

THE COMMONWEAL

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WEEKLY; ONE PENNY.

A WRITTEN DEBATE

BETWEEN MR. C. BRADLAUGH, M.P., AND E. BELFORT BAX.

SUBJECT:

"Will Socialism Benefit the English People?"

IV.—*Negative*: MR. C. BRADLAUGH.

(1) MR. BAX says that I have ignored the "basis" of Socialism; but, having again referred to the first paragraph of his first paper, I find that, though he speaks of "an economic basis," he nowhere in that paragraph, or as far as I can see elsewhere, explains what he means by these words. He says his whole article is an endeavour to afford such an explanation. I, after a careful re-reading, am unable to gather the supposed explanation from either of his papers, and therefore will ask him to kindly state briefly, and as clearly as he can, what it is that he holds to be the "new view of life (*i.e.*, of human relations), having an economic basis." As he puts these words as affording his definition of the Socialism which he affirms is to benefit the English people, it is absolutely necessary—especially as various schools of Socialists differently define the word—that I should know precisely what he means, if I am to discuss the probable effects of the Socialism intended by him, and the making clear our meaning will certainly be for the advantage of our readers.

(2) It is true that Mr. Bax says that "the condition of the civilised world as a whole is the immediate basis on which Socialism founds." But here, again, I do not understand what he means. If he means that there is sameness of condition for the working classes in any two civilised peoples, I must traverse this. Type, temperament, climate, soil, general life conditions, political conditions, social conditions, transmitted predispositions, vary considerably in every nation, and you cannot usefully lump these into a whole in order to propound a political or social theory for the English people. The wants, the miseries, the comforts, the means in possession, the facilities for gaining a livelihood, the legal hindrances, the amount of liberty enjoyed, differ in almost every country. So also there is an enormous difference as to the available means of reform and amelioration at the disposal, or within probable command, of various peoples.

(3) Nor am I quite sure how much of the world Mr. Bax intends by "the civilised world," for he elsewhere explains "civilisation" to mean the existence in the same country "of a propertied dominating class and a propertyless dominated class." This curious definition is wide enough to include nearly every country in the world, so far as I have any information.

(4) It is the more necessary that I should press Mr. Bax for a clear and concise definition of what he means by Socialism, because his objections to the definitions put forward by me in par. 9 of my last paper hardly render his own view more clear. I gave two definitions—

(1) "that organised society should own all wealth, direct all labour, and compel the equal distribution of all produce." This, says Mr. Bax, is "much too vague." While I can understand that it may not be the definition Mr. Bax thinks accurate, I avow it seems to me tolerably clear and explicit. He adds that "as it stands no modern Socialist would accept it." But is this last declaration quite true? The definition is divided into three sub-heads: That organised society should (a) own all wealth; (b) direct all labour; (c) compel the equal distribution of all produce. I shall be obliged if Mr. Bax will state as against each sub-head the respects in which he thinks it vague and inaccurate.

(5) As to my second statement of Socialism—*i.e.*, "that organised society should take possession of land, capital, all means of production, distribution, and exchange, should control all labour, regulate all distribution, and conduct all exchange"—I understand Mr. Bax to accept these words with the qualification that "all labour" means all social labour, not the labour an individual might perform for his own amusement." I do not quite appreciate the qualification, and should be glad if Mr. Bax would state some instances of the labour a man or woman might perform, and the raw material on which he might work, in a Socialistic state without being under the control which Mr. Bax says is to be applied to "all (other) labour." The acceptance of the definition involves the advocacy of the possible dispossession by force, that is, after a civil war, in which those who at present have possession of land and capital and of the means of production, distribution, and exchange, would resist the dispossession.

(6) Though accepting the words just quoted, Mr. Bax objects to the "explanatory rider" that "everything would be common as to their

user," but I understand him to say that "personal possession" would be limited under Socialism "to objects of personal use." Does he regard, say, an eight-roomed house and a one-acre garden attached as an object of personal use? or would a four-wheeled cab and the horse and equipments be objects of personal use? Can Mr. Bax state any formula which he thinks may distinguish the objects of which the user would be common from those of which the user would be personal and private? If everything is not to be common as to its user, how can there possibly be the "equal participation by all in the necessaries, comforts, and enjoyments of life"? Does Mr. Bax think that a man wearing Lancashire wooden clogs can equally participate in the enjoyment of my long and supple leather fishing-boots?

(7) Mr. Bax frankly enough says that "the words Socialism, Communism, and Collectivism are interchangeable, and mean economically the communisation of the means necessary to production, distribution, and exchange," and he concedes "that this would eventuate in the communisation of the product to a very large extent." That is, he agrees with me that to a large extent Socialism would mean Communism as to the products, as well as to the means of production. I would ask him to explain how he thinks this communisation of products would operate to a large extent, and how the operation would be stopped at any point?

(8) To par. 5 of my paper Mr. Bax offers no real answer. In his first paper he affirmed that the "economic goal of modern or scientific Socialism, no less than that of the Utopian Socialism of Owen, Fourier, St. Simon," "is the equal participation by all in the necessaries and comforts of life." Questioned by me specifically as to this (par. 5), he gives an answer which, if it means what it says, declares that the Socialism of Robert Owen, Fourier, and St. Simon, stands to the Socialism of Mr. Bax as astrology does to astronomy. If this be true, it is difficult to characterise Mr. Bax's first statement without being rude.

(9) More than once Mr. Bax challenges me to deal with what he describes as the historical side of his opening paper. So far as his paper does not purport to state the history of the English people, I decline to do so, as being outside the question I have agreed to debate. For the rest, I am unable to find that Mr. Bax has furnished any historical statement which I can identify with English history. He has presented a very ably-written romance, sometimes consonant with fact, sometimes utterly conflicting; the whole is put in language often exceedingly poetic; but I prefer to break up what he beautifully describes as "this rock of the ages, with its many-hued strata of economic formation" into plain and prosaic statements of fact which may be identified as to meaning, and which if material to the issue may be challenged or verified. Mr. Bax objects to "being waved aside with the epithet 'inexact,' or with mere bald denials," but I answer that the affirmer of a proposition is bound in such a debate as this to put forward at least some evidence in support of the statements challenged. To answer that what I consider his romances are "historical truisms" is scarcely convincing.

10. In answer to paragraphs 7, 8, and 9 of my reply to Mr. Bax's first paper, he states "that there is no possibility of the definite establishment of Socialism anywhere without a concurrent movement among the proletariat of the whole civilised world." If those words really mean anything more than a vague expression of opinion, they would mean that "the definite establishment of Socialism" cannot be possible in England until there is a concurrent movement (whatever that may mean) amongst the peoples of all Europe, of the greater part of America, of some parts of Asia and of Africa, and of some parts of America. This makes the possibilities of the definite establishment of Socialism in England so extremely remote as to considerably diminish the usefulness of our discussion. I desire to discuss here the probable influences of Socialism on the happiness of the English people during the present and immediately succeeding generations. I do not desire to waste time in this debate in arguing as to remote possibilities of what may or may not happen some centuries hence.

(11) Mr. Bax says that by the "break-up of nationalities," which he alleged in his opening paper "would be one of the first results of Socialism," he means "that the centralised state of to-day will be eventually merged in a federation of all socialised communities." He very fairly says that he cannot say when this is likely to happen. But as this is to be one of the "first results of Socialism," it is surely a little unpractical to discuss the conjectural happiness of the English people, if it is admittedly contingent on the happening of an event in any case improbable—perhaps impossible—and as to the time of the happening of which Mr. Bax cannot even hazard a conjecture, except

that it is to be "one of the first results" of the establishment of Socialism in this country. As the break-up of nationalities, which Mr. Bax affirms is to be one of the first results of the establishment of Socialism in England, is declared by him to be probably not a peaceful process, it seems to me therefore clear that in this respect, at any rate, whenever it happens, Socialism is not likely to benefit the English people. All violent changes result in great immediate misery to the poorer classes affected by and taking part in such changes. All violent changes have hitherto been followed by periods of reaction, and have often, in consequence of the demoralisation attending armed conflict, temporarily placed the masses under the control of a military dictator.

(12) Mr. Bax says that "assumption, etc.," does mean the taking away from the present owners "of the means of production, etc.," and that this taking away is to be "by any means, constitutional or otherwise, as circumstances may dictate." This is so very large that it includes the violent taking, at the mere discretion of the takers, and Mr. Bax is requested to explain who is to judge what it is that circumstances are likely to dictate in relation to property in the hands of others to those who as yet have it not. I cannot conceive that the encouragement of assumption of property by violence is likely to improve the general happiness of those so taught to acquire. I can conceive that it may totally demoralise the public mind. Mr. Bax does not answer any of the other questions in paragraph 10, and yet a clear understanding on those points is most vital to the issue between us.

(13) Mr. Bax does say that "Socialism only proposes to confiscate wealth used for production on a large scale." Does he really mean by this that Socialism will allow private wealth to be used for production on a small or on a moderate scale? Does he mean that under Socialism there may be small employers paying wage to those they employ? Unless he means this, his limitation of the confiscation proposal is absurd.

(14) Mr. Bax says that the only private enterprise Socialism sees reason for extinguishing is "the private enterprise which has material personal gain for its end." Will he please give me some illustration of personal enterprise in labour upon raw material which does not come within this definition.

(15) Mr. Bax originally said that Christianity was through and through Individualistic. When I in par. 16 showed him that as to property this was not all true, he does not attempt to in any way explain the positive words of Acts ii., 44: "And all that believed were together, and had all things common;" or of Acts iv., 32: "And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul: neither said any of them that ought of the things which he possessed was his own; but they had all things common;" except by the bold declaration that these words "do not affect in the least." He says that the principles of Christianity were not communistic is proved by the fact stated in chap. v., verse 4, that Ananias might have kept his property if he had not joined the Christian community and had not professed to give up to that community all his possessions. I cannot see the force of this as a reply. Mr. Bax apparently forgets that he introduced into this debate the principles of Christianity as affecting the ownership of goods. My only course was to point out that his statement was inaccurate and misleading. It is no part of my duty in this discussion to express any opinion on the special historical value of any of the Christian books.

Instead of expressing surprise that I challenge his statements as to the increase of the number of small employers and owners of small accumulations, Mr. Bax should remember that the onus is upon him to prove the whole of the statements he makes, and I especially wait for him to do this on the facts and figures alleged by him and challenged by me in paragraph 18. The vague reference to "the boot-making industry" here clearly marks Mr. Bax's absolute unacquaintance with the subject. I ask him to take on this Kettering, Leicester, London, Northampton, including the country villages, Norwich, and Stafford, and compare these with their condition forty years ago.

Mr. Bax admits that there is very possibly less pauperism in proportion to population than there was forty years ago, but he alleges that there is more poverty. I ask him to prove his allegation not by loose statements, but by giving precise and detailed facts relating to the counties, towns, and cities, with names of each, in 1847 and 1887. Mr. Bax asks me what it is that I have "to say about the perennial unemployed question." Unless Mr. Bax can show that Socialism will provide employment in England for the unemployed of this country, the answer would not be relevant to this debate, and in any event should be given by Mr. Bax as part of his case. My general views on the unemployed population are fully stated in the volume containing the verbatim report of the defence of myself and co-defendant in the case of Reg. v. Bradlaugh and Besant. I do not see that they make in any way in favour of the proposition which Mr. Bax undertook to affirm.

This paper is already so long that I reserve until my next my rejoinder on surplus-value.

CHARLES BRADLAUGH.

(For previous papers see *Commonweal* for May 22; May 29; June 12.)

HOW WE LIVE AND HOW WE MIGHT LIVE.

(Continued from p. 195.)

Now the next thing I claim is education. And you must not say that every English child is educated now; that sort of education will not answer my claim, though I cheerfully admit it is something: something, and yet after all only class education. What I claim is liberal education; opportunity, that is, to have my share of whatever knowledge there is in the world according to my capacity or bent of mind, historical or scientific; and also to have my share of skill of hand which is about in the world, either in the industrial handicrafts, or in the fine arts; picture-painting, sculpture, music, acting, or the like: I claim to be taught, if I can be taught, more than one craft to exercise for the benefit of the community. You may think this a large claim, but I am clear it is not too large a claim if the community is to have any gain out of my special capacities, if we are not all to be beaten down to a dull level of mediocrity as we are now, all but the very strongest and toughest of us.

But also I know that this claim for education involves one for public advantages in the shape of public libraries, schools, and the like, such as no private person, not even the richest, could command: but these I claim very confidently, being sure that no reasonable community could bear to be without such helps to a decent life.

Again, the claim for education involves a claim for abundant leisure, which once more I make with confidence; because when once we have shaken off the slavery of profit, labour would be organised so unwastefully that no heavy burden would be laid on the individual citizens; every one of whom, as a matter of course, would have to pay his toll of some obviously useful work. At present you must note all the amazing machinery which we have invented has served only to increase the amount of profit-bearing wares; in other words to increase the amount of profit pouched by individuals for their own advantage, part of which profit they use as capital for the production of more profit, with ever the same waste attached to it; and part as private riches or means for luxurious living, which again is sheer waste,—is in fact to be looked on as a kind of bonfire on which rich men burn up the product of the labour they have fleeced from the workers beyond what they themselves can use. So I say that in spite of our inventions, no worker works under the present system an hour the less on account of those labour-saving machines, so-called. But under a happier state of things they would be used simply for saving labour, with the result of a vast amount of leisure gained for the community to be added to that gained by the avoidance of the waste of useless luxury, and the abolition of the service of commercial war.

And I may say that as to that leisure, as I should in no case do any harm to any one with it, so I should often do some direct good to the community with it, by practising arts or occupations for my hands or brain which would give pleasure to many of the citizens; in other words, a great deal of the best work done would be done in the leisure time of men relieved from any anxiety as to their livelihood and eager to exercise their special talent, as all men, nay, all animals are.

Now again, this leisure would enable me to please myself and expand my mind by travelling if I had a mind to it: because, say for instance that I were a shoemaker; if due social order were established, it by no means follows that I should always be obliged to make shoes in one place; a due amount of easily conceivable arrangement would enable me to make shoes in Rome, say, for three months, and to come back with new ideas of building amongst other things which would perhaps be of service in London.

But now in order that my leisure might not degenerate into idleness and aimlessness, I must set up a claim for due work to do. Nothing to my mind is more important than this demand, and I must ask your leave to say a good deal about it. I have mentioned that I should probably use my leisure for doing a good deal of what is now called work; but it is clear that if I am a member of a Socialist State I must do my due share of rougher work than this—my due share of what my capacity enables me to do, that is: no fitting of me to a Procrustean bed: but even that share of work necessary to the existence of the simplest social life. In the first place, whatever else it is, it must be reasonable work; that is, it must be such work as a good citizen can see the necessity for; as a member of the community, I must have agreed to do it. To take two strong instances of the contrary, I won't submit to be dressed up in red and marched off to shoot at my French or German or Arab friend in a quarrel that I don't understand: I will rebel sooner than do that. Nor will I submit to waste my time and energies in making some trifling toy which I know only a fool can desire: I will rebel sooner than do that. However, you may be sure that in a state of social order I shall have no need to rebel against any such pieces of unreason; only I am forced to speak from the way we live to the way we might live. Again, if the necessary reasonable work be of a mechanical kind, I must be helped to do it by a machine, not to cheapen my labour, but so that as little time as possible may be spent upon it, and that I may be able to think of other things while I am tending the machine. And if the work be specially rough or exhausting, you will, I am sure, agree with me in saying that I must take turns in doing it with other people: I mean I mustn't, for instance, be expected to spend my working hours always at the bottom of a coal pit. I think such work as that ought to be largely volunteer work, and done as I say in spells. And what I say of very rough work I say also of nasty work. On the other hand, I should think very little of the manhood of a stout and healthy man who did not feel a pleasure in doing rough work; always supposing him to work under the con-

"If every man did his share of labour, and wasted effort were stopped, four hours' labour a-day would give to everybody all the wealth they could use." Thus said Benjamin Franklin over a hundred years ago, and how much truer is it now, with the then inconceivable improvements in the means of production which have been made since he wrote.—E. T.

ditions I have been speaking of—namely, feeling that it was useful (and consequently honoured), and that it was not continuous or hopeless, and that he was really doing it of his own free will.

The last claim I make for my work is that the places I worked in, factories or workshops, should be pleasant, just as the fields where our most necessary work is done are pleasant. Believe me there is nothing in the world to prevent this being done, save the necessity of making profits on all wares; in other words, the wares are cheapened at the expense of people being forced to work in crowded, unwholesome, squalid, noisy dens; that is to say they are cheapened at the expense of the workman's life.

Well, so much for my claims as to my *necessary* work, my tribute to the state. I believe people would find as they advanced in their capacity for carrying on social order, that life so lived was much less expensive than we now can have any idea of, and that after a little people would rather be anxious to seek work than avoid it; that our working hours would rather be merry parties of men and maids, young men and old, enjoying themselves over their work, than the grumpy weariness it mostly is now. Then would come the time for the new birth of art, so much talked of so long deferred; people couldn't help showing their mirth and pleasure in their work, and would be always wishing to express it in a tangible and more or less enduring form, and the workshop would once more be a school of art, whose influence no one could escape from.

And, again, that word art leads me to my last claim, which is that the material surroundings of my life should be pleasant, generous, and beautiful; that I know is a large claim, but this I will say about it, that if it cannot be satisfied, if every civilised community cannot provide such surroundings for all its members, I do not want the world to go on; it is a mere misery that man has ever existed. I don't think it possible under the present circumstances to speak too strongly on this point. I feel sure that the time will come when people will find it difficult to believe that a rich community, having such command over external nature, could have submitted to live such a mean, shabby, dirty life as we do.

And once for all, there is nothing in our circumstances save the hunting of profit that drives us into it. It is profit which draws men into enormous unmanageable aggregations called towns for instance; profit which crowds them up when they are there into quarters without gardens or open spaces; profit which won't take the most ordinary precautions against wrapping a whole district in a cloud of sulphurous smoke; which turns beautiful rivers into filthy sewers; which condemns all but the rich to live in houses idiotically cramped and confined at the best, and at the worst in houses for whose wretchedness there is no name. I say it is almost incredible that we should bear such crass stupidity as this; nor should we if we could help it. We shall not bear it when the workers get out of their heads that they are but an appendage to profit-grinding, that the more profits that are made the more employment at high wages there will be for them, and that therefore all the incredible filth, disorder, and degradation of modern civilisation are signs of their prosperity. So far from that, they are signs of their slavery. When they are no longer slaves they will claim as a matter of course that every man and every family should be generously lodged, that every child should be able to play in a garden close to the place his parents lived in; that the houses should by their obvious decency and order be ornaments to nature, not disfigurements of it; for the decency and order when carried to the due pitch would most assuredly lead to beauty in building. All this, of course, would mean the state, which as I have told you should mean all society duly organised, the state having in its hands the means of production, and can only be done on those terms; on any other terms people will be driven to accumulate private wealth for themselves, and thus, as we have seen, to waste the goods of the community and perpetuate the division into classes, which means continual war and waste.

WILLIAM MORRIS.

(To be concluded.)

BRISTOL—ANTI-JUBILEE MEETING.—An extraordinary incident occurred here this morning (21st inst.). An open-air meeting was held in the centre of the city at 9 o'clock in the morning, at which there was a large attendance, consisting chiefly of working men. Several prominent working men spoke to the assembly, and the following resolutions were carried in the most enthusiastic manner: 1. "That, having regard to the immense cost of monarchy, and the fact that it is maintained exclusively in the interest of the privileged classes, of which it is the centre, and seeing that the progress of the last fifty years has been greatly retarded by these classes, this meeting recognises no further cause for rejoicing at this period of the Queen's reign than the grand fact that the working-class organisations of this city decline to participate in the so-called Jubilee, notwithstanding an enforced holiday; and this meeting protests against such enforced holiday, and the use of public money and the national forces, as a despicable attempt to promote sham sentiment on which to bolster up a useless institution." 2. "That in view of the want, misery, and absolutely hopeless lives of the workers of this country (to say nothing of poor Ireland), this meeting earnestly protests against the continuance of this state of things in the face of the immense wealth of the nation, produced by the workers, as not only evidence that the working classes have no cause for joy at this time of so-called Jubilee, but as a disgrace to civilisation and opposed to all true ideas of justice and humanity."

One of the regiments taking part in the procession pro-Jubilee, coming in the vicinity of this meeting and somewhat interrupting the business, as it was thought designedly, was loudly hooted and hissed at. The "city's" procession in celebration of the Jubilee was nearly wholly composed of soldiers, and the proceedings were absolutely wanting in enthusiasm—not a single cheer along the whole route; and the affair only required the Dead March in "Saul" from one of the bands to make its funeral character complete.—R. G.

Society is barbarous until every industrious man can get his living without dishonest courtesies.—Ralph W. Emerson.

THE CONVICT.

(By L. WITTIG. Translated by J. L. JOYNES.)

WITH iron chains on neck and feet,
And forehead earthward sunken low,
Brown coat and uniform complete—
'Tis thus the convict plies his hoe.
He once, like him who walks beside
With rifle ready in his hand,
Wore coat in brighter colours dyed,
And served his native land.

For times were bad, and corn was dear,
And hope in every heart was dead;
And all around there smote the ear
The poor man's bitter cry for bread.
"O spare a crust, that we may eat;
In vain we've looked for work to-day,
And still must loiter in the street,
And lounge the time away."

But when indeed they knew the worst,
And prayers for bread were wasted
breath,
Beneath the rich men's feet there burst
The mine whose womb was big with
death.

Hark, "Work or Death," is now the
cry
Through all the limits of the land;
Sedition's flames are raging high,
By Famine's fury fanned.

And now the thunder of the drum
Is heard the angry cries between;
The grenadiers in order come,
Their aim is sure, their swords are
keen.

As though for sport on measured
ground
Where marksmen strive but to excel,
Are rifle-bullets handed round,
Sharp hunger to repel.

And hark, a cry! On either hand
Dense crowds in narrow streets are
pent;
Lo, face to face two armies stand,
The starving and the well-content.

See there! that yet the People's flag
May soar aloft and flaunt the sky,
They hoist a torn and tattered rag,
Defiantly on high.

"Bread," cry they, "brothers, give us
bread!
Nor let your answer be a stone;
That we to-night no more may dread
To hear our starving children wean.
Put by your lead; a single pound
Of bread will still our sharp desire."
Hark! through the serried ranks re-
sounded
The words "Make ready! Fire!"

The volley cracks; the people run;
Five only in their blood remain;
Their hunger with their life is done;
An end is put to all their pain.
The colonel's eye was on his men;
Its glance was keen their aim to see;
And woe betide the culprit then,
If any such there be.

Yes, one there was who would not do
That murder; what though he had
worn

A soldier's uniform, he knew
He too was of the People born.
His heart was beating fast for shame,
And trembling sore his every limb;
The foes on whom his eyes took aim
Were brothers unto him.

Before court-martial is he brought,
Because, despite the soldier's creed,
He fearlessly has felt and thought
As though he were a man indeed.
The doom of death is quickly said;
What sentence else could meet the
case?
To prison packs him off instead
The king's especial grace.

THE SAME OLD BOGIE!

READERS of newspapers have become so sated with the high-spiced Jubilee fare provided for them, and the monotonous imbecility of the "arguments" brought forth against the Irish people, that a new move is necessary. The sea-serpent is played out, and the green gooseberry not marvellous enough. Editors are in despair for "items," and the "Authorities" for something to stiffen the British Lion's courage to coercion pitch.

Here, then, is a difficulty; but the Able Editors and Law-upholding Authorities are much too good stage-managers to allow their drama to drag so pitifully long. The desperate dynamitard and the conspirator who is "known to the police" are brought out once more from the theatrical property-room; they are carefully dusted, the requisite shade of ferocity imparted to their appearance, and they are "produced with great applause"!

The police refuse information they do not possess; the "leading journals" have a passing fit of scolding and good advice; the public buy the papers and shake their sapient heads over the evil spirit shown by "those horrid rebels"; and law and order, loyalty, and several things else, are greatly strengthened.

Meantime all that can be done is being done to exasperate the oppressed—English and Irish—and to show them the uselessness of legal and constitutional means. Can it be wondered at if mayhap some embittered exile or hunted "felon" should learn the lesson that the press is preaching so loudly?
S.

THE TITHE WAR IN WALES.—The utmost excitement prevails throughout the disturbed districts of North Wales, where the military and police are again expected to enforce the sales on the distrained stock for tithes. Immense bonfires are erected on the various mountain ranges, and will be at once set ablaze on the approach of the authorities. Cannon are fixed on the hill slopes, and horns, 6 ft. long, are held in readiness at the farmsteads. The local magistrates have received instructions to hold themselves in readiness to proceed with the military for the purpose of reading the Riot Act. The future movements of the military and constabulary are, however, kept a profound secret. Concerning the proceedings at Colwyn Bay, and the alleged attack by the police on the crowd, a correspondent telegraphs:—The wounds produced were not mere scratches, but were deep cuts, and in some cases serious results may follow. The number of very old men thus wounded was remarkable, though the majority were of course able-bodied labourers. Another feature of the affray was that kicking was freely resorted to, and several complained of severe bruises about the legs.—Daily News, June 18.

Never grow faint-hearted, for there is a larger promise of dawn painted in the skies than ever before, and it needs only push, push, push, to swing wide open the gates of the morning.—B. G. Haskell.



"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!"

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Periodicals received during the week ending Wednesday June 22.

ENGLAND		Herald	BELGIUM
Justice		Denver (Col.) Labor Enquirer	Brussels—L'Avant-Garde
Jus		Fort Worth (Tex.)—South West	Liege—L'Avenir
Londoner Arbeiter-Zeitung		Hammonton (N.J.) Credit Foncier	
Norwich—Daylight		Paterson (N.J.) Labor Standard	HOLLAND
Practical Socialist		Milwaukee (Wis.)—Volksblatt	Hague—Recht voor Allen
INDIA		New Haven (Conn.)—Work-	SPAIN
Bankipore—Behar Herald		men's Advocate	Madrid—El Socialista
UNITED STATES		San Francisco (Cal.) The People	Cadiz—El Socialismo
New York—Freiheit		FRANCE	PORTUGAL
Der Sozialist		Paris—Cri du Peuple (daily)	Lisbon—O Protesto Operario
Volkszeitung		Le Socialiste	
John Swinton's Paper		Le Revolte	ROUMANIA
Boston—Woman's Journal		Guise—Le Devoir	Jassy—Lupta
Chicago (Ill.)—Vorbote		Lille—Le Travailleur	GREECE
Labor Enquirer		Milan—Il Fascio Operaio	Athens—Ardin

AN OLD SUPERSTITION—A NEW DISGRACE.

As was said last week, the contempt with which all Socialists necessarily look on the idiotic court ceremony of the week has prevented anything more than a mere hint being given in the *Commonweal* about the Jubilee. And besides this, Socialists feel of course that the mere abolition of the monarchy would help them little if it only gave place to a middle-class republic; such an one, for example, as that which butchered so many thousands of citizens at Paris in 1871 and now in 1887 grown respectable and liberal, still blocks the way to all progress in France, and holds out a hand to the corruption of society there. Nevertheless, now the monstrous stupidity is on us (for I am necessarily writing before the event), one's indignation swells pretty much to the bursting-point, and I really must take advantage of my position to relieve my feelings, even at the expense of being considered somewhat old-fashioned. And we must not after all forget what the hideous, revolting, and vulgar tomfoolery in question really means nowadays, or how truly its hideousness and vulgarity of upholstery symbolises the innate spirit which has forced the skinny twaddle on a nation that is in the habit of boasting (how vainly!) of its practicality. Such a ceremony would once have meant something very different to what it does now. Time was when the central figure in the procession from palace to Abbey would have been a man or woman whose personality would have been felt, though acting according to the ethics and maxims of feudality. The central figure in the procession would at the worst have been also in the centre of the feudal warriors gathered for the battle, and not seldom in the centre of the enemy's host. The administration of affairs, the balancing of the various claims of the groups of the feudal hierarchy, the assertion of the due rights of the great manor (scarcely yet a country)—all these would have been the duties of the central figure of a great royal procession; and no monarch of England, not even the worst of the Angevines or the most faineant of the Plantagenets could altogether neglect such duties; they had to do the deeds of men and women, however faulty or perverse, and not the deeds of a gilt gibbie-stick; they were each of them a part of the public, and an active part too.

All that is as dead as King Harold now. The nucleus of that grievous mass of flunkeyism which has been a disgrace even to disgraceful

London (although the coolness with which her duties are neglected is from time to time noticed by the public and the press) is on the whole considered as a satisfactory representative of what she does represent; so satisfactory that we are called upon to take part in a set of antics in her honour compared with which a corrobbery of Australian black-fellows is a decent and dignified performance.

What is it then that this central figure does represent? Not the feudal hierarchy, dead centuries ago; not the queer pedantic divine-right-of-kings, whose struggle with the bourgeois divine-right of parliamentary majority played such an important part in developing the supremacy of that bourgeoisie. No, it does not represent these extinct superstitions, but, superstition as it is itself, it represents commercial realities rather: to wit, jobbery official and commercial, and its foundation the Privilege of Capital, set on a background of the due performance of the conventional domestic duties; in short, the representation of the anti-social spirit in its fulness is what is required of it.

That is the reason why the career of the present representative is, in spite of those few grumblings aforesaid, so eminently satisfactory. It has been the life of a respectable official who has always been careful to give the minimum of work for the maximum of pay, to keep the public well at arm's length, and to abstain from any fantastic act of generosity, which might have been taken as a precedent in the future. All this has been expected of it and it has performed it in a way which has duly earned the shouts of the holiday-makers, the upholsterers, fire-work makers, gasfitters and others who may gain some temporary advantage from the Royal (but shabby) Jubilee Circus, as well as the deeper-seated applause of those whose be-all and end-all is the continuance of respectable robbery. For us Revolutionists it is clear that the gibbie-stick line of conduct is better than one with some show of human interest in it would have been; so that we have nothing to complain of. The more reaction is stripped of sentiment the better for us.

One word before this loathsome subject of the Jubilee is consigned to its due dust-heap. Fifty years ago the country was yet in the throes of that unorganised but formidable insurrection which followed on the industrial revolution, and the reckless greed of those benefitted by it—the capitalists, to wit. That insurrection was damped down by the commercial successes which so much increased the numbers and power of the definitely middle classes, so that twenty-five years ago a survivor of the discontent of 1837 might well have thought that all was over. But unbridled competition has forced the pace more than any one could have guessed it would; fifty years is gone, and once more we have "discontent" amongst us, if not wider spread than before, yet at least deeper seated, and with no apparent staving-off remedy before it except Mr. Chamberlain's feeble attempts at peasant-proprietorship. And even this vulgar Royal Upholstery procession, trumpery as it is, may deepen the discontent a little, when the newspapers are once more empty of it, and when people wake up, as on the morrow of a disgraceful orgie, to find dull trade all the duller for it, and have to face according to their position the wearisome struggle for riches, for place, for respectability, for decent livelihood, for bare subsistence, in the teeth of growing competition in a society now at last showing its rottenness openly.

WILLIAM MORRIS.

The labour movement is a world wide movement. It is limited neither by oceans, races, nor creeds. It is not one organisation, or two or ten; it is a combination of all organisations, Knights of Labour and Trades' Unionists who are seeking the economic emancipation of the wage-slave. The man whose view of the labour movement is limited by any one organisation is a victim of prejudice, ignorance, and intolerance. The amelioration in the condition of all men will be brought about not by overbearing insolence on the part of one side or the other, not by bullying or tall talk, not by the isolated action of any organisation be it ever so powerful, but by the combined strength, wisdom, and fraternal efforts of all organisations of wage labourers throughout this country and throughout the world of modern industry.—*Paterson (N.J.) Labor Standard.*

TOADYING TO ROYALTY.—At a meeting of the American Section of the Socialist Labour Party of America, of Providence, R. I., held Sunday evening, June 5, the following resolution was unanimously adopted:—"Whereas, The celebration of the anniversary of the coronation of Queen Victoria is to be held June 21 in this country, we, the American Section of the Socialist Labour Party of America, hereby declare that, Whereas, The idea of upholding or otherwise celebrating the anniversary of any monarch is repugnant to any and all liberty-loving people, especially to citizens of a republic like ours; and, Whereas, The worship of a figurehead who receives an income of estate and salary combined of 15,000 dols. per day, while subjects and citizens of Great Britain and Ireland are suffering from the want of the mere necessities of life; and also the sending out of beggars to solicit money from the working people for the benefit of royalty, which is nothing but a name for a method of keeping people in wage-slavery and poverty, are wrong; therefore be it, Resolved, That the Providence Section of the Socialist Labour Party of America hereby condemn the action of toadies to English royalty and English capital as an insult to all free people."

A FREE-TRADER'S VIEW OF THE LABOUR QUESTION.

I.

WHAT a blessing it must be to have a clear head, unclouded by any Socialist nonsense! Here have I been for the last seven or eight years looking with increasing attention at the great Labour Question, sometimes one side and sometimes another, under the impression that it was a sort of polygon or many-sided figure, if not rather an innumerable number of radii, each leading to Socialism as a centre, with many lines drawn across, like a mysterious but beautiful cobweb. But it seems all that is to be changed now, for a thinker has come forward in the person of Mr. Edward Atkinson, of Boston, U.S.A., and (thanks to an article about him in the *Pall Mall Gazette*) we have at last seen that after all there is no real ground for any labour difficulty, it being merely a question of comparisons to be solved by measuring two or three straight lines (drawn *parallel*, as if typical of how they will never bring you to the *point*), one long one to represent the share the workers get of the proceeds of a business, and one little short one for the profit of the capitalists, with a few others to make it look pretty and even and business-like. All that you want besides is a rule to measure and compare the lines with, and having done that the result will be the answer required, namely, that "the present division of profits between labour and capital is just," *Q.E.D.*, and so we need not trouble ourselves further about it. What could be more simple? Truly Mr. Atkinson deserves to be boss of the Hub of the Universe for this discovery! If only he would settle religious questions in the same way, how many poor souls might be saved from eternal perdition!

Nevertheless, I can't all at once clear the Socialist cobwebs out of my brain, and should like to trace two or three of the most important radii that seem to me to run across these beautiful parallels from Boston, like trees across a railway. I must first, however, give a few more details about Mr. Atkinson's argument.

The whole case is founded on an imaginary example, chosen probably for convenience of reckoning and measuring. Mr. Atkinson imagines three capitalists owning a cotton-mill built at a cost of 1,000,000 dols. They would employ 950 hands, who would produce in a year 17,500,000 yards of cotton cloth, which would sell for 1,100,000 dols. A diagram, drawn out to scale, shows how this sum is divided. I will take the three most important items, viz., 575,000 dols. paid for raw material, 285,000 dols. for mill-labour, and 60,000 dols. for the final profit of the capitalists, or 6 per cent. on the cost of the mill. Three other diagrams with descriptive letter-press deal respectively with the other expenses, the "spending of the profits," and with what is "consumed and saved" by capitalists and labourers. It is with the first, however, that we have most to do.

To begin with: to my prejudiced Socialist judgment a doubt occurs whether this 60,000 dols. can accurately represent the share of the produce which the capitalists would receive. For this amount (as is pointed out to us) to 6 per cent. on the cost of the mill, and Mr. Atkinson's case therefore imagines that the three capitalists will invest nearly three-quarters of a million dollars in raw material, etc., and not require any interest on it—a thing quite against the nature of capitalists to do. Wherefore I think it just possible that the whole thing is founded on a false hypothesis. However, not being in the cotton trade myself, I will try to believe that the supposed case is a true example of facts as far as cotton-spinning is concerned. But if so, I must demur to its being taken as an example of "the present division of profits between capital and labour." 60,000 dols. is about $5\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. of the total 1,100,000 dols. proceeding from the business, which is by no means the average percentage of proceeds which is taken by the exploiters of labour. For instance, Mr. Atkinson's second diagram shows that the total profit made by the exploiting classes out of the manufacture of 17,500,000 yards of cotton is, for farmers, merchants, mill-owners, and all, 145,000 dols. out of the 1,100,000 dols., or $12\frac{1}{2}$ per cent.; whilst we have only to turn to the accounts of English railways to find dividends of 50 per cent. of the gross receipts. Five and a-half per cent. is therefore far below the average share taken by the capitalists.

Not that I mean to admit that the capitalists have the least right to even $5\frac{1}{2}$ or any percentage whatever of the proceeds, merely as interest on capital. It is plain that the shares of the capitalists and labourers consist of the value added to the raw material in the mill. To create this value, capital was necessary and labour was necessary, and if any one likes to amuse himself guessing how much is due to capital and how much to labour, I don't much object, provided he does not go on to confuse the labourer with his labour, and the capital with the capitalist, as Mr. Atkinson has done. For I beg to submit that capital and capitalist are not synonymous, and that when it is said that such and such a share of the proceeds of business should go to capital, it by no means follows that that share belongs to a capitalist, even though he is said to be the owner of the capital. In the first place I should question his means of acquiring the capital, and his right to retain it; and even supposing that could be established, it should be asked what part the capitalist took in producing the proceeds of which he claims a share, though it was other men's labour which called forth the uses of his capital. If he managed the business, he deserves wages for what necessary or useful work he has done in that capacity; but it is not necessary to suppose that a capitalist takes any share in production, for though we cannot have labour without a labourer, we can (and will) have capital without a capitalist.

Again, Mr. Atkinson's black lines make it look as if the three mill-owners were very moderate in their demands, and the labourers in the mill had the best of the bargain; 285,000 dols. amongst 950 workmen is 300 dols. (about £60) each. But 60,000 dols. amongst three capitalists is 20,000 dols., or £4,000 each. A considerable difference here! considering that the whole of the extra value (60,000 dols. included) was added by the labourers, and that the only part the capitalists took in the production was the easy task of lending to the labourers capital they could not if they would have used themselves. Clearly the 60,000 dols. belongs to the labourers who produced it just as much as it would do if there were no capitalists to levy taxes on the use of the capital. Mr. Atkinson's simple diagram might be improved and still further simplified by eliminating altogether the share of the proceeds which the capitalist claims, since he, being useless, should receive no share of the gains.

It is probable that in opposition to this, Mr. Atkinson would argue that even if what I have said is true, the 60,000 dols. divided between 950 men would only give them a paltry 62 dols. (or about £12) extra all round, and that by driving away the capitalists this is all we should gain, instead of all the advantages promised by Socialism. We are told, "The poor are not poor because capital takes a bigger share than it ought. The poor are a great deal less poor . . . than they would be except for the service of capital, of which they enjoy the greater part of the benefit." (Please observe how the writer dare not put "capitalist," though he means us to understand it.) Therefore, since capitalists are not the cause of poverty, the nationalisation of capital would do us little or no good, and some other remedy must be found. Such I take to be the train of thought which Mr. Atkinson's article is intended to suggest, and his pretty parallels seem to be the lines he has prepared for the train of our thoughts to run upon.

GEORGE STURT.

(To be concluded).

THE NORTH OF ENGLAND SOCIALIST FEDERATION.

We have received the following Principles and Programme of the North of England Socialist Federation:

PRINCIPLES.

The North of England Socialist Federation has been formed to educate and organise the people to achieve the economic emancipation of labour.

While fully sympathising with and helping every effort of the wage-earners to win better conditions of life under the present system, the Socialist Federation aims at abolishing the Capitalist and Landlord class and forming the workers of society into a Co-operative Commonwealth.

An employing class monopolising all the means of getting and making wealth, and a wage-earning class compelled to work primarily for the profit of these employers, is a system of tyranny and slavery.

The antagonism of these two classes brings about fierce competition—for employment amongst the workers and for markets amongst the capitalists. This gives rise to class hatred and class strife, and destroys real independence, liberty, and happiness.

The present system gives ease and luxury to the idlers, toil and poverty to the workers, and degradation to all; it is essentially unjust and should be abolished.

Our aim is to bring about a Socialist System which will give healthy and useful labour to all, ample wealth and leisure to all, and the truest and fullest freedom to all.

All are invited to help the Socialist Federation in this great cause. Adherents shall acknowledge truth, justice, and morality as the basis of their conduct towards each other and towards all men. They shall acknowledge NO RIGHTS WITHOUT DUTIES: NO DUTIES WITHOUT RIGHTS.

PROGRAMME.

The Socialist Federation seeks to gain its ends by working on the following lines:—

- (1) Forming and helping other Socialist bodies to form a National and International Socialist Labour Party.
- (2) Striving to conquer political power by promoting the election of Socialists to Parliament, Local governments, School Boards, and other administrative bodies.
- (3) Helping Trade Unionism, Co-operation, and every genuine movement for the good of the workers.
- (4) Promoting a scheme for the National and International Federation of Labour.

All Socialists will wish the new society success; to which wishes I must add for my part the hope that our friends will find out the futility of sending (or trying to send) Socialists or any one else to Parliament before they have learned it by long and bitter experience. They will find their work cut out for them in carrying out Nos. 3 and 4 of their programme, and useful and necessary work it will be. At the same time I heartily congratulate them on not holding out the bait of a long string of "stepping-stones"; measures which no bourgeois Parliament would pass, and which yet would be out of date in the very first days of a Revolution; promises not capable of fulfilment, nor worth fulfilment.

W. M.

Socialism proposes scientific, intelligent, enlightened government, or free co-operation on the basis of liberty, equality, fraternity, and solidarity.

Socialism would perfect the educational system by entirely abolishing the present lack of system. The state would educate every child thoroughly, and, as they advanced, give them an opportunity to master any science, art or mechanical pursuit for which their tastes or abilities adapted them. Hence there would be no uncongenial pursuits or employments, as each would choose that in which he would be most likely to excel. Hence there would be very few bad mechanics, unskilled workers, or quacks at anything.

THE LABOUR STRUGGLE.

BRITAIN.

THE STRIKE IN THE BELFAST SHIPBUILDING TRADE.—The dispute which has existed for nearly seven weeks has at last been amicably settled. The works of Harland and Wolff were opened last Friday and the system of weekly wages will be established.

THE ENGINEERS' STRIKE AT BOLTON.—It is stated that the executive of the Ironmasters' Association has decided to vote the Bolton employers £25,000 to support their action in the present dispute; and if that sum be expended, and the men are still out, notices will be issued to all members of the association for a general lock-out, as in 1851.

TOBACCO TRADE.—Although the Budget agitation may be said to be settled, there are still hundreds of cigar-makers out of employment. The union has just lost another shop, which has been given over to female labour. In this the Jubilee year the tobacco trade in general is in a depressed state, which is likely to continue.—H. D.

THE CHAIN-MAKING TRADE.—In the House of Commons, last Friday, Mr. Matthews, replying to Mr. Curzon, said the wages in the chain-making trade at Cradley Heath, Staffordshire, were probably not more on the average than 7s. per week. The truck system prevailed to this extent that the middlemen who gave out the work only gave it to those who bought goods at their shops. This did not bring them within the law, but the right hon. gentleman invited evidence of any violation of the statute. He had great sympathy with the workmen in their privations, but it was impossible for the Government to interfere between employers and employed.

INDIVIDUAL CAPITALISM, JOINT-STOCKISM, MONOPOLY.—Ten years ago there were fifty firms engaged in the production of burning oil in Scotland; now there is less than a dozen. This diminution in the number of companies has taken place conjointly with an increased output. Finding that competition among themselves injuriously affected their dividends, a conference was held in Glasgow last week to consider a scheme for amalgamating the Scottish Mineral Oil Companies into one, and some progress was made. The first resolution agreed to by the conference was a reduction in wages all round, from 1s. 6d. per week on miners, 2s. on underground oncost men, 10 per cent. on retort men, and a like reduction on coopers. These reductions are to take place immediately, and some of the men are agitating for a general strike.—J. S.

THE CHAIN-MAKERS' STRIKE.—At a meeting of chain-makers in the Salvation Army Barracks, Cradley Heath, Thomas Homer, who presided, said they had some gentlemen down from Southport urging them to establish a co-operative society. He had received a promise that assistance would be rendered them in disposing of the chain they manufactured at Manchester, which was the centre of the co-operative movement. He was strongly in favour of starting such a society. When the society was established there would be no working one under the other, but they would all have the same price; consequently there would be no strikes. The advocates of the scheme had handed him over a cheque for £50. The masters had again been resorting to some of their bad ways. The had won the four-shillings list several times, but had let it slip through their hands. Consequently he considered the whole of the trade would have to turn out again. It was resolved to continue the strike.

THE DORSET AGRICULTURAL LABOURER.—A farm labourers wages are now 11s. per week and a house valued at 1s. per week free of rent. He is also allowed from 15 to 20 lug (perches) of ground for potatoes; this potato ground is an allowance for extra work during the hay-making, for which he is not otherwise paid. During the summer he will probably have six or eight weeks piece-work, turning hoeing and wheat tying, at which he will earn from a £1 to £1 5s. a-week, but it must be remembered that when he is working at piece-work he often works from 4 o'clock in the morning till dark, and also that he requires ale to quench his thirst and extra food to enable him to do the extra work. Hedgers are paid from 6d. to 8d. a lug (perch). I may say that lug is the local name for a rod, pole, or perch of ground. Shepherds get about 13s. or 14s. a-week and house rent free, and an allowance of faggots, potato ground, and sometimes ten hundred of coals per year, also about a £1 or £1 10s. extra called harvest money. They also have a small allowance for each lamb they succeed in rearing. It is difficult to calculate the exact income of a shepherd, but probably it is not much less than 17s. or 18s. a-week. I am of opinion that the earnings of a carter are about the same as the shepherd. I know one farm on which the carters are paid 11s. per week and house rent free, 20 lug of potato ground free, and £4 per year instead of faggots, coal, or ale. A carter, however, has the hardest place on a farm; he goes to the stable at 4 o'clock in the morning, to work in the field in all weathers at 6 o'clock, at 2 o'clock he returns with the horses to the stable, at 3 he goes to dinner, at 4 he is in the stable again till 6 o'clock, and at 8 o'clock he is again in the stable to serve the horses for the night, and this is the slavish state of the poor carter at the present time. Of course the position of the labourer, bad as it is now, was much worse 50 and even 30 years ago. Fifty years ago the farm labourer was only paid 7s. per week; at that time he had little besides barley cake, potatoes, and swedes stolen from the farmer's fields. They also stole all the wood for cooking, and who can blame them? I don't. In fact they were obliged to steal or starve. The farm labourers wages rose about a shilling a-week in every ten years till it reached 10s. per week, and at the formation of the Labourer's Union the wages rose to 13s., 14s., and in one case to 15s. per week, but the farmers gradually lowered the wages till it declined to 11s. per week, and in some villages it is as low as 10s. a-week.—John Smith, Whitechurch.

FRANCE.

ARMENTIERES.—The weavers of the firm of Louis Dulac have declared themselves on strike to the number of 250, having suffered a long time from many petty tyrannies and numberless fines. The head of the firm thinks fit to guard his weaving-sheds by a small troop of gendarmes, which makes up in self-importance and pomposity for what it lacks in number—consisting of four men commanded by their brigadier. It is touching to picture this brave and devoted little band "rallying round" M. Dulac, and defending his sacred person against the encroachments of the "bold, bad, striker" who endeavours vainly to seek an interview with his master, daring to think of discussing with him the conditions of work and wages of himself and his fellow-workers!

A representative of the *Cri du Peuple* has been wandering about the Champs de Mars among the works progressing for the construction of the

Eissel tower and the military school not far off. The navvies labour ceaselessly under the sun in the stifling and airless trenches. "What do you earn?" is the first question asked them. "Only 45 centimes an hour (less than 4½d). They deduct one centime an hour to ensure the master against the accidents that may happen to us. The regular price is 60 centimes, but—well, one must live!" For 45 c. an hour these men have to get through a task which one would not venture to impose on convicts. Facing the military school are the sheds of one Jonclard, the forges de Franche-Comte. Same price, same deduction, the regular tariff again being ignored. Gloomy and desolate is the aspect of the Champs de Mars; from 150 to 200 labourers at most in all these immense works. Not a song, not a burst of laughter breaks the monotony of this desert, nothing but an occasional hammer-stroke to be heard. So much for these works so derisively promised the Parisian workers; people saying to them for several years, "Have patience a little longer."

AMERICA.

BOSTON, June 9.—There is no longer any doubt that the great struggle between employers and employés in the building trades will begin at once. The demand of the master builders that their union employés shall work with non-union men, if required, will be met with absolute refusal. Leading men in the Amalgamated Building Trades Union say emphatically that the point will never be yielded while their union exists. Members of the Building Trades Council expect that strikes and lock-outs will now begin, and within two weeks will become widespread. The union men credit the master builders with a determination to make a decisive fight on the issue raised. The address of the Master Builders' Association to the Amalgamated Building Trades' Council, insists on the right of employing non-unionists as well as unionists. It also quibbles upon other points. It is practically a breach of agreement. Their action is part of the great national scheme of Master Builders which took shape when the Chicago lock-out was declared a few weeks ago.

CHICAGO.—The master masons who started the great lock-out are getting but few recruits under the new rules, and these are set to work upon the most urgent jobs. The offer of compromise made by a few of the contractors was rejected by the men. Many of the masons are at work for the smaller employers, and many others have got jobs out of town. It looks to-day (June 9th) as though the carpenters, at the end of this week, would again lay down their tools unless the employers go back on their determination to re-establish the nine-hour working day. The association of the master carpenters includes over 300 contractors, who employ nearly four-fifths of all the carpenters in Chicago; and they have endorsed the working rules of the master masons, including the nine-hour rule, and fixed wages at a minimum of 30 cents per hour. The men demand the eight-hour rule, at 35 cents per hour. General Secretary McGuire, of the Brotherhood, is in Chicago, and though he is a very moderate man, he advised the journeymen to adhere to their terms.

CORRESPONDENCE.

"THE IMMORALITY OF INTEREST."

Sir,—I send you the following, suggested on reading the letter of a professor of science on "The Immorality of Interest." The relationship of capitalist, employer, and workman may, I think, be exhibited in the following manner:—At every engagement of wage labour, the employers, seeing an opportunity to production, and seeing a number of workmen, usually more than is wanted, with nothing in the world to sell but their labour, say, being by law and by custom enabled to do so, "Now, you compete among yourselves for work, and we, employers, will compete (!) among ourselves for your labour." The workmen submit, that is, they do so every time they accept wages. But this system of production, it was observed, afforded so large a return to the employers, that it was seen to be possible and of sufficient advantage to the parties concerned for the mere capitalists to unite with the would-be employers in the work of production, and then to share between them the returns which before went to the employers only. This being done, and the market for capital being thrown open to all, the "reward of abstinence" became determined by the ratio between the supply of and demand for capital. If this be a correct statement, not of the actual origin of interest perhaps but of the manner in which it might have originated under present conditions, it will be seen that the payment of interest depends on the possibility of making the wages contract. It is then, I take it, not a question of the morality of the payment of interest by employer to capitalist, which is a mere question of the division of the spoil, but it is the morality of the wages contract which must come under consideration, the capitalist being considered a party to it on the side of the employer.

This question of the morality of the wages contract I do not myself feel competent to deal with, yet I cannot fail to see that the present competitive system is a mere struggle for the benefits and advantages of wealth, wherein employer competes with employer, workman with workman, and the working-class competes with the employing class for the product of industry. More especially ought the working-class to realise the true nature of this last phase of the competition, that war, as I believe, is the true name for it, that in this strife, no more than in war, does any moral consideration whatever exist to prevent them demanding for themselves the whole of the product of their labour. It is this struggle for the product of industry which I, a workman, should like to see carried out to its only possible conclusion. Let once the workmen recognise the true nature of this competition, that in spite of all our boasted law and order it is nothing but a fight for wealth; let them but realise that it is individual ownership of the means of production, involving competition and the wage-labour system, which is the cause of the most of our poverty, ignorance, and crime, and they will at once, unless human nature fail in the very important element of selfishness, take action to secure the overthrow of the present competitive system, and the abolition of our present barbarous industrial relationships.—Yours truly,
A WORKMAN.
June 9th, 1887.

Indirect slavery—nominally the least odious, practically the worst of its forms—is now enthroned high and unquestioned. Disinherit man! you ask through your trades' unions and labour conventions only a modification of the inferior condition that has been forced on you, and which you accept.—*The Old Book.*

NORTHUMBRIAN NOTES.

THERE is a remarkable leading article in the *Newcastle Chronicle* for June 13, on "Dwellings for the Poor," in which the following passage occurs:

"In schemes for the 'elevation of the masses,' the mistake is too often made of including under the head of 'the masses' the intelligent skilled artisan and the unskilled and casual labour class—and the schemes proposed are usually such as will further improve and develop the intelligence and artistic tastes of the former—but leave the lowest and poorest class untouched. There are hundreds of thousands of the latter so deadened by abject poverty, so steeped in misery, so absorbed in the passionate struggle for the morsel of daily bread, so densely herded together, that the little smattering of education they may once have possessed has been lost in the fight for existence, and they have neither the desire nor the power to avail themselves of the higher culture agencies provided."

The great mistake the average middle-class person makes is to assume that the difference between rich and poor is not getting bigger because the "working class" gets so-and-so much wages on the average. This is just a case where averages only conceal the truth. One of the rotten elements in "reforms" of this kind is that the benefit (if there ever is any) goes to those who need it least, and those who needed it most are left as poor, and getting poorer than before.

There is some fear of the strike breaking out again. The men are very bitter at having to resume work at such a miserable rate of wages, and they are, again, dissatisfied with the action of their agents in the way they are settling the new sliding-scale. The talk about the men going back "joyfully" to work is all bosh.

The spread of co-operation in the north of England has been enormous. The concentration of the work of distribution of course bears hard upon the small shopkeepers. The feeling of the traders against the co-operative stores is getting very bitter, and they are preparing to express it. A shopkeepers' agitation will soon be started against the co-operators, and we shall have a lively fight between them.

The men at Sir William Armstrong's Elswick works had a meeting and decided to work on Jubilee day. They think that the race-week holidays are much more important or more interesting than the Jubilee tomfoolery.

I held a most successful meeting at Consett last week. The condition of the men at these famous iron and steel works is such that they must soon become Socialists. Steel is gradually superseding iron for most purposes. The making of steel only requires about half the number of men and a less quantity of steel serves in the place of iron. Thus the men are thrown out of work and kept out. Plainly, the disturbance caused here will smash the trade union, unless it becomes a Socialistic body. The men are beginning to see this, and get more eager to hear the Socialist speakers.

The North of England Socialist Federation is making good progress. During the past week over a dozen thoroughly successful meetings have been held and several new branches organised. The miners are taking up the work of organisation very energetically, and the propaganda goes on as effectively as ever. There has been none of the waning in enthusiasm so confidently foretold by the enemies of Socialism down here. Since going back to work the miners have shown as much resolution as ever, and seem to be fully conscious of the great and pressing need for pushing on the spread of Socialism. Great good was done by Mrs. Besant's spirited and convincing lecture to the miners at Seaton Delaval last Saturday. Donald's return to help in the work is looked forward to with interest, and arrangements are being made with the Rev. Stewart D. Headlam for a series of meetings.

J. L. MAHON.

THE SOCIALIST LEAGUE.

OFFICES: 13 FARRINGTON ROAD, E.C.

Co-operative Store.—The Committee attend at the offices at 8.30 p.m. on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Saturdays. See advertisement on last page.

London Members.—The first meeting of London Members will be held on Monday the 4th of July.

Library.—The Library is open to members of the Socialist League and affiliated bodies. LIBRARY CATALOGUE, containing the Rules, 2d. D. J. NICOLL and W. BLUNDELL are the Librarians.

Outdoor Lecturers.—A special meeting of the outdoor lecturers will be held at the Offices, 13 Farringdon Road, on Saturday June 25, at 7 p.m., for the purpose of arranging the lecture-list for coming quarter. Branches are specially requested to send delegates.

Resolution of Council.

"That all monies collected at open-air meetings must be duly handed to the treasurer of the League, and the receipt of same acknowledged in *Commonweal*."

THE NORWICH PRISONERS' AID FUND.

Proceeds of Concert at Cleveland Hall, £1, 8s. 6d. For Mrs. Mowbray—A Few Fabians, per Annie Besant (weekly), 10s. J. LANE, Treasurer.

THE "COMMONWEAL"—SPECIAL NOTICE.

Owing to the extraordinary demand for last week's issue of the *Commonweal*, it is now out of print. Branches and others who have any unsold copies are requested to forward same to manager without delay.

REPORTS.

CLERKENWELL.—On Wednesday, June 15, D. J. Nicoll lectured on "Our Political Parties." Lively discussion followed. On Sunday, June 19, we held good meeting on Clerkenwell Green. In our hall, after the outdoor meeting, a large audience had gathered to hear "The Jubilee Recognition." The proceedings commenced by singing "The March of the Workers," every one standing up and joining in heartily. Then followed the reading of some lessons, by T. E. Wardle, from Joyces's 'Socialist Catechism.' After this, "No Master" was sung lustily by the audience, and then T. Dalziel gave short entreaty to the "Goddess of Truth." W. Blundell followed, taking as his text, "Do unto others as you would be done by." He pointed out the fearful misery existing in England, Wales, Scotland, and Ireland, and yet the people were asked to throw up their caps and rend the air with shouts because of the completion of a fifty years reign by Mrs. Guelph. He had no hesitation in describing it as only fit (especially the latter part) to be classed with the barbaric age. The meeting closed with the "Marseillaise." A large number of 'Chants for Socialists' were sold. Annie Taylor rendered valuable assistance at the piano.—A. T. and W. B.

HOXTON.—Sunday morning very successful outdoor meeting. Sunday evening W. C. Wade gave a very interesting historical lecture—"Henry VIII.'s Legacy."

HACKNEY.—Graham addressed a very successful meeting at the Broadway on Wednesday evening. Hobbs and Allman spoke to a good meeting at the Salmon and Ball on Sunday morning. An interesting lecture on "Liberty" was delivered by S. Mainwaring at the Club on Sunday evening. The lecturer clearly showed the evils of parliamentarianism, and exposed the fallacies of government, etc. This subject will be enlarged upon by Mainwaring at the Club on July 24. We recommend all members of the Socialist League to hear this lecture.

MARYLEBONE.—A rather lengthy meeting was held at Hyde Park Sunday afternoon, addressed by Cantwell, Doughty, Mrs. Taylor, Mainwaring, Samuels, and Turner. One opponent endeavoured to show the utility of a monarch in modern society. Sale of literature fair.—T. C.

MILE-END.—Good meeting on the Waste on Sunday. Good work may be done here. Those willing to co-operate in forming a Bethnal Green and Mile-end Branch are requested to correspond with H. Davis, 12 Florida Street, Harts Lane, Bethnal Green. A meeting will take place for the above object at 95 Boston St., Hackney Road, on Tuesday June 28. All those interested are requested to attend.—H. DAVIS.

NORTH LONDON.—We held a very good meeting at Ossulton Street on Tuesday. Comrades Sparling and Blundell spoke, and we sang the "Starving Poor of Old England" amid considerable enthusiasm. *Commonweal* sold well. On Sunday morning Mainwaring and Brooks spoke to a variable audience. Sale of literature fair.—H. BARTLETT.

DALKEITH.—On Wednesday June 15 J. H. Smith of Edinburgh, read a capital paper on "Socialism," Tuke in the chair. Gilray also spoke. Persons wishing to join the Branch here please communicate with John Thomson, secretary, 146 High Street.

EDINBURGH.—On Thursday June 16, in place of our usual study of 'Das Capital,' we read and discussed certain portions of the article "Socialism" in the present issue of the 'Encyclopedia Britannica.' The article is exceedingly able and very sympathetic; but Mr. Kirkup (the writer) completely misrepresents Marx in saying that he (Marx) taught that manual labour was the sole source of value. On Saturday evening, at Loanhead, Jno. Smith and C. W. Tuke spoke to a good meeting. On Sunday evening we were successful in having a meeting larger than any we have lately had in the afternoon. We will meet in future in the evening. Jno. Smith and Gilray spoke. One question was put—as to how work would be rewarded in a Socialist State. Tuke spoke in the Meadows. Average sale of *Commonweal* kept up.

GLASGOW.—On Saturday Paterson and Carmichael proceeded to Motherwell and explained the principles of Socialism to a fairly large audience. They afterwards went to Hamilton and met Glasier. Here they found a religious meeting on the ground before them, but in spite of this disadvantage our comrades succeeded in securing a satisfactory audience. On Sunday in Jail Square some hundreds of people listened with appreciation to addresses from Glasier, Carmichael, and Belbin. On the evening of the same day McKechnie and Belbin addressed a meeting in Stobeross Street.—A. M.

LEEDS.—On Sunday morning, we held our usual open-air meeting on Hunslet Moor. Comrades Maguire and Hill addressed the audience on "Passing Events." In the afternoon we met the Bradford comrades at Cleckheaton, where we had tea together. After tea we held an open-air meeting in the Market-place. The bulk of the audience were very attentive, and were addressed by comrades Maguire, Paylor (Leeds), Mitchell and Minty (Bradford). A good many back numbers of the *Commonweal* were given away. At the close of the meeting we went to Liversedge and held another open-air meeting. Comrades Bland (Bradford), Maguire, Hill, and Braithwaite (Leeds) addressed the audience on the "Principles of Socialism." The audiences at these two meetings had apparently never heard a Socialist speaker before, but we think that with a little work a good branch may be started in that quarter.—F. C., sec.

NORWICH.—On Thursday last we held a large meeting at Dereham, addressed by Henderson and Morley. On Sunday morning a large meeting was held at Diss, addressed by Lane, Slaughter, Morley, and Houghton. Two meetings were also held at Lyng, addressed by several comrades. At Norwich in the afternoon, we held our usual meeting in the Market-place, where a large concourse of people were assembled, and carried a resolution calling for the release of our comrade Mowbray on the Jubilee day. Henderson, speaking at some length, gave a case that had been drawn to his notice of a young man dying of destitution earning 6s. a week, and had to keep a blind mother and pay 1s. 6d. per week rent. Some opposition was given by Mr. Scurbes, which was replied to by Henderson to the satisfaction of all, 5s. being collected for Propaganda Fund. In the evening, Henderson addressed a meeting on the Agricultural Hall Plain. At 8 o'clock, Henderson lectured in the Gordon Hall on "Fifty Years National Progress," which was listened to with great attention.—J. S.

WALSALL.—On Monday evening, H. Sanders addressed a good open-air meeting of chain-makers at Cradley Heath. About 700 men are still on strike, and recognising that there is no likelihood of their obtaining the advance asked for, so long as portion of the trade are at work and masters thereby able to execute orders, have decided to have a general turn out again and establishing a co-operative society as a means of bettering their condition. The *Commonweal*, containing comrade Donald's report of his visit to the district, was well distributed and much satisfaction expressed with it. On Saturday, Sanders spoke in the Market-place, Walsall, to large and most attentive audiences on "The Jubilee" and "The Cause of Poverty." Fair sale of pamphlets and *Commonweal*.—J. T. D.

On Sunday morning, H. A. Barker lectured on Kingsland Green under the auspices of the Ball's Pond Branch of the N.S.S., to a good audience.

NOTTINGHAM SECTION SOCIALIST UNION.—On Thursday, June 16, at the club, a tea and social evening was held, which was well attended. On Sunday morning in Sneinton Market, Peacock and Proctor addressed a good audience, and 2s. 3d. was collected. In the evening, the same speakers addressed a large and interested meeting in the great market-place; 5s. 1½d. collected, making for the day 7s. 4½d. for club and propaganda work. *Commonweal* sold out, and a great demand for more which we were unable to supply. A meeting was afterwards held at the club, and seven members enrolled.—A. C.

WOOLWICH.—On Sunday evening Banner and Donald held good meeting at Arsenal Gates. Literature sold well. 4s. 3d. collected for propaganda.—R. B.

LECTURE DIARY.

LONDON.

Bloomsbury.—Communist Club, 49 Tottenham Street, Tottenham Court Road, W. On Thursday June 23, at 8.30, Annie Besant will lecture—subject, "The Prosperity of the Working Classes."

Clerkenwell.—Hall of the Socialist League, 13 Farringdon Road, E.C. Sunday June 26, at 8.30 p.m. T. Bolas, "Capitalism, its Growth and Delimitation." Wednesday June 29, at 8.30, H. H. Sparling, "Rebel Songs of Ireland." Members' Business Meeting first Sunday in July, 7.15 p.m. sharp.

Croydon.—Parker Road.

Hackney.—23 Audrey Street, Goldsmith Row. Club Room open every evening from 8 till 11.30; Saturday, 7 till 12.30; Sunday 11 a.m. till 12 p.m. Lecture next Sunday, June 26, on "Evolution and Socialism," at 8.30, by H. A. Barker. Social Educational Class for members on Monday at 9. Business meeting on Tuesday at 8.30. The Library is now being reorganised, and any comrades and friends having books or pamphlets to spare should forward them to the librarian at the Club. The Club is in need of a piano, and any friends able to assist are requested to do so.—J. C.

Hammersmith.—Kelmescott House, Upper Mall, W. Sunday June 26, at 8 p.m. W. Morris, "Monopoly."

Hoxton (L.E.L.).—2 Crondall Street, New North Rd. Club Room open on Monday, Wednesday, and Saturday evenings from 8 till 11. Singing Class every Wednesday at 8.30. Special Members' Meeting on Saturday July 2, at 7 p.m. Committee's report; election of officers. On Sunday June 26, at 8 p.m., a lecture.

Merton.—11 Merton Terrace, High Street. Club Room open every evening. Committee every Thursday. Discussions held every Sunday morning at 11.

Mitcham.—Corner of Merton Lane and Fountain Place. Club Room open every evening from 7.30 till 11.

North London.—Communications to H. Bartlett, sec., 13 Farringdon Road, E.C.

PROVINCES.

Bingley.—Coffee Tavern. Every Monday at 7.30 p.m.

Birmingham.—Carr's Lane Coffee House. Every Monday evening, at 8.

Bradford.—Morris's Dining Rooms, 114 City Road. Wednesdays, at 8.

Dublin.—Irish Labour League, 2 Bachelors Walk, every Thursday at 8 p.m. Discussion on all subjects connected with the Labour Question.

Dalkeith (Edinburgh).—Scientific Hall, Wednesday June 22, a Lecture.

Edinburgh (Scottish Section).—4 Park Street. Meets every Thursday at 7.30 p.m. to transact business. Class for the study of 'Das Capital' at 8.30. (See "Open-air" below.)

Glasgow.—Reading-room of the Branch, 84 John St., open from 10 a.m. till 10 p.m. daily. Monthly Business Meeting in Rooms on Sunday evening at 7 o'clock. (See "Open-air" below.)

Hamilton.—Paton's Hall, Chapel St. Every Thursday at 7.30.

Hull.—Address all communications to E. Teesdale, 20 Shakspeare Street.

Lancaster.—Addresses every Sunday morning on the Quay Jetty.

Leeds.—17 Chesham Street, Sweet Street. Club and reading room open every evening. Business meetings every Wednesday at 8 p.m.

Leicester.—Office of Hosiery Union, Horsefair Street. Fridays at 8 p.m.

Manchester.—145 Grey Mare Lane, Bradford, Manchester. Club and Reading Room open every evening 6 to 10 p.m. Lecture and discussion every Wednesday at 8 p.m.

Norwich.—Gordon Hall, 5 Duke Street. Free Lectures every Sunday at 8 p.m. Business meeting every Monday at 8.30 p.m. Speakers' Class every Sunday at 10.30 a.m. Social evening every Saturday at 8 p.m. On Sunday at 8 o'clock, lecture by Fred Henderson—subject, "Parliamentary Action."

Oxford.—Temperance Hall, 25½ Pembroke Street. Thursdays, at 8.30 p.m.

Paisley.—On Friday at 8 o'clock, open-air meeting at County Square.

Shields (North and South).—Meetings every Sunday, Quay-side and Market Place. Branch meetings on Thursday nights at the "General Gordon," Bath Street, Maxwell Street, South Shields. Secretary, J. Hearne, 32 Clive Street, No. Shields.

OPEN-AIR PROPAGANDA.

LONDON—Sunday 26.

11.30...Clerkenwell GreenJ. Lane
 11.30...Garrett—"Plough Inn".....The Branch
 11.30...Hackney—"Salmon and Ball".....Nicoll
 11.30...Hammersmith—Beadon Rd.The Branch
 11.30...Hoxton Ch., Pitfield St.Wade & Pope
 11.30...Mile-end WasteGraham
 11.30...Mitcham Fair Green.....Kitz
 11.30...Regent's ParkAllman
 11.30...St. Pancras ArchesThe Branch
 11.30...Walham Green.....The Branch

3...Hyde ParkTarleton
 3.30...Victoria ParkNicoll
 7...Clerkenwell GreenThe Branch

Tuesday.
 8...Ossulton Street, Euston Road.....Nicoll

Wednesday.
 8...Broadway, London FieldsBarker

Thursday.
 8...Hoxton, Pitfield StreetWade & Pope

PROVINCES.

Aylsham.—Alternate Tuesdays: Market Place, at 7.
Baillieston.—Saturday: at 6.30.
Dereham.—Thursday: Market Place, at 7.15.
Diw and Wymondham.—Alternate Sundays at 10.30 and 11 respectively.
Edinburgh.—Sunday: Queen's Park, 6.30 p.m.
Dalkeith.—Wednesday 8.15 p.m.
Loanhead.—Saturday 7 p.m.
Glasgow.—Sunday: Jail's Square, 1 o'clock; Paisley Road Toll at 5.
Govan Cross.—Thursday, 8 o'clock.
Hamilton.—Saturday: at 6 o'clock.
Motherwell.—Saturday: at 8.
Partick.—Saturday at 7, Gasworks.
Leeds.—Sunday: Hunslet Moor, 11; Vicar's Croft, 7.
Norwich.—Sunday: Market Place at 3; Agricultural Hall Plain at 7.
Walsall.—Saturday, at 6.30 pm.
Yarmouth.—Wednesday: On the Quay, at 7.30.

NORTH ENGLAND SOCIALIST FEDERATION.

Fri. 24—*Seaton Delaval.* Foot of Harpers, 7 p.m. Men from Cramlington, E. Holywell, and Hartley requested to attend.
 Sat. 25.—*Chevington,* 10 a.m. *Broomhill,* 1 p.m. *Amble,* 4.30 p.m.
 Sun. 26—*N. Shields,* 10.30 a.m. *Byker,* Bridge end, at 11 a.m. *Tynemouth,* 2 p.m. *South Shields,* Market Place, 6.30 p.m.
 Mon. 27—*Consett,* nr. Town Hall, 7 p.m.
 Tues. 28—*Bebside Colliery,* 7 p.m.
 Wed. 29—*Jarrow,* Boat landing, 7 p.m.
 Thur. 30—*Walsend,* nr. the café, 7.30 p.m.
 Fri. July 1—*Backworth,* 7 p.m.

HOXTON (L.E.L.).—Excursion on July 10th to the Rye House. Those wishing to take part in it can obtain full particulars from the secretary.

STAMFORD HILL AND TOTTENHAM.—Comrades and Friends living in this district desirous of forming a branch of the Socialist League are requested to address John Flocton, 3 Sussex Terrace, Markfield Road, Broad Lane, Tottenham, or to the Secretary of the League, 13 Farringdon Road, E.C.

WOOLWICH.—Arsenal Gates, Sunday at 7 o'clock, W. H. Utley.

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