

THE COMMONWEAL

The Official Journal of the SOCIALIST LEAGUE.

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WEEKLY; ONE PENNY.

NOTES ON NEWS.

THE labouring mountain of the Parnell Commission has at last produced its mouse; which is in fact the final acceptance of Mr. Parnell into decent political society. If this was the aim of the *Times* in its "Parnellism and Crime," that renowned paper has been eminently successful. But in view of its own comments on the Report we can hardly accept that theory. We must admit that the *Times* has been heavily thrown; and the *Times* was, or perhaps is, one of the chief bulwarks of respectability.

Yes, it is breaking up, this respectable "Society" of oppression, which it is the business of Socialists to attack. It is shaken in its policy of bluster, and the carrying of everything by means of the high hand. The mere political business of Home Rule will not last much longer as a pretext for our political tricksters. They will be face to face presently with the necessities of the working people, not only of Ireland, but of England and Scotland also; and in that position they will be absolutely helpless. W. M.

A recent number of the *Paris Bulletin Municipal Officiel* contains a comparative table of the number of vacancies in the different departments of primary education, and also of the number of candidates entered for these vacancies. It can be seen from this table that for 43 vacancies for male teachers there are 2,021 applicants; also that 6,441 certificated girls have to divide among them 54 nominations.

It is not in England alone that the intellectual proletariat have to fight among themselves for a bare living. Figures like these speak for themselves; and when one thinks that each year so many thousand young girls and men have to be rejected, and have to wait till next time for another faint chance of being nominated, or grow tired of waiting and sink into misery and degradation, one cannot but think that their struggle for life is as bitter as that of the labour proletariat, though the hardships of it are not so apparent at first sight. M. M.

Another police plot has come to light in Chicago, and our comrades are naturally a little excited. From the story as told in the *Chicago Mail* and elsewhere, it seems likely that not only have the promoters been found of the plot which put Hronek into prison (for which see *Commonweal* of a few months ago), but that much valuable information has been gained as to the inside working of the conspiracy which ended in the murder of our four comrades. We hope to be able to lay full particulars before our readers in a week or so.

"Mrs. Hetty Greene, the eccentric millionaire, who personally conducts her business in Wall Street, has been interviewed at Chicago. She admitted being worth nearly 50,000,000 dollars (£10,000,000). She owns land in nearly every city in the United States, and says there is nothing like land as an investment. She added: 'I am a very happy woman, and the Lord has blessed me above others. I think I make good use of my opportunities, for I have endowed over a hundred churches and founded fifty schools. I give away my substance without ostentation. I belong to a Quaker family, which has been wealthy for the last five generations.'"

It is perhaps too much to expect from any preachers of the "Gospel of Wealth" that they should do any reckoning or reasoning: if they were capable of it, one might ask them to state approximately the relation between those churches and schools, etc., and the misery caused by the abstraction of so much wealth from its producers.

"Whatever else may be thought of Mr. Carnegie's 'Gospel of Wealth,'" says the *Pall Mall*, which is the most blatant Wealth-Gospeller in this country, "he is at any rate entitled to the respectful hearing due to any man who practises what he preaches. Our readers will remember that the foundation of Free Libraries was the first and almost the last word of Mr. Carnegie's gospel, and now this morning we learn from Allegheny that—

Mr. Andrew Carnegie has presented this city with a library worth £60,000. It was formally presented to-day in the presence of President

Harrison and a distinguished assemblage. Allegheny was the first American city that gave Mr. Carnegie shelter. He has offered Pittsburg £200,000 for public libraries, and the offer has been formally accepted."

"Mr. Carnegie," the *Pall Mall* goes on to say, "is like Chaucer's good monk: he teaches the law and commandments as he has received them; but 'first he followed them himself.'"

One would think that anyone who analysed the process of robbery and sweating which inevitably goes to the formation of a millionaire, with only a remote chance of his turning out even such a comparatively favourable specimen as Mr. Andrew Carnegie, would be unable to defend the system under which it is an ordinary and recognised thing. Can it be worth while to let one man plunder a million for years in order to take the chance of his benefiting a hundred or two before he dies?

"Potters' rot" is a kind of asthma brought on by the unhealthy conditions under which potters work. A man died of it last week in London, and that kind of unnecessary death is such an ordinary thing that the inquest seemed to be held as a mere matter of form. It is one of the many sacrifices that workmen must make in order to have millionaires and "gifts" of free libraries, or less desirable institutions—"Pelican Clubs," and so on.

Would it not be better for workmen to free their work from the mastership of the money-bag; to work in association for the common benefit, looking after their collective health, comfort, and happiness; and then, when they had satisfied the more immediate and pressing needs of food, clothing, and shelter, turning to the provision of libraries, concert-halls, and common-rooms for the satisfaction of other "higher" cravings?

As it is now, they are degraded at work by undue toil, in unhealthy conditions, and with scant reward; and are further degraded when work is done by accepting the "charitable" doles of their plunderers carelessly flung back to them.

I see that a "Stanley Exhibition" is to be held, and that a great German publishing firm will issue a translation of his book. If the managing committee will send their address to this office, we will furnish them with a few suggestions as to exhibits; and the publishers are welcome to a few annotations on the "great" man's book. No fees.

Mr. Stanley has found his poet; a Mr. Deane Brand is singing a song in his praise, of which a copy has been sent to us, presumably for review. Here is the chorus:

"So raise all praise through our Island home,
Till it spreads like stars on Heaven's dome;
A cheer for the right, a sword for the wrong,
Till we girdle the earth with glory and song."

After which there is nothing to be said, but that the bard is worthy of the hero, and both of their worshippers.

Exhibits and notes may both be suggested by, and the poet receive inspiration from, the following story of an "execution" told at the Savage Club on Saturday night by Mr. T. Stevens, the American "special" who was sent to meet Stanley:

"At the time, Stanley was so weak that he could not turn in his bed without help; but so strong was his iron will that he insisted upon being taken out of bed and propped up in a chair. He took a strong stimulant, and had himself carried outside of his tent, where the people were all drawn up, and where the mutineer, who had been tried and found guilty, awaited his sentence. The chair was put down, and Stanley faced the miscreant, the fever in his eye, and his thin hand outstretched. 'We have come through a thousand difficulties and dangers to save you,' he said, 'and this is our reward! Depart to God!' The people thereupon rushed upon the man, shouting 'What shall we do with him?' 'Send him to God, I say!' shouted Stanley, pointing to the overhanging limb of a tree. A rope was thrown over, noosed round the miscreant's neck, and he was swiftly run up, and soon dangled a corpse in the air." S.

NEWS FROM NOWHERE:

OR,

AN EPOCH OF REST.

BEING SOME CHAPTERS FROM A UTOPIAN ROMANCE.

CHAP. VII.—TRAFALGAR SQUARE.

AND now again I was busy looking about me, for we were quite clear of Piccadilly Market, and were in a region of elegantly-built much ornamented houses, which I should have called villas if they had been ugly and pretentious, which was very far from being the case. Each house stood in a garden carefully cultivated, and running over with flowers. The blackbirds were singing their best amidst the garden-trees, which, except for a bay here and there, and occasional groups of limes, seemed to be all fruit-trees: there were a great many cherry-trees, now all laden with fruit; and several times as we passed by a garden we were offered baskets of fine fruit by children and young girls. Amidst all these gardens and houses it was of course impossible to trace the sites of the old streets: but it seemed to me that the main roadways were the same as of old.

We came presently into a large open space, sloping somewhat toward the south, the sunny site of which had been taken advantage of for planting an orchard, mainly, as I could see, of apricot-trees, in the midst of which was a pretty gay little structure of wood, painted and gilded, that looked like a refreshment-stall. From the southern side of the said orchard ran a long road, chequered over with the shadow of tall old pear-trees, at the end of which showed the tall tower of the Parliament House, or Dung Market.

A strange sensation came over me; I shut my eyes to keep out the sight of the sun glittering on this fair abode of gardens, and for a moment there passed before them a phantasmagoria of another day. A great space surrounded by tall ugly houses, with an ugly church at the corner and a nondescript ugly cupolaed building at my back; the roadway thronged with a sweltering and excited crowd, dominated by omnibuses, crowded with spectators. In the midst a paved be-fountain square, populated only by a few men dressed in blue, and a good many singularly ugly bronze images (one on the top of a tall column). The said square guarded up to the edge of the roadway by a four-fold line of big men clad in blue, and across the southern roadway the helmets of a band of horse-soldiers, dead white in the greyness of the chilly November afternoon—

I opened my eyes to the sunlight again and looked round me, and cried out amongst the whispering trees and odorous blossoms, "Trafalgar Square!"

"Yes," said Dick, who had drawn rein again, "so it is. I don't wonder at your finding the name ridiculous: but after all, it was nobody's business to alter it, since the name of a dead folly doesn't bite. Yet sometimes I think we might have given it a name which would have commemorated the great battle which was fought on the spot itself in 1952,—that was important enough, if the historians don't lie."

"Which they generally do, or at least did," said the old man. "For instance, what can you make of this, neighbours? I have read a muddled account in a book—O a stupid book!—called James' Social Democratic History, of a fight which took place here in or about the year 1887 (I am bad at dates). Some people, says this story, were going to hold a ward-mote here, or some such thing, and the Government of London, or the Council, or the Commission, or what not other barbarous half-hatched body of fools, fell upon these citizens (as they were then called) with the armed hand. That seems too ridiculous to be true; but according to this version of the story, nothing much came of it, which certainly is too ridiculous to be true."

"Well," quoth I, "but after all your Mr. James is right so far, and it is true; except that there was no fighting, merely unarmed and peaceable people attacked by ruffians armed with bludgeons."

"And they put up with that?" said Dick, with the first unpleasant expression I had seen on his good-tempered face.

Said I, reddening: "We had to put up with it; we couldn't help it."

The old man looked at me keenly, and said: "You seem to know a great deal about it, neighbour! And is it really true that nothing came of it?"

"This came of it," said I, "that a good many people were sent to prison because of it."

"What of the bludgeoners?" said the old man. "Poor devils!"

"No, no," said I, "of the bludgeoned."

Said the old man rather severely: "Friend, I expect that you have been reading some rotten collection of lies, and have been taken in by it too easily."

"I assure you," said I, "what I have been saying is true."

"Well, well, I am sure you think so, neighbour," said the old man, "but I don't see why you should be so cocksure."

As I couldn't explain why, I held my tongue. Meanwhile Dick, who had been sitting with knit brows, cogitating, spoke at last, and said gently and rather sadly:

"How strange to think that there have been men like ourselves, and living in this beautiful and happy country, who I suppose had feelings and affections like ourselves, who could yet do such dreadful things."

"Yes," said I, in a didactic tone; "yet after all, even those days were a great improvement on the days that had gone before them. Have you not read of the Mediæval period and the ferocity of its

criminal laws; and how in those days men fairly seem to have enjoyed tormenting their fellow men?—nay, for the matter of that, they made their God a tormentor and a jailer rather than anything else."

"Yes," said Dick, "there are good books on that period also, some of which I have read. But as to the great improvement of the nineteenth century, I don't see it. After all, the Mediæval folk acted after their conscience, as your remark about their God (which is true) shows, and they were ready to bear what they inflicted upon others; whereas the nineteenth century ones were hypocrites, and pretended to be humane, and yet went on tormenting those whom they dared to treat so by shutting them up in prison, for no reason at all, except that they were what they themselves, the prison-masters, had forced them to be. O, it's horrible to think of!"

"But perhaps," said I, "they did not know what the prisons were like."

Dick seemed roused, and even angry. "More shame for them," said he, "when you and I know it all these years afterwards. Look you, neighbour, they couldn't fail to know what a disgrace a prison is to the Commonwealth at the best, and that their prisons were a good step on towards being at the worst."

Quoth I: "But have you no prisons at all now?"

As soon as the words were out of my mouth I felt that I had made a mistake, for Dick flushed red and frowned, and the old man looked surprised and pained; and presently Dick said angrily, yet as if restraining himself somewhat—

"Man alive! how can you ask such a question? Have I not told you that we know what a prison means by the undoubted evidence of really trustworthy books, helped out by our own imaginations? And haven't you specially called me to notice that the people about the roads and streets look happy; and how could they look happy if they knew that their neighbours were shut up in prison, while they bore such things quietly? And if there were people in prison, you couldn't hide it from folk, like you may an occasional man-slaying; because that isn't done of set purpose, with a lot of people backing up the slayer in cold blood, as this prison business is. Prisons, indeed! O, no, no, no!"

He stopped, and began to cool down, and said in a kind voice: "But forgive me! I needn't be so hot about it, since there are *not* any prisons: I'm afraid you will think the worse of me for losing my temper. Of course, you coming from the outlands cannot be expected to know about these things. And now I'm afraid I have made you feel uncomfortable."

In a way he had; but he was so generous in his heat, that I liked him the better for it, and I said: "No, really 'tis all my fault for being so stupid. Let me change the subject, and ask you what the stately building is on our left just showing at the end of that grove of plane-trees?"

"Ah," he said, "that is an old building built quite in the beginning of the twentieth century, and as you see, in a queer fantastic style—not over beautiful; but there are some fine things inside it, too, mostly pictures, some very old. It is called the National Gallery; I have sometimes puzzled as to what the name means: anyhow, nowadays wherever there is a place where pictures are kept as curiosities permanently it is called a National Gallery, perhaps after this one. Of course there are a good many of them up and down the country."

I didn't try to enlighten him, feeling the task too heavy; but I pulled out my magnificent pipe and fell a-smoking, and the old horse joggled on again. As we went, I said—

"This pipe is a very elaborate toy, and you seem so reasonable in this country, and your architecture is so good, that I rather wonder at your turning out such trivialities."

It struck me as I spoke that this was rather ungrateful of me, after having received such a fine present; but Dick didn't seem to notice my bad manners, but said:

"Well, I don't know; it is a pretty thing, and since nobody need make such things unless they like, I don't see why they shouldn't make them, if they like. Of course, if carvers were scarce they would all be busy on the architecture, as you call it, and then these 'toys' (a good word) would not be made; but since there are plenty of people who can carve—in fact, almost everybody, and as work is somewhat scarce, or we are afraid it may be, folk do not discourage this kind of petty work."

He mused a little, and seemed somewhat perturbed; but presently his face cleared, and he said: "After all, you must admit that the pipe is a very pretty thing, with the little people under the trees all cut so clean and sweet;—too elaborate for a pipe, perhaps, but—well, it is very pretty."

"Too valuable for its use, perhaps," said I.

"What's that?" said he; "I don't understand."

I was just going in a helpless way to try to make him understand, when we came by the gates of a big rambling building, in which work of some sort seemed going on. "What building is that?" said I, eagerly, for it was a pleasure amidst all these strange things to see something a little like what I was used to: "it seems to be a factory."

"Yes," he said, "I think I know what you mean, and that's what it is; but we don't call them factories now, but Banded-workshops: that is, places where people collect who want to work together."

"I suppose," said I, "power of some sort is used there?"

"No, no," said he. "Why should people collect together to use power, when they can have it at the places where they live, or hard by, any two or three of them; or any one, for the matter of that? No; folk collect in these Banded-workshops to do hand-work in which working together is necessary or convenient; such work is often very

pleasant. In these, for instance, they make pottery and glass,—there, you can see the tops of the furnaces. Well, of course it's handy to have fair-sized ovens and kilns and glass-pots, and a good lot of things to use them for: though of course there are a good many such places, as it would be ridiculous if a man had a liking for pot-making or glass-blowing that he should have to live in one place or be obliged to forego the work he liked.

"I see no smoke coming from the furnaces," said I.

"Smoke?" said Dick; "why should you see smoke?"

I held my tongue, and he went on: "It's a nice place inside, though as plain as you see outside. As to the crafts, throwing the clay must be jolly work: the glass-blowing is rather a sweltering job; but some folk like it very much indeed; and I don't much wonder: there is such a sense of power, when you have got deft in it, in dealing with the hot metal. It makes a lot of pleasant work," said he, smiling, "for however much care you take of such goods, break they will one day or another, so there is always plenty to do."

I held my tongue and pondered,

WILLIAM MORRIS.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

THE PARTICK ELECTION.

BLESSED are those Socialists who have been several hundred miles at least away from Partick during these last three weeks. I cannot help thinking that their favourable impression of human nature will be directly as the square of their distance from the area of the conflict. Those who, like myself, have had to endure in the midst of it, have been sadly shocked with the appalling spectacle of human folly and downright knavery exhibited in that "free fight" for political advantage. The hair-brained enthusiasm of the working-class electorate who caught the fever of the fight, and the wolfish cunning and ferocity of the professional politicians and their hiring press, have been quite phenomenal. Paid agitators of every degree and description, and from every quarter of the kingdom, bull-dozed the electors nightly for fourteen days with lies, promises and threats, and every conceivable device of electioneering oratory. On the election-day carriages, cabs, dog-carts, brakes, vans, and lorries—furnished by supporters within a radius of five miles—were used by both parties to bring the electors to the poll. Canvassers, paid and unpaid, prowled from house to house beseeching the voters to vote; and every known method of cajoling and coercing the free and enlightened citizens of Partick was resorted to. Intelligent opinion, or a sense of public duty on the part of the working-class, had no more to do with the result of the contest than they had to do with the swindling vagaries of that poor idiot—Jubilee Benzon.

That Sir Charles Tennant was defeated is, however, a matter for congratulation. No more worthless Home Ruler, and no worse enemy of the interests of the workers could have been selected to fight the battle for the Liberals. The chairman of half-a-dozen large public companies, the director of as many more, and the head partner of the St. Rollox Chemical Works, which employs men at from 12s. 8d. to £1 per week to work amongst poisonous materials, his adoption as the Liberal candidate was a flagrant affront upon the democratic sentiment of our day. Mr. Parker-Smith, though a professed Liberal (Unionist), is recognised as a Tory—and his return as such can do little harm meanwhile; but the return of Sir Charles Tennant as a Radical and Home Ruler would certainly have done all the harm that a selfish capitalist, steeped to the lips in profit-mongering and the sweating of the poor, can do, when masquerading in the disguise of a champion of progress and a friend of freedom.

That his defeat was due to the fact of his being a capitalist and sworn foe of the workers is, I regret, an opinion that cannot be entertained. Most of the Liberal voters who would have voted in any case, voted, I believe, for him. His defeat was due mainly to the fact that the electorate is composed very largely of the wealthy residents of the west-end district of Glasgow, who, being always alert to their own interests, and conceiving that an anti-Home Ruler anti-Gladstonian was their safest man, voted *en masse* for Parker-Smith.

That Liberal papers in Glasgow and throughout the country should attribute the Liberal defeat to the advocacy of Mr. T. P. O'Connor, who was publicly charged with allowing articles to appear in the *Star*, expressing sympathy with the Portuguese and denouncing British missionary brigandage, shows the opinion which those enlightened prints have of the intelligence and fair-play of the Liberal electorate. Let me say that I do not believe that stupid and ignorant as average Liberal electors are, the sentiments expressed in the *Star* articles were unfavourably regarded by the mass of them; and I am certainly of the opinion that the fact of Mr. O'Connor's connection with those articles did not turn a single vote against the Liberals.

J. BRUCE GLASIER.

SLAUGHTER OF SIBERIAN PRISONERS.—We have received two pamphlets from "Friends of Russian Freedom" on this subject. Those who are willing to aid in the dissemination of information on the subject should communicate with Robert Spence Watson, Bensham Grove, Gateshead-on-Tyne.

We have received an interesting report from the Cremation Society (8 New Cavendish Street, Portland Place, W.) on the valuable work they are doing in bringing about a common-sense disposal of the dead. It contains a useful bibliography of the subject, and much cognate matter.

In *Lippincott's* this month is a suggestive article by Francis Galton, F.R.S., which might be made the text for a good deal of Socialist moralising. "Why do we measure mankind?" is the question he answers: if a parallel development-chart of a worker and an ordinarily wholesome middle-class man were made it would show some startling results. There is a good deal of material to be got; could not some of our scientific comrades put it in shape for us?

Let not anyone pacify his conscience by the delusion that he can do no harm if he takes no part and forms no opinion. Bad men need nothing more to compass their ends than that others should look on and do nothing. He is not a good man who, without a protest, allows wrong to be committed in his name, and with the means he helps to supply, because he will not trouble himself, and use his mind on the subject.—*John Stuart Mill, Inaugural Address, St. Andrews, 1867.*

IN AUSTRALIA.

THIS is a cutting from last week's *Boomerang*, the most powerful weekly in Queensland:

"We like men to be a little consistent, even in labour matters. At the time of the printers' strike the *Boomerang* was called all sorts of names for declaring that the men were right, that solidarity was an essential for the securing of a basis for conciliation between Labour and Capital. The Master Printers' Association would then get no nearer to that than talking about liberty and about permitting no interference in the internal affairs of an office. Now, having thrashed their employes on this question, they are coming the same capers themselves, and without anything like the same excuse, are trying to put the screw on non-association masters. The *Boomerang* and, we presume, other non-association firms, have received a circular informing us that, unless we join the M. P. A. before 1st January, the members of the association will 'decline to quote prices to, or execute work for, . . . any firm in the printing trade not being members of the Master Printers' Association.' There is an explanation pointing out that irresponsible canvassers are 'cutting down prices' and 'blackmailing the public,' just as competing shipping companies are, we suppose; and this beautiful explanation is capped by another, declaring that the price-list agreed on in July shall not be binding upon members—in other words, that the cut-throat competition against which the association was formed shall proceed unchecked! We have reason to believe that the more thoughtful of the master printers disapprove of this circular; but whether they do or not, the *Boomerang* can't be bull-dozed in this fashion. When the Master Printers' Association recognises the solidarity principle, when it concedes to the journeymen the solidarity it demands for the employes, and acts accordingly and consistently, then the *Boomerang* will gladly join it and be loyal to it—but not till then."

The Australian labour movement just now seems to be in a constant state of progress, showing a strong and widespread tendency towards federation, the bringing of all wage-earners within one fold. The draymen of the far northern port of Cairns have written to some of the labour leaders in Brisbane seeking advice and have been recommended to throw in their lot with the General Labourers' Union. The draymen and carters of Brisbane have also come to the sound conclusion that caste has too long been the enemy of the common weal, and have decided to swell the ranks of what promises to be the strongest section of the proposed Federation—the General Labourers' Union.

The following letter has been sent by the South Australian Railway Commissioners to the Railway Service Mutual Association:

"The Commissioners have duly considered the communications made by you subsequent to the interview this morning—viz., that unless the Commissioners pay 6s. per day to probationary porters in future, all the employes, members of the association, would cease work to-morrow morning. I have to inform you that under the existing circumstances the Commissioners will not accept the responsibility of throwing the railway service into confusion and of causing such a dislocation of the public traffic as must be attended with serious loss and injury to many people wholly unable to protect themselves. The Commissioners therefore will adopt the following scale of wages for porters from January 1 next: First year, 6s. per day; second year, 6s. 6d. per day; third year and thereafter, 7s. per day. This scale to apply to the existing staff. The Commissioners must leave to the country and Parliament to decide whether, having regard to the position assumed by a certain section of the employes and the outside assistance rendered and promised, any other course was open to them."

The Brisbane Wharf-labourers' Union, having found that the rule providing for fifteen minutes' respite for "smoke, oh!" when engaged in working coals or heavy bagged goods was being infringed, has made an effort to enforce the rule. This "smoke" or breathing time is regarded by many people who know nothing of a wharf-labourer's occupation as an unnecessary interruption with "discipline," but these know-nothings should take a walk down to the wharves and watch the men at work for an hour or two.

I am told that the officers of the Australian coasting steamers have very frequently to work from thirty to forty hours straight off before sailing, and are completely exhausted before they go to sea. At the highest rate of pay, chief officers receive a fraction over 9d. per hour; seconds, 6d.; and thirds, a fraction over 5d. an hour.

How does this strike you, culled from the highly-respectable, vice-suppressing *Sydney Morning Herald*, the great upholder here of religion and property, which denounces us Socialists for our "immoral teachings"?

WET-NURSE Wanted; young, unmarried preferred; arrangements made for nurse's child. Apply between 9 and 12, Mrs. —, —, Park-road, Burwood.

I hear of what seems to be a general determination to cut wages on all the mining fields. What with exemptions and reductions the miner will be a pretty much sat-on workman soon if he doesn't wake up.

The Brisbane Building Trades Council is the first to adopt the Labour Paper Conference report, of which I told you the other week.

After a "brief but lively" existence of thirteen weeks, the *Trades and Labour Advocate* has come to an end, "defeated, but not disgraced." The editor says in his valedictory:

"We are heartily sorry that we have been defeated in our attempt to establish a genuine labour newspaper, for there are many abuses that require to be shown up, many shams that it is necessary for the public good to expose. The sweating system is rampant in the city at the present time, and requires drastic treatment. The nigger-driving draper and late-hour shopkeeper are in want of severe castigation. One public disgrace in the shape of a gigantic business firm, who compel their employes to dine on the premises off a few small 'chunks' of mutton and a lone potato each, while the lynx-eyes of sycophantic shopwalkers watch lest the slave-driven employes shall dare, like Oliver Twist, to ask for 'More'—requires that the light of the public press shall be shed on the Siberian rigour of its 'discipline.' But all must go unseathed, and why? Because we who have the courage to denounce these people, in spite of libel actions, cannot carry on for want of capital. The daily press who have the capital but not the courage, will not refer to these abuses; for daily papers are run to make money, and no matter how earnestly the editor and his literary satellites may desire to carry out the noble work of elevating humanity by exposing its wrongs, the editor is controlled by his manager or directors, at the back of whom is a greedy body of shareholders or wealthy private firm of two or three, who clamour for 10, 15, or 20 per cent. dividends, dividends which cannot be produced unless advertisers are conciliated; and, as fully half the advertisers are the persons who carry on the nigger-driving, sweating, and starvation-wage system in conducting their emporiums, warehouses, establishments, shops, manufactories, etc., it is not to be wondered that the daily press is silent on the dark deeds that are being perpetrated on a large number of the working-classes in 'beautiful Sydney.' . . . We believe that the Labour party will never be able to assert its full strength until it has an established newspaper to give voice to its wants and requirements."

To which I say "Hear, hear!"
Sydney, N.S.W., Jan. 2, 1890.

CORNSTALK.



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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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. B.—'Baboe Dalima'; or, the Opium Fiend,' translated from the Dutch of Mr. M. T. H. Perelaer, is published by Vizetelly and Co. (7s. 6d.). The other book won't help you much. If you read Dutch, look up M. Perelaer's other books on the subject.

MANCHESTER and EDINBURGH.—Reports came Wednesday—a day too late.

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Periodicals received during the week ending Wednesday February 19.

ENGLAND	Philadelphia—United Labour	SWITZERLAND
Brotherhood	Princeton (Mass.)—Word	Przedswit
Die Autonomie	S.F. Coast Seaman's Journal	SPAIN
Justice	San Francisco Arbeiterzeitung	Madrid—El Socialista
London—Freie Presse	St. Louis (Mo.)—Die Parole	PORTUGAL
Labour Elector	Pacific Union	Lisbon—O Presto Operario
Seafaring Friend	FRANCE	GERMANY
Worker's Friend	Paris—La Revolte	Berlin—Volks Tribune
UNITED STATES	Le Proletariat	AUSTRIA
New York—Volkszeitung	L'Autonomie	Brunn—Volksfreund
New York—Truthseeker	Charleville—L'Emancipation	HUNGARY
Der Sozialist	Lille—Le Cri du Travailleur	Arbeiter-Wochen-Chronik
Freiheit	Lyon—L'Action Sociale	DENMARK
Jewish Volkszeitung	HOLLAND	Copenhagen—Arbejderen
Labour Advocate	Middelburg, Lichten Wahrheid	SWEDEN
Twentieth Century	BELGIUM	Stockholm, Social-Demokraten
Boston—Woman's Journal	Antwerp—De Werker	WEST INDIES
Chicago (Ill.)—Vorbote	Ghent—Vooruit	Cuba—El Productor
Detroit—Der Arme Teufel	Liège—L'Avenir	
Milwaukee—National Reformer		

HUXLEY AND SPENCER.

It is instructive to note how very soon those twin champions of capitalism, Huxley and Spencer, part company when they descend from general denunciations of Socialism to an explanation of their particular views of the social evils. If the "Reasoned Savagery" controversy goes on the capitalists of all denominations will have good cause for crying out, "Save us from our friends!" Spencer, in his letter to the *Telegraph* of the 8th inst., evidently writes under the professor's imputation that he and his school would rather leave men to starve than advocate State help or private "charity." Speaking of the poor man the professor says, "It is not I, but the extreme individualists, who will say that he may starve. If the State relieves his necessities, it is not I, but they who say it is exceeding its powers; if private charity succours the poor fellow, it is not I, but they, who reprove the

giver for interfering with the survival of the fittest."⁹¹ Spencer, in the letter above referred to, quotes these sentences, and protests against them as applying to his views. We may, therefore, take it for granted that both Spencer and Huxley are in favour of the principle of collective action in the solution of the great problem of poverty; or at any rate of the opposite principle not being carried to its logical conclusion.

"State" is a very elastic word, and the State of to-day may be a very different thing to the State of some years hence. But under every kind of composition its interference in social matters is utterly opposed to Mr. Spencer's individualism, which he has so strenuously advocated for years past. Extreme individualism Professor Huxley indignantly repudiates, and by implication admits the principle of Socialism. Not to be behind the professor, Mr. Spencer hastens to assure the public that his friend Huxley has misunderstood him and his works. And though he hedges a good deal (as he has done in regard to land nationalisation), the plain and logical inference is that he also is in favour, not only of private charity, but of collective action on what he would call "State interference" as well. Once having admitted the principle where will they stop? The truth is, Huxley and Spencer, like other men, must move with the times, and the latter begins to see with sorrow that all the factors of social progress are strongly setting towards Socialism. This is to him a very serious matter, for it means that his theory of economic development, persisted in to nearly the end of his life, is undoubtedly wrong: and that, so far as this part of his philosophy is concerned, he will go down to posterity as a collector of facts, and nothing more. This, to a man who wishes above all things to pose as a philosophical expounder of laws and principles, is, no doubt, very humiliating. There are many expressions in Mr. Spencer's recent utterances which seem to me to imply that he is aware that he has misinterpreted the laws of social evolution, and I would like to see him candidly acknowledge it. Apart from this, the basis of his reputation is sufficiently broad to satisfy the ambition of any man. Moreover, most of his facts will fit in with Collectivism or Socialism just as well as with Individualism.

With Professor Huxley the matter is somewhat different. Socialism is to him a little profitable diversion from cutting up monkeys. And though I do not wish to make a point of it, I may be permitted to say that those who advocate Socialism spend their earnings—many of them very scanty indeed—in so doing; whereas their opponents, by their magazine articles, etc., make the subject a source of considerable profit. I have read most of Huxley's writings on Socialism, and I venture to say there is no internal evidence in any of them that he has ever read, and, much less, understood, any work of authority on the subject. His assumption that Socialism is a revival of Rousseauism is utterly false in any sense whatever and without the smallest atom of foundation; and I challenge Professor Huxley to point to any body of Socialists in the world which bases its principles, its aims, or the justification of its actions upon the doctrine that "all men are born free and equal," either naturally or politically. If that were so, then I, for one, would begin to despair that the day will ever arrive when this earth will be the cheerful home of a happy and contented people, instead of as at present and through the long ages of the past, the theatre of suffering and want, from which for the million there is no escape but in the grave. Socialism has a deeper and more enduring foundation than any fanciful hypothesis with a dozen meanings. It is based as surely in the law of economic development as Professor Huxley's biology is in the law of organic development, and requires more time and study for its comprehension.

No Socialist that understands his science ever gave expression to the theory that all human beings are born equal, and should therefore remain equal throughout life. What a child is at birth has nothing, whatever to do with the subject; nor has the natural inequality of man. And I believe Huxley's laboured and tortuous interpretation of Rousseau's equality at birth to be wide of the mark. When Rousseau said all men are born equal and free, he did not mean either of the ideas Mr. Huxley has attached to his words. He is kind enough to say that Rousseau could not have been "a mere fool"; but he tries very hard nevertheless to make him out one. And if one of the greatest writers France has produced meant either of Huxley's suppositions, then, in truth, he was but a mere fool. If he meant that a new-born infant was politically free, the expression had no meaning; if he meant it was naturally free, the assertion was equally meaningless. And in regard to equality; I do not imagine anyone will seriously maintain that Rousseau meant to affirm his belief that all human beings are born with equal powers of muscle and brain, or with potentialities for their equal development. What Rousseau probably did mean was, not that nature confers upon man any positive natural rights as a unit in the social organism, but that nature brings us all into the world under precisely the same laws, and is no respecter of persons or classes. The son of the peer is the product of the same laws as the son of the peasant; and, as regards these laws, they both stand upon the same footing at the time, and through the processes of their advent to this life. During the whole time the human being is subject to natural laws only, *i.e.*, up to the moment of its appearance on this stage of its existence, it has met with no partial or unequal treatment on the score of social caste. Our great mother has succoured all alike, and all have been subject to the same laws. But the very moment the birth is accomplished differentiation takes place, and inequality of conditions is established: the son of the peasant being destined by human laws and institutions to be through life the slave of the son of the peer. We, of course, know much that Rousseau

could not, of the pre-natal influences that form or malforn the man or woman that is to be according to the condition and surroundings of their parents.

It is true that a few exceptionally gifted wage-earners may, and do, rise from the class in which they are born; but for the great mass of workers there is nothing for it but to work, and by the produce of their labour support in idleness and luxury those to whom human laws and institutions have secured a share of the monopoly of the sources and conditions of production. Human laws and institutions secure to these people, without any merit of theirs, a power to take from the wage-earners a large share of the fruits of their labour. No amount of disingenuous special pleading can disguise this fact, or make it appear otherwise than unjust and wrong. Nor, indeed, does Professor Huxley attempt to do so, for he plainly tells us in so many words that might is right, and that it is inexpedient and wrong to disturb or upset the possession of that which has been acquired through robbery, so long as the robbery is not of recent date. And when we bear in mind that this style of argument is applied to justify the possession of land by those whose ancestors stole it from the people, it is impossible to acquit Professor Huxley of deliberately adopting a kind of special pleading, which he would not dare resort to in the consideration of any of the sciences in which his name carries weight. He knows and feels the weakness of his argument, and to strengthen his position he tries to prove, from sources which may be made to prove either side of the contention, that land has been legally, industrially, and justly acquired.

Now, a man of Huxley's intelligence must know perfectly well that the question as to how land was acquired or held centuries ago is not of the slightest importance to us to-day, in practically approaching the subject of our food supply and the solution of the labour problem. We must be guided by the light of our knowledge of to-day, and not by the darkness and ignorance of ages ago. What would Professor Huxley say if such a line of argument were adopted in scientific discovery? On the question of sanitation, for instance, what would he say if we groped about among the darkness of past years for arguments to bring against the adoption of any new discovery in this direction; or attempted the solution of any scientific problem to-day by the ignorance of the past? The truth is Huxley knows that any absurd statements and assumptions will go down with the public, in condemnation of Socialism. He knows how largely he can draw upon the general ignorance of the subject, or he would never, surely, have trotted out a saying of Rousseau's, admitting of many interpretations, and placed it before the public as the basis of the great science of Socialism as known to-day. The laws of economic development were unknown in Rousseau's day. Nor could they possibly have been known so far as they relate to the transition from the wage-system to Socialism. The conditions of their existence had not arrived. It is not difficult to understand why Huxley went to Rousseau for his Socialism, against which he tells us he conceives it to be his duty to run a-muck. To grapple with the facts and arguments of true Socialism requires more time and study than Huxley is disposed to place at the service of his friends, though every such exertion brings him a nice little cheque. He has falsely assumed that Socialism is based upon certain doctrines of Rousseau; nothing could be more inaccurate or absurd. And furthermore, either in ignorance of Rousseau's meaning, or for the purpose of a cheap and easy victory, he has placed a false interpretation upon Rousseau's language; and then, having exposed the absurdity of his own assumptions, he flatters himself that he has done his friends, the capitalists, a service by demolishing Socialism!

The real point for Socialists is, not that Professor Huxley has knocked over an idol of his own creation, and paraded the performance as an exposure of Socialistic fallacies, but that a scientist of great, and perhaps deserved, reputation, has given the weight of his character and name to the outcry raised by the ignorant and prejudiced idle and worthless classes of society against the advent of a system, which the progress of economic laws is slowly, it may be, but surely, bringing about.

ARTHUR J. DADSON.

IN THE UNITED STATES.

R. G. DUN and Co., the great financial-information firm of New York, have published the following table of the number of business failures, amount of liabilities, and proportion of the number failing to the number in business for the 13 years from near the close of the great depression of 1873:

Year.	Liabilities. Dols.	No. of Failures.	No. in Business.	Proportion Failing.
1889	148,784,000	10,882	1,055,554	1 in 97
1888	123,830,000	10,679	1,046,662	1 in 98
1887	167,561,000	9,634	994,251	1 in 103
1886	114,644,000	9,834	969,541	1 in 98
1885	124,220,000	10,637	919,990	1 in 86
1884	226,343,000	10,968	904,759	1 in 83
1883	172,874,000	9,184	863,993	1 in 94
1882	101,547,000	6,738	822,256	1 in 122
1881	81,150,000	5,582	781,689	1 in 140
1880	65,752,000	4,735	746,823	1 in 158
1879	98,149,000	6,658	702,157	1 in 105
1878	234,383,000	10,478	674,741	1 in 64
1877	190,670,000	8,872	652,006	1 in 73

The American Federation of Labour has sent a circular letter to nearly 500 "prominent" persons. The following are the questions embodied in the circular letters:

"1. In view of the wonderful and ever-increasing inventions of and improvements in wealth-producing methods, should the working people of our country be required to work more than eight hours per day?"

"2. What effect would, in your opinion, the general reduction of the hours of labour to eight per day have upon the economic, social, industrial, and commercial condition of the people of our country?"

Some, mostly business men, doubted in their answer the feasibility of the plan in their own particular respective business; others, political demagogues, would like to see the eight hours discussed and perhaps introduced; in the answer of the rest one could plainly see the grin between the lines. Not a single one of those favoured with a letter, however, proposed to do anything.

As it is the opinion in some labour circles that, if the American Federation of Labour will do anything at all in reference to the introduction of the eight hours day on May 1st, and all the energy of the organisation will be concentrated first on the building trade, it may be of interest to know what the master builders propose to do. At the national convention of the builders, which was held at the end of January in St. Paul, Minn., a delegate offered the following resolution:

"The National Association of Builders recommend, as far as practicable in the construction of buildings, eight hours shall constitute a day's work for all mechanics employed on or in the construction of the same."

To this the Boston delegation offered the following substitute:

"Recognising the agitation for shorter hours of labour than those now prevailing, the National Association of Builders, in convention assembled, declares that, as a central body, representing so many different constituents, it is not competent or proper for it to define a certain number of hours for the building trades generally to adopt, but that it should be left to the local bodies to adjust the number of hours of labour as circumstances and conditions by which they are surrounded may dictate, but we do believe that this body should persistently urge upon local bodies that the thorough establishment of the system of payment by the hour is an absolutely necessary safeguard, and they should earnestly labour to secure the establishment of the system."

Then Mr. Purington, chairman of the Chicago delegation, presented the following brief substitute:

"Resolved, that this association deems it inexpedient to take any action on the eight hour day that shall interfere with, or in any way hamper the local exchanges affiliated with this body."

After a heated discussion a vote was called, and the Boston substitute was adopted by 111 to 4.

The Federation has issued a circular to all its affiliated bodies asking for the organisation of mass meetings on February 22nd, Washington's birthday, for the purpose of propagating the eight hour day.

The Massachusetts Federation of Labour has issued the following call:

"To the Trade Unionists of Massachusetts: It is the high and bounden duty of the trade unionists of this state to take advantage of the flood-tide of the eight hour agitation of 1890. From the definite purpose of the American Federation of Labour—to achieve an advance toward shorter hours for the wage-earners of the land—there should spring strengthened organisation, permanency of growth and unity of action in our state trade societies. To this end the state branch of the A. F. of L. cordially requests your co-operation and support, and requests that you send delegates to a convention of trade unionists to be held in Boston, Sunday, March 16, 1890, in Typographical Hall, 724, Washington Street, Boston."

At this session the eight hour movement will receive the fullest consideration. The trades that are in the best position to enforce eight hours will be determined, and plans will be formulated, and such committees appointed as will be necessary to carry forward the eight hour work.

In spite of all these nervous efforts "to do something at any price," the eight hours propagation will prove utterly abortive, as may be seen from the fact that we are close upon the 1st of May, and yet no action has as yet been determined upon.

In 1889, 3,567 murders have been committed in the United States against 2,184 in the previous year, and 1,499 in 1887, and 1,809 in 1886. And yet the police force has been increased everywhere! What about State protection of life in this case?

The Society of Christian Socialists has been given legal standing and made amenable to the laws of the commonwealth of Massachusetts. The purpose of the society is to call the attention of Christians to the necessity of so changing industrial conditions as to remove crime, misery, and want. Methinks that Christians always have professed to purpose something of the sort. And if they have effected nothing in 1,900 years, why don't they kick the "mounted policeman up above" overboard, leave all metaphysics to the devil and his assistants, and try to help solve the social problem on rational principles? Probably because they are "mostly fools."

A new political labour party has been inaugurated in the State of Massachusetts under the name of the "Working-men's League." The manifesto they issued concludes as follows:

"The issues we must put to the front at first are: A demand for an eight-hour law; the abolition of the poll-tax as a pre-requisite for voting; and the granting to cities and towns the right to own and control the plants for furnishing light, water, and various other functions which are at present enjoyed by private individuals. We urge you again, for the sake of yourselves, your homes, and the institutions of your country, to unite with us in instituting this labour party. We believe labour organisations to be necessary as educational factors; yet these organisations and our party are working on two different lines of action. While one deals with effects, the labour party is dealing with cause. Remove the cause, and you remove the effect. All industrial and social conditions are governed by, and dependent for success upon, laws controlling them; therefore it is our purpose to remove restrictions which prevent the working people from retaining an equitable share of the product of their labour. We believe that machinery and an enlightened age have made it possible to produce faster than we are able to consume; therefore, we desire to establish an equilibrium between production and consumption. Again we say commence at once. Organise your leagues and make ready for action while we have the long evenings with us."

As the new party proposes to go into politics, it will be short-lived indeed. The manager of the Lead Trust has made the following report to his organisation:

"Before organising the Trust on October 1st, 1887, the different companies always waged war on each other. During the year 1888 nothing was earned, and the Trust lost up to January 1, 1889, about 262,000 dollars. In May 1889, however, after the Trust had been properly organised, things altered. In the first six months of the last year a profit of 309,848 dols. was realised, and in the last six months 792,137 dols."

This is a remarkable statement, when trusts are said to be played out.

It will be remembered that comrade John Most was found guilty by an idiotic jury of having delivered an incendiary speech on November 12th, 1887, in the City of New York, and that he was sentenced by Judge Coming on December 6th, 1887, to one year's imprisonment in the penitentiary. He appealed against this judgment, and was admitted to 5,000 dollars bail.

Since then the affair has slumbered, and everybody thought that the asinine action of citizens of the city of New York had been buried in the pigeon-holes of the law courts. However, on January 25 Acting District Attorney Gunning S. Bedford received a notification from the General Term of the Supreme Court that the conviction of John Most for "unlawful assembly and inciting to riot" had been confirmed, and he notified Inspector Byrnes and issued a warrant for Most's arrest. Most got notice of the warrant in time, and as he had resolved to appeal again, and did not desire to be brought to the "Island," where he would have been shaved, clad in prison garb, and exhibited on private view for the benefit of political "bums" and their "ladies," he went to the house of his bondsman, Dr. Hoffmann. Of course, the press and the police, done out of their pleasure, howled in fury. The following clipping from the *New York Herald* may give an idea of the conduct of press and police:

"Two detectives were entrusted with the warrant of the District Attorney, and Inspector Byrnes went home to his dinner last evening confident that the Anarchistic shouter would be speedily made a prisoner. He was notified by telephone from Police Headquarters that the detectives had not succeeded in finding Most, and hurried back to his office. The detectives had searched Most's house, his usual haunts, and places where it was thought likely he might be found, but the agitator had disappeared. Inspector Byrnes was furious. "Go find him," he shouted, "and don't come back until you do." Then the Inspector soliloquised upon the publicity given the contemplated arrest, and heaped imprecations upon the head of the person who notified the Anarchist of his danger. To be outwitted by Most rattled the Inspector considerably, and it was some time before he could collect his scattered senses. All the available detectives on his staff were summoned, and inside of half an hour twenty reliable aids were scurrying about all over the city in quest of Herr Most. Detective Blissert, of the Fifth Street station, who is supposed to be familiar with all Anarchistic movements, was sent for, together with Sergeant Saul, a watcher of Socialist movements."

On Saturday the 26th of January, Most, on leaving in company with his bondsman the latter's house, was at once pounced upon by the legal suckers and carried to the Tombs. However, Most's attorneys, Messrs. Howe and Hammond, acted promptly. No sooner was he arrested than an application was made for a writ of habeas corpus. Mr. Howe argued the case on Tuesday before Judge Van Brunt, who granted a stay of proceedings on the ground that one of the best judges had expressed his doubt of Most's criminality, and said that, if he had "incited," it was against the State of Illinois he had sinned, and not against the State of New York. Most was freed on 5,000 dollars bail. The case will now slumber again for two years, pending an appeal to the Supreme Court. This is good luck, as I do not believe that comrade Most's state of health would have stood another year in an American jail.

The orthodox Hebrew employers of Philadelphia, generally of low Polish Jewish origin, have organised a boycott against all their employes who do not believe in the Jewish God or who entertain ideas and hopes of a better social system. They have announced that such employes must sever their connection with all "Atheistic" or "Anarchistic" societies, or seek employment elsewhere. Long live liberty in the United States!

Through the courtesy of comrade Benjamin R. Tucker, I have come into the possession of a most remarkable book on economics, entitled 'Involuntary Idleness, an exposition of the cause of the discrepancy existing between the supply of and the demand for labour and its products,' by Hugo Bilgram; published in Philadelphia by T. B. Lippincott Company in 1889. As soon as time permits, I intend to review the book in the *Commonweal*. So much I may say now, that it is refreshing to read a serious work on social economics after one has been compelled to peruse the shilly-shally plans of social reconstruction by a Gronlund or a Bellamy, of which the latter openly confessed that when writing 'Looking Backward' he had never as yet studied seriously social economy! and that his book was nothing—this he practically admits in the first number of the *Nationalist*—but the fanciful product of an idle hour. In other words, a pinchbeck Utopia. And this is the fellow who says that our martyrs in Chicago "were justly hanged because they rebelled against the laws." Sic!

Boston, Mass., Feb. 6, 1890.

HENRY F. CHARLES.

THE LABOUR STRUGGLE.

The Strike at the Wharves.

The masters' association has already begun to take the offensive against the men. At the meeting of Norwood and Co. last week it was decided "that the members of this association hold themselves free to employ such labourers as they require, whether they are members of a union or not, no preference being shown to unionists or non-unionists, so long as the men satisfactorily discharge their duties." Some may think this a very harmless resolution, especially members of the sentimental middle-class who were so much moved last autumn by the story of the docker and his woes. What it means is simply this: Since the end of the great strike, the work at the docks has been done entirely by unionists, but now Mr. Norwood and his fellow-conspirators declare that blacklegs shall be forced into the docks and unionists excluded, whether they like it or not. Can anyone doubt that the old sweating contractors, who are now transformed under the new system into foremen, will not prefer to employ blacklegs to men whom they know are unionists? Of course they will; and though Mr. Norwood and his friends may declare they will show "no preference," yet they have shown us plainly by their speeches and the letters that have lately appeared in the press that they want to go back to the old system of low pay and merciless sweating. Under this new regulation the unionists will be gradually ousted for blacklegs, whom Mr. Norwood will import if he cannot find them in the neighbourhood. Result: fresh conflicts, increasing in intensity, followed by a general strike or lock-out. And then Norwood and Co. will go whining to the middle-class public and will say that these wicked dockers want to interfere with the "freedom of labour." And the middle-class public will respond, "It is shameful to prevent a man earning his living because he doesn't belong to a union. Quite right, Mr. Norwood, this sort of thing must be put a stop to." It becomes daily more evident that a renewal of the struggle of last autumn is inevitable.

There have been few features of interest about the strike at Hay's Wharf during the week. The men still hold out with determination, and have great hopes of success. On Saturday the 470 who are out received 13s. strike pay instead of the 10s. they have received up till now. This increased pay will be continued, owing to promises of financial help from Australia and other quarters. As to the wharf, the blacklegs have succeeded in getting the work completely disorganised.

Ten thousand men met on Tower Hill on Sunday, and were addressed by Tom Mann, Ben Tillett, Cunninghame Graham, and Keir Hardie. Tom Mann pointed out the way in which Norwood is trying to provoke a fresh fight. On November 14th an agreement was drawn up between the men and the company by which the representatives of the men had the right to stand by and assist at the taking on of hands, in order to prevent non-union men being engaged. The company have now deliberately gone back on their engagement, and refuse to allow them to do it. He said that he had been asked to stand as a candidate for Parliament, but he emphatically protested against going among thieves, and further, was of an opinion that labour's battles would never be fought successfully at the Parliament House. Tom Mann seems changing his opinion with regard to legislation.

Already the union men are finding out the way the new rule works. On Monday at Sharp's Wharf, Wapping, they found that blacklegs were taken on in preference, and all union men employed at the wharf are now out on strike. N.

The Stick-makers' Union.

The stickmakers on strike against a threatened reduction held a meeting at the Loyal Friends Hall, Banner St., Old St., on Feb. 12, with the object of calling upon those stickmakers in work to give greater support to those on strike, and also to call upon all non-union workers to at once join the society. Mr. J. Leslie, president of the society, stated that when the men went on strike they were told by their masters that they could "get dock labourers to do the work," how they are going to do this we do not know, considering the docker wants his "tanner" an hour and the stickmakers get on an average 3d. per hour. He stated that when the men first struck work the masters treated the union with contempt and would not recognise it, but now it appears they have learnt the meaning of what organisation can do for the worker and have sent an arbitrator to the strike committee, but they in return would have nothing to do with arbitrators, and told this worthy that they would not give in one inch but would stand by what they demanded as their rights. Comrade Feigenbaum (International Workers' Club) and C. W. Mowbray (Socialist League) were the other speakers. The chairman, in closing the meeting, stated that since the strike 350 more had joined the stickmaker's society. He further stated that though only a young society they were paying those on strike 10s. a-week, and called on those who could subscribe to help them. He would just say a word of some importance to those who believed that strikes in certain trades drove that particular trade away. A stickmaker who had a large stock of certain sticks could obtain no sale for them, but it appears that since the strike he has obtained that sale, and is even supporting the union. This should teach the worker how to make use of the "master blackleg," the same as the masters make use of the "workman blackleg." The following resolution was carried unanimously: "That this meeting pledges itself to heartily support by every means in its power (especially by subscriptions) the action of the present committee in their endeavours to keep up the union, and to support the present strike till we get our rights, and in the future to thoroughly organise the stick trade for the benefit of both men and masters." Endorsing as I would the sentiment of this resolution, and as I believe all Socialists will, I must abstain from so doing owing to the last sentence, "for the benefit of both men and masters." It is indeed phenomenal that men who lead workmen should know so little of the economic basis of modern society. There can be no benefit to both sides—to master and men. The conditions of society are so formed to-day that every one who monopolises capital and does not labour, is necessarily a thief; therefore, the masters must no longer thief if they would benefit the worker, and the worker must not submit to robbery by his master if he would improve his own position. Now you worshippers of trades unionism, which position must the worker take?

On the following evening the strike ended in a decisive victory for the men, who received an advance instead of suffering a reduction. They have thereby practically learnt the advantages of combination. S. P.

Clay Workers' Strike.

At Wortley, just outside Leeds, there are several factories that produce fire-bricks, sanitary tubes, etc. These are being controlled by a syndicate, and one or two of the firms that trade by the name of Ingham and Cliff, are paying their "hands" about 15 per cent. less wages than neighbouring firms. Two weeks ago about 300 men and boys out of about 400 gave notice of their intention to strike for a 15 per cent. advance. The masters refused, and at the end of the week the men were refused their wages (the masters allege that the notices were irregular). Their wages are on an average about 19s. weekly. One man who has a wife and four children is only earning 12s. a-week. "Britons never shall be slaves." On Monday last the men received notices to quit their dwellings, which belong to their masters; and the married men are obliged to take these, for which they have to pay 3s. 6d. a-week. The horses that are in the same employment are lodged free of charge. The men a few months since joined the Gas Workers and General Labourers Union, who are getting subscriptions in for them. On Sunday, Feb. 9, a mass meeting was held in Vicar's Croft, at which comrades Paylor, Sweeney, Cockayne, and others spoke, and there was collected for the strikers £4 5s. 7½d. On Sunday, Feb. 16, a big meeting was held in Vicar's Croft; Michael Henry (London), Cockayne, and Roper were the speakers. A collection was made which resulted in £1 10s. On Monday the notices to quit expire, and as we have advised the men to stick to their homes as Irishmen have done, there is a probability of seeing something exciting. H. S.

Miners' Movements.

At the weekly meeting of the Lanarkshire Miners' Central Board, held on Saturday last, it was resolved, "That the delegates return to their districts, convene meetings, and ascertain whether the men would be in favour of a four days' policy or a cessation of labour, the results to be reported to a conference to be held on 22nd inst., so that definite action may be taken on Monday 24th." The secretary (comrade Small) vindicated the correspondence he had with the Lord Advocate and Home Office in reference to the right of checkweighmen to be employed by the men, the inspection of fiery workings, and anomalous position of the men under the Explosives and Mines Act, and stated his belief that the Home Secretary was about to take measures whereby checkweighmen would no longer be prohibited from weighing quarters, and the men would get credit for all the coal they produced. The chairman, in expressing the indebtedness of the delegates to comrade Small's very valuable services, advocated the application of the Corrupt Practices Act to future County Council elections.

At a meeting of the Executive Board of the Fife Miners' Association, Mr. Weir stated that he had written the secretary of the masters' association, pointing out that in the month of January the miners had only been conceded about a sixpence per day advance, whereas they had asked a shilling. He had asked that the other sixpence be conceded without delay. The masters expressed surprise that another demand should have been made for increased wages, and stated that selling prices would not permit of another increase—to the men! (ah! hem!). The matter was ultimately left in the hands of the wages committee, with instructions to issue an appeal to the miners to finish contracts should other districts in the county adopt this drastic course to enforce higher wages.

At a conference of the Miners' Federation on Saturday last, delegates attended from Yorkshire, Lancashire, Derbyshire, Notts, Warwickshire, Leicestershire, Staffordshire, Shropshire, Dean Forest, North Wales, Monmouthshire, Somerset, and Ayrshire, representing altogether over 350,000 miners. Reports on the wages question were handed in, and after a prolonged discussion a resolution was unanimously carried to demand an advance of 10 per cent. on all underground wages, and pledging all the counties, federations, and districts to co-operate in giving in notices and bringing out tools, and that if the advance be not conceded all round, no district, county, or federation be allowed to accept the advance demanded except on the lines laid down in Rule 20 of the Federation. It was resolved to terminate all contracts in the week ending 15th March, and the conference was adjourned to that date. At a meeting of Durham delegates held on 15th inst. the determination already arrived at to stop work unless the further advance in wages asked for is granted was fully confirmed. Colliers, firemen, and boiler-minders are agitating for eight hours instead of twelve as a day's work.

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.

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, to end of December. 1890:—North Kensington and Manchester, to end of January. 'Commonweal' Branch, and Leicester, to end of February.

Propaganda Fund.—Marland (Rochdale), 4s. 6d.

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

NEW PREMISES FUND.

Collected at Council meeting, Feb. 17th, 3s. 0½d.

"COMMONWEAL" GUARANTEE FUND.

The following further sums have been received towards this fund:—H. R., 1s.; J. Presburg, 6d.; B. W., 6d.; F. Kitz, 6d.; D. Nicoll, 6d.; P. Webb, 1s.; M. Moscheles, 1s.; A. J. Dadson, £1; E. W. Buteux, 1s.; C. Saunders, 2s.; and Mrs. Schack, 1s.

REPORTS.

'COMMONWEAL.'—On Sunday evening, Mowbray in chair, A. Tarn delivered a lecture on "The First Step in the Social Revolution," mainly dealing with the "mutual banking" theory; many questions, good discussion, and 1s. 4½d. collected.—S. P.

NORTH KENSINGTON.—Fair meeting at room in evening, when H. Halliday Sparling delivered a lecture on "Luxury Now, Necessity Then;" good discussion, collected 1s. 6d., and good sale of *Weal*.

NORTH LONDON.—We had a very good discussion last Wednesday, founded on Kropotkin's article on the "Spirit of Revolt." On Sunday morning Cantwell and Mowbray addressed a good meeting in Regent's Park. Fair sale of *Weal*, and 4s. 4d. collected.—T. C.

ABERDEEN.—At indoor meeting on 10th, Sydney Olivier's paper on "The Moral Aspects of Socialism" (Fabian Essays) was read and discussed.—L.

LEEDS.—On Sunday morning, at Vicars Croft, Taylor and Samuels spoke to a good audience, who seemed quite pleased with the remarks made, and bought *Weals* and *Freedom* well. In the evening, at the Socialist League Club, Mattison opened the discussion on "The Organisation of Labour," by Bebel. A good discussion followed.

YARMOUTH.—Socialism is slowly but firmly taking root here. Although we have not been able to do much in the open air lately, good work has been done indoors, and a lot of *Commonweal* distributed in the district. We are badly in want of funds to buy leaflets for distribution in the slums and the rural district. At the yearly meeting, on February 14th, there was a good attendance of members. The secretary gave the report of the work done during last year by the branch towards realising the Social Revolution. Comrade Headley was elected secretary and Comrade Brightwell treasurer for the ensuing year.—J. H.

LIVERPOOL SOCIALISTS.—In the morning a very successful open-air meeting was held near the landing stage, the speakers being S. Reeves, H. Sharples (Blackburn), and McCutcheon. Judging by the attention paid to the speakers and the literature sold, the open-air propaganda of this society promises to bear good fruit. Hubert Bland (Fabian) lectured in the morning and evening at the Concert Hall on "Where Radicalism Fails" and "What Socialism Is." Many questions and 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, 45, Smith Street, Battersea Park Road.

Commonweal Branch.—24 Great Queen Street, Holborn, W.C. Business meeting of members every Thursday evening at 8; Discussion Class at 9. Hall open every evening from 7 till 10. Lecture on Sunday February 23, at 8.15 p.m., D. J. Nicoll, "Law and Order."

East London.—12 Basing Place, Kingsland Road. A meeting of members will be held on Sunday February 23, to arrange for outdoor and proposed indoor propaganda.

Hammersmith.—Kelmescott House, Upper Mall, W. Sunday Feb. 23, at 8 p.m., a Lecture.

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 23, at 8 p.m., R. E. Dell, "Anarchism and Social Democracy."

North London.—6 Windmill Street, Tottenham Court Road. Meets every Wednesday evening at 8 o'clock. Feb. 26, J. Turner will lecture on "The Outcome of Trade-Unionism."

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 Grosvenor 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.

All persons who sympathise with the views of the Socialist League are earnestly invited to communicate with the above addresses, and if possible to help us in preparing for the birth of a true society, based on equality, brotherhood, and freedom for all.

OPEN-AIR PROPAGANDA.

SATURDAY 22.

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

SUNDAY 23.

11 Latimer Road StationMaughan, Dean, and Crouch
11.30..... Kilburn—"Old Plough," Kilburn LaneThe Branch
11.30..... Mitcham—Fair GreenThe Branch
11.30..... Regent's ParkNicoll
3.30..... Hyde Park—Marble ArchCantwell
3.30..... Victoria ParkMackenzie and Mowbray
7 Welteje Road, Ravenscourt ParkHammersmith Branch
7.30..... Walham Green—back of ChurchHammersmith Branch

TUESDAY 25.

8 Walham Green—back of ChurchHammersmith Branch

THURSDAY 27.

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

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

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

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

CHELSEA S.D.F., Co-operative Lecture Hall, 312 Kings Road, Chelsea.—Sunday February 23, at 8 p.m., Theodore A. Wright, "Objections to Socialism."

MANHOOD SUFFRAGE LEAGUE, "Three Doves," Berwick St., Oxford St., W.—Sunday February 23, at 8.30 p.m., W. W. Townshend, "The Conspiracy of the German Government."

THE NEW FELLOWSHIP, 267 Strand (rooms of the National Vigilance Association).—Tuesday Feb. 25, Miss Woods, "Looking Backward." Education.

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

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. *Commonweal* 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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