

THE COMMONWEAL

The Official Journal of the SOCIALIST LEAGUE.

VOL. 6.—No. 223.

SATURDAY, APRIL 19, 1890.

WEEKLY; ONE PENNY.

NOTES ON NEWS.

"He overtakes at last who tires not," says an old proverb. In the face of a thousand failures and rebuffs, over a thousand apparently insurmountable barriers, seeing a multitude of men and women falling around us as we went, and many a trusted one dropping out of the ranks, sometimes to turn traitor; in spite of all dangers and discouragements we have kept on working for the Good Cause. Under all the strain and amid the trouble, we have held on our way unflinchingly; but it may be that we are become so inured to long-continued effort, that we do not fully realise how near we are to success. And now, in all truth, our reward would seem to be at hand. It may be only a false dawn this time, but the true dawn cannot be far behind. Nor is it easy to believe that it is not the real dawn. In every country the proletariat is stirring as it never stirred before; not even in the "Year of Revolutions" was there such a universal movement; never once has the feeling of international solidarity risen so high.

From Holy Russia, that mysterious land of terror, messages crowd fast upon one another, telling of this and that manifestation of the rising tide. From Germany we hear such news as this:

"A new Socialist song, with the refrain '*Das sind die Arbeitsmänner*,' sung to the melody of the formerly prohibited Andreas Hofer song, is being widely sung in Berlin, and it is significant that soldiers and Socialists may be seen daily marching up and down the *Tempelhofer Feld* arm-in-arm singing the new *Volkslied*."

France, Italy, Spain—every country in Europe sends cheering news of the activity and wakefulness of the workers. Even England, Conservative England, is moving more rapidly than her masters like, though more slowly than her neighbours.

"Labour Day," May 1st, is drawing near, and already hearts are quickening at its approach. On the side of Labour it is looked forward to as what it is, a great manifestation of the solidarity of the workers of the world. On the side of the rulers it is looked upon with dread, resentment, and distrust. Right round the globe that day will fly the warm and fraternal greetings of men, who, a few short years ago, were ready and willing to fly at one another's throats, but who are now learning to combine for mutual benefit. If one could only stand aloof in space a little, and see the earth revolve under one's feet that day! As country after country came into sight, one would see the armies of Labour, marshalled under many flags, it is true, but with the red flag over all. Then, as that mighty panorama unfolded itself, one would realise that in all the history of the world there has not been such a mass of men moved with one object before.

In the very height of the Crusades there were fewer eyes turned toward Palestine than there are now toward our latter-day Land of Promise; the armies of Alexander, Xerxes, Napoleon, and all the conquerors who have led vast armies to victory, sink into utter insignificance when compared with the Army of Labour as it is to-day. Yet there are millions of the lukewarm and half-converted who cannot be counted yet, although they are being forced into the ranks. And what is to be done with this host? Is it to be led on to victory? Or be turned aside from attacking its enemies to pick shells upon the seashore?

It will be to our eternal disgrace, we Revolutionary Socialists, if this great occasion should be so belittled and vulgarised, by being taken hold of to promote catchpenny palliatives or to afford an opportunity for parliamentary place-hunting and political chicanery, that its true meaning will be overlooked. We must exert ourselves to the utmost to keep it from this degradation, and to press forward its true end and aim, the celebration of the international solidarity of Labour.

Not that we are or need be antagonistic to the demand for an eight-hour day, which has been to a certain extent mixed up with the larger question. We antagonise no amelioration of the workers' position which can be wrought by themselves without danger to their ultimate and speedy emancipation. But we do and must oppose and explode

the specious promises of those who would persuade the workers to distrust their own strength and to rely upon anybody, emperor or M.P., who is outside their ranks and enrolled among their enemies; to "sell the sow and buy bacon," surrender their own power and right of action in return for "gifts" which they might readily and more effectively take for themselves.

I notice that even in the discussion by the London Trades Council on Thursday of the Chamber of Commerce "conciliation" proposals, one of the delegates pointed out that the power of combination under the Trades Union Act was already in danger through parliamentary action. The representatives of the (rich) people will be only too apt to ask: "If you want us to do everything for you, why should you retain power to do anything for yourselves?"

By the way, that same discussion was in itself a sign of the times. Remembering what the London Trades Council was, and to a certain extent still is, how do the following speeches strike you?

Mr. Caiger (Cigar-makers' Society) said the whole scheme [that of a permanent Board of Conciliation equally composed of capitalists and workmen] was fraught with danger to workmen. If they accepted this scheme they would be playing into the hands of the employers by giving them information they should not possess, and they would be undermining their trade organisations. Boards of conciliation had hitherto been failures, as witness the strikes of the miners, whose cases were always compromised out of existence. Mr. McBean (Compositors) opposed the scheme. Chambers of Commerce had failed to settle the dockers' dispute in Liverpool, and it would be the same in London. Mr. Marks (Compositors) asked if they were to go cap in hand to the employers' board of conciliation for an advance of 5 per cent. in their wages. They should like to see the employers' profits before they submitted to the judgment of the boards of conciliation. Mr. Griffiths (Silver Plate Polishers) believed the scheme was the result of capitalist fear of the organisation of the workmen. The proposal simply meant to break up the trades unions. Mr. Left (Bricklayers) said he never knew a board of conciliation give the benefit of the doubt to the workmen in a dispute.

The scheme was unanimously rejected.

To think of that lunch in the servants' pantry at Sandringham!

S.

The continental workers are going to show in an imposing manner their growing sense of international unity by making the *first of May* a general Holiday of Labour and a demonstration in favour of an eight hours' working day. There is to be no manual work of any kind on that day, and the trades have agreed to go out in the open country for a regular feast, and to leave all the exploiters severely to themselves. The enthusiasm evoked by this idea is so great in Berlin and Vienna that at the headquarters of the Socialist party fears are entertained lest the zeal of the workers may overstep the bounds of discretion and give the barrack governments on the Spree and Danube the much desired pretext for a general massacre of the people. But I think that those who profess to be Socialists may be depended on to know what they are about, and that beyond a scuffle here and there the grand holiday demonstration will come off a success and with flying colours.

A. S.

NEWS FROM NOWHERE:

OR,

AN EPOCH OF REST.

BEING SOME CHAPTERS FROM A UTOPIAN ROMANCE.

CHAP. XII.—CONCERNING THE ARRANGEMENT OF LIFE.

"WELL," I said, "about those 'arrangements' which you spoke of as taking the place of government, could you give me any account of them?"

"Neighbour," he said, "although we have simplified our lives a great deal from what they were, and got rid of many conventionalities and many sham wants, which used to give our forefathers much trouble, yet our life is too complex for me to tell you in detail by means of

words how it is arranged; you must find that out by living amongst us. It is true that I can better tell you what we don't do than what we do do."

"Well?" said I.

"This is the way to put it," said he: "we have been living for a hundred and fifty years, at least, more or less in our present manner, and a tradition or habit of life has been growing on us; and that habit has become a habit of acting on the whole for the best. It is easy for us to live without robbing each other. It would be possible for us to contend with and rob each other, but it would be harder for us than refraining from strife and robbery. That is in short the foundation of our life and our happiness."

"Whereas in the old days," said I, "it was very hard to live without strife and robbery. That's what you mean, isn't it, by giving me the negative side of your good conditions?"

"Yes," he said, "it was so hard, that those who habitually acted fairly to their neighbours were celebrated as saints and heroes, and were looked up to with the greatest reverence."

"While they were alive?" said I.

"No," said he, "after they were dead."

"But as to these days," I said; "you don't mean to tell me that no one ever transgresses this habit of good fellowship?"

"Certainly not," said Hammond, "but when the transgressions occur, everybody, transgressors and all, know them for what they are; the errors of friends, not the habitual actions of persons driven into enmity against society."

"I see," said I; "you mean that you have no 'criminal classes.'"

"How could we have them," said he, "since there is no rich class to breed enemies against the state by means of the injustice of the state?"

Said I: "I thought that I understood from something that fell from you a little while ago that you had abolished civil law. Is that so, literally?"

"It abolished itself, my friend," said he. "As I said before, the civil law courts were upheld for the defence of private property; for nobody ever pretended that it was possible to make people act fairly to each other by means of brute force. Well, private property being abolished, all the laws and all the legal 'crimes' which it had manufactured of course came to an end. Thou shalt not steal, had to be translated into, Thou shalt work in order to live happily. Is there any need to enforce that commandment by violence?"

"Well," said I, "that is understood, and I agree with it; but how about crimes of violence? would not their occurrence (and you admit that they occur) make criminal law necessary?"

Said he: "In your sense of the word, we have no criminal law either. Let us look at the matter closer, and see whence crimes of violence spring. By far the greater part of these in past days were the result of the laws of private property, which forbade the satisfaction of their natural desires to all but a privileged few, and of the general visible coercion which came of those laws. All that cause of violent crime is gone. Again, many violent acts came from the artificial perversion of the sexual passions, which caused over-weening jealousy and the like miseries. Now, when you look carefully into these, you will find that what lay at the bottom of them was mostly the idea (a law-made idea) of the woman being the property of the man, whether he were husband, father, brother, or what not. That idea has of course vanished with private property, as well as certain follies about the 'ruin' of women for following their natural desires in an illegal way, which was of course a convention caused by the laws of private property."

"Another cognate cause of crimes of violence was the family tyranny, which was the subject of so many novels and stories of the past, and which once more was the result of private property. Of course that is all ended, since families are held together by no bond of coercion, legal or social, but by mutual liking and affection, and everybody is free to come or go as he or she pleases. Furthermore, our standards of honour and public estimation are very different from the old ones, and success in besting our neighbours is a road to renown now closed, let us hope for ever. Each man is free to exercise his special faculty to the utmost, and everyone encourages him in so doing. So that we have got rid of the scowling envy, coupled by the poets with hatred, and surely with good reason; heaps of unhappiness and ill-blood was caused by it, which with irritable and passionate men—*i.e.*, energetic and active men—often led to violence."

I laughed, and said: "So that you now withdraw your admission, and say that there is no violence amongst you?"

"No," said he, "I withdraw nothing; as I told you, such things will happen. Hot blood will err sometimes. A man may strike another, and the stricken strike back again, and the result be a homicide, to put it at the worst. But what then? Shall we the neighbours make it worse still? Shall we think so poorly of each other as to suppose that the slain man calls on us to revenge him? when we know that if he had been maimed he would, when in cold blood and able to weigh all the circumstances, have forgiven his maimer? Or will the death of the slayer bring the slain man to life again and cure the unhappiness his loss has caused?"

"Yes," I said, "but consider, must not the safety of society be safeguarded by some punishment?"

"There, neighbour!" said the old man, with some exultation. "You have hit the mark. That punishment of which men used to talk so wisely and act so foolishly, what was it but the expression of their fear? And they had need to fear, since *they*—*i.e.*, the rulers of society—were dwelling like an armed band in a hostile country. But we who live amongst our friends need neither fear nor punish. Surely if we, in dread of an occasional rare homicide, an occasional

rough blow, were to solemnly and legally commit homicide and violence, we could only be a society of ferocious cowards. Don't you think so, neighbour?"

"Yes, I do, when I come to think of it from that side," said I.

"Yet you must understand," said the old man, "that when any violence is committed, we expect the transgressor to make any atonement possible to him; and he himself expects it. But again, think if the destruction or serious injury of a man momentarily overcome by wrath or folly can be any atonement to the commonwealth? Surely it can only be an additional injury to it."

Said I: "But suppose the man has a habit of violence,—kills a man a-year, for instance?"

"Such a thing is unknown," said he. "In a society where there is no punishment to evade, no law to triumph over, remorse will certainly follow transgression."

"And lesser outbreaks of violence," said I, "how do you deal with them? for hitherto we have been talking of great tragedies, I suppose?"

Said Hammond: "If the ill-doer is not sick or mad (in which case he must be restrained till his sickness or madness is cured) it is clear that grief and humiliation must follow the ill-deed; and society in general will make that pretty clear to the ill-doer if he should chance to be dull to it; and again, some kind of atonement will follow,—at the least, an open acknowledgement of the grief and humiliation. Is it so hard to say, I ask your pardon, neighbour?—Well, sometimes it is hard—and let it be."

"You think that enough?" said I.

"Yes," said he, "and moreover it is all that we can do. In addition we torture the man, we turn his grief into anger, and the humiliation he would otherwise feel for his wrong-doing is swallowed up by a hope of revenge for our wrong-doing to him. He has paid the legal penalty, and can 'go and sin again' with comfort. Shall we commit such a folly, then? Remember Jesus had got the legal penalty remitted before he said 'Go and sin no more.' Let alone that in a society of equals you will not find anyone to play the part of torturer or jailer, though many to act as nurse or doctor."

"So," said I, "you consider crime a mere spasmodic disease, which requires no body of criminal law to deal with it?"

"Pretty much so," said he; "and since, as I have told you, we are a healthy people generally, so we are not likely to be much troubled with this disease."

Said I: "Well, you have no civil law, and no criminal law. But have you no laws of the market, so to say—no regulation for the exchange of wares? for you must exchange, even if you have no property."

Said he: "We have no obvious individual exchange, as you saw this morning when you went a-shopping; but of course there are regulations of the markets, varying according to the circumstances and guided by general custom. But as these are matters of general assent, which nobody dreams of objecting to, so also we have made no provision for enforcing them: therefore I don't call them laws. In law, whether it be criminal or civil, execution always follows judgment, and someone must suffer. When you see the judge on his bench, you see through him, as clearly as if he were made of glass, the policeman to imprison and the soldier to slay some actual living person. Such follies would make an agreeable market, wouldn't they?"

"Certainly," said I, "that means turning the market into a mere battle-field, in which many people must suffer as much as in the battle-field of bullet and bayonet. And from what I have seen I should suppose that your marketing, great and little, is carried on in a way that makes it a pleasant occupation."

"You are right, neighbour," said he. "Although there are so many, indeed by far the greater number amongst us, who would be unhappy if they were not engaged in actually making things, and things which turn out beautiful under their hands,—there are many, like the house-keepers I was speaking of, whose delight is in administration, organisation, to use long-tailed words; I mean people who like keeping things together, avoiding waste, seeing that nothing sticks fast uselessly. Such people are thoroughly happy in their business, all the more as they are dealing with actual facts, and not merely passing counters round to see what share they shall have in the privileged taxation of useful people, which was the business of the commercial folk in past days. Well, what are you going to ask me next?"

WILLIAM MORRIS.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

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

STRIKE IN THE STATES.—NEW YORK, April 11.—A thousand men employed in the building trade here have struck work owing to a firm of contractors refusing to employ union men.

THREATENED POLICE STRIKE.—The reports of a strike of the metropolitan police are by no means without foundation, says the *Pall Mall*. For some time past there has existed a feeling of considerable discontent at what is termed "the unfairness of the present pension rules," and this feeling is at the bottom of the trouble. There are also a number of men who are dissatisfied with the long hours and meagre pay, and these now come forward and add their grievances to the others. Some weeks ago Mr. John Burns asked that two men, well acquainted with the grievances of the force, should assist him in agitating the cause of the police. He made one stipulation—namely, that a sum of £600 should be raised in order to indemnify these two men in the event of their being discharged. It is said that there is no difficulty in raising the money, but that the martyr-champions are not forthcoming as yet. Several secret meetings have been held recently, and the agitation, which is going on strictly *sub rosa*, has already created a great deal of disaffection in the ranks of the metropolitan police.

IN THE UNITED STATES.

THE Massachusetts State Branch of the Federation of Labour met on the 16th inst. in the Typographical Hall, Boston. The following report has been adopted:

"For the first time in the history of the American labour movement, the bulk of organised labour has centred its efforts upon one definite reform, that of shortening the normal working-day to eight hours. We advocate the adoption of all legitimate means for the education of the general public in the justness of the eight-hour demand. A systematic plan of work is necessary, and, therefore, we make the following recommendations:

"1. The appointment by each affiliated union of an eight-hour legislative committee, whose duty it shall be to at once wait upon, or communicate with, the senator and representatives from the district covered by the jurisdiction of the union, for the purpose of notifying such legislators that their constituents, represented by organised labour, are desirous of the passage, by the present legislature of the eight-hour order introduced by representative Henry S. Lyons, of North Adams, the first section of which reads as follows: 'Eight hours shall constitute a day's work for all labourers, mechanics, or workmen now employed, or who may be in the future employed, by, or on behalf of, the commonwealth of Massachusetts, or in any county, city, or town therein. All acts, or parts of acts, inconsistent with this act are hereby repealed.'

"2. We recommend the appointment by each affiliated union, and other unions in sympathy with the short-hour movement, of an agitation committee whose general duty it shall be to keep the eight-hour question prominently before the public.

"3. That each union follow out the plan already adopted by the joint labour conference of Boston, and send, either through its secretary, or by a special committee, a circular letter to each officiating clergyman in its jurisdiction, requesting the delivery, before May 1, 1890, of a sermon, address, or lecture upon the general question of the short-hour movement.

"Every tradition urges us to do our share in the mighty onward impetus to labour that the American Federation of Labour has undertaken. The spur of self-interest is supplemented by the higher motive of concern for the general weal."

So the eight hours day is going to be introduced through the parsons and priests and such like preaching about and praying for it!

The legislative committee presented a long report at this meeting, and upon its recommendation the following proposed labour measures were endorsed:

"That 53 hours per week constitute a week's work for women and children in factories.

"That eight hours per day constitute a day's work for state, city, county, and town employes.

"That the hours of labour be reduced, and better protection for life and limb be provided for railroad employes.

"That trade labels be given protection accorded other trade marks.

"That the school limit be raised to 15 years.

"That corporations be compelled to give 14 day's notice of reduction.

"That the overwork of women and children be prohibited.

"That public parks and commons be made available for purposes of public assemblage.

"That blacklisting be prevented, and, if attempted, be punishable by law.

"That the running of elevators by young people be regulated.

"That the employment of children under 13 in workshops, mercantile establishments and factories be prohibited.

"That better means of escape from factories in case of fire be provided.

"That eight hours be made a legal day's work."

Chief Wadlin, of the Massachusetts Bureau of Statistics of Labour, has issued a part of his report, which is devoted to the subject of the relation of wages to the cost of production. The result of his observations is the statement—proved by figures—that in industries representing some 73 per cent. of the manufactured products of the State, the labourer gets 20 per cent. of the cost of production. In establishments representing 27 per cent. of the entire products, the labourer's share reaches 33 per cent., and in a few special industries goes beyond that, but it never amounts to over 50 per cent. If Chief Wadlin goes on making correct statements like this, he may soon be able to shake the dust of his office from his shoes.

The Executive Council of the American Federation of Labour met on the 18th of this month in New York. All the members of the Council were present. The Council resolved to engage George E. McNeil, of Boston, and Paul Grottkau, of Chicago, as lecturers. Both lecturers will visit most of the cities of the United States and Canada, and deliver speeches in favour of the eight hour day under the auspices of the Federation and of the United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners. The Council resolved further, that the United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners, the crack organisation of the Federation, should take the lead in the eight hour movement. The Brotherhood is instructed to ask for the introduction of the eight-hours work-day on May 1st without condition. Should the demand be refused by the masters, then the 60,000 members of this organisation will cease to work till the demand is granted. In that case the strikers will be supported by the strike fund of the whole Federation of Labour. As soon as the carpenters and joiners have gained a victory, the miners will begin the fight.

Boston, Mass., March 27, 1890.

HENRY F. CHARLES.

A man has no more goods than he gets good by.

In 1870 a Sydney lady purchased a piece of land with £160 she had saved. The assessed value of the property is now £16,000—in other words, says the *Bulletin*, the land has, without any effort of hers, increased in value a hundred times.

Arrangements are now (Feb. 22) complete in connection with the new Australian labour paper, which will be called the *Worker*, not the *Swagman* as at first proposed. It will consist of sixteen pages about *Christian Socialist* size, and will be issued about the 26th instant. This will be the first labour paper in the world owned by the workers themselves, under such conditions.

AUSTRALIAN MINERS' TROUBLES.—NEWCASTLE, N.S.W., Feb. 26.—In accordance with the orders of the Miners Association, the Wallarah men gave notice yesterday to the manager demanding payment by weight, in lieu of wages. A few hours afterward the manager posted up a notice that on and after that date the miners will receive a hewing rate of 3s. per ton, and wheelers 8s. per shift of eight hours. Under the district agreement the men are bound not to work for less than 4s. 2d. per ton, and there is little doubt that the association will call the men out rather than allow them to work at reduced rates. The mine is situated at Catherine Hill Bay, some 14 miles south of Newcastle, and at the present time about eighty men are employed.

INTERNATIONAL NOTES.

GERMANY.

A deep impression has been made by an order from the Saxon Ministry of the Interior requiring four veteran military organisations to remove the royal arms from their flags, and to return all standards and insignia presented to them by the King of Saxony, who is the patron of the military veteran unions throughout the kingdom. They are also forbidden to carry firearms, and are deprived of all the rights and privileges appertaining to the veteran associations in Saxony. This is due to the Socialist spirit pervading the unions. The immediate cause was that one corps recently attended the funeral of a Socialist in full uniform, and planted its flag on the grave while revolutionary speeches were delivered. The decree has led to a wide-spread interest in the affair, which cannot fail to have a good effect.

BELGIUM.

CHARLEROI.—For some time past, says *La Bourse du Travail*, the coal-hewers at the Charleroi pits have been making complaints and demands which are entirely disregarded. They announce their intention of striking if their demands are still received with the same contemptuous silence. The partial stoppage of work at Gilly is a sign of this, and we are assured that the workers at one of the neighbouring collieries have decided to stop work. They ask for a uniform scale of wages; in some of the collieries the wages are from 5 fr. 50 c., while in others they range from only 3 fr. to 3 fr. 50 c. for a working day of 12 to 13 hours. At several places the men demand a rise of 15 per cent., and the directors to whom the demand has been addressed have received an ultimatum from the Labour Leagues. The directors will probably think before creating a movement similar to that produced last year in all the mining centres, and will probably accede to the legitimate wishes of these unfortunate workers.

On all sides a considerable movement is noticed in favour of the International Congress of miners, which will be held next month.

ITALY.

CORBETTA (Milan).—An *Association of Mutual Assistance* has been formed here among the country labourers, in memory, no doubt, of last summer's disturbance and revolt, and in anticipation of a similar occurrence this coming season.

At Brescia a Labour Exchange has been inaugurated, and the same is being organized also in Bologna.

MILAN.—The police have forbidden a meeting of journeymen bakers which was to have been held in a hall granted by the municipality for the purpose, to discuss the abolition of night labour. The reason of this *вето* has not been vouchsafed, and remains entirely inexplicable.

SPAIN.

MATARO.—At a tannery in this town, the workmen had succeeded in organising themselves into a trade society; but this was apparently a cause of disquietude to the directors of the same, who have recently managed to break up the organisation by means of various intrigues.

A strike is announced of the glaziers of Mataro, and the Society *La Fraternal* have issued a manifesto charging those of the same trade in other neighbourhoods to abstain from coming to Mataro to the prejudice of the said strike, and of the solidarity of the workers.

MANLEU.—The masons' trade society here have issued a similar announcement of strike and manifesto to their fellow-workmen.

MANRESA.—For some time an energetic propaganda has been carried on by the Federation of the *Tres Clases de Vapor* in Barcelona and the neighbourhood, more especially at Manresa, where several big meetings have been held to discuss the condition of affairs. About 4,000 employes in the weaving factories at Manresa are on forced strike. The master of one factory refused the demands of his employes of both sexes (some of them girls under 13), who only asked one hour's reduction in the day, which now is from 5 a.m. to 8.30 p.m.; and when the strike took place, he called on the masters of the other factories to stand by him. One and all presented a solid front to the workers, expecting to break their spirit and reduce their demands by hunger, and a lock-out was announced throughout. Great excitement prevails, and the workers say they would rather starve than give way. The movement spreads in Catalonia, and strikes are declared in numerous factories in Barcelona. It is announced that a meeting will be arranged between the masters and delegates from the Labor Societies, to try to arrange matters; but if the demands of the latter are not acceded to, the strike (which will cease while the arbitration takes place) will begin again, and will spread yet further through Catalonia.

M. M.

SWEDEN.

The Swedish Socialists have now, from the 1st of April, two daily papers, *Social Demokraten* and *Arbetet*. It is an immense step forward, and if it proves a success—as we heartily wish it may—Swedish Socialism may justly feel proud of itself, and its brave leaders of their splendid work.

A Swedish clergyman, the Rev. Johan Nylander, has for some time preached revolutionary Socialism in his parish church, and his bourgeois parishioners have promptly rewarded him by petitioning government for his dismissal. A similar fate has befallen Mr. Johan Lindström, who was one of the best Radical journalists of Sweden. He turned Socialist, and consequently the proprietors of the paper he edited turned him out. Now he is sub-editor of *Arbetet*, a very valuable acquisition for the Swedish Socialistic party.

The eight hours movement and the agitation for a grand working-men's demonstration on the 1st of May, are making good progress in Sweden.

NORWAY.

The Social Democrats of Norway have issued a circular to all the working-men's unions in the country, explaining the importance and justice of an eight hours working-day, and requesting them to join the international demonstration on the 1st of May.

STN.

HARD TIMES IN THE TRANSVAAL.—The *Johannesburg Standard* says:—It is quite appalling to see the number of active young fellows at the present time idling about the streets in quest of employment, a large number of whom are intelligent and no doubt industrious. A large percentage of them also were formerly brokers' clerks, but, as that branch of business is now at a standstill, they are forced to look around them for something else. The question is, what is there for them to do? Without desiring to take a pessimist's view of the situation, it is, to say the least of it, a gloomy outlook.



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.

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TO CORRESPONDENTS.

- W. A. S.—Regret to find article unsuitable. We are by no means hard up for copy, though always open for more, if good.
- J. P. (Edinburgh).—Your verses, though not up to publication standard, are by no means as bad as you seem to think. Try again. It would be advisable next time to choose a tune not quite so jingo in association.
- S. M. G. (Shepherds Bush).—Regret to find unsuitable; try again.
- D. G. (Bexley Heath).—Thanks; will be filed for future use. Please give name of paper it appeared in.

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Periodicals received during the week ending Wednesday April 16.

<p>ENGLAND Brotherhood Coming Times Die Autonome Justice Labour Elector London—Freie Presse Labour Tribune People's Press Railway Review Social Demokrat Worker's Friend NEW SOUTH WALES Sydney—Bulletin QUEENSLAND Brisbane—Boomerang INDIA Bankipore—Behar Herald UNITED STATES New York—Der Sozialist New York—Truthseeker Freiheit Volkszeitung Workmen's Advocate Boston—Woman's Journal Nationalist Chicago—Knights of Labour</p>	<p>Detroit—Der Arme Teufel Philadelphia—United Labour Paterson Labour Standard Princeton (Mass.)—Word S. F. Coast Seamen's Journal San Francisco Arbeiter Zeitung Pacific Union St. Louis (Mo.)—Die Parole Anarchist FRANCE Paris—Bourse du Travail Le Proletariat Charleville—L'Emancipation Lille—Le Cri du Travailleur Lyon—L'Action Sociale Rouen—Le Salarial HOLLAND Anarchist BELGIUM Ghent—Voortuit SWITZERLAND Arbeiterstimme ITALY Milan—Il Fascio Operaio Rome—L'Emancipazione Milan—Cuore e Critica</p>	<p>SPAIN El Proletario PORTUGAL Porto—A Revolucao Social GERMANY Berlin—Volks Tribune AUSTRIA Brunn—Volksfreund Vienna—Arbeiter-Zeitung Trieste—Confeder. Operaia HUNGARY Arbeiter-Wochen-Chronik DENMARK Social-Demokraten SWEDEN Malmo—Arbetet Stockholm, Social-Demokraten WEST INDIES Cuba—El Productor CAPE COLONY Cape Town—Argus ARGENTINE REPUBLIC Buenos Ayres—Vorwarts</p>
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THE SITUATION IN GERMANY.

WHATEVER may be the fate of the Irish obstacle, which to the ambitious Liberalism of these islands so effectually "blocks the way," there seems at least a fair chance of some historical variety-entertainment being witnessed in Germany. The prelude, in fact, has just been rattled off in a most promising manner. The heavy form of the Chancellor, who, after his bloody work in 1871, had settled down in

mid-stream of national life, impeding its flow and causing stagnation and disease, has just been lifted up by the spring tide of the Revolution, and is slowly but surely drifting out of sight.

The alarm among the worshippers of successful brutality and violence is great; they show fear and doubt, lest the so-called peace of the world should be disturbed by the fall of one of the busiest instigators of war the world has ever seen. The great press mob is full of admiration and regret, and the self-styled tutors of the "New Democracy" insult their readers and the German nation by declaring that "Bismark was the greatest man that Germany ever produced."

That his admirers are so very small, made him look big, no doubt; and that he was one of the greatest brutes to whom Germany ever gave life cannot be denied. During the lifetime of Old William, whom he had made an emperor, the chancellor ruled supreme. He set himself not only above his master, but above the constitution, and bearing down before him every opposition by the sheer weight of his reckless brutality, imposed his will and pleasure upon the suffering fatherland. He suppressed the will and stifled the voice of the people wherever his own selfish interest was at stake, and used the power placed in his hands in the meanest and most grasping manner for his own enrichment and the snug placement of the members of his family; he turned Germany into a huge barrack drill-ground, and brought the system of blind military discipline to perfection; he corrupted the public service, subsidised the "Reptile Press" in his own favour, and engendered a system of political espionage not previously known in German history. His home policy, which, besides taxing the necessities of life to the uttermost, consisted in the attempt to crush by exceptional laws the advanced party of the country's working population, culminated in the hatching of police conspiracies among the men who refused to transgress even the most stringent provisions of his national state of siege. The triumph of his foreign policy has estranged the two most cultured nations of the continent, and keeps them armed to the teeth, ready at command to tear each other to pieces. For the last twenty years the power of this man has been without mercy, his selfishness without shame, and his vanity without parallel. It seemed as if his misdeeds were to go on without check until his natural death. But Nemesis was on the way all the time. Slow came she, but she came—and at last undid him.

He was literally hoisted by his own petard. For it was he who fostered that, politically almost omnipotent, prerogative of the Prussian Crown. The king's will was to over-rule all others, and against its pleasure there was no appeal—so long as the king's will was guided by his Chancellor's. When old William was dead, and Bismark saw his providential plans with regard to emperor Frederick's throat frustrated, he played the impetuous son against his dying father and his English mother, thinking, no doubt, that young Willie on the throne would be as pliant a tool in his hand as his grandfather had been. But the chancellor had evidently reckoned without his host. For young Hotspur is Emperor now, and finding that there is no room for two despots on one throne, shows an unquenchable desire to do the ruling all by himself.

The seed of repression too, sown broadcast by Bismark all over the most fertile part of the nation, is bearing its fruit, and the triumph of his sincerest enemies was brought about in its fulness by the very methods of militarism. For it was the splendid discipline of the drill-ground, fired by the consciousness of the grand ideal they were fighting for, which led the Socialists to victory, and made the defeat of the chancellor's policy so crushing. It having proved played out, the Bismark dynasty was sent home to Friedrichsruhe, bag and baggage, dogs and all.

What next? While being not quite so sanguine as many are inclined to be, as to the probable result of the last elections and the change of government tools it has already brought about, I would yet warn the Socialists of this country not to under-rate the importance of this mighty manifestation. Socialism in Germany is not a fashionable fad, but a growing conviction in the mind of the working-classes, which cannot be ignored or suppressed, but must be reckoned with. There is no bourgeois money, no middle-class leader, scheming, gambling, and dissembling in his own interest and that of the almighty money-bag, but a sound, thorough-going, and downright working-class movement, supported and carried on by the brains, the sinews, and the enthusiasm of the workers themselves. And whatever may be the inclination of one or the other of their chosen mouthpieces in Parliament in favour of a temporary policy of compromise, the fact remains, that they are all elected on a strictly imperative mandate, to wit, the programme of the Socialist party, the fundamental aim of which is the final abolition of the wage-system, that infernal source of all the poverty, ignorance, and degradation in the world.

Twenty-five years ago Lassalle exclaimed, "Give me one hundred thousand German working-men, and Reaction is a thing of the past!" Those were boastful words, and perhaps somewhat illusory. But today the German Socialist Party have an army of a million and a half of men; men who have come of age in the thick of the fight against the infamous odds of the Bismark system—i.e., the allied powers of everything that is bad on the Throne, in the Church, and in the Army—and the leaders of such a host have something to answer for. By overthrowing the idol of German capitalism and Junkerdom, they have begun well; but it was indeed only a beginning, and the baneful battle-field of Parliamentarism which they have now to enter is most slippery ground to fight upon. The German Socialists have become strong and powerful through persecution and adversity. Will they retain their strength in the enervating sunshine of imperial condescension? Willie Hotspur is a young man who is clearly dead for making

history, and who in this endeavour conjures the spirits of the deep in the most childlike way and without seeming apprehension of defeat. He touches, after all, only the fringe of the social question, as he plays with that of every other; he offends most powerful interests and personalities, without on the other hand satisfying anybody, and may find himself presently in rather hot water. Yet, with the working classes he means business anyhow, and is not above canvassing for his "ideas" (whatever they may amount to!) among the lowliest of his realm by squeezing a workman's hand or two, and were they ever so genuine. At the same time, he rattles his sword and talks loudly of "smashing" those who refuse to take his candy and be quiet.

Nor is it the Scilla and Charybdis of the imperial smile and frown alone which the chosen ones of the German working-men's party have to steer clear between. There may be many among them who, like their young Cæsar, are brimming over with eagerness to save the world now they enter upon the stage political, whilst others, again, may prefer to play the part of diplomatists, sitting on a fence of observation above the turbulent contentions of party. A million and a half of votes given are too many to allow their delegates to assume the latter, and thirty-five members are too few to take up the former attitude. They are more than sufficient, however, to make their presence and their importance felt, by watching and spoiling the game of the reactionists and by protesting against the way in which the workers are fooled and plundered. Yet, despite all the dangers of the situation, there is much hope that those thousands of men who have just given the world such a brilliant spectacle of party discipline, have in them enough of the unerring spirit of the Revolution to keep their leaders straight and fresh and to the point at issue. The masses have not taken the imperial bait, nor have they been cowed by the imperial threat, but they have stood by their guns like men; an attitude by which their brethren in England might well profit. For, the show of their number and of their dauntless resolution has forced the hands of their ruler, and, whatever may be the temporary outcome of the present emperor's attempt at playing the Saviour of Society, it cannot fail ultimately to benefit the cause of militant labour.

True it is, that to dabble in the shaping of Social Reform Bills looks like the momentary damming back of the social sin-flood, and that such would not be exactly the work of professed revolutionists; but it is not likely that the electorate of a million and a half of Socialists will allow much time and energy to be wasted over the attempt at patching up "*Iniquity found out*," and there is sure to be an early tussle between Cæsarism ("well-meaning" or otherwise) and Socialism.

AND. SCHEU.

IN SOUTHERN AFRICA.

AWHILE ago, the colonial press said that there was no such thing as a "Labour Question" in South Africa. To-day the different dailies are to be found admitting not only its existence, but that there is an unemployed question as well; that the former has asserted itself by carrying the eight hours day both in the Transvaal and in Natal; that the latter, though not as yet well able to make any definite demands owing to lack of organisation, may yet count on being heard later on. As regards the eight hour day in Cape Colony, a deputation of workmen from the Cape Government Railway workshops at Salt River waited on Colonel Schormbrucker, Commissioner of Public Works, a couple of weeks ago, for an answer as to the eight hour day. Although the interview has not yet been made public, I am able to give the result. The Commissioner said that the demand of the workmen was universal, and that the eight hours day, with which he personally was in sympathy, would come into operation from the 1st July next. This will affect over 5,000 workmen throughout the railway system.

The trades in Cape Town are also agitating for the same, and most likely will get it.

The sooner the eight hours question is settled, the sooner will the workers be forced to attend to their true position. That they do not understand it half so well as most of their enemies is evidenced by the tone and comments of the colonial press. As proof of this, I clip the following from an article in the *Cape Times* commenting on the London dock strikes:

"The response of the workers in Australia by subscribing funds, and of the labourers in Holland by refusing to fill the places of the strikers, are the fore-warning of the spread of a movement which could paralyse industry over half a continent."

Probably the "movement" will paralyse something else than *industry* first, and extend to more than "half a continent."

Now let us look at the Rudd-Rhodes-Duke-of-Fife-Earl-of-Aberdeen Syndicate, and see what it is doing alongside of what Lord Fife says it intends to do. The following taken from the *Patriot* gives a very fair idea of what it is just now busy with:

"The great Rhodes Company is also in the field, and is enlisting men who are to be sent to Matabeleland as civilisers. The civilisers will naturally be well equipped with powder and lead, and Gatling guns will certainly not be wanting."

How does the following read alongside of the granting of the South African Company's charter? It is taken from the *Cape Times*:

"For the student of social and economic problems the South African Republic is at present a fruitful field. The antiquated and dishonest [the italics are mine] practices of the Transvaal Government in granting monopolies," etc.

Come, come! Mr. Editor, what about the "dishonest practices" of the infallible British Government? Another tale of the Kettle and Pot. The company has begun what Lord Fife in his Mansion House speech called its "high functions," by which he said he meant "the civilisation and elevation of the aborigines of that long-neglected country," in rather a curious manner. First, Mr. Rhodes, as representing the company, smuggles into the country 1,000 stand of rifles, and is aided by Government officials in doing so. The civilising process thus begun, is followed up by a grand horse-race in Matabeleland, under the patronage of King Lobengula, who, to show the interest he takes in the civilising process, enters two horses presented to him by the company. This he follows up on the following Sunday by a monster dance. Some people at home will raise their hands in holy horror at this,

but (take heart of grace, good folk!) the dance was under the auspices of the company formed for the "Elevation and Civilisation" of these "long-neglected" people, and had, no doubt, a good deal of the Elevating and Civilising influence infused into it; of which influence Lord Fife would have us believe the company possesses a monopoly. That Lobengula is a fraud, and a puppet to boot, of which the Rhodes Syndicate pull the strings, is very certain, and the pity is that his tribe will be the sufferers from his treachery. Many of the Matabeles, however, are uttering threats against the invasion of their territory by the Fiving Filibusters, and Lobengula himself admits that some of the younger regiments of the Matabeles may yet give trouble.

Lord Fife thought fit to tell the Mansion House meeting that the Rhodes Syndicate were working in co-operation with the African Lakes Company. Reading this part of the speech brought to my mind an interview I had with Mr. Moir, the manager of the Lakes Company, in Edinburgh about a year ago. When talking over the wages paid by the company, I hazarded the remark that they were very low; was it not in Mr. Moir's power to increase them? "No," said Mr. Moir, "I cannot do that, for, as you are aware, it is a limited company, and you know what that means." A second afterwards, when I blurted out that I believed it meant that said companies had neither soul nor conscience, my remark met with a consenting but silent nod—a handy way of signifying approval, which, however, cannot be produced as evidence. However, the after-conduct of the company in advertising for men to form part of an expeditionary force to be employed in "Elevating and Civilising" the Arab traders on the Zambesi, confirmed me in my opinion; and when the company went howling to Lord Salisbury and the British Government about the treatment they had received from the Portuguese authorities, simply because they were not allowed to send arms and ammunition for their hired murderers into the interior by way of Delagoa Bay, I knew what the howl meant, and felt glad when they were forced to take a back seat. They have had their revenge by urging on the Makololos to attack Major Serpa Pinto, and so, by forcing this officer to defend himself, giving Lord Salisbury what shadow of an excuse he wanted for the ultimatum to Portugal. I do not say this out of sympathy with Portugal's action in Eastern Africa, because both are playing the same game, only Britain knows best how to play "brag." I cannot close my reference to Lord Fife's speech without saying that all this hypocritical cant about the "High [capital H] Functions" and the "Civilisation and Elevation," etc., is simply rubbish, and puts one in mind of William and Mary's Attorney-General, who, when asked to assist in founding a college in Virginia, and told by way of inducement that the people of Virginia had souls to be saved as well as those of England, "Souls!" answered he; "damn your souls!—spin tobacco." It comes to the same thing with the Rhodes Syndicate; as with all others, it is a case of "damn your souls!—dig us diamonds, or gold, or any other thing by which we can fleece and rob you and your brothers in other parts of the globe; leave your souls in our keeping, we will look after them for you. But don't have anything to do with those rascally Portuguese, who don't care a rap for 'High Functions' or 'Civilising and Christianising Influences'!" So much for the South African Company.

That the whole of Southern Africa is in a state of transition is true and very evident to people who may chance to be on the spot. A few years ago, "exploitation" and "development" were words but seldom used in the colony. Now they are used by most men and by many women with a patness born of long familiarity. The only people who know the *true* meaning of the words are the Kafirs whose lands have been "developed" and who have been well-nigh exploited out of existence. But for pure effrontery in the use of the word exploitation in connection with labour commend me to the following, which I picked up from the table of a share-broker in this town the other day. It is the front page of the prospectus of the "General Exploitation and Building Company, Limited," which has its motto "Labour alone ennobles mankind," and for its capital £250,000 in £1 shares. The margins of the front page are further embellished with the following: "No fruitful labour without organisation," "No prosperity without labour," "No real organisation without liberty," "No charitable (?) liberty without knowledge." To the truth of all which I heartily assent; but oh, the company they keep!! The present rent-roll of the "General Exploitation," etc., Company is £6,308, and it reckons on increasing this in a few years to £25,000! Capitalise this sum at twenty years' valuation, and you have £500,000, or twice the capital of the company. Then the company goes on to say that "we would impress upon the readers the fact that Pretoria property is on the increase, and to give some idea of the value of ground, £14,000 was recently given for one erf of ground." An erf is 227 by 121 English feet. The prospectus winds up by saying that

"the company is possessed of a mile of street-frontages, partly with buildings on, and nearly all in the steady solid town of Pretoria and centrally situated; also about 160,557 acres of farm lands or about 428 square miles upon which we have endeavoured to show that gold, silver, copper, and other precious metals exist. Here there is food for reflection by the investor, which can be digested at leisure."

Readers can find comments for themselves.

Harking back to "exploitation," let me give you the words of old Krel, chief of the Gcalekas, to a correspondent of the *Cape Times* who visited him recently in his rocky fastness. The old man—he is over seventy—is one of the most courageous and kindly hearted of native chiefs, and has won the confidence of the colonists, who say, "He is a man of his word to us; with the Government he has no conscience. Here are the correspondent's own words: "He told us he did not care to see strangers, for he was living like a baboon in a hole. 'Where is my country? where are my children? My country was there'—sweeping the horizon. 'Now I've no country.' Perhaps the old man's words explain the meaning of "Exploitation and Development," as applied to colonial matters, better than any dictionary definition yet given. What civilisation did for Edmund Sandilli is put by the same correspondent into few words—viz.: "It shot his father, jumped his country, and sent him for years to the breakwater to herd with other convicts, until, heartbroken and dejected, the Government thought there could be no danger in sending him back to his—or what was once his—country." And so with old Krel; for well-nigh eight years he was a fugitive. Hunted down for no crime, fighting every step of the ground, never showing the "white feather," poor old Krel was at last forced back to live as he himself says "like a baboon in a hole." And as with Sandilli and Krel and many other native chiefs, so it will yet be with many others. However, a little more claptrap about "High Functions" and "Civilisation and Elevation of the natives" from this new-fledged dual "whistler," as fifiers are termed in Scotland, and the shareholders will grab their dividends and dispose of their shares to the highest bidders and rest with easy consciences, and the gullible British public will be as wise as ever as to the real objects of the Fiving Filibusters. However, with the turn affairs are taking here, the doings of the company are likely to be known sooner than most

people imagine, and I am inclined to think that it has a future before it not altogether pleasant to those most interested in it. In other words, Mr. Rhodes will sooner or later find that the days of Chartered Piracy Companies are past, and that despite the patronage of colonial and imperial governments and the professional services of officers and ex-officers, military and marine, and the help of African travellers and explorers, doctors, lawyers, and I don't know what else, that there is rougher work cut out for them than they are fitted to do.

J. BAIN.

Cape Town, March 19th.

P.S.—News just to hand that police force of Chartered Company have mutinied against officers and refuse to serve.

THE LABOUR STRUGGLE.

Cardiff and Hanley.

We had two Labour conferences on Easter Monday on the important question of labour representation. The conference at Cardiff was got up by a Liberal agent for the purpose of forming a new labour league, the members of which would bind themselves to pay $\frac{1}{4}$ d. a-week for the purpose of returning supporters of Mr. Gladstone to the House of Commons. We will own that it was not plainly stated that this was the object of the conference, but the cat was let out of the bag in the course of the proceedings. A proposal by Mr. Mahon, London, that the movement should be independent of all political parties, was indignantly rejected by an overwhelming majority; and when the same speaker hoped they would not elect Mr. Broadhurst as one of their vice-presidents, he was received with a storm of disapprobation, and Mr. Broadhurst was returned at the top of the poll. The Liberalism of the congress was admirably shown when someone proposed that Michael Davitt should be president. The meeting literally howled with rage at the notion. The conference was mostly Welsh, and a general outcry went up that "a Welshman was as good as him." A delegate from Llanerch objected to telling his constituents that a "foreigner" was to boss the show. We fear that after exhibiting this "patriotic" feeling that "the British Labour League" is likely to be confined to Wales. Probably it would be hard to find anywhere else workmen who are fools enough to give their helpance to return Gladstonian M.P.'s of the Broadhurst stamp to Parliament, although they may be green enough to vote for them. English prefer to let Liberal sweaters pay for the return of their partners to Parliament. Mr. Broadhurst should be a happy man, for he knows now that when he has been kicked out of every assemblage of honest workmen in England he will be able to find a refuge in the "British Labour League" of Wales.

A much healthier feeling was shown at the conference of the Labour Electoral Association at Hanley. This conference was not a bogus affair got up by a Liberal agent to nobble the Labour party. The conference, which represented the organised trade-unionists of the country, decided upon "the energetic opposition of all unfair employers and enemies of labour, to whatever party they may belong." It was also the general opinion, as stated by the secretary in the annual report, that "in no case should candidates be allowed to gain their seats without being closely questioned as to their intentions, and certainly none whose primary qualifications appear to consist of ability to fence, to evade, to compromise, and to cover by a number of legal quibbles the points we contend for." On the motion of Mr. Holmes (Leicester), the delegates regretted Mr. Charles Bradlaugh, M.P.'s, attitude on the Employers' Liability Bill, and refused to recognise him as a labour representative. Poor Charles will have a difficulty in posing as a representative of labour after this. A resolution in favour of the nationalisation of the land was carried unanimously. On the whole, although the conference was not so advanced as we should have liked to have seen it, yet it certainly showed that even the trade unionists are getting on. It was generally recognised that, in the words of one of the speakers, as to the political parties, "there was more profession in both than practical sympathy or justice towards the working classes." These trade-unionists have learnt at last that both these parties are largely composed of knaves and traitors. They have yet to learn that parliamentary action is a fraud from beginning to end, and that the people can only achieve their emancipation by overthrowing the system of capitalism by their own united action.

The National Conference of Miners.

The miners showed themselves still more advanced in their Conference. They did not go for Bradlaugh, but they passed a sharp vote of censure upon that very reactionary body, the Trades Union Parliamentary Committee. It appears that the Parliamentary Committee was ordered, at the last Trades' Union Congress, to draw up an Eight Hours Bill for miners and present it to the House of Commons. As the Trades' Union Parliamentary Committee have a very strong objection to the Eight Hours movement, they "forgot" to draw up this Bill, and the miners are very angry at this shuffling on the part of the Committee. This anger found vent at the Conference, not only in the vote of censure, but in some pretty strong speeches. The chairman, Mr. B. Pickard, M.P., declaring that the Parliamentary Committee was practically dominated by Tory influence, and for the last three years, at any rate, had not been worth the money paid to them. Rather hard, this, on the late Secretary of the Committee, Mr. Broadhurst, who, you would have thought, would have been reckoned as an orthodox Liberal, and who has "dominated" the Committee up till now. Another delegate, Mr. Cowie, said that if the Committee were the autocrats of the toiling masses, the sooner they were got rid of the better. A Bristol delegate, Mr. Whitehouse, said the Committee had humbugged them from Genesis to Revelation. Poor Parliamentary Committee! It was decided to join the Trades' Union Congress, and the delegates appointed were instructed to vote for a Parliamentary Committee that would be favourable to an Eight Hours Bill for miners. *The Star*, which is now "dominated" by capitalist Liberal influence, makes a pitiful pretence of liking this new development, but it notes in anything but a gleeful spirit, "that the advanced sections of the miners seem to have it pretty well all their own way." The delegates also showed that they look upon the Berlin "Labour" Conference as a sham, and declared, through their chairman, that as neither the Miners' Federation nor the Eight Hours Movement had any representatives at that Conference; they repudiated any arrangements that might have been made there. It is evident that new ideas are taking a strong hold upon the miners, who are again as they have always been, in the front of the labour movement. There is evidently a bad time approaching for all reactionaries and traitors.

The Strike in the Boot Trade.

The struggle is still continued with the same determination, the men being confident of success. They have decided that the union men now on strike who want to leave London will be assisted to do so. This, if the masters still persist in their obstinacy, will mean that all the best workmen will leave London for the country, where there is now a great demand for labour, and the masters will be left in the lurch, for the London trade will follow these best hands to the country. The London Trades Council has agreed to support the strikers in their appeal to other trades for assistance. 215 out of 400 masters have given in, and will provide workshops, but the others want to force the men to submit all future wages disputes to a court of arbitration, and this the men very sensibly refuse to do. They do not want their freedom of action fettered, and they have an idea that arbitration may be used to reducing the prices already paid. Some of the Jew employers have offered 10s. and £1 to men to take work home, and thus break the ranks of the strikers, but in not a single instance have they been successful.

Strike of Thames Barge-builders.

The Thames barge-builders came out on strike on Monday. They demand that the working day shall be reduced to nine hours, and that a uniform rate of wages of 9d. an hour, and 1s. an hour overtime, shall obtain throughout the trade, two hours being allowed, or equivalent paid in money, for the grinding of tools after a job. At present the men are working an average of 58 hours per week at an average rate of wages of £2. They are willing to submit the question of overtime to a joint committee of masters and workmen, no overtime to be worked in the meantime. Out of ninety firms carrying on the trade between Brentford and Woolwich, twenty-three have already given way.

The Eight Hours Demonstration.

The societies affiliated to the London Trades Council have resolved to invite the London districts to declare in favour of an eight hours working day, without any stipulation as to the methods by which such eight hours shall be obtained, the general sentiment being in favour of a reduction of hours of labour as a pressing necessity and as likely to ensure employment to those who are now denied it. It was further decided not to demonstrate on the 1st May; but to do so on the first Sunday in May, as the most convenient time.

Tram Strike at Swansea.

A strike broke out on Saturday among the tram men owing to the dismissal without notice of two of the men who have taken a prominent part in the union. No trams ran on Saturday evening, owing to the head constable declining to be responsible if a disturbance took place. A fearful state of tram slavery prevails at Swansea, the men working 105 hours a-week for 8s. a-day. There was an attempt to run the trams with blacklegs on Tuesday, but the people collected in strong force, and trams and blacklegs were unmercifully pelted with flour bags, stones, and other missiles. The windows of the trams were broken, and they were soon forced to cease running.

Strike of Dublin Labourers.

The labourers employed by the Dublin Brick and Tile Co., Mount Argus, have struck work for an increase in wages. During the summer they work 60 hours per week, 57 in winter. Wages, 15s. summer, and 14s. 3d. winter. They demand the hour system, at $\frac{1}{4}$ d. per hour. N.

CORRESPONDENCE.

"DUBLIN BRICKLAYERS LABOURERS."

SIR,—Under the above caption there is a paragraph on page 110 of last week's *Commonweal* (which I have only just read) in which the following statement occurs, in connection with the arbitration between the labourers and contractors of Dublin: "As is usual in cases of arbitration, the men have gained very little; in fact, many of them will lose 1s. 6d. per week."

The facts are these:—There was an increase of 3s. per week got for every labourer (groundman), 1s. 6d. of which was to be granted immediately, and 1s. 6d. more after the 1st of July next. Hodmen to receive one shilling extra beyond the pay of the groundmen, as usual. There is no truth whatever in the assertion that many of the labourers "will lose 1s. 6d." as a consequence of the arbitration.—Yours truly,

MICHAEL DAVITT.

Land League Cottage, Ballybrack, April 9th, 1890.

Cours Weavers' Strike Fund.—Already acknowledged:—£16 18s. 4d. D. W. Reeve (second donation). £10.

COURS FUND.—When sending his subscription, Mr. Reeves said:—"I look upon such a subscription as of great importance, as all such expressions of active sympathy shown by one country towards the workers of another aid in promoting, what is so very desirable, an international solidarity of labour."

Sea-wages from Leith are:—Westward, steam—Sailors, £4 15s.; firemen, £5; donkeyman, £5 10s.; stewards, £6 10s.; cook, £5 10s. and £6. Westward, sail, £4; cook, £5; steward, £5 10s. To the southward, steam—Sailors, £4 10s.; firemen, £4 15s.; boatswain and donkeyman, £5 and £5 5s. respectively, cook, £5 5s.; steward, £5 15s. to £6. To the southward, sail, £3 10s.; steward, £5; cook, £4 10s.; and weekly wages, local, £1 10s.; non-local, £1 12s. 8d.

ALASKA FISHERMEN.—At a meeting in San Francisco, the men engaged in the Alaska Salmon Fishery adopted the following scale of prices:—For Copper River and Nushagak: 30 dols. a month, 10 cents for king fish each and 3 cents for small fish each per boat. For seining in Karluk district: 30 dols. per month and 10 dols. a thousand per seine. For Chignik Bay: 30 dols. a month and 20 cents per case to be divided among the fishermen. For Cook's Inlet: 75 dols. bonus to each man and one cent a case per man. Eighty per cent. of the Alaska fishermen belong to the Coast Seamen's Union, and others belong to the Steamship Sailors' Union and the Sacramento Fishermen's Union.

THE SOCIALIST LEAGUE.

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

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

Executive.—The Council of the Socialist League have, at their meeting on Monday, April 14th, resolved to demonstrate on May-day and Sunday following in favour of the International Solidarity of Labour and its Emancipation by Voluntary Combination. Branches and allied societies are asked to hold demonstrations in their own districts upon the lines of the League principles.

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.

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

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, April 14th, 3s. 5d.

"COMMONWEAL" GUARANTEE FUND.

The following further sums have been received towards this fund:—C. Saunders, 2s.; H. R., 1s.; D. Nicoll, 6d.; North London Branch, 3s.; Fraser, 6d.; Birkbeck, 4d.; P. Webb, 4s.; J. C. Kenworthy, 10s.; J. L. Joyne, £1; and A. K. Austin, £1.

REPORTS.

EAST LONDON.—Good meeting in Victoria Park addressed by Cores, Davis, and Mowbray; 33 *Weals*, 5 *Freedom*s, and 12 pamphlets sold.—H. McK.

NORTH KENSINGTON.—A good meeting held at Latimer Road; speakers were R. J. Lyne and Maughan; collected 1s. 10d. and several *Weals* sold. Good meeting in Hyde Park at 3.30; speakers were Crouch, R. J. Lyne, and Cantwell; 2s. 6d. collected, and several *Weals* sold. At our room in Clarendon Coffee Tavern, comrade Coulon lectured to a good audience on "The French Revolution;" animated discussion; 2s. collected.

NORTH LONDON.—We held a very good meeting on Saturday night at Hyde Park, addressed by Cantwell and Nicoll; fair sale of *Weal*. On Sunday afternoon at Hyde Park, Cantwell, R. Lyne, Bullock, and Crouch, addressed a large audience; very good sale of *Commonweal* and pamphlets, and 3s. 8d. was collected.—T. C.

STREATHAM.—A good meeting was held at the Fountain last Sunday night. A middle-class young man of the Christian Association started the opposition with a sermon, but did not succeed in diverting the attention of those who had come to listen to our comrade Kitz; 3s. *Commonweal* sold.—R. S.

ABERDEEN.—At meeting on 13th, comrade Rennie read an eloquent paper on "The Socialism of Count Tolstoi," which was followed by an interesting discussion.—L.

GLASGOW.—On Sunday, at 2 o'clock, Joe and Tim Burgoyne spoke to a good audience on "Jail Life." At 5 o'clock Glasier spoke at Paisley Road Toll; *Weal* sold out; next Saturday we intend beginning our Saturday afternoon excursions.

LEDS.—On Sunday last, at a meeting in Vicar's Croft, when Maguire, Braithwaite and Sweeney spoke, a policeman cautioned Samuels against selling any literature, as it was contrary to the bye-laws. Samuels, who has been speaking and selling papers in the same place for months previously without molestation, got on the platform and related the circumstance to the assembled crowd and defied the constable. He then got down and in a few moments he had sold all the *Weals* and *Freedom*s that he had with him. The policeman attempted to rush him out of the market, but the demeanour of the crowd becoming threatening, he was satisfied with our comrade's name and address, whom he threatened with a summons "in the morning." I think this is a sign we are getting felt here.—H. S.

LEICESTER.—March the 4th, Stepniak lectured in the Co-operation Hall to a large audience on "Russian Democracy"; a Fabian comrade took the chair; great interest was manifested. On the 11th, William Morris was among us and took tea with about twenty of us at our rooms. Morris's address, "The Class Struggle" was a real stirring one, and his replies to objections excellent. Sunday evening, Greenman, of the S. D. F., spoke on the general question of Socialism, at Humberstone Gate, to a good audience.—T. B.

MANCHESTER.—On Sunday morning a large meeting was held at Phillips' Park; Barton and Baillie spoke; lively discussion. In Stevenson Square, in the afternoon, Sharples (of Blackburn) was the principal speaker; two quires of *Commonweal* sold, and 2s. 9d. collected. On Monday night, the quarterly meeting of the branch was held at the club; the financial report showed the branch to be in a sound and flourishing position; the corresponding and financial secretaries were re-elected, and other business transacted.

YARMOUTH.—On Sunday, in the morning, on Priory Plain, comrade Brightwell opened a discussion on "Socialism v. Christianity," several comrades taking part; in the evening, at Colman's Granary Quay, comrade Ruffold addressed a good audience; 11 *Commonweal* sold.—J. H.

DUBLIN.—At Working-men's Club, Willington Quay, April 9th, the third sitting of an Industrial Conference took place; amongst the speakers were Mr. J. A. Cree and Fitzpatrick, who dwelt strongly on the antagonism between employes and employer, and the utter impossibility of propping up the existing system; the clerical and orthodox Trades Union element being not at all pleased at some of the home thrusts.

EDINBURGH—SCOTTISH SOCIALIST FEDERATION.—On Sunday afternoon we held a very successful meeting in the Meadows; M'Kenrie, Hamilton and Smith made very effective speeches. In the evening comrade Melliett lectured to a good audience in the Moulders' Hall, on "Capital Punishment," and showed, from the points of view of a Socialist and a man of the world, why it should be abolished; good discussion.

LIVERPOOL SOCIALIST SOCIETY.—On Sunday afternoon and evening, comrade William Morris lectured to good audiences at the Rodney Hall, on "The Development of Modern Society" and "The Social Outlook"; papers and literature to the amount of £2 9s. were disposed of.—E. C. CHAPMAN.

'COMMONWEAL' can be had from—

Mr. Read, Surrey-street, Littlehampton, Sussex.
C. A. Crump, 39, Rayner Terrace, Stratford New Town.

INTERNATIONAL OR REVOLUTIONARY SOCIALISM.—As the study of Socialism from a revolutionary or international standpoint is absolutely necessary, it is intended by several friends to form a branch of the League. I have therefore to ask all those who are willing to join in forming such branch, and who are willing to help in propagating the principles of true Socialism, to communicate with me as early as possible.—J. SKETCHLEY, 105 Gibraltar Street, Sheffield.

LECTURE DIARY.

LONDON.

Battersea.—All communications to E. Buteux, 45, Inwith 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. Sunday April 20, at 8 p.m., George Bernard Shaw, "The Consequences of Democracy."

East London.—A meeting of members will be held on Sunday April 20 at 12 Basing Place, Kingsland Road, 6.30 p.m.

Hammersmith.—Kelmscott House, Upper Mall, W. Sunday April 20, at 8 p.m., a Lecture. French Class conducted by Mlle. Desroches on Friday evenings at 7.30.

Mitcham.—Comrades are asked to turn up on the "Lord Napier" on Sunday at 8.30, to decide upon the summer campaign.

North Kensington.—Clarendon Coffee Palace, Clarendon Road. Meets every Wednesday at 8 p.m. On Sunday April 20, at 8 p.m., a Discussion.

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

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 Hall, 9 Harriet Street, on Sunday evenings at 6.30. Singing practice, etc., in Odd-fellows' Small Hall, Crooked Lane, Mondays at 8 p.m.

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

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.

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.—Socialist League Club, 56 Row, Market Place. Open every evening. Business Meeting Tuesdays at 8 p.m. Elocution Class Friday at 8.30 p.m. Discussion Class Sunday 3 p.m.

OPEN-AIR PROPAGANDA.

SATURDAY 19.

7 Hyde Park Nicoll and Cantwell

SUNDAY 20.

11 Latimer Road Station North Kensington Branch
11.30 Hammersmith Bridge Hammersmith Branch
11.30 Kilburn—"Old Plough," Kilburn Lane Mainwaring
11.30 Mitcham—Fair Green J. Turner, Kitz, and Smith
11.30 Regent's Park Mowbray
3.30 Hyde Park—Marble Arch North Kensington Branch
3.30 Victoria Park East London Branch
7 Hammersmith Bridge Hammersmith Branch
7 Weltje Road, Ravenscourt Park Hammersmith Branch
8 Streatham Fountain Smith and Sparling

TUESDAY 22.

8 Walham Green—back of Church Hammersmith Branch

THURSDAY 24.

8.15 Hoxton Church Kitz and Davis

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.

Liverpool.—Landing-stage, Sundays at 11.30.

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 11.30 a.m.; Burngreave Road, near Vestry Offices, at 3 p.m.; Pump, West Bar, at 8 p.m.

Yarmouth.—Sunday: Priory Plain, at 11; Bradwell, 11.30; Colman's Granary Quay, at 7.

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

NOTTINGHAM SOCIALIST CLUB.—All communications to be addressed to the Secretary, A. Clifton, 11 Hawksworth Street, Clarence Street.

CHELSEA S.D.F., Co-operative Lecture Hall, 312 Kings Road, Chelsea.—Sunday April 20, at 8 p.m., H. R. Taylor, "England as it Was, as it Is, and as it Ought to Be."

EDINBURGH—SCOTTISH SOCIALIST FEDERATION.—Bruce Glasier (of Glasgow) speaks in Meadows, Sunday at 2.30, and in Moulders' Hall at 6.30. Criticism of Fabian Essays, Tuesday at 8 p.m., at 35 George IV. Bridge.

FABIAN SOCIETY.—A course of seven lectures on SOCIALISM IN CONTEMPORARY LITERATURE will be given in the French Chamber, St. James's Restaurant, W. (entrance from Piccadilly), on Friday evenings, at 8 o'clock. May 2 (second lecture), Ernest Radford, "William Morris."

DEMONSTRATION OF LANCASHIRE AND DISTRICT SOCIALISTS.—On Sunday May 4th, the Annual Gathering of Socialists will take place in Manchester, and a mass meeting will be held in Stevenson Square at 3 p.m. A large array of well-known Socialist speakers will address the meeting.

YARMOUTH.—Suitable premises have now been secured for the Socialist League Club at 56 Row, Market Place. Amongst its attractions will be a library, reading, boxing, and refreshment rooms. Friends who can assist, either with furniture, fittings, books, or funds, are earnestly invited to do so. The club is open every evening for members. *Commonweal* and Socialist League 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*.

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