. Comrade Bland, from Bradford, visited us on Saturday night, and J. Burgoyne, of Glasgow, was with us on Sunday; he hopes to find employment here. And the Cause goes marching on.

YARMOUTH.—Good meeting addressed by Leggett for an hour and a half. Good sale of *Commonweal* and *Freedom*; 1s. 6d. collected. Comrade Burnie announced for next Sunday.

THE LABOUR STRUGGLE.

THE TRADES CONGRESS.

There can be no question that the New Unionism has gained the victory all along the line; and we must confess that the leaders have come through it a great deal better than we expected. When Mr. Champion was the main mover in the New Unionist movement, there was always an uneasy suspicion among many Socialists that not only was the agitation being utilised for purely reactionary ends, but that its main object was to ruin the Socialist movement by insisting upon one item in the Social Democratic programme, the legal eight hours day, by dragging it as a red herring across the path of progress. But there is little fear of that now; the leaders of the New Unionism, by declaring for the nationalisation of the land and the means of production, have shown that they have not forgotten the principles they once prominently advocated; and it is evident from the outburst of ill-concealed rage and fury from the reactionary press that they have been disappointed, and have found out, as many reactionists have done before, that people who play with fire often burn their fingers. Neither Maltman Barry nor his clever pupil H. H. Champion have been able to turn the popular movement in the direction they wished. The revolutionary forces were too strong for them; and the present leaders know well enough also that neither they nor anyone else can boast that they control the rushing stream which merely bears them with it. Even John Burns is as little master of the popular movement as he was of the crowd which bore him through the West-end of that famous 8th of February, mid the crash of shattered glass and the shouts of a rebel populace. I was speaking just now of the fury of the reactionary press. Let us give a few extracts from a "highly respectable" capitalist newspaper, the *Liverpool Mercury*:

"The advanced section of the Congress were ripe with suggestions which, if adopted and carried out, would turn the world topsy-turvy. The eight hours proposal is one of the least revolutionary of these proposals. During the closing scenes on Saturday some of the wilder spirits of the party gave vent to suggestions so extravagant as to make one wonder whether they were brought forward in a serious vein. Boycotting is the latest resort proposed by Mr. John Burns and his friends in order to bring about the establishment of the new order of things which is to make labour the supreme power in the State, even if it be erected on the ruins of society. Everything and everybody standing in the way of the realisation of their schemes, however utopian in conception, is to be swept aside. All commodities made by so-called 'blackleg' labour are to be boycotted; only those rail, tramway, and steamship owners who allow their employés to work under the most favourable conditions and pay them the best wages are to be patronised by trade unionists. Even reporters representing newspapers which do not pay the full rate of union wages to printers are to be placed under a ban, and be refused permission to take notes at a trades-union meeting; while the newspapers in question, as well as general printing establishments of the same stamp, are to be anathematised as unworthy of receiving any support whatever from unionists. The new boycott is to be made universal. It does not seem to have struck the advanced section that in clamouring for what they call their rights they are resorting to the worst methods of tyranny, and setting up a claim that no one else shall have any rights. . . . Under the present condition of things no Government would entertain the idea of introducing an Eight Hours Bill, and still less would Parliament contemplate passing such a measure."

We think it a remarkable fact that an organ like the *Liverpool Mercury* agrees with us that a "universal boycott" is a more "revolutionary proposal" than an Eight Hours Law. They know that the Eight Hours Law is impossible, for the capitalists cannot be beaten in their fortress the House of Commons, where "no Government would entertain the idea of introducing an Eight Hours Bill, and still less would Parliament contemplate passing such a measure." But not even Parliament can save the sweater from the boycott; and there is a better weapon than the universal boycott, and that is a Universal Strike, as the capitalists may find out before long. Several of the New Union leaders—for instance, Keir Hardie, Mann, and Tillett—have very little belief in parliamentary action; a little more experience of the parliamentary fraud will shatter the faith of those who still believe.

There is a warm time coming for the capitalist. Even the dear little *Star*, which had such a touching faith in Fabianism and New Unionism, because it imagined that they might be utilised to return Gladstone, Morley, Stuart, and Co., to the top of the poll at the next election, talks about the "over-bearing attitude of the eight-hour men," and sneers at Cunninghame Graham because he objected to the presence of lying press reporter at a meeting at which he was speaking. Whigs, Tories, and Radicals have all been dished, and they are a little wroth in consequence. Probably Professor Stuart thinks he made a mistake in getting rid of T. P. O'Connor. Tories and Radicals can now go in company, and shed bitter tears over the graves of Broadhurst and Shipton—they have lost their best friends for ever. The most fossilised of the old trade-unionists are going; the ideas of the New Trade-unionism are triumphant, alike on the Parliamentary Committee and in the Congress. What will they do—go forward with the popular stream, or try to struggle against it? If they dream of doing the latter, the putrescent corpse of the old trade-unionism, stranded in the mud of the river bank, should be a sufficient warning. To dare, again to dare, and without end to dare, is the only safe motto for those who are in the front of a revolutionary movement.

Great Dock Strike at Southampton.

On Tuesday, just after the Trade Congress, news arrived that a serious strike had broken out among the dockers at Southampton. The company have been engaging blacklegs, who they sweetly call "permanent men," at one guinea per week of ten hours a-day—i.e., 3³/₄d. an hour. Immense crowds collected round the docks, and a party of sixty blacklegs were sent home by the people. A train of cattle-trucks, which the people thought might contain blacklegs, was stopped by the strikers collecting on the line, chucking the engine-driver off the engine, and thus making a temporary seizure of this part of the company's plant. The engine was afterwards drawn back and not allowed to pass, one man telling the people to smash the cattle-trucks to pieces before they allowed them to go into the docks. In the end, the company found it impossible to get blacklegs into the docks in the face of the opposition of the men, upon whom the lesson of Leeds has not been lost, and agreed to a twenty-four hours' truce.

On Tuesday night the military were called in by the mayor, and there was desperate fighting, the troops charging the people with the bayonet. The crowd then marched round and smashed the mayor's windows. No blacklegs have yet arrived. The people of Southampton are showing a splendid spirit, and we hope they will continue their courageous fight against blacklegs and sweaters.

CORRESPONDENCE.

BOARDS OF CONCILIATION.

In the *Chronicle* of August 28th, I find a letter from Mr. Ben Tillett advocating and sketching an ideal Board of Conciliation. Mr. Ben Tillett is, of course, quite at liberty to occupy his time with this sort of thing, but when he is spoken of as a revolutionary character I find it impossible to reconcile the two ideas.

The *Commonweal* of August 23rd says that Mr. Ben Tillett, "curiously enough, made the best speech from a revolutionary point of view."¹ (A remark, by the way, which has roused the ire of the gentleman who *did* make the best speech). "Curiously enough," indeed, when read by the light of his letter to the *Chronicle*. I cannot say that I found anything specially socialistic or revolutionary in the speech. It is the sort of speech the popular orator feels bound to make to the working-man nowadays.

I should like to digress here a moment to protest against the ill-advised remark in last week's *Commonweal* about a speech of Mr. Tom Mann, that "a Revolutionary Socialist could not have made a better speech." The only difference I can see between the two speeches is that Mr. Tom Mann has learnt his lesson better. There is nothing in it to lead us to suppose that he would not devise a Board of Conciliation if he had the inventive genius of Mr. Ben Tillett.

To return to the letter. It is too long, too involved and straggling for quotation. Here, however, are a couple of sentences that could never have been written by a Socialist. It appears there is an economic necessity for a Board of Conciliation:

"Seeing the economic necessity for such a board on account of our social environment assuming more complex forms every day, it behoves all concerned to strive for a permanent good understanding."

And—

"Trade unionists are only too anxious to see capital organised, provided the means and powers to organise are also recognised for labour. The more perfect the organisation of either, the less will there be of strikes or even disputes."

We know that such a Board is quite opposed to the principles of Socialism. To refer disputes to it is an admission on the part of the workers that the capitalist has rights to defend. It permits the capitalist to make a slight concession (which he has been forced to make) with a good grace, and to pose as a benefactor of the working-classes. The hypocrisy of such an institution is worthy of the canting spirit of our time. We say capital has no rights. The capitalist has no right to force the worker to sell his labour power to him for a mere existence. The capitalist has yet to justify the possession of wealth, which is not the result of his own labour, but the result of the labour of generations of workers.

It cannot be too strongly expressed that trades unionism, even with its new leaders, is not Socialism. It is too limited, too exclusive, too conservative in spirit. Trade unionism, if it would be Socialistic, must be all-embracing; it must be militant and aggressive; its aim must be the expropriation of landlords and capitalists, and its battle-cry, "No Compromise!"

I would a thousand times rather see a strike to protest against the discharge of comrades, or some other act of tyranny, than for a rise in wages. The first strengthens the bond of sympathy between the workers; the other is a doubtful good if it tempts the worker to lay down his arms and lapse into a state of indifference, from which it will take a tremendous effort to rouse him.

Let us rather preach and work for the Great Strike, which will be for nothing less than Freedom. Freedom for the proletariat. Freedom for all to use the means for producing the necessities and pleasures of life. Freedom from the thraldom of wage-slavery. Freedom for each to develop his latent talents to the utmost, and to find his highest pleasure in devoting them to the common good. "But!" the timorous trade unionist will exclaim, "this is a Revolution,—the General Overturn!" Yes, my dear friend, exactly!

J. S. S.

WHY NOT A UNITED MEETING ON THE CHICAGO MARTYRS?

COMRADES,—I notice with some surprise and regret the fact that *Freedom* and the groups that journal speaks in the name of are organising a meeting for the purpose of announcing and speaking on the anniversary of those noble men who died or are imprisoned for Labour's Cause. More power to these *Freedom* groups for their initiative, but why should they stand alone? It is time some international comradeship was shown in these matters. Why could not the whole, or, at any rate, the majority of the schools of thought in London who are in any way revolutionary, unite on these questions? There are two events in the year that all Revolutionists delight to honour—the Paris Commune of 1871, and the noble deaths of those Chicago Martyrs on November 11, 1887. If not unity this year, let us see what can be done next—i.e., either a series of meetings throughout the country on the same day, or, a large one in each town. If the Social Revolution has not overtaken us, may unity prevail next year.—Fraternal greetings,

AN ANARCHIST.

"REVOLUTIONARY GOVERNMENT."

Although looking upon comrade Kropotkin's article as a splendid piece of criticism of all forms of possible revolutionary government, still I feel there is one difficulty he has not met, one question he has not answered. Supposing that the Labour Party, the Social Democrats, and the Revolutionary Socialists have all made a mess of the business, and a popular revolution declares for Anarchy: what will the Anarchists do? I ask this question, for it is one that is continually asked by thinking men, and it would be well to supply some answer. It is no good saying that you will not be pushed to the front, and you will only have to spread your ideas

¹ The writer of the note did not say Ben Tillett was a revolutionary character; but that he had made what was a "revolutionary speech." Very moderate people indeed sometimes do this. Even Morley and Gladstone have given vent to some very revolutionary utterances at various times; but this does not make them revolutionists. We have never given the character to either Ben Tillett or even Tom Mann. We only recorded how the tendencies of the time affect even them. Whether they are sincere or not is only known to themselves, and we fully agree with our friend that the leaders of the New Unionism are not models of consistency.—Eds.

among the people; you cannot be sure of this. Who would have thought in 1789, when Bailly, "a most respectable man," surrounded by other "respectable men," was mayor of Paris, that in three years' time the Hotel de Ville would be occupied by men between whose opinions and Bailly's there was far more difference than between the opinions of Burns and Kropotkin? It is therefore no use to reply by saying you might not be placed in that position.

Let us suppose that an Anarchist revolution has just come off in this huge city of five millions. As in all revolutions, provisions run short. Who is to direct the men, for instance, who must be sent into the country, and into other countries also, to get supplies of food? Who is to direct the distribution and exchange of commodities? Do modern Anarchists agree with Bakounine? According to Emile Laveleye in 'Socialism of To-Day,' Bakounine, in a pamphlet entitled 'Letters to a Frenchman,' 1870, thus laid down the Anarchist programme after the revolution:

"The insurgent capital forms itself into a commune. The federation of the barricades is maintained in permanence. The communal council is composed of delegates, one for each barricade or ward: deputies who are responsible, and always revocable. The council chooses separate executive committees for each department of the revolutionary administration of the commune. 'The capital declares that, all central government being abolished, it renounces the government of the provinces. It will invite other communes, both urban and rural, to organise themselves, and to send to a place to be named delegates with imperative and revocable mandates, in order to establish the federation of the autonomous commune and to organise the revolutionary force necessary to the triumph over the reaction. This organisation is limited to the insurgent country. Other provinces or countries may join in it. The communes which pronounce for the reaction shall be excluded from it.'"

With this I and other members of the League agree. I believe also that it is practical enough to commend itself to the ordinary English workman. Does it represent the ideas of the modern Anarchist?

There is another question I should like to ask: Was not the Commune of Paris of 1793 a revolutionary government with which little fault could be found? If it also failed in its work, why did not Kropotkin select it also for his criticism? Surely he should have touched upon that famous body, which was surely more revolutionary in spirit than even the Commune of 1871.

D. J. NICOLL.

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.

For Fur Pullers' Strike.—Donation, 7s. 6d.

General Fund.—D. Gostling, £5.

Propaganda Committee.—The Propaganda Committee meets on Tuesday, Sept. 16, at 8.30 p.m., at 24, Great Queen Street. Comrade Kitz will open a discussion on "The Land Question." Special meeting; important business; all members of the League interested in the propaganda invited to attend.

NEW PREMISES FUND.

Collection by Council on September 8th, 4s. 2d.

"COMMONWEAL" GUARANTEE FUND.

Table with 4 columns: Name, £, s., d., and Branch/Item. Includes H. R., P. Webb, R. F. (1 month's), Commonweal Branch, H. R. C. N., Saunders, B. W., North London Branch, Glasgow Branch, C. D. Hills, M. Moscheles, and a Total row.

SPECIAL PROPAGANDA FUND.

P. J. W., 1s.; J. B., 5s.

REPORTS.

NORTH LONDON.—On Saturday at Ossulston Street, our meeting was addressed by Kitz, Mrs. Blundell, Blundell, Miss Lupton, and Cantwell; 27 *Commonweal* sold. In Regent's Park a most successful meeting held; Cantwell and Nicoll spoke; our old opponent Whelan filled up an interval with some opposition, which amused the audience very much by its imbecility; collection 4s. 9½d., and 60 *Weals* sold. In Hyde Park, Coulon, Miss Lupton, Mrs. Lahr, and Cantwell spoke, and in conclusion comrade Smith sang a couple of songs, and we disposed of all the song-books we had; collection 1s. 9½d. We held a meeting at Liverpool Street, King's Cross, in the evening, where a virtuous Christian woman inquired what was Nicoll's salary, and when asked what was her salary she offered to give me a "wipe across the jaw," and then went to take her position in the congregation of the Rev. Zephaniah Woffendale. We have disposed of 7 quires of *Weals*, and 5s. worth of other literature; we have the red flag at our meetings now, and find it a great attraction.—T. C.

MANCHESTER.—On Sunday, September 4, Samuels (of Leeds) paid us a visit, and spoke at three meetings during the day—morning (St. Phillips Park gates, afternoon Stevenson Square, and at night at Higher Chatham Street. Barton and Stockton also spoke, and other comrades assisted. *Commonweal* sold well, and we made a collection at each meeting, which resulted in 8s. 7½d. for the day. These visits of fresh comrades do a deal of good, and we gladly welcome all our surrounding friends.

NORWICH.—Good Meetings Sunday afternoon and evening; about 2½ quires of *Commonweal* sold; about 4s. collected; addressed afternoon for two hours by Leggatt, evening by Leggatt, Poynts, and Emery. Collection made for Leggatt, who is out of work, amounting to 7s.

Agent for *Commonweal*—

Streatham—Mr. Bush, newsagent.

BRIGHTON.—W. B. Parker will speak on the Level Sunday Sept. 14, at 3.30.

COSMOPOLITAN RESEARCH ASSOCIATION, Wharfedale Temperance Bar, 46 Wharfedale Road, Kings Cross.—Wednesday September 17, at 8.30, Houchin, a lecture.

A Tonic Sol Fa Class meets every Thursday evening at 8 o'clock at Kelmscott House, Hammersmith; comrade J. Munday conductor. All members of the League are cordially invited to attend and assist.

"COMMONWEAL" BRANCH S.L.—A Course of Lectures and Concert and Ball (under the management of the above Branch) for the benefit of the *Commonweal* is in active preparation. The full particulars of same will shortly be announced. There will be some initial expenses in connection therewith, and Branch comrades and friends are asked to help in this direction. All donations will be gladly acknowledged in *Commonweal* by WM. BLUNDELL, Branch Secretary, 24 Great Queen Street, Lincoln's Inn Fields, W.C.

LECTURE DIARY.

LONDON.

- Battersea.—All communications to E. Buteux, 45, Inwith Street, Battersea Park Road.
Commonweal Branch.—24 Great Queen Street, Holborn, W.C. Tuesdays, Singing Practice. Thursdays, Business meeting. Saturdays, Social Gathering.
East London.—H. McKenzie, 10 Victoria Dwellings, Clerkenwell Road, E.C.
Hammersmith.—Kelmscott House, Upper Mall, W. Lecture every Sunday at 8.
North Kensington.—Clarendon Coffee Palace, Clarendon Road. Meets every Wednesday at 8 p.m.
North London.—6 Windmill Street, Tottenham Court Road. Meets every Wednesday evening at 8 o'clock.
South London.—St. George's Coffee Tavern, 106 Westminster Bridge Road.
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 Sunday evenings at 6.30. Singing practice, etc., Mondays at 8 p.m.
Glasgow.—Members are invited to meet on Thursday and Sunday evenings, at 8 o'clock, in the Secretary's house, 250 Crown Street, S.S. All communications to be sent to that address.
Halifax.—Socialists meet every Sunday at 6.30 p.m. at Helliwell's Temperance Hotel, Northgate.
Hull.—Club Liberty, 1 Beets Court, Blanket Row.
Leeds.—Socialist League Club, 1 Clarendon Buildings and Front Row. Open every evening. Business meeting Saturdays at 8.—International Educational Club, Templar Street. Open every evening. Discussion class every Friday at 8; lectures every Saturday at 4. All kinds of Socialist literature on tables and for sale.
Leicester.—Exchange Buildings, Rutland Street. Branch meets on Monday, Thursday, and Saturday at 8 p.m.
Manchester.—Socialist League Club, 60 Grovesnor Street, All Saints. Open every evening. Branch weekly meeting on Tuesdays at 8.
Nottingham.—Socialist Club, Woodland Place, Upper Parliament Street. Club contribution, 1d. per week; dancing every Wednesday, 8 till 10.30—fee 3d.
Norwich.—Members' meeting held every Tuesday at 8.30.
Oxford.—Temperance Hall, 25½ Pembroke Street. First Friday in every month, at 8.30 p.m.
Sheffield.—Socialist Club, 63 Blonk Street. French Class, Tuesday at 8.30. Discussion Class, Wednesday at 8.30. Open-air meetings are held as follows:—Sunday: Monolith, Fargate, at 11.30; Newhall Road, Attercliffe, at 11.30; Pump, Westbar, at 8; Heeley, Maresbrook Park, at 7.30; Monolith, Fargate, at 6.30; Rotherham, College Yard, at 3.15. Wednesday: Nursery Street, Wicker, at 8. Thursday: Bramall Lane, at 8; Eckington, at 6.30. Friday: Duke Street, Park, at 8. Saturday: Woodhouse, at 7.
Walsall.—Socialist Club, 18 Goodall Street, Walsall. Meetings every night.
Yarmouth.—Socialist League Club, 56 Row, Market Place. Open every evening Business Meeting, Tuesday at 8. Singing Practice, Wednesday at 8.30. Discussion Class, Thursday at 8.30. Elocution Class, Friday at 8.30.

OPEN-AIR PROPAGANDA.

SATURDAY 13.

- 8 Bermondsey Square Kitz and Miss Lupton
8 Euston Road—Ossulston Street Nicoll and Parker

SUNDAY 14.

- 11 Commercial Road—Union Street Leggatt and Mrs. Lahr
11 Latimer Road Station North Kensington Branch
11.30 Hammersmith Bridge Hammersmith Branch
11.30 Hoxton Church Burnie and Kitz
11.30 Kilburn—"Old Plough," Kilburn Lane Mainwaring
11.30 New Cut—Short Street Miss Lupton and Buckeridge
11.30 Regent's Park Nicoll
11.30 Hyde Park—Marble Arch Cantwell
11.30 Victoria Park Mrs. Lahr and Burnie
11.30 Streatham Common The Branch
6 Streatham—Fountain The Branch
7 Hammersmith Bridge Hammersmith Branch
7 Wormwood Scrubs North Kensington Branch
8 Kings Cross—Liverpool Street Nicoll
8 Mile-end Waste Mrs. Lahr
8 Walham Green—back of Church Hammersmith Branch

MONDAY 15.

- 7.30 Westminster Bridge Road—Pearman Street The Branch

TUESDAY 18.

- 7.30 New Cut—Short Street Miss Lupton, Leggatt, and Parker

FRIDAY 19.

- 8.15 Hoxton Church Nicoll and Mrs. Blundell

PROVINCES.

- Aberdeen.—Saturday: Castle Street, at 8 p.m.
Glasgow.—Sunday: Jail Square at 2 o'clock; Paisley Road at 5 o'clock. Friday: Bridgeton Cross, at 8.15.
Leeds.—Saturday: Woodhouse Moor, at 7.30 p.m. Sunday: Hunslet Moor, at 11 a.m.; Vicar's Croft, at 7 p.m.
Leicester.—Sunday: Russell Square at 10.45 a.m.; Humberstone Gate, at 8 p.m. Monday: Belgrave, at 7.30. Tuesday: Sanvey Gate, at 8. Wednesday: Oadby, at 7.30. Friday: Anstey, at 7.30. Saturday: Wigston, at 7.—Sunday, September 14, Andrew Hall, of Chesterfield.
Liverpool.—Landing Stage, Sundays at 11.30 a.m. and 3 p.m.
Manchester.—Saturday: Middleton market ground, at 7 p.m. Sunday: Phillips Park Gates, at 11; Stevenson Square, at 3. Monday: Market Street, Blackley, at 8.
Nottingham.—Sunday: Sneyton Market, at 11 a.m.; Great Market, at 7 p.m.
Norwich.—Saturday: Haymarket, at 8. Sunday: Market Place at 11, 3, and 7.30.
Yarmouth.—Saturday: Church Plain Trees, at 8 p.m. Sunday: Priory Plain, at 11; Bradwell, at 11.30; London Boat Landing Stage, at 3; Colman's Granary Quay, at 7. Monday: Belton, at 8 p.m.

EXCURSION TO SHIRLEY HILLS will take place on Sunday, September 28th. Brakes will start from the Office at 10 a.m. All seats must be booked by 24th latest.

SOCIALIST LEAGUE PUBLICATIONS.

Leaflets.

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

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—AUGUST SPIES.

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LA REVOLTE

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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.

Printed in the Socialist League Printery, and published in the name and on behalf of the Socialist League, by FRANK KRZ, at 24 Great Queen St., Lincoln's Inn Fields, London W.C.