

THE COMMONWEAL

A JOURNAL OF Revolutionary Socialism.

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MARCH, 1891.

[ONE PENNY.]

COMMUNE OF PARIS.

THE TWENTIETH ANNIVERSARY of the PROCLAMATION of the COMMUNE OF PARIS will be celebrated on

TUESDAY MARCH 17th, at 8 p.m.,
AT THE HALL, BANNER STREET,
OLD STREET, ST. LUKE'S, E.C.,
(Close to Aldergate Street Stations.)

The following Comrades will address the Meeting:—

D. J. NICOLL, R. W. BURNIE, C. W. MOWBRAY, W. MORRIS,
MRS. WILSON, J. TURNER, LOUISE MICHEL and other Comrades.

THE PARIS COMMUNE.

Across the darkling expanse of twenty years there shines still for us the flame kindled by the noble-hearted Paris workers, in March, 1871; a flame which is as a beacon on a hill, bidding Revolutionists take heart, and be of good courage, terrifying even now the souls of all "respectable" folk everywhere. As we look backward, over the weary way traversed since the days when Paris sprang once more into her old place at the head of the army of the toilers, this feeling as of a flame lit for our encouragement is always the first crude impression we receive. A few moments later we may remember a blunder committed here, a false step taken there; we may recognise that it would never answer to conduct a future revolt too servilely upon the model of 1871, and so fall into the error of those belated Jacobins who were always wanting, (as Jules Vallés tells us) to "do as in '93." For all that, and with all deductions made, our first crude impression of admiration remains, in substance, the true result to gather from study of the only Workingmen's Government the world has seen. For my own part, at least, I do not (like some of our more pedantic Anarchist comrades), hold it as matter of reproach to the men of 1871 that they made a Government at all. Look forward as we may to the glad "epoch of rest" after the Revolution, when, in a free Society, we shall need neither laws nor government, I fail to understand how the necessarily anti-social business of fighting is to be carried on without some measure of coercion, some kind of Government.

This is not the place to dilate upon a question which is hotly debated among us now, but which will probably very easily solve itself practically when the time comes. One may assume, at least, that to Socialists of any school it is not necessary to clear the heroes of the Commune from the stains of the foul lies with which the capitalistic press bespattered them at the time, and yet bespatters them. Infamy there was in 1871—deep, damning, bloody infamy enough—but it was infamy wrought not by the workers and the thinkers at the head of the insurrection, but by such robbers and murderers as the vile butcher Gallifet (as cruelly inhuman a brute as ever Russian Czar or Austrian Kaiser had in his services), and the venomous and merciless trickster who gloried in the singularly apt nickname of the "Little Bourgeois."

Yet there are still some honest people (some proletarians even), especially in this island, who sincerely believe that the Paris Communards (in other words, practically all the toilers of Paris) were, in some strange, pantomimic fashion, suddenly transformed from honest, helpful, friendly workmen and workwomen, into devils incarnate (and mad devils, too), who vomited petroleum and slew for slaying's sake. With middle-class people who take views of this kind it would probably be vain to argue. So blinded are they by class prejudices that no evidence would convince them. Nay, probably in their heart of hearts they think it a light misdemeanour for the Versaillesists to shoot prisoners in cold blood (as they did from the first skirmish), an atrocity for the Communards to make tardy reprisals (after long months of patience) by executing hostages, after repeated warning, and according to the laws of war.

With the bourgeois we have no wish to discuss the question. natural for him to back his own side, — even when his side was in the blood of the workers, killing twenty thousand (men, women, children) in the streets of Paris alone, after all the fighting was done and done with,—all in a few June days. Yet as one thinks of the twenty thousand and of the fifty thousand prisoners at Versailles penned in their fold at Satory, of their tortures and their torments while awaiting the morning firing party or the cruel journey to New Caledonia,—surely, if we are men and women, the hot blood mounts to our cheeks and it is hard to refrain from longing for the time when we may do so and more also to the robbers whose slaves we are, when we may revenge the blood of our comrades. Remember, the middle-classes are the same everywhere. Were we to unsuccessfully revolt here as our brothers revolted in Paris, the same measure would be dealt out to us. The ladies and gentlemen who spat upon wounded prisoners as they marched through Versailles to their death would find plenty of imitators in Kensington High Street; there would be plenty of friends of law and order to beat us almost to death first and then shoot us afterwards, if once we were helpless,—as they did with our noble Varlin. There is a superabundance of well-fed brutes of the Barttelott and Jameson types among the British bourgeois who could, upon occasions, eclipse even Gallifet at his own game. I repeat it is a natural (although illogical) impulse which makes us eager sometimes for the day when it shall be "our turn at last," that we may have revenge.

That day is surely coming—must (as we know better than did most of the Communards) surely come, by the action of natural laws, even were we to do nothing to hasten its coming. Yet, somehow, I venture to predict that when it comes we shall not wreak that senseless vengeance, for which we now cannot help half longing. Violence and slaying there doubtless will be; but we shall not murder prisoners, or even furnish up the old goals to imprison and torture our masters in. It will not be worth while;—as our Comrade McLately "we shall be too happy"; we shall find a nobler way of avenging and honouring our martyrs of 1871.

Those martyrs themselves have taught us that way, and let the proletarian who has allowed himself to be bluffed into believing the Communards to be the devils in human shape their enemies and his have painted them, learn what manner of men those Parisians who died for him really were. I have said that from the first skirmish the bourgeois chiefs shot prisoners of war. The rebels (they were rebels, and the best of them would have been proud of the title,) retaliated by setting free their prisoners upon a mere promise not again to bear arms against the Commune; it was only at the last extremity that, to stop, as they thought, further murders, they at last made reprisals. "The more fools!" some may say, and say perhaps rightly; but it is such noble folly that makes men, men, and life beautiful.

I said just now that they died for the workers of to-day, and so they did, many thousands of them fighting to the last, when all hope was gone, behind the barricades, knowing that they should never see the New Age, but knowing also that they were kindling that beacon, of which I spoke in the beginning, which should lighten the darkness of those who were to come after them. As one of themselves said, they fought for human solidarity and for us. It would be sad indeed if the toiler of the nineties were permanently to fail to recognise the truth regarding the struggle made in Paris a score of years since by workingmen for the betterment of working-men all over the world. We need not fear any such permanent failure. Year by year the celebrations of that great attempt to set the crooked straight grow in magnitude and importance; year by year the people learn more to keep in reverent memory the deeds and the sufferings of the brave men and women (aye, and brave children too,) who died and went into everlasting night for us, and that we might see (as we hope to see, some of us,) at least, the dawn of the new heaven and the new earth.

They were not all Socialists, our comrades of '71; the majority of them knew nothing of Socialism, even the Socialist minority were but learners and students of Socialism. They made, as we have granted, many mistakes; they had, perhaps, too much faith in political formulas, and quasi-parliamentary red-tapeism. For all that, the workers have no reason to be otherwise than proud of the Worker's Government. "Crime" and "vice" disappeared as by magic under

its beneficent sway. The "governors," for the most part, recognised that they were merely mates of the "governed," set for the moment to the discharge of certain needful services. We may remember with justifiable elation the chasm between the incorruptible honesty of the Communal officials and the thievery and corruption which prevailed under the rule of the so-called "Government of National Defence." The poor workmen who entered the councils of the Commune and who survived the massacres were as poor as before, although all the treasure of the Bank of France might have been theirs for the seizing. Gambetta who entered upon his dictatorship a hungry and briefless advocate, a loungeur in the dingy cafés of the Latin Quarter, left it a rich man. The moral needs no painting. Verily the children of this world are in their generation wiser than the children of light. For my part I yield to no one in my hatred of all authority and all government; but if, as I also believe, government is a necessary evil while we are actually fighting the forces of reaction, I can hardly hope for a better government than that of '71.

It may be that not many more times will the month of March come round again before that final Armageddon, when we shall crush for ever the robbers who make our lives so grey and bitter. In the meantime surely we do well to hold in honour the forerunners of the last evolution of all:—

"Named and nameless all live in us; one and all they lead us yet;
Every pain to count for nothing, every sorrow to forget.

R. W. BURNIE.

NOTES.

OUR sympathising, but somewhat too religious and respectable friends of the *Belfast Weekly Star* (an excellent and useful paper enough in its own way), are beginning to perceive that there are ugly times in store for the possessing classes. "Violence has been openly advocated," says this "Christian Socialist" organ, "by several of the extreme journals, and at meetings of angry workmen revolutionary speeches have been hailed with delight, while more moderate and more reasonable speeches have been listened to with but scant patience. Such sentiments as 'putting a little more devil into the strike;' 'don't let all the corpses be on one side;' and vague threats of 'fanning the class war into a blaze which shall fire the world' are heartily echoed by thousands of excited workers in different parts of London and throughout the provinces." It will be observed that our North Irish friends are diligent students of these "Notes."

Clearly the *Weekly Star* is a little horrified at our "violent" phrases; but its leader-writer has the grace and the sense to add:—"It is easy for us well-wishers, belonging to the comfortable class, to decry revolutionary methods, and to advocate reliance on Parliamentary action and peaceful combination; but the bulk of the men who are ready to rush to revolution as the only means of social salvation are not so favourably situated for calm reflection. They have suffered much, and are still suffering; their wives and their children are being crushed into misery and degradation; they feel as if they had no time to lose; they know not what may happen to them when the year is ended; unless they bring about some change in the world. Any change they think must be for the better."

Our good friend describes well enough one great cause of the Revolutionary feeling, which we trust is spreading apace indeed. Yet, here and there, there may be one or two belonging more or less to the "comfortable" classes who would join in "endeavouring after a speedy change," "prepared to dare all—and if need be to lose all," because after much "calm reflection" they have come definitely to the conclusion that the change, although inevitable and necessary, can only come by a "revolutionary method"—certainly never by "parliamentary action and peaceful combination." Those workers, too, who are real Revolutionists are so, we may hope, mainly because their reason is convinced that in the Revolution alone is ultimate peace to be found.

Anti-parliamentarians, it seems, according to that excellent *Reynolds*, are "theorists" who do not understand the beauty and utility of expropriating the ground landlord for the benefit of the house-farmer and of promoting a "Bill" with that object. In truth, we care absolutely nothing for "reforms" of this kind—reforms which can have only one result, the transference of plunder from one gang to another gang of robbers. The only purpose of our lives is to sweep away robbery altogether by destroying our so-called "civilisation" once for all—and with it the thing called "Parliament," an institution which was even admirable in its day, but which now is but a cunningly-devised machine for the enslavement of mankind. Probably, in pursuit of that purpose of ours, we shall be a little too practical in our methods for the paragraphist in *Reynolds*.

The excitable and variable-minded "lady" who masquerades under the name of "John Law" has undertaken the rehabilitation of Iscariot-Champion in the congenial columns of the *Pall Mall Gazette*. "John Law's" defence of Iscariot is of the quaintest, and is thoroughly characteristic of one who has proclaimed herself a follower of two somewhat dissimilar leaders, Bombardos Booth and our Comrade Kropotkine. Iscariot, misfortune is, it seems, that his blue

blood and superior education unfit him for association with the "common or garden" worker. Hence his two great faults are "reticence" and "pride!" The selection of these two qualities as predominant in Iscariot is (as Postlethwaite would have said in the days when Postlethwaite flourished) "distinctly precious."

Some curious association of ideas (surely it could not have been mention of Postlethwaite!) leads me to speak of Oscar Wilde's article on "The Soul of Man under Socialism" in the February *Fortnightly*. Oddly enough, the article in question is quite valuable, making allowance of course for the idiosyncrasies of its author. It really supplies a good argument for Free Communism (as distinguished from State Socialism) from an artistic standpoint. Comrades who have access to half-crown magazines should read it. As, before the great bourgeois revolution of the last century, even such foppish literary parasites of the nobles as Beaumarchais prophesied of the wrath to come, so now, the very society versifiers and jack-puddings of the pot-bellied classes are foretelling the New Era.

One notes without without surprise that Dr. Aveling and his "Legal Eight Hours" organisation have pronounced in favour of a demonstration on the first Sunday in May, rather than on the first day of the month. It may be useful to point out to workers, at once, that a mere Sunday walk absolutely nullifies all the main advantages of the observance of Labour Day. Even as an engine for obtaining an Eight Hour's Act (whatever such an Act would be worth), such a walk is of little avail.

Surely, however, the real practical utility of the May celebration is the proving of the solidarity of Labour throughout the world, and the demonstration to masters of their dependence on the producers and their helplessness without them. It is a kind of dress rehearsal of the General Strike: a dress rehearsal which costs little to put on the stage, since it only involves the taking a "day off" together. All over this continent and that of America, at least, our brothers will make holiday on the first, undeterred by the reactionary chatter of their Avelings. Here, too, let all workers who believe in Labour and its claims (whether as yet they be Socialists or not,) join with their fellows abroad in a week-day observance of Labour Day.

Our comrade Belfort Bax has been discoursing in *Time* on the moral duties of Socialist capitalists. Really there are so very few of these persons, (it would be wonderful indeed if there were more,) that it hardly seems worth while to waste valuable energy in discussing the morality of this position. I agree with Bax, of course, that they would do harm rather than good by individually, under present conditions, abandoning their stolen riches and joining the proletarian ranks, or even by "selling all they have and giving to the poor," according to the crude unscientific Communism of Galilee. Is it, however, too much to ask that every Socialist profit-monger whose ill-got gains amount to more than £500 a year should devote all such surplus to propaganda? The request seems moderate enough; but I fear it is not likely to be granted, probably because no capitalist can in truth be a Socialist. It is the old story of the camel and the needle's eye.

R. W. B.

Once again the church is making frantic efforts to regain its hold of the working classes. The question which is uppermost in the minds of "Godology-mongers" is why the working-classes do not go to church. They seem to be surprised that after all their preaching down to the people the gospel of equality after death, that these very people (the workers), want to establish a little equality whilst they are alive.

The church never has been, nor ever will be a friend to the workers, until it preaches fearlessly the doctrine, "Call ye no man master," and this it is incapable of doing, and for a very good reason, being as it is, simply a moral police force to frighten people into submission to law and authority by the fear of Hell.

The spread of Socialism is forcing the hands of even Cardinal Manning, the great light,—save the mark—of the most reactionary force existing in the world at the present time. This would be, if he could a check on progress. He has been declaring Socialism to be a disorganising and revolutionary element. I wonder what books he has been reading to show the disorganising tendency of Socialism. It is news indeed to us, and if true why this fear on the part of the cardinal and his clique.

That Socialism is revolutionary we admit, and therein lies its value; and the great battle of the future will be between the Red Internationalists and the Black International, the culmination of which will be the total extinction of the enemies of Liberty and Freedom, i.e., the black-coated police.

It is very pleasing to us to see the jingo spirit of the workmen dying out. It seems from what Mr. Broderick, M.P. says, replying to Mr. Goldsworthy, that the regular army is short of 1,657 men; militia, 23,731; yeomanry, 2,387. This is really good; for once get it into the head of the worker that he is a fool to fight for his master's interests, and against his own, then it is an easy matter to induce him to keep away from the fighting forces of the country.

It seems, after all, that Socialist teachings are taking root, and that the time is not far distant when the fighting forces of this and other countries will consist of thieves on the one hand and workers on the other. Push on, comrades, there is nothing to be disheartened at, but rather the reverse.

C. W. M.

THE WORKMAN'S COMPASS.

SHALL the "docker's tanner" be the end of the "greatest labour movement of the century," or shall the strike whereby the "tanner" was won be only the beginning of a far greater movement—the first step along the road that shall lead the working people from poverty and misery to plenty and happiness?

The road is sure. There need be no mistaking it. For the strike should teach lessons that will prove like signposts all along the way, giving certain directions to those who will learn to read them.

The main lessons to be learnt are five. I. The absolute dependence of all life upon labour. II. The inter-dependence of labour. III. The necessity of union. IV. The value of organisation. V. The uselessness of government.

Let us take these lessons in their order.

I. The dependence of life upon labour. This is the key to the whole position. The strike closed only one of the sources of supply of London; yet it paralysed trade, hindered production, and interfered with distribution. If the other great source of supply—the railways—had been closed by a similar strike, what would have happened? In one week London would have been starving; because the rich man's money would not buy him food if the working people refused to bring it in for him to buy. So that it is plain that *all* people, rich and poor alike, depend for their very living on those who work. And instead of the companies—the capitalists—starving the strikers into submission, the strikers might have starved their masters into submission, and made what terms they liked with them.

Therefore it is plain that capital is useless without labour. But labour is not useless without capital, for it can produce capital. When the docks and the railways were made, and the machinery you work with and the houses you live in, labour was producing capital. And the labourers were not kept by the capitalists' money, but by the food brought into London by other labourers.

All who live depend upon labour; if not on their own, then on some one else's.

II. The inter-dependence of labour. The skilled workman is therefore not more *useful* to society than the unskilled labourer. He gets higher wages, because his class of work is more scarce than the labourer's; not because it is more useful. If *all* men had learnt a trade, competition would have lowered the wages of skilled labour.

But the skilled workman is not only no more useful than the unskilled. He cannot get on without the latter. During the strike there were many artisans obliged to stand idle for want of the materials kept back in the docks by the dockers. This would have been much worse had the railways also been closed. Then it would have been seen at once that all classes of labour depend on one another, and especially on those who supply the daily food.

Therefore all labour is inter-dependent, and the interests of all working men and women are common.

III. The *value* of union is plainer since the strike; but if the working men and women of London had all been united, the duration of the strike might have been reckoned by days instead of by weeks.

We have seen how a general strike would enable the working classes to make what terms they like with their masters. But the proclamation of a general strike was withdrawn, and wisely withdrawn under the circumstances. Why? What were the circumstances which made it wise *not* to take a step that should have ensured immediate victory for the men? They were three: (a) There was not enough unity to ensure its success. (b) The men could not depend entirely on the help of the other working-men of London. (c) They were therefore afraid of losing the help of those who were *not* working-men, but who live on the labour of the workers.

Now, if there had been more complete unity amongst the working people, (b) the dockers would have had the help of all other labourers, (c) they could have done without the help of the rich, and (a) they would have ended the strike and got all they wanted.

Therefore, for the future, unity of labour is a necessity (and it should include eventually all clerks, Post-office employés, domestic servants, shop-assistants, and the police).

IV. The value of organisation is especially notable in connection with the distribution of relief to the dockers. It was stated that the Strike Committee practically knew every genuine docker personally, and so could regulate the distribution of relief-tickets. (Whether or not this was taken advantage of does not matter.) It could be managed in this way. The dockers, when employed, work in gangs. Each gang is under the direction of a well-known man, who is more or less acquainted with the men who work with him. By putting these "gangers" in connection with the leaders of the strike and with the general distributors the relief could be afforded with a regularity

otherwise impossible. Every man might be sure of his fair share, and no man could obtain more. Happily the men seem to have behaved so splendidly (it is a glorious thing to think of!) that there was little need of such precautions. Heroes do not cheat one another. Yet it is well to have some check against sneaks and traitors.

These four facts are the north, south, east, and west of the untried future. The fifth is the Compass, whereby the working class may steer a direct course across it.

V. Neither Parliament nor the County Council did, or could do, anything to help the strikers. All that was done, was done by the men themselves, under trusty leaders. But further, the Government was equally powerless to help the dock companies *against* the strikers. For Parliament could not compel one single man to work; neither could the police prevent picketing. Therefore the workers need not expect either help or hindrance from any but themselves. They must take their own cause in their own hands.

Government is useless. The people must help themselves.

And now, steering by this Compass, which points away from government, straight towards self-help, what is the course for the working classes to pursue?

They depend upon each other for their life. Let them unite in order to make that life happier. At present their life is rendered hard and miserable by competition amongst themselves. The large profits of their employers are made at the expense of the welfare and happiness of the workers, who keep all men. If the toilers wish to be better off they must persuade their masters to be content with smaller profits. If they cannot persuade them, then they must force them. They will be able to force them when they can threaten to starve them out by a general strike.

Therefore all the workers in London should combine. Perhaps in separate unions, but if so, these unions should amalgamate and form a general combination of working people—a *labour syndicate*.

As soon as this is sufficiently accomplished they will be able (1) to fix a minimum wage; (2) to fix a maximum working day—say eight hours; (3) to protect every man and woman in London from ill-treatment by a master; (4) to make short work of the slums, and insist upon every worker having a decent home at a reasonable rent; because if the landlords are obstinate they will be able to persuade them by the force of a general strike!

But much more than this may be achieved by such a combination of all the workers. For out of their higher wages a large fund of money would be contributed to the central union. Strikes would hardly be necessary, for the masters would not dare resist. Therefore this money might be used for other purposes. The sick and the old would have to be well provided for. Then with the remainder of the

money co-operative stores might be started, to supply the workers with food and clothes *at cost price*. Bakeries, shoemakers' shops, tailors' shops, etc, might also be conducted on the same principle.

And now observe what this leads to. These stores and shops would have to be built. Many men would be employed in them. Vans and machinery would be required, which would give work to still other men. The Relief Committees have shown how these men may be paid. Their work will be equally valuable; their wages too must be equal.

Thus the workers of London would begin to be *their own employers*. They would not only be dependent on one another; they would be working for one another. And they would then keep for themselves all that extra labour which now makes their masters rich. Then they might still further reduce the hours of labour: and so there need no longer be any starving unemployed.

Other towns will follow suit, and other countries too. There will be no fear of foreigners being brought in to help the capitalists starve Englishmen. The Australians are even now with you. The Americans will follow suit. (You saw them come out and join you, rather than work against you for 3s. 6d. an hour. They treated you as brothers; do not treat yourselves worse, but be worthy to call such men brothers!) The Germans and Jews in London will labour side by side with you in perfect friendship, taking their part in keeping themselves and you.

When other towns and countries have followed suit, you may buy your goods of them at cost price, extending your union to your brothers all over the world. You may acquire your own farms all over the country: they will belong to you in common, and those working on them will not be slaves of landlord and farmer, but will be your comrades, working happily with you for the good of all.

You and your children will be on the road to a happiness hitherto only dreamt of, but now shown to be possible, if you will only take the first step, and *combine*.

Your enemies will tell you that this is unpractical. *Try it*. It will be a good deal *too* practical for them. For nothing can stand against you when your watchword is—*COMBINE*.

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

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THE "COMMONWEAL."

Whilst thanking the many friends and comrades who have volunteered their sympathy and help during the present crisis, we wish to assure all that no efforts will be spared to resume the Weekly Issue at the earliest opportunity. We by no means despair of being able to do so if our comrades will but rally round at this juncture. The 'COMMONWEAL' now is entirely dependent upon the support of working-men. The cold and wet weather lessens our sale by stopping all outdoor meetings. The expenses of our removal, and the fitting up of new premises, have been very heavy, and we shall have great difficulty in keeping even the Monthly Issue going through the winter months, unless comrades and friends subscribe liberally to the 'COMMONWEAL' Guarantee Fund. We, therefore, earnestly appeal to all who sympathise with our work to help us to the best of their ability.—EDITORS.

THE GLORIOUS REFORMATION:

OR,

HOW THE ENGLISH PEOPLE WERE EVICTED, ROBBED,
AND MURDERED BY THE RULING CLASSES.

IV.—THE PEOPLE DRIVEN FROM THE LAND.

It is in Strypes' "Ecclesiastical Memorials" that we find a pamphlet entitled "The Supplication of the Poor Commons." It is evident that this pamphlet was written by a Reformer, for it contains much abuse of the old monks, who are called "sturdy beggars" and other hard names; but it gives an excellent idea of the methods of procedure adopted by their enemies, the new proprietors, in rack-renting and evicting the Abbey tenants. The "Supplication" is addressed to the king, and the extracts I am about to give run as follows:—"Instead of these sturdy beggars (i.e., the monks) there is crept in a sturdy set of extortioners (the new *bourgeois* proprietors). These men cease not to oppress us, your Highness' poor commons, in such sort that many thousands, which here before lived honestly upon our sore labour and travail, bringing up our children in the exercise of honest labour, are now constrained some to beg, some to borrow, and some to rob and steal to get food for us, our poor wives, and children. We are constrained to bring up our children to spend the flower of their youth in idleness; to bring them up to bear wallets [to be beggars], or if they be sturdy to garnish gallows trees. For such of us who have no provisions left us . . . can get no farm, tenement, or cottage at these men's hands without we pay unto them more than we are able to make. . . . Yet, not sufficed with this oppression on their own inheritance, they buy of your Highness' hands such Abbey lands as you appoint to be sold. When they stand once seized in such Abbey lands they make us, your poor commons, so in doubt of their threatenings, that we dare none other than bring into their courts our copies [leases], taken of the convents and the late dissolved monasteries, and confirmed by your High Court of Parliament. They make us believe that by virtue of your Highness all our former writings are void and of no effect, and that if we will not take new leases of them, we must then forthwith avoid the ground as having therein no interest. Moreover, when they can espy no commodious thing to be bought at your Highness's hand, they labour for and obtain leases for twenty-one years in and upon such abbey lands as lie commodious to them. Then do they dash us out of countenance with your Highness's authority making us believe that by virtue of your Highness our copies are void: so that they compel us to surrender our former writings—we ought to hold some for two, and some for three, lives—and force us to take leases for twenty-one years, which impose upon us fines and rents beyond all conscience."—Strypes' "Ecclesiastical Memorials," vol. i., p. 899.

These poor commons state also that, owing to these oppressions, those tenants who were able to bring up their children to learning, are now obliged to set them to labour, while the poorer classes could not procure work for theirs, though they proffered them for "meat, drink, and poor clothes to cover their bodies."

The dissolution of the monasteries was no doubt the climax of the war of the ruling classes upon the poor. Not only were some 50,000 monks turned loose to starve, or beg, or steal, but many of their tenants were forced to follow. All these, with the poor wretches who used to be fed at the abbey gates, now had no relief offered save the whip, the branding-iron, or the gallows, and the whole mass of evicted tenants, monks, and all the other victims of the system wandered over the country in bands of vagabonds, begging, and frequently taking by force, the bread they needed. England seemed on the eve of a social revolution. It came at last. In the north the feudal nobility, abbots, and starving vagrants rose in revolt in a formidable insurrection known as the Pilgrimage of Grace, but the leaders allowed themselves to be pacified by promises, and found, when too late, that Henry and the plunderers of the Church had neither honesty nor faith.

The insurrection and the other threatening symptoms alarmed the ruling classes. They saw that the men whom they had turned from industrious peasants into desperate banditti were dangerous to them and their new-found wealth. What! did they start some scheme of relief for the poor? Not a bit of it. We read in Harrison's "Description of England" that these people became earnest Malthusians. Says he, "Certes, a great number complain of the increase of poverty, laying the cause upon God, as though he were in fault for sending such an increase, or a want of wars that should consume them, affirming that the island was never so full. Again, as he points out, the rich complained that "the youth, by marrying too soon, do nothing to profit the country, but fill it full of beggars, to the hurt and utter undoing, they say, of the commonweal." Of course, the rich never thought it was their own greed in driving the poor from the land that created these hordes of beggars. Well, they became Malthusians, and practical ones, too, far more practical than their timid disciples of the present day. They instituted the bloodiest criminal code that has ever been known in English history. Harrison says that during the reign of Henry VIII.—a period of only 37 years and 9 months—72,000 vagabonds, great and small, were hung. For what, let me quote Sir Thomas Moore, "because they go about and work not, whom no man will set work, though they ne'er so willingly proffer themselves thereto."

Thus, the new Protestant nobility, from whom our Whig Dukes like Westminster and Bedford are descended, not only robbed our fore-

fathers of their land, but hung them in thousands. Robbery was not enough for these gentlemen, they must murder the people as well in their greed for wealth. And even this was not sufficient. To the gallows they added whipping and branding.

Justice was not adequately administered by hanging twenty of these poor wretches at a time from the same tree, so slavery was solemnly instituted by statute by these "Protestant Reformers," these pious gentlemen with their faith of the counter and shop till. An act was passed in 1543 ordering vagabonds to be the slaves of anyone who presented them to a justice for two years, and to have the letter V imprinted on their breasts with a red-hot iron. The masters were permitted by the statute to treat them with every brutality, and if under those circumstances a slave ran away, and was absent for fourteen days, he became a slave for life. If he was caught he was then branded on the forehead with an S, so all should know him. Then, if he ran away a third time, and the master had the testimony of two witnesses to this effect, he was sentenced to be hung. Any master could put a collar on a slave's neck, or an iron ring round his arms and legs so that he might identify him. The children of vagabonds could be taken away and kept as apprentices, the boys till they were 24 years of age, and the girls till they were 20.

These kind of laws were continually passed during the reigns of the first three Protestant sovereigns, Henry VIII., Edward VI., and Elizabeth. The great and glorious Queen Bess passed an act, for instance, by which any vagabond could be seized, severely whipped, and branded on the left ear, after which ceremonies anyone could take him into service for two years. What his treatment was while he was in service may be imagined by what occurred beforehand. He was fed on the family leavings, knocked about like a dog, and had to slave day and night for no wages except his "meals." This is doubtless the kind of "free labour" which Mr. Norwood would admire—it was so cheap, and cost so little to the proprietors.

During the reign of the "Virgin" Queen, hanging went on merrily. Harrison says that during this reign "thieves were trussed up apace, and three hundred and four hundred were commonly eaten up by the gallows every year."

Strype tells us that in Somersetshire in one year 40 persons were executed, 35 robbers burnt in the hand, 37 whipped, and 183 discharged as "incorrigible vagabonds."

But with all this whipping, branding, and hanging of people, who could no more help being vagabonds than you and I could help being born, these outcasts still increased. To quote Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth, the "land was full of beggars." And yet this land was once tilled by a happy peasantry, who enjoyed comforts and luxuries that are unknown to most of their descendants.

Well, the people revolted again and again, and at last, finding the penal laws were no use, a parliament of Elizabeth passed the famous poor-laws, by which overseers of parishes could set unemployed men to work, and bring a rate upon the inhabitants for that purpose. The act continued in force till the middle of this century, when it was replaced by what is known and hated as the New Poor Law. The glorious Reformation, therefore, swept away the monasteries, which gave kindly help to the poor, and gave us instead—the Parish Workhouse.

I think now I have amply justified the title of these articles, and have proved that the glorious Reformation, that is the great middle-class revolution, or the change from feudalism to modern commercialism, simply meant the eviction, robbery, and murder of the English people for the benefit of the forefathers of our present ruling classes. These commercial classes have pursued the same policy down to the present day. The reign of commercialism has been characterised by stealing of common lands, and the driving of the people with every species of cruelty and barbarity from the land in England, Ireland, and Scotland. The capitalist landowner has hunted the agricultural workers from the soil, and has flung them as prey to his brother thief, the capitalist manufacturer of the towns.

We Revolutionary Socialists, who are now fighting for a better freedom than ever the English peasantry of the middle ages enjoyed, can see that similar forces to those which destroyed feudalism will shatter commercialism. The invention of printing has now made books so cheap that the poorest can possess them, and on the other hand gunpowder is now giving place to stronger explosives, which are so cheap and so easily made that they cannot become the exclusive property of kings and governments, but are within the reach of all.

During the Reformation the ruling classes taught us a good lesson. They robbed, plundered, and slaughtered the property-holders of that day; monks and peasants, without mercy. Their descendants have proved that they are not behind their forefathers. Let the people show that this lesson has not been lost on them, and may the day soon come when they will spoil the spoiler as they may, and from the robber rend his prey.

D. J. NICOLL.

IMPORTANT NOTICE.

F. KIZZ having no further connection with the London Socialist League, all communications must in future be addressed to T. CANTWELL, (Secretary), 273, Hackney Road, London, N.E.

PHYSICAL FORCE.

It seems very terrible to many people that any party among the working people should believe that what is commonly known as "physical force" will prove their only salvation. Strange to say, we Revolutionary Socialists do believe this, and despite the hypocritical cry of horror from humbugging politicians, who see that if that belief becomes common among the people that their trade is gone, or the more sincere jeremiads of old women belonging to that large class of persons who appear to imagine that the giant wrongs and crimes of centuries can be removed by a little rose water, we maintain that our belief is not only sincere, but is grounded upon an unassailable foundation, and that logic, history, and experience alike proclaim its truth.

The belief of the English workmen that it is possible to carry out a Social Revolution through Parliament has been the ruin of most advanced movements in this country. The early Reformers, the old Radicals, the Chartists, the Republicans, all trusted that political measures would heal their grievances—with the result that we, their descendants, are still groaning beneath the same heavy bondage. A life of hard and monotonous toil, uncheered by a single ray of hope, with the workhouse as our last refuge, when too old, worn out, and broken to be of any service to our masters, is still our doom as it was our fathers.

The Hunts, the Cobbets, the Vincents, and the Bradlaughs have spoken and written in vain. Even the mere political demands of the old Reformers, Universal Suffrage and Annual Parliaments, are not realised, though they may be honoured with a last resting place in the programme of the Social Democratic Federation, and if the people still listen to the voice of politicians they may be found a hundred years hence still unrealised in the programme of some similar party. We read in a certain old book that the walls of a great fortress fell at the sound of the trumpet. The age of miracles is past, and yet we find politicians who profess to believe that the walls of capitalistic Jericho will fall beneath a shower of voting papers.

Even our friend Cunninghame Grahame, in one of his sudden lapses into a love of law and order, informs us that to attempt to overthrow capitalism by physical force would be useless, because the capitalist classes are vastly superior in health and strength to the workers. If Cunninghame Grahame really believes this, we can only regretfully advise him to give up his fruitless task of agitation, for we are quite sure that the Norwoods and the Liveseys will not surrender either "their" wealth or "their" factories, mines, railways, shipping, etc., to a body of people whom they can easily beat in a fair fight. The workers might have a majority in Parliament, but the majority might be damned, or be easily chucked out under those circumstances. If all the workers were as poor in physique as the victims of East End sweaters there might be some truth in his contention; but we will undertake to say that an army composed of the gas workers, the dockers, and the navvies of London would make short work of any force the fat capitalists, or even the athletic gilded youth of the West End or of the suburbs of middle classdom, might bring against them. We don't believe that the special constable has ever been much of an object of terror to the working classes, though he may have afforded them much harmless amusement.

I will now relate a little anecdote in support of my contention. Some years ago a workman, who was anxious for the conversion of the middle classes, distributed some leaflets among some athletic middle class youths at a suburban railway station. One of these young gentlemen, presuming upon his strength, after some insulting remarks tore some leaflets and threw them in the distributor's face. For this ill-breeding our friend promptly knocked him down. A fight followed, and after a five minutes' engagement the middle class youth, to use a pugilistic phrase, was "knocked all over the shop." His companions surrounded him, and led him away with the soothing remark that he might be cock of the walk among them, but "it was no use for him to try to fight a working man." The moral is obvious, and despite the dolorous prophecies of Mr. Grahame, we do not think that the middle class would be victorious in a physical force contest with the workers.

This may be taken as a sample of the arguments brought against physical force, or "violence," by the political friends of the people. But there is another large section, to whom our friend Annie Besant belongs, who object to physical force from a moral point of view, and appear to imagine that courses of lectures on Political Economy, or say Theosophy, will in time "moralise the capitalist," and he will be only too happy to endow the working classes with all his worldly goods and live a life of virtuous poverty ever afterwards. If these people could supply us with instances from history of a whole class being persuaded to surrender their "property" by any appeals to their emotional or logical faculties, we might believe in it. But ancient history is painfully silent upon the subject, and as to modern experience we know well that American slaveholders and Irish landlords were only persuaded to surrender their "rights" of plundering, torturing, and enslaving the people by lead and steel, and we have no reason to believe that they were made of any sterner stuff than our own Norwoods and Liveseys.

Those people who believe in "moralising" the capitalist might try their hands upon these gentlemen, and when we see Norwood or Livesey on a Socialist platform we shall begin to believe that it is possible to convert the capitalist by "peaceful means." We are quite certain that the more Socialism spreads among the people, the fewer

will be the converts among the "respectable classes," and when it seems upon the point of realisation we shall not only gain no friends from the rich, but we shall lose most of those excellent people who now form middle class mutual admiration societies for the discussion of Socialism from academic standpoints, but who object to its inconvenient realisation.

The truth is that any steps save very timid and courteous ones will "spare the capitalists." Our friends the Fabians show that they know this by whittling down as much as possible even that miserable palliative an Eight Hours Bill, and when the capitalist is scared—whether it be by unemployed riots, general strikes, no rent movements, dynamite explosions, or more awful still the return of a large number of Social Democratic members to Parliament—he will not hesitate to use merciless repressive measures. Well, let him; it will be all the better. There is nothing like persecution to make a popular movement go. But in that case our Fabian friends need not be nervous. The blows of the rich will not fall on their shoulders. The doctrines they preach tend so much to promote a feeling of reverence for law and order among the "lower classes"—if they would only listen—that we should not be surprised if Government did not bestow upon them a permanent endowment, as the services of priests and parsons are beginning to lose their effect. In that case the Fabians might substitute for old commands to working people to order themselves lowly and reverently to their betters that they may obtain a heavenly mansion in a better world, an instruction to vote for the taxation of ground rents, and your children's children in a couple of hundred years time may enjoy the blessings of Socialism. But whether the ministrations of the new clergy will be more successful than our present holy men remains to be seen. In any case our position remains unaltered. None of the great changes that have yet occurred in the world's history have been achieved either by voting papers or by the moralisation of the possessing classes, and we are firmly convinced that the great change that is approaching will be wrought out by the same "brutal and barbarous means" as those of the past. The robber classes will not resign their plunder without a fight for it, and, knowing this, we honestly proclaim our opinion that the approaching Revolution must be one of "violence," and that the only salvation of the people lies in their might and courage. N.

MANIFESTO TO SCOTCH RAILWAY WORKERS.

Our Comrades of the Scottish Socialist Federation who have worked hard during the recent Railway Strike have issued the following Manifesto to the Working People of Edinburgh:

FELLOW-WORKERS.—During the past few weeks the struggle between Labour and Capital has been passing through an acute phase in one branch of industry. The employees of the two chief Scottish Railway Companies have been fighting for a reduction of their excessively long hours of work, and the fight has been conducted with a stubbornness, determination, and bitterness hitherto unknown in labour disputes in Scotland.

In the railway troubles we have but one of the many indications of the utter rottenness of our industrial system; and indeed, the convulsive, desperate efforts of both New and Old Trade Unionism to keep wages from falling, or to reduce the hours of labour, may be regarded as among the premonitory symptoms of the approaching dissolution of that system. Workmen are forced to compete with workmen, capitalists with capitalists; and these two classes are pitted in ceaseless warfare against each other. Strikes and social disturbances are but warnings of the disease from which society suffers. Consider well, then, how insecure our boasted civilisation must be, when it is founded on such a basis as the antagonism of classes. For that such antagonism is the basis of society is evident, notwithstanding the asseverations to the contrary of a corrupt pulpit, a dishonest political platform, and a hireling press (including such organs as the *Scottish Leader*, *Evening News*, *Scotsman*, and *Dispatch*).

What assistance can you afford your fellow-workmen in their struggle? The power of Capital is as it is, mainly because capitalists are united. They form a more or less compact body, in spite of market competition, and they have at their disposal, through laws made by themselves in their own interests, the armed forces of the State. These forces they use to guard the spoil which they have secured from the product of your labour. And that they do not hesitate to use these powers has been proven beyond the shadow of a doubt by the straining of the Law of Conspiracy in the conviction of P. Curran at Plymouth, and of R. Smith at Edinburgh; by the murderous assault on the people in Trafalgar Square; and by the use of the military in intimidate the gas strikers in Leeds and the evicted railway workers at Motherwell. Hence the workers in any single industry cannot wage wholly successful war against the enemy who holds the land they cultivate and the machinery they employ. What is necessary than is *Union among all workers*. Your interests are identical. Let your action be united. There is weakness in isolation. In combination there is irresistible strength. What you must incessantly aim at, therefore, is common action among all workers.

We, as Socialists, somewhat regret that during this struggle the moral right of the Companies to the possession of the railways, which have been constructed by men who for the most part are now dead and gone, has never been directly challenged; and consequently no great question of principle is at stake. If the railway employee is

maintaining his undoubted right as a seller of labour, when he wishes to reduce the working day, and so to secure the best possible price for his commodity, his labour power; on the other hand the railway director is also maintaining a similar right as a purchaser, when he tries to make the working day as long as possible, or to make, if he can, two working days out of one, so as to secure the greatest amount of value from the commodity he has bought, the labour power of the workman. And so long as the right of the Companies to the possession of the railways is recognised, so long will the struggle between the Companies and their employees be but a struggle of right against right. But between equal rights, force decides—might is right.

"Might is right." That is how the matter is regarded by non-socialists, whether capitalists or workers. We, as Socialists, prefer to look at it in another light. But, from whatever standpoint we view it, the imperative necessity for union among all workmen becomes evident. When you sink mutual jealousies and unite in a general movement, victory is certain. Whatever may be the issue of the present struggle, let it be understood that the next time any body of workmen demands amelioration of their condition, and has not this conceded, every railway guard, porter, signalman, and driver, will fold their arms, every joiner will lay down his plane and every mason his trowel, every miner will refuse to dig coal, every baker to make bread, and every warehouse hand, shopman, clerk, teacher, and worker with head or hand will do no work until the strikers receive what they demand. A few days of this paralysis would bring the holders of capital and spoilers of labour to their senses, and to their knees at the same time. One general strike would be sufficient. Nay, the mere prospect of paralysis of production and distribution would be enough. If the men in each trade or occupation can and do strike, why not in all trades at the same moment? The owners of capital cannot eat their machinery or their land. Let their workers stop supplying these social parasites with food; let them stop working for them, and that monstrous superstition which, under the name of Capital, is trampling under foot the best blood and bone and sinew of the nation, would be among the things that were. "That high rents and interest might be paid, it has been decreed that multitudes should be made miserable," said Carlyle. While the existing system continues, this decree is in force. Socialise capital, and it falls to the ground.

TO THE RAILWAY MEN.—It is only by setting before yourselves the definite idea of all lands, mines, factories, railways, and other means of production and transit being held and wrought by the people for the people, can you achieve any lasting or worthy result. Always remember that there is no possible escape from railway slavery, so long as there are railway masters. Let your future rallying cry therefore be, "No Masters!" and as a consequence, "No Slaves!" Your struggle has been but a prelude to that in which all workers must soon engage. Prepare yourselves for it. The great Revolution, for which all history has been but a preparation, is coming on a pace. Win or lose, your struggle will not have been in vain, if it convinces you that the Revolution cannot come too soon. Defeated you may be, but the day will come when you will be able to say with Mazeppa:—

"But time at last makes all things even,
And if we do but watch the hour,
There never yet was human power
That could evade, if unforgiven,
The patient hate and vigil long
Of those who treasure up a wrong."

The Brotherhood of Man has been too long merely a sentiment. Help to make it a reality, and inaugurate a society wherein there will be a community of interests. The exploiters of labour may well tremble in the prospects of an international uprising of labour, "wherein the workers have nothing to lose but their chains, and wherein they have a world to win."

Propaganda Committee,

SCOTTISH SOCIALISTIC FEDERATION.

"COMMONWEAL" GUARANTEE FUND.

THE Committee of the London Socialist League appeal most earnestly to all who sympathise with the views advocated in the paper and the principle therein set forth, to send at once all pecuniary assistance they can spare to this Fund. The defection of the late General Secretary has caused much confusion and loss; but every effort is being made (and successfully made) to place administrative details on a more satisfactory and secure footing than hitherto. Considerable supplies of money are, however, absolutely essential if the journal is not to cease with the next number. It must be remembered that great difficulties have been occasioned by the lying statements of the capitalistic press that the *Commonweal* was already dead. With the assistance which it seems to us we have a right to look for from sympathising societies and groups, as well as from individual comrades and friends, we are convinced that we can tide over present hindrances, and in the summer, when our open-air propaganda has been some time in renewed operation, resume our weekly publication. We confidently ask comrades and friends who appreciate the unswerving Revolutionary policy of the *Weal*, and who believe that it is doing good work, to rally round the Red Flag and keep their organ and ours going. "He gives twice who gives quickly."

OBITUARY.

On Friday morning, February 6th, died Maude Elizabeth Morgan, a young comrade of the North London group, who was a good worker in the Cause, both at our open-air meetings and in the workshop, although being a sufferer from heart disease she was unable to be as active as she wished. The Committee of the Commonweal Club, on hearing of her decease, passed a vote of condolence with Comrade H. D. Morgan, and regret at the loss of a good Revolutionist.

We regret to learn of the death of Arch McLaren, M.A., at Tighna Bruach. McLaren who was assistant to the Professor of Greek in Glasgow University was a member of the Glasgow Branch of the Socialist League, and at one time wrought heart and soul in the movement. His academical position latterly prevented, to some extent, his participation in propaganda, but he remained to the last a steadfast friend and comrade. He was a young man of much ability, earnestness and kindness, and his death is much mourned by all comrades who knew him.

In the middle of the dreary month of February there departed from us a brave old comrade who had been a strength and a stay to more than one generation of Revolutionists—Marie Anne Victoire Malenfant. Our comrade died at 82, but it is hardly too much to say that her whole life had been devoted to our Cause. She was the widow of a Socialist of 1848, who died in exile at Brussels. Although already old twenty years ago, yet she fought on the barricades during the last days of the Commune, in company with her daughter, now married to our Comrade Brocher. She was one of those who made the last glorious stand, and, escaping with her life, she lay hid in Paris for eighteen months from the Versaillist murderers. At the end of that period she contrived to reach Geneva, where they had not yet abandoned the right of asylum. She was highly esteemed, and really loved by all the exiles there, who always spoke of her as "Mamma." She died at Brixton, and was buried at Tooting Cemetery on Feb. 21st, under the Red Flag, according to her last wishes. Surely she, too, is among the "unforgotten dead."

'COMMONWEAL' CLUB, 273, Hackney Road.—During February we have had very successful Lectures, all of which have been exceedingly well attended. The Lecturers have been Comrades Mowbray and Burnie. Good collections and remarkable sale of Literature.

Successful Free Concerts have been held on Saturdays at our Club. We intend making this a feature for the purpose of keeping our members together, and supplying them with an antidote to the ordinary music hall entertainment.

DARTFORD, KENT.—During February, Comrade Mowbray has, with the aid of Comrades Cherkauer, Beltheo, and Fischer, raised the Red Flag in this district. A lecture has also been delivered on "Wage Labour and Capital" in the Dartford Working-men's Club, by Mowbray. There is to be several open-air meetings in Dartford during March, Comrades Turner, Burnie, and Mowbray being the speakers.

MORE VICTIMS TO CAPITALISM.

An old woman, 50 years of age, named Mary Oswald, was found dead in a room off Chancery Lane. She had existed for some time by begging in the streets. No furniture, no clothes, no food; a verdict of natural death was returned by the jury.

Another victim was a woman named Wright, found dead outside her cottage. Inside, on an old bed, lay her two daughters and a boy three years old. The boy was dead, the daughters dying, all from starvation. Natural death, forsooth, Murder is too moderate a word. When will people learn that it is better to be alive taking back part of the stored-up wealth than dying like curs in the gutter from starvation?
C. W. M.

DO YOU AGREE?

Do you agree with us that the social awakening of the workers is a desirable end? Do you agree with us that we are working in the right way to achieve that end?

You do not? Then oppose us and prove us wrong on every platform and in every paper to which you can gain access!

You do agree? Then work with us and for us; help us to extend our circle of influence; let no day pass in which you have not interested some one in our propaganda!

There is no middle course for an honest man!

LECTURE DIARY.

LONDON.

Commonweal Club.—273, Hackney Road, N.E. Lectures every Sunday at 11 a.m. and 8 p.m. Admission free. Membership: 1s. entrance fee, and 6d. per month subscription.

Lectures—March 1st.—R. W. Burnie, "First of May." March 8th.—J. Turner, "Outcome of Trade Unionism." March 15th.—R. Smith, "Revolutionary Socialism v. Democracy." March 22nd.—Conference of members and sympathisers of Socialist League, at 11 a.m.

Hammersmith Socialist Society.—Kelmseott House, Upper Mall, W. Lecture every Sunday at 8. French Class conducted by Mlle. Desroches on Friday evenings at 7.30.

North Kensington.—Clarendon Coffee Palace, Clarendon Road. Meets every Wednesday at 8 p.m. Band practice every Tuesday at 8, in the hall at the back of the "Britannia" public-house, Latimer Road—more fifiers wanted.

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

PROVINCES.

Aberdeen.—Organiser, J. Leatham, 7 Jamaica Street. Branch meets in Oath fellows' Small Hall, Crooked Lane, on Sunday evenings at 6.30. Singing practice, etc., Mondays at 8 p.m.

Glasgow.—Lectures and Discussions every Sunday evening, at 7, in the Hall, Antiqua Place, Nelson Street, City.

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

Hull.—Club Liberty, 1 Beets Court, Blanket Row.

Leeds.—Socialist League Club, 1 Clarendon Buildings and Front Row, Thistle Road. Open every evening. Business meeting Saturdays at 8.15. National Educational Club, near St. James's Hall, York Street. Open every evening. Lectures every Saturday at 4. All kinds of Socialist literature for sale at both clubs.

Leicester.—Room No. 7, Co-operative Hall, High Street. Branch meeting on Thursday at 8 p.m. Lecture in the Spiritualist Hall, Silver Street, every Sunday at 6.30.

Manchester.—Socialist League Club, 60 Grovesnor Street, All Saints. Open every evening. Branch weekly meeting on Tuesdays at 8.

Nottingham.—Socialist Club, Woodland Place, Upper Parliament Street. Club contribution, 1d. per week; Dancing every Wednesday, 8 till 10.30—fee 3d.

Norwich.—Members' meeting held every Tuesday at 8.30.

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

Sheffield.—Socialist Club, 63 Blonk Street. French Class, Tuesday at 8.30. Discussion Class, Wednesday at 8.30.

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

Yarmouth.—Socialist League Club, 56 Row, Market Place. Open every evening Business Meeting, Tuesday at 8. Singing Practice, Wednesday at 8.30. Discussion Class, Thursday at 8.30. Elocution Class, Friday at 8.30.

OPEN-AIR PROPAGANDA.

(Weather permitting.)

SUNDAY.

11	.....	Commercial Road—Union Street	.....	The Branch
11.30	.....	Hoxton Church	.....	The Branch
11.30	.....	Regent's Park	.....	Nicoll
3.30	.....	Hyde Park—Marble Arch	.....	Mainwaring and Nicoll
3.30	Victoria Park	Commonweal Branch
3.30	Streatham Common	The Branch

FRIDAY.

8.15	Hoxton Church	The Branch
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PROVINCES.

Aberdeen.—Saturday: Castle Street, at 7.30 p.m.

Glasgow.—Sunday: Jail Square at 2 o'clock; Paisley Road at 5 o'clock.

Leeds.—Sunday: Market Gates, Kirkgate, at 11.30 a.m. and 7 p.m.

Leicester.—Saturday: Old Cross, Belgrave Gate, at 8 p.m. Sunday: Russell Square, at 10.45 a.m.

Liverpool.—Landing Stage, Sundays at 11.30 a.m. and 3 p.m.

Manchester.—Saturday: Middleton market ground, at 7 p.m. Sunday: Philips Park Gates, at 11; Stevenson Square, at 3. Monday: Market Street, Blackley, at 8.

Nottingham.—Sunday: Sneinton Market, at 11 a.m.; Great Market, at 7 p.m.

Norwich.—Saturday: Haymarket, at 8. Sunday: Market Place at 11, 3, and 7.30.

Sheffield.—Sunday: Monolith, Fargate, at 11.30; West Bar, at 11.30; Newhall Road, Attercliffe, at 11.30; Grimsthorpe, at 11.30; Rotherham, at 3; Woodhouse, at 3; West Bar, at 8; Attercliffe Road, at 8.

Yarmouth.—Sunday: Priory Plain, at 11; Fish Wharf, at 3; Hall Quay, at 7.

An International Anarchist Conference will be held at the Club Antonomie, on Easter Sunday, March 29th, to commence at 11 a.m.

STREATHAM.—A vigorous propaganda has been carried on in Streatham since Christmas. The workmen of Streatham, many of them unemployed, turning up in large numbers at our meetings. On January 11th, Smith and Osborn, S.D.F., spoke at Fountain in fog and frost, this was not a large meeting owing to the weather, but the announcement of meetings for the unemployed brought together large crowds.

DUBLIN.—Dublin Socialist Union, 87 Marlboro Street. Lecture every Saturday at 8 p.m.

LIVERPOOL SOCIALIST SOCIETY.—Vegetarian Restaurant, Eberle Street, Dale Street.—Meets every Tuesday at 8 p.m.

SCOTTISH SOCIALIST FEDERATION.—EDINBURGH—Labour Hall, 50 South Bridge. Business meeting, Fridays at 8 p.m. Lectures every Sunday, at 6.30 p.m.

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 month by month 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.

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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.

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