

THE COMMONWEAL

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WEEKLY; ONE PENNY.

NOTES ON NEWS.

THE Kaiser has quite fluttered the capitalistic doves by his rescripts. Of course we get the irrepressible article in the *Pall Mall Gazette*, assuring us once more that we are indeed all Socialists now, and praising heaven for the House of Hohenzollern and this last development of Monarchism. Of course, on the other hand, we get the general "Pooh! pooh!" of the orthodox capitalistic press, both Liberal and Tory.

Most of them say, "Ah! Kaiser, here's an opportunity for you! If you would only be good like us English, and have free trade, then we would go to your Congress; then, at last, and not before, would be the time to consider whether our working population should starve or thrive—or, at all events, to pretend to consider it. For, of course, you will understand, that while free trade is a practical question to us, the questions you are suggesting of the duration of the day's labour, the conditions of factories, and so forth, have ceased to be practical questions to us since we passed the consolidation of the Factory Acts in order to make the Factory Hell respectable. And as to our working-classes, we assure you we are not at all afraid of them; they are sheep and like to be shorn, and if they baa a bit under the operation, our nerves are strong enough to bear it. Liberty of the press! Free competition! Unrestricted march of economic laws! Free trade! Imitate us and keep on bawling out these phrases, which cost nothing, and you will live peacefully and die happy."

Well, perhaps! And yet, on the surface of things, it scarcely seems likely that the Kaiser should set out on his enterprise of dishing the Socialists without some reason behind him, even if his step be only an electioneering dodge, as seems likely. It is not unreasonable to suppose that he is impressed, not to say alarmed, by the spread of Socialism, and feels that it would be no bad stroke if he could detach a considerable body of working-men from the Socialist party: a thing which he may consider possible in Germany, where the superstition of loyalty is yet strong. At any rate, if the workers refuse to bite at his phantom minnow, his "intentions" will help to respectabilise his position amongst the respectables of all Europe, and in no case will they cost him much. For who knows if the quarrel with Bismark is anything else than a bit of stage effect? W. M.

Some of our Radical friends have not been best pleased at our exposure from time to time of what hollow shams "Republican institutions" can be. A few weeks ago, when we wrote of the Argentine, they could say, and some of them did, that it was a new country, populated for the most part by a heterogeneous mass of recent immigrants, and still suffering from the effects of Spanish mis-rule. But if they read the reports of the National Convention of the coloured citizens of the United States, they will find that the Stars and Stripes is still the "flaunting lie" it was before the war. That in spite of the blood poured out to free the negro, he is only technically free; that so far as he is concerned, "Republican institutions" are a sham and a fraud; that even in the Northern States, where he is allowed to exercise his "political rights," he is still ostracised and treated as a helot. Together with the position of the working-classes in France, Argentina, and the United States, this continued ill-treatment of the negro needs to be accounted for, before we can accept the adequacy of "Republican institutions" to the cure of social ills.

"Ivory is worth over £2,000 per ton, and those advertising 'humanitarian' brigands, Explorer Stanley and Co., have over 600 tons of it." That is how the Sydney *Bulletin* speaks of the sainted person who is an object of worship to Mr. John P. Brown and men of his kidney. Where is divine vengeance and the power of respectability?

The newspapers are talking of another "Carnegie free library," and are praising Mr. Carnegie to the skies because he offers a million dollars for the endowment of a free library. Well! as we have said before, we should like to hear what the sweated iron-workers have to

say about this "generous" disposal of their unpaid earnings. It is all very well to have free libraries, but they would probably have preferred to live decently first of all, and then to have built libraries where they wanted them. "Justice, not Charity."

M. Lemoine, the well-known French writer, has been speaking plainly to his countrymen, who have been so jubilant about the Russian alliance. He says:

"We foolishly take the northern visitors who flock to the Mediterranean every winter, under the combined attractions of sunshine and the *roulette*, to represent the Tzar and the Russian people; and there is no man to tell us that, behind these idlers and cosmopolitan tourists, there are millions of men far away in the north who know nothing of this superficial agitation, who are ignorant of our very existence, and who acknowledge but one master on earth, whose will to them is that of a god, and whom they are prepared to obey at the sacrifice of their life. We forget in our levity that we have no means of knowing the views of the solitary man who wields such crushing power, or the workings of his mind."

His utterance is quoted by the *Pall Mall*, with the comment:

"M. Lemoine is wrong in saying that 'we have no means of knowing the views of the solitary man.' The Tzar has expressed them frankly enough, and he never speaks without sincerity. If M. Lemoine does not know what these views are, it is his own fault for not reading the *Pall Mall Gazette*."

The *Pall Mall* has often enough been accused of being a Russian organ, but has never quite so fully and cynically avowed the fact.

The richest man in Germany, according to recently published statistics, is Herr Krupp, the notorious maker of (legal) murder-machines, whose income for the current year amounts to £279,000. Clearly his business has been flourishing in the past year, for a twelvemonth ago his revenue was officially estimated at "only" £219,000. It is a profitable trade, this tool-making for tyrants. How the poor devils who never get above skeleton-keys and burglar's jemmies must look up to and admire their big brother!

An Anti-Opium League has been formed in Holland, having for its object to bring public opinion to bear on the system of raising revenue from the farming of the opium monopoly in the Dutch West Indies. The manifesto of the League is signed by a considerable number of present or former members of both branches of the Netherlands Legislature, ex-colonial officials, and other influential persons. Anyone who has read 'Baboe Dalima' and 'Ran Away from the Dutch,' must wish all success to the League; though it is difficult for an Englishman who "looks at home" to say much upon the matter. S.

NEWS FROM NOWHERE:

OR,

AN EPOCH OF REST.

BEING SOME CHAPTERS FROM A UTOPIAN ROMANCE.

CHAP. VI.—A LITTLE SHOPPING.

As he spoke, we came suddenly out of the woodland into a short street of handsomely built houses, which my companion named to me at once as Piccadilly: the lower part of these I should have called shops, if it had not been that, as far as I could see, the people were ignorant of the arts of buying and selling. Wares were displayed in their finely designed fronts, as if to tempt people in, and people stood and looked at them, or went in and came out with parcels under their arms, just like the real thing. On each side of the street ran an elegant arcade to protect foot-passengers, as in some of the old Italian cities. About half-way down, a huge building of the kind I was now prepared to expect told me that this also was a centre of some kind, and had its special public buildings.

Said Dick: "Here, you see, is another market on a different plan

from most others: the upper stories of these houses are used for guest-houses; for people from all about the country are apt to drift up-hither from time to time, and folk are very thick upon the ground, which you will find very pleasant at present, and there are people who are fond of croquet though I can't say that I am."

"I don't help smiling to see how long a tradition would last. He is the ghost of London still asserting itself as a centre, — an inland centre, for aught I know. However, I said nothing, except that I asked him to drive very slowly, as the things in the booths looked exceedingly pretty.

"Yes," said he, "this is a very good market for pretty things, and is mostly kept for the handsomer goods, as the Houses of Parliament market, where they set out cabbages and turnips and such like things, along with beer and the rougher kind of wine, is so near."

Then he looked at me curiously, and said, "Perhaps you would like to do a little shopping, as 'tis called."

I looked at what I could see of my rough blue duds, which I had had plenty of opportunity of contrasting with the gay attire of the citizens we had come across; and I thought that if, as seemed likely, I should presently be shown about as a curiosity for the amusement of this most unbusiness-like people, I should like to look a little less like a discharged ship's purser. But in spite of all that had happened, my hand went down into my pocket again, where to my dismay I met nothing metallic except two rusty old keys, and I remembered that amidst our talk in the guest-hall at Hammersmith I had taken the cash out of my pocket to show to the pretty Annie, and had left it lying there. My face fell fifty per cent., and Dick, beholding me, said rather sharply —

"Hilloa, Guest! what's the matter now? Is it a wasp?"

"No," said I, "but I've left it behind."

"Well," said he, "whatever you have left behind you can get in this market, so don't trouble yourself about it."

I had come to my senses by this time, and remembering the astounding customs of this country, had no mind for another lecture on social economy and the Edwardian coinage; so I said only —

"My clothes — Couldn't I? You see — What do you think could be done about them?"

He didn't seem in the least inclined to laugh, but said quite gravely: "O don't get new clothes yet. You see my great-grandfather is an antiquarian, and he will want to see you just as you are. And, you know, I mustn't preach to you, but surely it wouldn't be right for you to take away people's pleasure of studying your attire by just going and making yourself like everybody else. You feel that, don't you?" said he, earnestly.

I did not feel it my duty to stick myself up for a scarecrow amidst this beauty-loving people, but I saw I had got across some ineradicable prejudice, and that it wouldn't do to quarrel with my new friend. So I merely said, "O certainly, certainly."

"Well," said he, pleasantly, "you may as well see what the inside of these booths is like: think of something you want."

Said I: "Could I get some tobacco and a pipe?"

"Of course," said he; "what was I thinking of, not asking you before? Well, Bob is always telling me that we non-smokers are a selfish lot, and I'm afraid he is right. But come along; here is a place just handy."

Therewith he drew rein and jumped down, and I followed. A very handsome woman, splendidly clad in figured silk, was slowly passing by, looking into the windows as she went. To her quoth Dick: "Maiden, would you kindly hold our horse while we go in for a little?" She nodded to us with a kind smile, and fell to patting the horse with her pretty hand.

"What a beautiful creature!" said I to Dick as we entered.

"What, old Greylocks?" said he, with a sly grin.

"No, no," said I; "Goldyllocks, — the lady."

"Well, so she is," said he. "Tis a good job there are so many of them that every Jack may have his Jill: else I fear that we should get fighting for them. Indeed," said he, becoming very grave, "I don't say that it does not happen even now, sometimes. For you know love is not a very reasonable thing, and perversity and self-will are commoner than some of our moralists think." He added in a still more sombre tone: "Yes, only a month ago there was a mishap down by us that in the end cost the lives of two men and a woman, and as it were put out the sunlight for us for a while. Don't ask me about it just now; I may tell you about it later on."

By this time we were within the shop or booth, which had a counter, and shelves on the walls all very neat, though without any pretence of showiness, but otherwise not very different to what I had been used to. Within were a couple of children — a brown-skinned boy of about twelve, who sat reading a book, and a pretty little girl of about a year older, who was sitting also reading behind the counter; they were obviously brother and sister.

"Good morning, little neighbours," said Dick. "My friend here wants tobacco and a pipe; can you help him?"

"O yes, certainly," said the girl with a sort of demure alertness which was somewhat amusing. The boy looked up, and fell staring at my outlandish attire, but presently reddened and turned his head, as if he knew that he was not behaving prettily.

"Dear neighbour," said the girl, with the most solemn countenance of a child playing at keeping shop, "what tobacco is it you would like?"

"Latakia," quoth I, feeling as if I were assisting at a child's game, and wondering whether I should get anything but make-believe.

But the girl took a dainty little basket from a shelf beside her, went to a jar, and took out a lot of tobacco and put the filled basket down

on the counter before me, where I could both smell and see that it was excellent Latakia.

"But you haven't weighed it," said I, "and — and how much am I to take?"

"Why," she said, "I advise you to cram your bag, because you may be going where you can't get Latakia. Where is your bag?"

I fumbled about, and at last pulled out my piece of cotton print which does duty with me for a tobacco pouch. But the girl looked at it with some disdain, and said —

"Dear neighbour," I can give you something much better than that cotton rag." And she tripped up the shop and came back presently, and as she passed the boy whispered something in his ear, and he nodded and got up and went out. The girl held up in her finger and thumb a red morocco bag, gaily embroidered, and said, "There, I've chosen one for you, and you are to have it: it is pretty, and will hold a lot."

Therewith she fell to cramming it with the tobacco, and laid it down by me and said, "Now for the pipe: that also you must let me choose for you; there are three pretty ones just come in."

She disappeared again, and came back with a big-bowled pipe in her hand, carved out of some hard wood very elaborately, and mounted in gold sprinkled with little gems. It was, in short, as pretty and gay a toy as I had ever seen; something like the best kind of Japanese work, but better.

"Dear me!" said I, when I set eyes on it, "this is altogether too grand for me, or for anybody but the Emperor of the World. Besides, I shall lose it: I always lose my pipes."

The child seemed rather dashed, and said, "Don't you like it, neighbour?"

"O yes," I said, "of course I like it."

"Well, then, take it," said she, "and don't trouble about losing it. What will it matter if you do? Somebody is sure to find it, and he will use it, and you can get another."

I took it out of her hand to look at it, and while I did so, forgot my caution, and said, "But however am I to pay for such a thing as this?"

Dick laid his hand on my shoulder as I spoke, and turning I met his eyes with a comical expression in them, which warned me against another exhibition of extinct commercial morality; so I reddened and held my tongue, while the girl simply looked at me with the deepest gravity, as if I were a foreigner blundering in my speech, for she clearly didn't understand me a bit.

"Thank you so very much," I said at last, effusively, as I put the pipe in my pocket, not without a qualm of doubt as to whether I shouldn't find myself before a magistrate presently.

"O, you are so very welcome," said the little lass, with an affectation of grown-up manners at their best which was very quaint. "It is such a pleasure to serve dear old gentlemen like you; especially when one can see at once that you have come from far over sea."

"Yes, my dear," quoth I, "I have been a great traveller."

As I told this lie from pure politeness, in came the lad again, with a tray in his hands, on which I saw a long flask and two beautiful glasses. "Neighbours," said the girl (who did all the talking, her brother being very shy, clearly), "please to drink a glass to us before you go, since we do not have guests like this every day."

Therewith the boy put the tray on the counter and solemnly poured out a straw-coloured wine into the long bowls. Nothing loth, I drank, for I was thirsty with the hot day; and thinks I, I am yet in the world, and the grapes of the Rhine have not yet lost their flavour; for if ever I drank good Steinberg, I drank it that morning; and I made a mental note to ask Dick how they managed to make fine wine when there were no longer labourers compelled to drink rot-gut instead of the fine wine which they themselves made.

"Don't you drink a glass to us, dear little neighbours?" said I.

"I don't drink wine," said the lass; "I like lemonade better: but I wish your health!"

"And I like ginger-beer better," said the little lad.

Well, well, thought I, neither have children's tastes changed much. And therewith we gave them good day and went out of the booth.

To my disappointment, like a change in a dream, a tall old man was holding our horse instead of the beautiful woman. He explained to us that the maiden could not wait, and that he had taken her place; and he winked at us and laughed when he saw how our faces fell, so that we had nothing for it but to laugh also.

"Where are you going?" said he to Dick.

"To Bloomsbury," said Dick.

"If you two don't want to be alone, I'll come with you," said the old man.

"All right," said Dick, "tell me when you want to get down and I'll stop for you. Let's get on."

So we got under way again; and I asked if children generally waited on people in the markets. "Often enough," said he, "when it isn't a matter of dealing with heavy weights, but by no means always. The children like to amuse themselves with it, and it is good for them, because they handle a lot of diverse wares and get to learn about them, how they are made and where they come from, and so on. Besides, it is such very easy work that anybody can do it. It is said that in the early days of our epoch there were a good many people who were hereditarily afflicted with a disease called Idleness, because they were the direct descendants of those who in the bad times used to force other people to work for them — the people, you know, who are called slave-holders or employers of labour in the history books. Well, these Idleness-stricken people used to serve booths all their time, because they were fit for so little. Indeed, I believe that at one time

they were actually compelled to do some such work, because they, especially the women, got so ugly and produced such ugly children that the neighbours couldn't stand it. However, I'm happy to say that all that is gone by now; the disease is either extinct, or exists in such a mild form that a short course of aperient medicine carries it off. It is sometimes called the Blue-devils now, or the Mulleygrubs. Queer names, ain't they?"

"Yes," said I, pondering much. But the old man broke in:

"Yes, all that is true, neighbour; and I have seen some of those poor women grown old. But my father used to know some of them when they were young; and he said that they were as little like young women as might be: they had hands like bunches of skewers, and wretched little arms like sticks; and waists like hour-glasses, and thin lips and peaked noses and pale cheeks; and they were always pretending to be offended at anything you said or did to them. No wonder they bore ugly children, for no one except men like them could be in love with them—poor things!"

He stopped, and seemed to be musing on his past life, and then said:

"And do you know, neighbours, that once on a time people were still anxious about that disease of Idleness: at one time we gave ourselves a great deal of trouble in trying to cure people of it. Have you not read any of the medical books on the subject?"

"No," said I; for the old man was speaking to me.

"Well," said he, "it was thought at the time that it was the survival of the old mediæval disease of leprosy: it seems it was very catching, for many of the people afflicted by it were much secluded, and were waited upon by a special class of diseased persons queerly dressed up, so that they might be known. They wore amongst other garments, breeches made of worsted velvet, that stuff which used to be called plush some years ago."

All this seemed very interesting to me, and I should like to have made the old man talk more. But Dick got rather restive under so much ancient history: besides, I suspect he wanted to keep me as fresh as he could for his great-grandfather. So he burst out laughing at last, and said: "Excuse me, neighbours, but I can't help it. Fancy people not liking to work!—its too ridiculous. Why, even you like to work, old fellow—sometimes," said he, affectionately patting the old horse with the whip. "What a queer disease! it may well be called Mulleygrubs!"

And he laughed out again most boisterously; rather too much so, I thought, for his usual good manners; and I laughed with him for company's sake, but from the teeth outward only; for I saw nothing funny in people not liking to work, as you may well imagine.

WILLIAM MORRIS.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

IN PARIS.

I HAPPENED to be at the *Bourse du travail* last week, to hear how it stood with the general strike movement, and when in the secretary's office, citizen Ribanier showed me a letter he had just received from a certain citizen (?) Bennett, or something like that, at the Board of Trade, London, asking for information as to the working of our *Bourse du travail*, as being of the greatest interest to him. The letter was written in tolerably good French, making allowance, that is, for misplaced prepositions, which sounded very harsh to an *habitué* of the *Quartier Latin*. No matter; Mr. Bennett (?) will improve if he comes into nearer contact with French Socialists, and it will do him and his fellow-Cockneys good if they persevere in their bold enterprise.

Having read the letter, my friend Ribanier asked for my opinion upon it. "Hem!" said I, "it looks very strange to me that Englishmen should come to us for information about our *Bourse du travail*, for the whole of Europe knows us as Socialists; and, this being so, must know that our aim is not to make use of this municipal grant to "settle" disputes between masters and employed, nor to find employment for the unemployed—which, indeed, would be impossible, as we have double the number of hands needed for the work at any time of the year. No! our aim is to fight the capitalists to the bitter end; and I am sure if you say this in your answer to Mr. Bennett, as no doubt you will, for it is a fact, he will not favour you with another such letter."

Having said so much, I burst into a hearty laugh, whereon the general secretary stared at me, and musically joined in the laugh, without knowing what was the joke. However, I soon became conscious of my breach of good manners, and grew serious as a lobster. "So," said I, "it seems that the English Tory Government will give a Labour Exchange to the people of London; and what have you to say about that, Ribanier? Or rather, as I have an hour to spare, tell me how Paris got one at first; that's more interesting."

Here is the substance of what the general secretary of the Paris Labour Exchange told me. "The first idea of a *Bourse du travail* was brought before the municipality of Paris, as far back as the 2nd of March, 1790, when the motion was defeated. It was taken up again by the *Chambre des Députés*, and met with the same fate, being defeated by 413 votes against 218. A few years ago it was resolved on at the *Hotel de ville*, the Government refusing to have anything to do with it. The Municipality voted £500,000 for one central labour exchange, promising several annexes in different parts of Paris, in proportion as the Budget would admit of it.

"Before we had this first building, working-men used to meet on certain squares called *grèves*, waiting till masters came to engage them. Now the masters do not come to us, for the good reason that, the market being overstocked, they get plenty of hands coming to them direct from the country or from private registry offices in town. The *Bourse* can give but few situations, and it will never work properly unless the Government does away with private registry offices, and this it naturally won't do. Some desperadoes, labouring under a strong sense of injury, have blown up some of these registries, and have thereby done us no good.

"Only a small proportion of the workmen are organised in unions, and have a right to hold meetings here; 130 unions, or syndicates as they are

called, have joined altogether, but the great majority of the toilers are indifferent, and do not see the good they could do by banding themselves; for our object is not so much to find work as to see our way to a complete upheaval of this cursed favouritism system."

I took leave of my friend, who gave me as I came away the statistics of the *Bourse*, in which I could see that the officials are paid at the rate of 8 frs. a-day for eight hours work; the other secretaries are paid by their trades-unions, and, all considered, I think English trades-unions are far better off than the Paris ones. They are at home, and the police are not quite so ready to interfere; whilst here, if they are "rowdy," the police may close the building, as they did two years ago, when it was closed for three weeks and troops were camped in the streets around. This brutal interference of bayonets gave the *Bourse* almost a death-blow; working-men see they can agitate better in their own localities, where they are comparatively free. If Mr. Bennett would take the trouble to see for himself, instead of writing from a distance, he would soon find that all is not gold that glitters.

In most cases the groups, or trades, have so few members syndicated at the *Bourse* that they cannot afford to pay a secretary the whole day long, so most of them come there from seven to nine at night. Wouldn't it be better for, and more worthy of them, to meet in their own little hall where they would feel at home, and never be disturbed nor molested by any busy-bobbies. Every man supporting the funds of his trade may come to the *Bourse* to get a job; his name will be taken down, and when his turn comes— But why speak of his turn that never will turn up, considering that tens of thousands are out of work at any time of the year? You can get a job through the medium of a friend lucky enough to be at work, but I never saw a master inside of the *Bourse du travail* to look for hands. Why should he take the trouble of going there, when he has only to open his door to see numbers of toilers anxious to work at any price it may please *Monsieur le patron* to give them?

I will give you some day a list of the recognised rates of wages of the syndicates at the *Bourse*, and compare it with the real wages paid with impunity by the robbers. It is all very easy for the *Bureau* to publish a wage-tariff based on the strict necessity of a man's existence. It may have done twenty years ago, when all hands were employed, but then we were all law-abiding sheep, who thought of "duty" instead of "right." Now that we have a little sense, it is only to see how our tyrants are armed against us, and that we may choose between starvation and open revolt.

I would advise the secretary of every Socialist branch or Anarchist group to write to citizen Ribanier, *Secrétaire Général, Bourse du travail*, 35, Rue Jean Jacques Rousseau, Paris, for a copy of the *Annuaire de la Bourse du travail*, which will be sent them post free. If the readers have still a little remnant of respect for the present scandalous form of society, I am sure that respect will vanish after the perusal of this book, for it is heartrending to read some of the accounts given by men of the different trades in this and other countries.

It is a puzzle to understand how a man can live, as in nearly every trade men are idle four months in the year. The book does not explain what they do; but I suppose they are cursing the kind government which secures to them the right of starvation. It is interesting to read it, not so much to know about the hours, work, wages, etc., as to notice the way in which questions are answered. Some of the questions are answered with scorn, some with pride, some again with a contemptuous silence; not one complaint, that would be unworthy the dignity of a working-man. They suffer and hate until the time comes when they will endeavour to make non-producers a thing of the past.

Georges Mertz, a young Anarchist of 20, got five days prison and 15 frs. fine for having, as a conscript, drawn a handful of numbers out of the urn and thrown them on the pavement in front of the gendarmes and the Mayor. When before the judge he was asked, "If the fatherland were in danger, would you defend it?" "No," was his answer, "for to kill a man, be he a German or an Italian, is a crime!" This took place at Dijon. When the judge was reading his sentence there were interruptions and expressions of sympathy with the prisoner, which does not look bright for discipline in the French army.

I hear at the last moment that the syndicates (trades-unions) of Bordeaux are going to start a *Bourse du travail* for themselves, independent of the one given them by the municipality, unless the municipality allows them to make their own rules and statutes. This is a good hint for Englishmen who think so much of municipal grants.

Paris, Feb. 9th, 1890.

A. COULON.

ANOTHER SIBERIAN TRAGEDY.

INFORMATION has just reached London of another horrible tragedy in the far east of Siberia, at Kara, near the north-west coast of Tobolsk. Nadejda Sihida, formerly a superior teacher in St. Petersburg, had been condemned to penal servitude. Some copies of *Narodnaia Volja* had been found in her house. This refined and highly-educated woman was detained in the Kara prison, where of late many political prisoners sentenced to hard labour have been sent. Sihida was grossly insulted by the Director of the prison, but repulsed his outrageous advances with a box on the ear, whereupon he ordered that she should be stripped and flogged, a punishment illegal for politicals even in Holy Russia. The humiliation so afflicted Sihida that she poisoned herself. The women political prisoners thought they were no longer safe from insults. No sooner had Sihida killed herself than her friend and fellow prisoner, Marie Kovalevskaya, wife of Professor Kovalevskaya of Kiev, also poisoned herself. It is said that other women destroyed themselves after the flogging of their companion, but of this there is as yet no certain evidence, though it is probably true. A few miles from the women's prison is the men's, and the inmates have contrived to establish communications. It is supposed that when the men heard of the flogging and subsequent suicides, some burst of indignant sorrow naturally took place, and this, of course, was sure to be followed by violent and brutal suppression. In any case, the procurator, whose functions are somewhat similar to that of an English sheriff, the colonel of the gendarmes, and the surgeon of Chita were summoned in hot haste to Kara. One of the letters says that every day the situation of the exiles in Siberia becomes more and more difficult. The position has now become so critical that they do not know if to-morrow they will not be involved in some affair which will result in their dying at the point of the bayonet.



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 HEARD 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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Subscribers who receive a RED WRAPPER are thereby reminded that their subscriptions have expired and must be renewed immediately if they wish to continue to receive COMMONWEAL.

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Remittances from abroad must be made by International Money Order.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

J. BIBBY (Liverpool).—Not a "reply," but a comment; a different thing.

N. WETHERALL (Manchester).—When your postcard reached us, your letter had already reached the grave that waits for anonymous letters; even if they are so by accident, as yours was. We regret the mishap.

W. B. (Abercarn) asks for a good work on Organisation. Can any of our readers help him?

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Periodicals received during the week ending Wednesday February 12.

ENGLAND	Chicago (Ill)—Vorboten	ITALY
Brotherhood	Milwaukee—National Reformer	Milan—Cuore e Critica
London—Freie Presse	Philadelphia—United Labour	Rome—L'Emancipazione
Labour Tribune	San Fran.—Commonwealth	SPAIN
Norwich—Daylight	Ybor City—Revista da Florida	Madrid—El Socialista
Railway Review	FRANCE	PORTUGAL
Social Demokrat	Paris—La Revolte	A Revolta
Seafaring	Le Proletariat	Porto—A Revolucao Social
Worker's Friend	La Revue Europeenne	GERMANY
INDIA	Charleville—L'Emancipation	Berlin—Volks Tribune
Bankipore—Behar Herald	Lille—Le Cri du Travailleur	Brunn—Arbeiterstimme
UNITED STATES	Rouen—Le Salarjat	AUSTRIA
New York—Volkzeitung	HOLLAND	Hague—Recht voor Allen
New York—Truthseeker	Middelburg, Lichten Wahrheid	DENMARK
Twentieth Century	BELGIUM	Social-Demokraten
United Irishman	Antwerp—De Werker	SWEDEN
Workmen's Advocate	Ghent—Vooruit	Stockholm, Social-Demokraten
Boston—Woman's Journal	SWITZERLAND	Malmö—Arbetet
Boston—Liberty	Arbeiterstimme	WEST INDIES
Investigator		Cuba—El Productor
The Dawn		ARGENTINE REPUBLIC
Buffalo—Arbeiter-Zeitung		Buenos Ayres—Vorwarts

SCENES FROM THE FRENCH REVOLUTION.

II.

THE BLACK COCKADES.

THERE is peace in Paris in these latter days of September; an ominous peace. The agitation concerning the Veto has died away, but the scarcity of bread continues, though the harvest is abundant, and is growing worse as the winter approaches. Whether it be the greed of speculators or royalist intrigues, there is a fearful sociality of food.

Ominous grumblings are heard from groups around the baker's shops; many of the people who still had the superstitious belief in royalty which has long vanished in France, but still exists in England, imagine that if the King would but come and live in Paris matters might mend. Meanwhile, the tyranny of the officious patrols is not calculated to soothe the popular irritation; though you may still hear the cries of hunger by levelled bayonets, yet that does not satisfy a starving people. Besides, another danger threatens from above, which even makes constitutional Lafayette and Bailly feel very uncomfortable. The crushing of insurrectionary Paris by Lafayette's National Guard encourages the Court, which quickly sees its opportunity. Its foes are divided; what a splendid time, now the middle-class and the people have quarrelled, to strike a heavy blow at both. The Court knows the weakness of the bourgeoisie. Without the people, surely it will take but little to strike down these middle-class snobs, who have alienated the class that has helped them to gain their Bastille victories. A plot is accordingly set on foot among zealous royalists, not over-burdened by caution, to restore the former despotic power of the Crown. Some thirty thousand of the clergy and nobility are said to have signed a bond to stand by the King. Marie Antoinette, the Queen—a proud, haughty woman, with a genius for all kinds of intrigue and treachery—is the centre of these intrigues. The King, Louis, though naturally harmless enough, is completely swayed by his wife and her party, who would have slaughtered every soul in Paris to obtain absolute power, and who hated the people with the same fury as the Marnicardes' and Norwoods' of our own days.

Well, Marie Antoinette and her troops of Court gallants, who hovered like butterflies around her, had formed their plan. It was not a bad one, viz., to bring up, on pretext of alarm at the disorders in Paris, one of the few French regiments which was supposed to be quite untouched by revolutionary opinions—this was the regiment of Flanders; then with this regiment and the other troops at Versailles, to carry off the King to Metz, a strong fortress on the borders of Germany, where the Marquis de Bouille commanded troops, mostly German and Swiss, who could still be depended upon; and then, with the noblesse, who had fled from their burning chateaux, begin a war of extermination against rebellious Paris.

The Flanders regiment arrived at Versailles on September 23rd, bringing with it two pieces of cannon. At the same time a large number of royalist officers, who have suddenly obtained leave of absence, arrive at Paris, numbering it is reckoned from 1,000 to 1,200. The King's body-guard, which is totally composed of aristocrats, is doubled by a clever manoeuvre, for the hundred men who are on duty at the chateau of Versailles, the French Windsor, are relieved by another hundred, as is the custom every month; but the men relieved do not leave the chateau. It is evident to sharp observers at Paris that there is something in the wind.

Now, if the royalists had even confined themselves to bringing up troops, and collecting royalist officers in the capital, had they possessed the caution necessary to conspirators, perhaps their plot might have succeeded; but, unfortunately for the success of their conspiracy, they were not cautious. They were so certain of success that they bragged of what they were going to do, and so the details of their plot were talked of everywhere. This was not enough, worse folly remains behind.

The King's body-guard invite the officers of the Flanders regiment to a grand dinner. Their majesties have graciously granted the use of their Opera House in huge Versailles Palace for the purpose. It is on Thursday, the 1st of October, when the dinner takes place; officers of the Flanders regiment body guards, and officers of the National Guards of the town of Versailles sit down together. The body-guard who are devoted royalists, still wear the white cockade, the symbol of despotic royalism; the officers of the Flanders regiment and National Guard, the new national colour, the tri-colour. The dinner is finished and the drinking begins; they drink the health of the King, the Queen, and royal family. A timid voice is heard to suggest the health of the nation, then the popular toast, but this is contemptuously rejected. Then, as the assembly is getting warm with wine, the King, Queen, and their son, the Dauphin, enter the dining-room. They are received with roars of half-drunken enthusiasm; the room is now thronged not only with officers, but soldiers of the various regiments at Versailles, who have been graciously admitted after the dinner. The royal family walk around the tables amid thunderous shouts; swords are drawn and frantically waved; soldiers, body guards, and officers drink, brandishing their weapons, to the health of the King, the Queen, and the Prince. The royal family retire, and as they leave the hall the band strikes up a popular opera air, "O Richard, O my King, the world is all forsaking thee." This is received with delirious loyalty, greatly strengthened by the amount of wine consumed. The band then plays a popular march, and the trumpets sound the charge. The drunken officers and soldiers scale the boxes; the national cockade, the tri-colour, the emblem of the victorious people, is torn out of their hats and trampled under foot. White cockades are distributed. They rush hither and thither in the madness of their intoxication. They then stagger in drunken riot into the marble court of Versailles; the tumult is so great that the inhabitants of Versailles imagine that the revolution has broken out afresh, and detachments are sent from distant guard-houses to quell the disturbance. These are agreeably surprised to find it is only some drunken royalist officers on the spree. The riot dies out at last, and the revellers stagger home to bed and snore peacefully in swinish slumber; but they have done their work, they have lit a flame which they will not easily extinguish.

Imagine how the news of this drunken revel was received among

the starving crowds around the baker's shops in Paris. "In Paris we starve waiting for a few pounds of bad black bread, while at Versailles they feast in profligate riot; these drunken aristocrats laugh at our misery, trample the tri-colour under their feet as they long to trample us. Shall we wait patiently till the King flies to Metz, and then with foreign troops and emigrant aristocrats advances upon Paris to put us to the sword?" These and similar murmurs arise amid these starving groups; even Lafayette and the constitutional middle-class are looking blue. What can be done to stop these plots? Alas! constitutional patriotism cannot see, for its fears the multitude as much as it does the Court, and therefore it can only wait till the King flies and civil war begins. But the audacity of the royalist party increases, the trampling of the tri-colour under foot was no drunken freak. Next day the Queen declares herself "delighted" with the drunken riot of the day before. Officers of the National Guard who enter the chateau in their uniform, are told that they "Can have no feeling to appear at Court in that dress!" They are surrounded by tilted harlots of the most vicious Court in Europe, who hold the white cockade in their taper fingers and entreat them with smiles and wanton glances to exchange it for the "odious tri-colour." "Take it!" exclaim these ladies, "it is the only true one, and it shall be triumphant!" Remember, it could only be triumphant at the cost of spilling the blood of thousands of the people.

One young officer of the National Guard, overpowered with the witching smiles and glances, had donned the royalist colour, and is remonstrated with by Major Lecointre, a popular officer of the National Guard, who is immediately threatened by a Court bully with assassination.

On Saturday, there is another drunken orgie; and now the starving groups can see that the royalist officers have mounted black cockades, "the colour of the night," nay, some of them wear a new and strange uniform of a sinister hue—green faced with red. What does it mean? Another St. Bartholomew, a wholesale slaughter of patriots by the same means as a French king once rid himself of his Protestant subjects? And bread grows scarcer, for the Corbeil corn-boat that used to come twice a day now only comes once. Are we to be decimated by starvation and then slaughtered? It is said the aristocrats are drawing up a list of proscription against the best patriots. What shall we do? In the Palais Royal, where patriots still promenade, a woman is seen speaking, denouncing the black cockades. Her husband has been forbidden to speak but she will; if the men fear to act the women must, and she calls on the men to march and bring the King to Paris. Marat flies to Versailles, and returns crying in his paper "O ye dead men, rouse yourselves!" Danton's voice thunders in the Cordeliers. The next day (Sunday) the district decides that it will march to Versailles as the advance guard of Paris patriotism and bring back the King. It is, however, held back by the persuasions of the commandant of its National Guard, M. de Crevecoeur. But, at least, one thing shall be done, these aristocrats shall not be allowed to flaunt their black cockades in Paris, and with an angry roar the patriots, as the popular party were then called, rush into the streets. The offending cockades are torn from the royalists by main force and trampled into the mud. If an individual tries to pick up the unpopular badge, they threaten to string him up to the nearest lamp-post. One royalist officer, who is more than usually obstinate, is being dragged to the lanterne, but is saved by a National Guard patrol. But though the National Guards may save individuals, they will not defend the cockades; in some cases they assist in tearing them away from the wearers. Nor are the patrols over-vigilant this Sunday afternoon, for orators arise in the Palais Royal despite them, and declare that the wearer of a black cockade is deserving of death as a man who would murder the nation by bringing upon it civil war.¹ Rumours fly hither and thither, "40,000 stands of arms have been ordered by the royalists, the massacre of a whole people is impending." The Town Hall is alarmed at the progress of the royalist conspiracy, and issues a proclamation prohibiting the wearing of any cockade save those of the national colour. At the same time the sleek bourgeoisie are quite as much afraid of the people. A rumour is abroad that night, that there is a plot in progress to attack the guard-rooms of the National Guard and disarm these middle-class militia, and with their weapons march on Versailles. Lafayette doubles his posts and his patrols, as night sinks upon disturbed Paris. The night passes quietly, but what of the morrow?

D. J. NICOLL.

Comrades coming to Edinburgh from London or elsewhere, who may wish to meet with Edinburgh Socialists, should call on Donald Mackenzie, 35, George IV. Bridge, Edinburgh.

We are glad to hear that *Znamia* (Banner), the Russian paper of New York, which was forced to suspend publication some time ago, has re-appeared. It is now of 8 pp., double the previous size, and after the current number will be issued weekly. Comrade Guilaroff, of 5, Devonshire Cottage, High Road, Chiswick, W., is the agent for this country.

"THE BATTENBERG LOCK-OUT."—Prince Henry of Battenberg is still out on strike, but with a difference compared with those who get their wages for useful work. His "work" at Court has ceased for some time, but his wages still run on. "Society" is not quite sure whether it is a "lock-out" or a revolt against the conditions of the Prince's employment. There is some talk of the matter being referred to arbitration, and the names of the Prince of Wales, Cardinal Manning, and John Burns are mentioned as likely persons to bring it to a reasonable termination.—G. McL.

¹ These black cockades were the colour of Austria, the native country of the Queen, and perhaps were worn by men who did not dare to wear the white one in Paris. The people looked upon them as an evil emblem signifying that the royalist party were prepared to carry out the most extreme measures against them.

TO A SOVEREIGN.

Thou glittering bauble, tell me why
In thee I see all tyranny,
All grief, and shame, and misery
Personified by Gold?

For Gold—men shed each other's blood;
For Gold—they sneer at all that's good;
For Gold—become as devils rude;
And rob their God for Gold!

For Gold—they raise the battle-cry,
And wage, with bitterest enmity,
A war against each loving tie,
Which can't be bought or sold.

For Gold—the youth is taught to rove;
For Gold—the maiden gives her love;
For it—old age through life has strove;
All joys exchanged for Gold.

For Gold—the brave plunge into strife;
For Gold—risk comfort, love, and life;
For Gold—fell murder's self is rife,
And stalks abroad for Gold.

For Gold—the priest beguiles the time
Of men with nonsense called sublime;
Shrives him of every sin and crime,
And barter heaven for Gold.

Gold—give me back my feelings rude,
Ere competition chilled my blood,
And taught me to regard all good
As centred all in gold.

Gold—bitterest foe to human joys!
Gold—hoary father of all lies!
Thy name all wickedness implies,
And HELL is meant by Gold!

By PENCIL 'EM, *New Moral World*, Sept. 21, 1839.

IN AUSTRALIA.

THE Brisbane bakers' troubles were the cause of a special meeting of the Labour Federation on Wednesday night. It was stated that of thirty-eight master bakers in the city, thirty-four had agreed to a scale providing for £3 and £2 10s. respectively. A deputation was appointed to visit the four who had refused on behalf of the Federation.

The General Labourers' Union is spreading in every direction. On Monday night a meeting was held in Brisbane to finally consider the rules, but adjourned till next Monday in order that a mass meeting, called for that night at the Maritime Hall, might definitely fix the monthly contribution. Another General Labourers' organisation meeting will be held this (Friday) evening at Lutwyche. If the attempt to federate all Queensland labour, for which purpose delegates are going to Blackall and Barcardine, is successful, the general labourers of the West, the Central, Maryborough and Brisbane, already fairly organised, will be united in one solid body along with their skilled brethren.

The Brisbane draymen last Saturday decided to organise, a large number joining. They will meet again to-morrow to decide whether they shall join the General Labourers' Union as a branch. This course is strongly urged by the best Brisbane organisers, not only for the draymen but for other shifting occupations, as it would enable casual labourers to work indiscriminately at anything, without being burdened by subscriptions which would be considerable if they had to belong to two or three distinct societies.

The Brisbane wharf-labourers held their annual meeting on Wednesday night, and decided to send a delegate to Blackall and Barcardine, as recommended by the Maritime Council, in order to join with delegates from the Labour Federation and bushmen's unions in discussing and drawing up a scheme for a Queensland federation. It is significant that at the same meeting correspondence was read from the Sydney wharf-labourers asking if Brisbane would send a delegate to discuss inter-colonial federation, from Hobart asking for federation information, also the same from Melbourne.

The newly-formed Cutters and Trimmers' Union of Sydney is experiencing the usual difficulties attendant on establishing a trades-union. One "boss" has announced his intention of "sacking" any man who joins the union. This tyrannical threat is not, however, going to deter the Cutters and Trimmers from carrying out their intentions. On the contrary, it has made the members of the new union more enthusiastic.

A minimum wage of £3 for a week of forty-eight hours has been decided on by the Journeymen Butchers here.

The Charters Towers Miners' Union, by a unanimous vote, have authorised a levy of half-a-crown per member to form a funeral fund for the newly-formed Queensland district. Next-of-kin of members meeting with fatal accidents will receive £50 therefrom.

Things are moving along here very nicely. In the *Trades and Labour Advocate* this week appears the League's "Statement of Principles" reprinted from your back page. This paper is going to do a lot of good. Since the *Radical* went Individualist, or whatever it may be by now, we have been in sad want of a labour paper. The Brisbane *Boomerang* and the Sydney *Bulletin* are real good, but all the same there was a "long-felt want." I will send you a *Swagman* when it appears.

Sydney, N.S.W., Dec. 21, 1889.

CORNSTALK.

Frost and fraud have always foul ends.

Lost, in the neighbourhood of the Guelphic obstruction, Strand, by a Queen's messenger, a packet of royal condolences, assorted, to suit railway and mining disasters and fires; no cash enclosed. Also, at same time and place, an order on the Savage Semite of Fleet Street for a three-decker article on the domestic virtues of royalty. Whoever will return the above to the owner will be handsomely (*sic*) rewarded.

THE LABOUR STRUGGLE.

The end of the Gas-stokers' Strike.

The defeat of the gas-stokers—for it is a defeat, although the men have obtained from Livesey a promise that the eight hours system shall be continued—is a heavy blow for the new trade-unionism. The more so, because the defeat has occurred mainly through the workers not carrying out the principles which have hitherto made the new organisations successful. These principles were, first, widespread strikes, and secondly, generous support extended by workers in other organisations to those who were fighting the battle of labour. The first blunder the union made was in being too moderate in not calling out the men in the gas and coal trade all over London; and then, although it must have been evident to all workmen that the defeat of the gas-stokers meant an assault by the sweaters upon every trade union, yet they stood by in apathy while their comrades were starved into surrender. They will now find out their mistake. Already we find Col. Makins, chairman of the Gas Light and Coke Company, "congratulating Mr. Livesey and his colleagues" amid the resounding cheers of directors and shareholders, at the same time declaring his "sympathy" for Livesey during the struggle and announcing his intention of introducing a profit-sharing scheme of his own. Mr. Livesey was present at the meeting, and on seconding the vote of thanks to the chairman and directors was loudly cheered. He stated that it would be to the interest of both companies "to work cordially together." All these things show that it is extremely possible that "sympathy" was not the only aid extended to Mr. Livesey by Col. Makins during the strike, and it is most probable, as I said at the beginning of the strike, that Livesey's profit-sharing scheme was drawn up in agreement with the other company, South London being the most convenient battle-ground for smashing the union.

It is now evident that we shall have plenty of benevolent schemes from sweating capitalists for breaking up the newly-formed unions, the latest dodge being the sick and benefit society of Mr. Norwood. The capitalists have found that bribery succeeds where force would fail, and it is clear that a serious crisis has arrived for the workers' organisations. They will now be subject to a new and insidious attack, and the fate of most of the new unions will be decided in the next few weeks.

The Strike at the Wharves.

The renewal of the dock strike has only been prevented at the last moment by the withdrawal of the men's manifesto. This, under present circumstances, is a wise step on the part of the union, for the present would be a most unfavourable moment to renew the struggle of last autumn. We are still in the winter months, when trade is not over brisk, and the supply of unemployed men, who would be utilised as blacklegs, is considerable. Therefore it would certainly suit the newly-formed employers' association excellently.

A big demonstration of 25,000 men was held on Tower Hill last Sunday, at which John Burns and Tom Mann were the principal speakers. Burns stated that since the signing of the agreement in September, all the wharves with the exception of Hay's and the Monument had agreed to pay for meal-times, and it was not worth while to risk defeat in the others for these two. But still, there is the risk, if the dockers lose at Hay's, that the other wharves may declare their intention of going back to the Mansion House agreement, and refuse to pay for meal-times any longer. However, under present circumstances, the men can do very little but stand on the defensive; their opportunity will come next autumn. It is quite evident that Norwood and Co. are going for a policy of sap and mine; the announcement that the employers' union is going to start a blackleg supply association in the shape of a sick and benefit society is a proof of this. It is to be feared that the lockers will have reason to regret that they did not give the gas-stokers more help in their struggle.

The fight goes on briskly at Hay's Wharf. The blacklegs are not learning their work very quickly. The "Benamain," a steamer that is berthed beside the wharf, took forty-six hours to unload the other day—a job which the old hands could do in fourteen hours. The proprietors have not gained much by the substitution of non-union for union labour.

Mr. Bradlaugh and Eight Hours.

Mr. Bradlaugh made a speech at Northampton the other day in which, as usual, he declared his violent opposition to any interference by the State with the hours of labour. This Mr. Bradlaugh has a perfect right to do. But there is one thing Mr. Bradlaugh has no right to do, and that is to lower scurrilous and false abuse upon those who advocate measures of which he does not approve. In his speech he referred to advocates of the eight hour legislation as "blatant orators, who stood at street corners and quares, who never worked and never would." Now, Mr. Bradlaugh knows that this statement—excusable from a pig-headed capitalist who knows no better—is, to put it plainly, absolutely false. He knows as well as I do that the men who have been most prominent in advocating this measure are not only workmen, but trade-unionists, and are therefore much better able to understand the wants of their class than Mr. Bradlaugh, whose past experience as a lawyer's clerk and a private soldier—though both doubtless highly respectable occupations—does not justify him in posing as the only person who understands the rights and grievances of labour. We fear, however, despite the respectability of Mr. Bradlaugh's past pursuits, he has somehow failed to learn the excellent virtues of ordinary truthfulness and good manners.

The Stick-makers' Union.

This union held a successful meeting at Banner Street Hall, St. Luke's, on February 5. Vaughan Nash, of Toynbee Hall, spoke on Trade Unionism. These meetings will be continued on Wednesday evenings throughout February. The speakers are Tom Mann, Ben Tillet, H. Orbell, R. Feigenbaum, C. Rochman, C. W. Mowbray, B. Cooper, and H. Collier of the Cigar-makers' Society, and many well-known trade-unionists and co-operators. We wish our friends every success in their struggle against the sweaters.

The Shop Assistants' Union.

Even the most respectable of the workers, the most snobbish, probably, that exist—namely, the shop-assistants—have at last begun to be agitated by the labour boom. The union is now undoubtedly taking root in London,

four or five branches having been established up to date. The early-closing people are taking up parliamentary action for a change, but the assistants are determined on having a trade-union untrammelled by politicians. In the provinces things are also moving. Manchester, Liverpool, Bristol, and Cardiff being particularly active. It is hoped to make one large organisation out of the independent local societies before long. In the meantime, London will be worked well first. Further report next week. J. T.

Dundee Dock Labourers.

A number of Dundee dock labourers have given notice of a demand for an extra 1d. per hour. A meeting of the men was held on Saturday last, and consideration of the matter was deferred till Monday morning, when they will decide whether they will ask the increase on the work in hand or not. The present rate of pay is 7d. per hour.

The Aberdeen Comb Maker's Strike.

A procession of comb makers paraded the principal streets of Aberdeen on Saturday afternoon, as a mark of demonstrative sympathy with the men that are now out from Rosemount works, not directly on account of any wages dispute, but in consequence of a dispute as to the apportionment of the work in the different departments. The procession was composed of about 400 men and women, the latter class predominating. They bore aloft an effigy, which they addressed from time to time in sarcastic and abusive terms, and at the houses of several of the employers and heads of departments they made noisy demonstrations. The police, however, were on the job in the interests of the employers, and the order of coercion was maintained.

"When Constabulary Duty's to be Done."

A mass meeting of Glasgow night constables was held in the Albion Hall on Friday morning, Feb. 7th, to consider the attitude of the Town Council on the question of wages and hours. Resolutions were passed regretting that the Police Board had again refused an increase of pay, and the men indicated their intention of continuing their endeavours until successful. They further threatened that unless a favourable answer be returned by Monday, the 17th inst., extreme measures will be taken. The resolutions were the same as those adopted at a meeting of the day constables held the previous night in the same hall. The bulk of the Glasgow constables are only paid £1 6s. per week.

Scottish Railway Servants' Agitation.

Crowded meetings of railway servants were held on Sunday Feb. 2, at Glasgow, Greenock, Hamilton, Kilmarnock, Dalry, Stirling, Perth, Dunfermline, Dundee, Arbroath, Montrose, and Aberdeen, at which resolutions were passed expressing dissatisfaction with railway directors for not meeting the men in a body. At the Glasgow meeting, Mr. Henry Tait, the secretary, said that the conditions under which the men were labouring, where the late serious accidents occurred, may have had something to do with the accidents. Referring to the accident which occurred at Maryhill on the North British Railway, he said some of the men involved in that "accident" had been on duty for fourteen consecutive hours, and that in all probability before they reached the end of their journey they would be sixteen or seventeen hours on duty. At the Gartscherrie "accident" on the Caledonian Railway, after making enquiry, he found that the signalmen had been on duty in the cabin 1½ hours when the accident occurred, and that the engine-driver and fireman had been eleven hours on duty, with fifty miles still to run before their day's work was completed. In discussing the results of the deputations of the men to the Boards of the various railway companies, some difference of opinion was expressed as to what course should now be followed. Many speakers thought that the men had been sufficiently forbearing, and that some decisive action should now be taken. A very considerable number are in favour of striking on an early date if their demands are not granted—viz., the reduction of hours. G. McL.

The Yorkshire Labour Council.

This body held its first meeting on Saturday Feb. 1st. It was decided at the suggestion of our comrades Maguire, Sweeny, and Cockayne to form a bureau of statistics of the state of labour and trade in the county, so that the unemployed workers may know where labour is needed, and also to do their utmost to federate the various sections of labour. Comrades Paylor and Constantine were elected president and secretary, and Maguire and Sweeny were appointed as honorary members to the Council. Fifty delegates were present, representing over seven thousand organised labourers.

A Bedstead Maker's Wages.

The following particulars have been recently supplied to us during the bedstead-makers' strike in Birmingham:—

AVERAGE WAGE IN THE BEDSTEAD TRADE PER MAN PER WEEK, £1 4s. 5d.		Expenditure of Man with Wife and Three Children.	
	£ s. d.		£ s. d.
Short time (or time not at work) 4 weeks per annum, 1-13th of £1 4s. 5d.	0 1 10½	Vegetables, Potatoes, etc.	0 1 2
7 Loaves, at 5d. per loaf	0 2 11	Tea, ½lb. at 1s. 4d.	0 0 8
1lb. of Butter	0 1 2	Meat (including bacon) 5½lbs.	0 3 8
House Rent	0 3 9	at 8d.	0 0 10
Flour	0 0 2½	Soap, Soda, and sundries	0 0 3
1½lbs. of Lard	0 0 9	Sugar, 2lbs. for	0 0 7
Trade Club	0 0 6	Milk, 2 quarts	0 0 3
Sick Society	0 0 6	Rice	0 0 11
Sickness of Family	0 0 6	Coal, 1 cwt.	0 0 3
Clothing	0 2 8	School Fees.	0 0 3
Gas, Oil, and Candles.	0 0 6		
		Total	£1 3 11

Which leaves a balance of 6d. to be expended on such luxuries as books, newspapers, tobacco, etc., or to be "saved" with a view of turning capitalist. N.

Riches like muck which stinks in a heap, but spread abroad makes the earth fruitful.

THE SOCIALIST LEAGUE.

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The Offices of the Socialist League will be open for the sale of Commonwealth and all other Socialist publications from 8.30 a.m. to 9 p.m. every day except Sunday.

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 Commonwealth, to be addressed to me. No other person is authorised to sign any official communication. FRANK KITZ, Secretary.

NEW PREMISES FUND.

Collected at Council meeting, Feb. 10th, 4s. 11d.

"COMMONWEAL" GUARANTEE FUND.

The following further sums have been received towards this fund:—H. R., 1s.; J. Frésburg, 6d.; B. W., 6d.; F. Kitz, 6d.; D. Nicoll, 6d.; P. Webb, 1s.; W. Hearn, 1s.; C. Henry, 2s.; J. B. G., 6d.; and Jeannie (Glasgow), 1s.

REPORTS.

EAST LONDON.—At a meeting held last Sunday evening at Basing Place, H. D. Morgan was elected treasurer; H. Mackenzie, secretary; and Mrs. Morgan, librarian. It was agreed to commence meetings next Sunday afternoon in Victoria Park.

NORTH KENSINGTON.—On Sunday, Feb. 2nd, a good meeting was held at Latimer Road, addressed by R. J. Lyne, Saint, Catterson Smith, Bullock, and Davis. The room was filled by a crowded audience in the evening to hear Lothrop Withington on "The Iron Crown;" interesting discussion; good sale of Commonwealth. On Sunday morning, Feb. 9th, R. J. Lyne and Saint addressed a fair meeting at Latimer Road. In the evening, D. J. Nicoll lectured at rooms on "The Commune of Paris" to a good audience; good discussion; all 'Weals' sold and collected 2s.

MITCHAM.—I promised when I wrote my last to let you know a little more of how we get on in our village. We have had a real live M.P. (a Mr. Bonsor) amongst us. There was a pleasant lot of people to meet him, all the shopkeeping element, landlords, and the parson and his curate. Now Mr. Bonsor rattled away, and had a good deal to say about the great social question; he said he was in favour of trade unions, and that it was the first duty of workmen to organise; as to Ireland, he said it was now happy and contented. This was rather too much for one of our comrades, who seemed inclined to make a rush for the platform, and he was only pacified by being allowed to mount the platform and oppose. In answer to my question as to organisation, he told his audience that if they wanted to better their condition as against capital he should advise them to go to work and get what they wanted, and not look to Parliament for it, which seemed to stagger some of his hearers. In answer to another question as to the excessive price charged in Mitcham for allotments, he said he would receive me or a deputation as soon as Parliament meets. He lets his land at £2 per acre free to all comers, and here it is £8; only £6 difference. There has been a nice little plot going on in this village, and which has only just leaked out. The Socialist meetings seemed to annoy the parson and some of his followers, and now it has come to light that they have held a series of meetings to discuss the best method of attack; one suggestion was that they should hold ranters' meetings on the spot where we hold forth, but which fell through; another that they should have music met the same fate; but now they have found it out at last, and are going to start a temperance lecturer in opposition. It is curious how I got the information, but some one has played them false; such is the wickedness of mankind.—S. G.

GLASGOW.—On Sunday, Gilbert and T. and J. Burgoyne spoke on Jail Square. In the evening, at Paisley Road, the same speakers were supported by comrade Lyne, of London, who chanced to be present, and delivered a stirring address.

MANCHESTER.—Though for a week or two we have not reported in Commonwealth, we have been as active in the cause as circumstances and the cold weather permitted. On Sunday last in Stevenson Square a meeting was addressed by Mr. Cutcheon, an extreme disciple of Ruskin, and other comrades. Of late, some of our speakers have assisted at the meetings of the Salford S.D.F., at the request of the latter. Barton lectured at their club on "Anarchist Socialism," which created a lively discussion.

WALSALL.—On Monday evening, Feb. 3, comrade P. Kropotkin lectured to a large audience at the Institute, Dudley, on "The Colonisation of Siberia." Comrades here took advantage of his being in the district for him to pay us a visit next day; and although there was but little time to organise a meeting, a capital audience assembled in the Unitarian Schoolroom and listened to an eloquent address on "The Social Problem." Questions were put at the close, and satisfactorily answered.—J. T. D.

DUBLIN.—At Progressist Club, 87 Marlboro' Street, Feb. 8th, B. McGuinness delivered an address on "Dublin Municipal Reform," outlining a Socialist administration. Kavanagh, O'Gorman, Fitzpatrick, and King also spoke. On Thursday, Fitzpatrick and McGuinness attended a meeting of the "Ratepayers' Association," a pettifogging association of small shopkeepers and tenement-house owners, and gave these worthies a lesson on their duties. Several old stagers were indignant at such doctrines being preached in their room.

EDINBURGH (SCOTTISH SOCIALIST FEDERATION).—On Sunday a friend of the cause treated a fair audience to a "Criticism of the Present System." He was subjected to a severe "heckling," and the questions on the whole were replied to satisfactorily; good discussion.

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

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

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. Sunday Feb. 16, at 8.30, A. Tarn, "The First Step in the Social Revolution."

East London.—12 Basing Place, Kingsland Road. Hammersmith.—Kelmescott House, Upper Mall, W. Sunday Feb. 16, at 8 p.m., T. Johnson, "Education."

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 February 16, at 8 p.m., H. H. Sparling, "Luxury Now; Necessity Then."

North London.—6 Windmill Street, Tottenham Court Road. Meets every Wednesday evening at 8 o'clock. Feb. 19, a Discussion.

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.

Dundee.—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.

Manchester.—Socialist League Club, 60 Grovesnor Street, All Saints. Open every evening. Branch weekly meeting 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 15.

8.30..... Mile-end WasteCores and Presburg

SUNDAY 16.

11 Latimer Road StationR. J. Lyne, Dean, and Crouch

11.30 Broad Street, Golden SquareCantwell

11.30 Kilburn—"Old Plough," Kilburn LaneThe Branch

11.30 Mitcham—Fair GreenThe Branch

11.30 Regent's ParkMowbray

3.30 Hyde Park—Marble ArchMowbray

3.30 Victoria ParkMrs. Schack, Mackenzie, and Parker

7 Weltje Road, Ravenscourt ParkHammersmith Branch

7.30 Walham Green—back of ChurchHammersmith Branch

TUESDAY 18.

8 Walham Green—back of ChurchHammersmith Branch

THURSDAY 20.

8.15..... Hoxton ChurchThe 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: Phillips 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. 15, at 8 p.m., G. King, "Women's Rights."

CHELSEA S.D.F., Co-operative Lecture Hall, 312 Kings Road, Chelsea.—Sunday February 16, at 8 p.m., R. E. Dell, "Why I am a Socialist."

EDINBURGH—SCOTTISH SOCIALIST FEDERATION.—In Moulders' Hall, High St., Sunday February 16, at 6.30, Comrade Melliet, "Gracchus Babeuf."

MANHOOD SUFFRAGE LEAGUE, "Thres Doves," Berwick St., Oxford St., W.—Sunday February 16, at 8.30 p.m., Professor Lenne, "A Lecture for the Times."

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.

MANCHESTER.—Suitable premises have now been secured for the new Socialist Club. It is our aim to make it a centre for Socialist propaganda in Lancashire. A library, reading, recreation, and refreshment rooms will be some of its attractions. Aid is invited from friends who can assist, either with fittings, furniture, books, or funds. The Club, 60 Grosvenor Street, All Saints, is now open for members every evening. Commonwealth and other literature on sale.

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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 wrapper round paper 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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