

THE COMMONWEAL

The Official Journal of the SOCIALIST LEAGUE.

[REGISTERED FOR TRANSMISSION ABROAD.]

Vol. 5.—No. 179.

SATURDAY, JUNE 15, 1889.

WEEKLY; ONE PENNY.

NOTES ON NEWS.

The dam above what was once Johnstown in Pennsylvania turns out to have been the crowning triumph of what we call in England jerry-building—*i.e.*, building not for the use of the public but for the profit of the speculator. The crowd of unfortunate people who were lost in that stupendous tragedy have in fact been sacrificed to the demon of profit-mongering to which hundreds and thousands of the disinherited classes are sacrificed every day, whether the kind of sacrifice be the actual death caused by privation, or the living death of hopeless poverty.

To the demon of profit they were sacrificed, and also to the demon of waste: for it seems that that huge mass of water, held temporarily in check by its jerry-built dam, was in fact a pleasure lake, the property of a fishing-club; so that this gigantic threat of sudden death to thousands was simply one of the means of wasting the riches which the idle class wring by force from the workers, and which they cannot use but can only waste.

I do not wonder at the anger of the survivors from this artificial deluge, this subsidised terror, against the owners or holders of the pleasure-lake; but if there be any members of the class which lives on the enforced labour of the workers amongst these angry men, their anger is illogical; because they themselves are doing the same kind of thing (unconsciously maybe) every day. Let Keats speak to it:

“For them alone did seethe
A thousand men in troubles wide and dark:
Half-ignorant, they turned an easy wheel
That set sharp racks at work to pinch and peel.”

On the other hand, those of the disinherited classes who have shown their anger are abundantly justified in being angry; but if they understood their position better, their anger would seek wider afield, for they would know that the profit and pleasure of the masters of slaves does not produce mere spasmodic accidents only of death and misery, but is and must be the constant and necessary cause of continuous death and misery.

Will you say, “How do I know that there was a slave class in and about Johnstown?” If I did not know it otherwise, I should be sure of it by the token that after the catastrophe there were people found so miserable and brutalised that they used the occasion to rob the dead bodies—and were shot for doing it by others (doubtless maddened by the terror that surrounded the place) who did not, and we will say could not, remember the words of a great teacher, “Let him who is without sin amongst you lift up the first stone against her!” O shooters of the robbers of the rich dead, is it not a worse crime to rob the living poor, and that not now and again, but constantly, systematically, and legally?

The “large employers of labour in the printing trade,” who have just lately published a circular to prove that they are the true friends of labour, “protest too much.” We don’t need to be told that they will do what they think best to bring them in a profit; but surely workmen don’t need to be told that this *must* mean their paying the lowest wages they can safely pay. We shall have more on this subject.

Advanced Radicals boycotting Socialists is a sight which would please Tories more than any other party. *Reynolds* please take note of this, and do not refuse to publish our lecture-lists. *Star* please take note also, since you seem to be beginning that game. The *Dispatch* has not the same terror of us as other Radical papers have, but publishes our places and times of meeting regularly.

A poor little boy was run over and killed the other day in getting out of the way of a tram-car. The driver of the said car was arrested and brought before Mr. De Rutzen. But the evidence that the man was not in the least responsible was so clear, that the magistrate remarked that “no doubt what had been done by the police was in

accordance with police regulations, but why the person before him should be taken into custody he was utterly at a loss to understand.” The reason, I think, is rather clearer to us; it is in accordance with police regulations to badger and bully poor men on every possible occasion, and even on what would seem to ordinary persons *impossible* occasions.
W. M.

The General Assembly of the Church of Scotland has been again throwing off some feverish yammerings—prognostics of death—respecting the non-church goers and “lapsed masses.” The Rev. Donald McLeod has emphasised the fact “that this, like other countries, was passing through what he might call a cold wave of religious indifference arising from many causes, but certainly affecting the religious interests of the people to a very enormous extent.” The fact of the existence of the cold wave referred to is beyond dispute, but the new birth which it forbodes is what really alarms the leisured professional prattlers in our churches, presbyteries, and assemblies. Its cold calm characteristics are guarantees of the coming cyclone which will sweep away the sham sentimentalists who, while preaching of honesty, holiness, and love, subtract from the sum of social wealth more than they render an equivalent for, and whose honesty of purpose is as the inverse ratio of “the cold wave of religious indifference.”

The Rev. Dr. D. McLeod confesses that “Bible women, missionaries, and students are not the persons to deal with working-men. These working-men needed good strong teaching.” The necessities and miseries of the workers have too long been the playthings of pious pretenders and moneyed sensation-seekers, who have other objects in view, as the fruits of their “labours,” than those actually professed; and because “these working-men” refuse such stuff as the pious pretenders provide, it does not follow that they will shut their eyes and open their mouths and take the “strong teaching” of the church. What does the church propose to do, or what can it do, to secure for “these working-men” the full results of their work? If the “strong teaching” of the church can reach those who steal from “these working-men” now, so as to make them steal no more, then it will be able “to deal with working-men.”

But it is clearly evident the church does not intend to reach those who steal from “these working-men,” and the burdens which the church sanctions to be laid on the backs of the latter by the former, as by the design and will of God, are such that “these working-men” are physically unable to look towards heaven. It is in the nature of man to stand erect, and nature must have *its* way. It is the knowledge of this fact that has aroused the bats of the church, for they know when the workers throw off the burdens that deform them, the church, as it now is, will be in the lot. Until the church renders an equivalent to the workers for what it takes from them, the church will be in danger.
G. McL.

The L.P.D.L. has issued another circular, soliciting “your opposition to the following bills,” etc. Considering the hopelessness of the business, either from the point of view of the devoted M.P.’s who introduce these wicked bills, or of the unhappy idiots who think them worth opposing, it is a matter that calls for our pity rather than for our anger. It is a dispiriting spectacle, this of the old watch-dog of property scratching so incessantly to keep down the fleas. Poor beast! He is terrified, but they will never cause his death (indeed, it wouldn’t suit them to do so); nor, again, will he ever be clear of them, till his miserable life is summarily cut short by the triumph of Socialism.

Some of the flea-bites of bills are certainly large of their kind, and must be sufficiently terrifying to the wretched dog. But that is no reason why the fleas should shriek, as some of them have lately done, for Socialists to come and help them. We desire to kill the dog, and neither can share the feast with his Liberal and Radical parasites, nor can look on them as our allies. Their bites only touch the skin, and we, who have decided he shall die, must find some more effectual means of killing him; which, indirectly, will be bad for the fleas as well.

Perhaps it might be instructive to be the owner of property for a day or two, or say a week at the most—one could hardly stand more of it—just to see where the fun comes in. To an outsider it seems dull past all defending, a very desert which no living thing can hope to cross without falling a prey to vultures and other devourers of carrion. The liberty we desire for all, of fully developing all our faculties of personal enjoyment, and by pleasant arts sharing our delight with friends. All this is by property restrained, so that but few have, and fewer make use of, the chance of self-culture; and these miss the full fruition of happiness for lack of the sympathy of those others, who, trained for property's purposes into a sort of cattle, must forego all that makes life good to live if they would obtain permission from property to live at all.

On the whole it would be amusing, were not the circular so fearfully dull, to observe the high moral ground taken up by the earls and dukes who are responsible for it. Under the mildest proposals they seem to see the cloven hoof, and are plainly ready to prove, with the very best of economical logic, that its owner must be the devil. But their logic need not concern us, who can answer to it all: "You may have argued well, but we know a better way of living." Meanwhile, we may rejoice to see property refusing to bend; it will presently be the more easily broken.

G. S.

DREAMS AND NIGHTMARES.

It is well known that we Socialists are dreamers—at least we have been told so over and over again by our opponents. Our ideals are impracticable, our proposals visionary, and we ourselves are dreamy enthusiasts. If it be true, there is some satisfaction even in that. At least in our dreaming we have entered a protest against the inferno which the realists seek to make us believe is unchangeable. And we could scarcely imagine anything more horrible than that which is. Misery everywhere; in the mansion and in the garret alike. The misery of greed and the misery of want; the torture of not having enough, and the satiation of having too much. The toiling of one class from morning to night with the slightest intermission, and never a chance to exercise their mental and physical faculties as nature meant them to be exercised; the idleness of the other class giving them no incentive to rational enjoyment, and, often assisted by the helplessness of those whom they have made poor, rendering them an easy prey to vice. Such is the reality which we are asked to believe endureth for ever! For my part, I do not hesitate to say that those who really believe in the lasting of this chaos of unhappiness are suffering from nightmare.

Notwithstanding the evil state at which we have arrived in the course of the evolution of society, in spite of our surroundings, which are certainly calculated to make us have very gloomy ideas of the condition of posterity, it is easy enough for dreamers such as we are to look into the future and see a poetic vision of coming grandeur and beauty. Basing our dreams upon such real things as tendencies, previous events, and science, and, if you will, being optimistic rather than pessimistic, we see the cities of the coming time full of architectural splendours, in the place of the squalid low-roomed brick hovels of to-day. Only those who have themselves felt the influence of a magnificent building can imagine the effect upon men of a beautifully constructed city. I remember well how impressed I was myself when I saw for the first time the great temple of Themis at Brussels standing out like a giant among the surrounding buildings, as a monument to the glory of humanity and a promise of the future capacity of the race, seeming to encourage mankind to press onward to the conquest of the treasures which science and art have in store. It is of course only dreamers who can imagine a regenerated humanity in a rejuvenated city full of beautiful parks and palaces and dwelling places, into which every man, woman, and child can enter and enjoy themselves to the full of their desire. And then the forests and mountains and valleys, the fertile plains and meadows, the joys of a rural life, which are to hundreds of thousands in London and our other great cities incomprehensible. We dreamers can imagine under the new order of things the dwellers in the city and the village mingling together and living each other's lives in healthful change. We can imagine the people drinking in to the full the delights of life in a rational and freely organised society. We can see how much superior to us the men and women will be who are born in an environment favourable to the development of their best qualities. All this is manifest to us. And, though the wise men who are careful not to look beyond their noses do not believe it, we dreamers have not the slightest shadow of a doubt that what we see in our dreams is as real as the promised land which Moses saw from Mount Pisgah. We may not enter therein, but those who follow after us will assuredly do so.

And so at least our dreams would be pleasant even if they were only dreams. But the nightmares of our opponents, what shall we say of them? If a man never ventured out of his house for fear the slates on the roof would fall upon him and kill him; if he never crossed a street for fear a brewer's dray or a cab, or a tramcar would run over him; if he never entered a railway train for fear of a collision, or a steamboat because he dreaded shipwreck; if he was afraid to eat or drink anything because of what the *Lancet* man has said,—you wouldn't be content with saying he was in a highly nervous state or calling him an idiot, you would unhesitatingly say he was mad. Yet the arguments of the enemies of Socialism and progress are very

often pretty much on the same level as those of the individual I have instanced. Admiral Maxse—who is one of those persons who call themselves Radicals because they never go to the root of anything—had an article in a daily paper the other day, in which he said he was against Home Rule for Ireland because it would lead to separation, and then we should have an independent country at the disposal of a foreign power seeking to invade us. No doubt the gentleman in his unpleasant nightmare had seen vast armies of Frenchmen, Germans, Russians, Austrians, and Italians landing on the coasts of the tight little island, using Ireland as a huge barracks and assisted by American cruisers. I pity the Admiral. A grain of common sense should assure him that a friendly nation is a far better neighbour than an enslaved country. Then again, the Admiral opposes Home Rule because it might lead to Home Rule for Scotland, Wales, and even Cornwall. Terrible thought to this excellent Radical! He imagines that it is necessary for every individual and every county to be bound together by chains, and for the four divisions of the United Kingdom to be united by force. We consider this a foolish dream on his part—a nightmare in fact. Any union which is based upon coercion instead of upon community of interest must necessarily defeat its own ends. Indeed the compulsory co-operation which exists to-day between England, Wales, Scotland, and Ireland prevents the development of the people. When the interests of two or more individuals, towns, or districts are such as to require combination, they will certainly unite without any coercion whatever as soon as they understand the necessities of the situation.

The Malthusian delusion is another form of nightmare to which those who oppose us are subject. We are increasing at such a tremendous rate that in a few years there will be nothing to eat. That is the burden of their perpetual dreary song, which appears to be inspired by the crowded cities of which London, Glasgow, and Manchester are types. Listen to one of these unfortunate croakers: "We punish a man with death for killing his fellow; but a little reflection should make the dullest understand that the crime of bringing a being into the world exceeds by a thousand, a million-fold that of putting out of it. Men are to-day as thick as flies in a confectioner's shop; in fifty years there will be less to eat but certainly some million more mouths. I laugh, I rub my hands! I shall be dead before the red time comes. I laugh at the religionists who say that God provides for those he brings into the world. The French Revolution will compare with the revolution that is to come, that is inevitable, as a puddle on the roadside compares with the sea. Men will hang like pears on every lamp-post; in every great quarter of London there will be an electric guillotine that will decapitate the rich like hogs in Chicago." The amiable lunatic who writes in this pleasing strain is the well-known novelist, Mr. George Moore. Mr. Moore needn't frighten himself any longer. That there is going to be a revolution is true enough; that some lives may be sacrificed is probable; but the cause of the coming revolution is not too many mouths, but monopoly and tyranny. The bloodshed which may take place will be trifling compared with the number of lives which are sacrificed in commercial wars, and it will be solely due to the attempts of the capitalists and landlords to maintain the present order of things. Nobody wants any electric guillotines: if the Socialists want any particularly murderous weapons to use against the powers that be, they could well be content with the murder-machines designed by the military inventor. But the workers wish to put a stop to the present reign of terror, not to inaugurate a new one. They seek to establish Liberty, Equality, and Brotherhood, and don't wish to punish the ruling classes for being foolish; they recognise that nature is to blame for that. But nevertheless the workers will not stand any nonsense from those who oppose them in the days of struggle. Mad Malthusians really ought to read up their geographies, and try to form some idea of the vast areas of land which are out of cultivation. A course of agricultural chemistry sufficient to teach them that the land in cultivation can be made to produce a great deal more than it does now, a course of Socialism to show them that the causes of the present crisis are not what they believe them to be, and a course of history to show them that population really doesn't increase in the way they imagine, would probably complete their cure, and the nightmare would vanish.

There are a vast number of other unpleasant delusions which non-Socialists suffer from. There is the Chinese invasion mania, the foreign conquest bogey, and very many others which will suggest themselves to various comrades. But they are all specimens of what may be termed capitalistic nightmare. I prefer the dreams of Communism.

JAMES BLACKWELL.

The shutting down of locomotive works at Albany, New York, renders 1,000 men idle.

Coal miners in the Gallitzin region, Pa., have accepted a 10 per cent. reduction in wages.

Bradstreet reports strikes in the United States from May 1st to 25th at 63; number of strikers, 24,962.

The question of admitting coloured men to membership in the Amalgamated Iron and Steel Association is receiving attention.

THE YANKEE-BRITISH BEER TRUST.—The British capital, now on the tramp after big and easy made profits, seems not to content itself with the look-out of being able to buy up the entire beer-brewing industry in the United States. It wants more. The syndicate in charge of this unemployed mammon has sent some agents to Minneapolis, Minn., with the instruction to obtain a controlling interest in the flour mills of that city, the greatest producers of flour in the world. Dame Rumour and her vigilant representatives, the reporters, know not as yet whether the agents have been successful.—H. F. C.

WE LIFT THE BANNER RED.

We lift the banner red,
Like the brave men who have bled
For the liberty of man;
As they've gone we will go,
With our faces to the foe,
And finish what they well began.
Wrong we know is strong,
The upward path is long,
But through danger undismayed march we;
So we all, young and old,
The red flag uphold,
And cheer for it with three times three.

Stout-hearted men are here,
And women without fear,
Who flinch not from the fray;
Though Death do us take,
At his terrors we'll not quake,
Nor waver in our upward way.
Right is often weak,
And Justice far to seek,
But we'll alter that when we are free.
So we all, young and old,
The red flag uphold,
And cheer for it with three times three.

Before our flag shall fall
With a crash the prison wall,
And the slave shall snap his chain;
Then Labour free from toll,
Of its fruit shall have the whole,
And Plenty through the world shall reign.
Free and happy then,
Shall be the lives of men,
And the earth a merry place shall be.
So we all, young and old,
The red flag uphold,
And cheer for it with three times three.

H. HALLIDAY SPARLING.

REVOLUTIONARY CALENDAR.

WEEK ENDING JUNE 22, 1889.

16	Sup.	1381. Wat Tyler murdered. 1808. Trial of John Harriott Hart, printer, and Henry White, proprietor, of the <i>Independent Whig</i> , for "libel upon the administration of public justice in England." 1816. Debate in the House of Commons on the employment of spies and informers. 1819. Meeting of 30,000 weavers at Glasgow in favour of Reform. 1848. Berlin Arsenal stormed. 1885. Labour riot at Brinn.
17	Mon.	1637. Trial of John Hampden begun. 1775. Battle of Bunker Hill. 1789. The <i>Third Estate</i> resolves itself into the <i>National Assembly</i> . 1810. Ferdinand Freiligrath born. 1830. Chorley "outrage." 1882. Seizure of arms in Clerkenwell.
18	Tues.	1643. Battle of Chalgrove Field; John Hampden mortally wounded. 1815. Battle of Waterloo. 1823. Petition to the House of Commons from the Hibernian Philanthropic Society, asking "that the House would take into consideration Mr. Owen's plan for the employment of the poor, with the view of ascertaining how far it could be applied to the employment of the peasantry of Ireland." 1835. William Cobbett died. 1864. Ivanitzki, Mrochek, Stankevich, and Kinevich, delegates from Polish revolutionary executive to organise a rising in Russia, shot in Kazan. 1864. William Smith O'Brien died. 1881. Most sentenced to sixteen months' imprisonment. 1884. Explosion at Madrid.
19	Wed.	1843. Inauguration of Hampden Memorial on Chalgrove Field. 1843. "Rebecca" Riots in South Wales. 1867. Maximilian of Mexico shot.
20	Thur.	1764. Theobald Wolfe Tone born. 1789. The Hall of the National Assembly shut by order of the king; the National Assembly adjourn to the Tennis Court, and swear not to dissolve till they have given France a constitution. 1791. Flight of Louis XVI. from Paris to Varennes. 1792. Parisians enter Tuileries. 1836. Abbé Sieyès died. 1848. A. R. Parsons born. 1853. Tennis Court at Versailles opened as a national museum and monument.
21	Fri.	1628. Dr. Manwaring "makes submission" at the bar of the House of Commons. 1798. Battle of Vinegar Hill. 1867. S. J. Meany sentenced for Fenianism. 1886. "Trial" of the Chicago Martyrs begun.
22	Sat.	1736. Captain Porteous tried. 1772. The "Negro Case"; James Somewett discharged. 1780. Rev. Henry Bate tried for libel on the Duke of Richmond. 1805. Mazzini born. 1866. Military rising at Madrid. 1870. Third prosecution of the International at Paris; 38 prisoners. 1872. Trial of 50 peasants of Chigirin, in Kieff, for taking part as men in a secret revolutionary society organised by Stephanovich, Deitch, and Bukhanovsky (who escaped for the time); sentences: Siberia, 5; prison, 2; reprimanded, 23; acquitted after a year's imprisonment, 1; died before trial, 2. 1882. Monument to Mazzini unveiled at Genoa.

A LETTER FROM AUSTRALIA.

NOTICING in a late number of the *Commonweal*, dated March 2, 1889, that you are apparently at a disadvantage in not knowing the state of affairs regarding employment and wages in Australia, and kindly requesting the *Australian Radical* for information on that subject, I herewith send you a brief letter, roughly showing you the condition of the working classes in this country.

The position of the toilers is very bad indeed; and things are fast drifting to a crisis; workers from other countries (chiefly Britain) have been wrongfully deceived by immigrant agents advertising in newspapers the great advantages that Australia affords, which necessitates their selling off what goods they have to pay for conveying them this far, and immediately on landing—work is found in abundance and good wages too.

Looking over some back numbers of the Northumberland *Morpeth Herald*, England, I find in its columns a "standing ad.": "Special Notice!—2,000 female servants, miners, farmers, labourers, quarrymen, and others wanted for Queensland, Australia. Immediate employment on arrival." The above is the plausible style in which these agents and shipping companies (who are making heaps of money out of it) gull the minds of the working-classes at "home"; and the people who have immigrated to this country these past few years, and living in this district, have found it out to their cost; anyhow, suffice it to say that the information given by unscrupulous advertisers in British papers about Australia is, undoubtedly, untrue.

I cannot refrain from adding a little more about the doings of these agents. When rumour has it that certain individuals are thinking about journeying to Australia or other countries, the immigrant agents make no delay in attending to their wants,—as in the matter of selling off what furniture they possess, and seeing them dispatched to the ship. I have conversed with several persons here who have come from the "old country," and they state that they were treated with mean cunning trickery by their agents. The latter gentlemen being generous and hard-working in their way, gave the intending immigrants to understand that they need not necessarily put themselves to much trouble, for that they would see after and procure auctioneers if they chose (let me say here that many of these agents are auctioneers themselves). But here is the trickery: the immigrants' kind advisers, finding that they possessed good furniture, made no hesitation in uniting with the auctioneers to buy up the greater part of it, if possible; by the latter men employing different persons to stand and bid, they were thus able to gain the goods very cheap; by such deceitful dealings these sharpers were able to get plenty of money by selling the articles out again at their real value.

It is to the interest of the upper classes that Britain should dispossess some of the lower classes—whom the former have barbarously robbed of their rights—by exiling them to shores which are fast becoming themselves cumbered with the wreckage of monopoly.

The winter that is coming on will prove disastrous to the workers in our large cities. As it will be seen through J. A. Andrews' report, "Unemployed in Melbourne," published in the *Australian Radical* of April 6th, armis of unemployed are tramping the streets of that city, and the same in Sydney. Notices are appearing every day in our dailies, being the opinions of people in many of our districts, stating that "they are indignant at the action of the immigration department in sending a continuous stream of penniless unemployed up country by the free pass system. . . . Even though all were respectable, yet it is unjust to send penniless men into districts where there are already too many unemployed." Swagmen may be seen everywhere tramping in great numbers in search of employment; workers from other countries come here for the greater part to starve; heartrending cases are occurring every day, ending in suicide and other fatalities through destitution. The other day a poor girl committed suicide in Melbourne, the reason being that she was only earning 2s. 6d. per week, and had to support her aged father besides herself on that small sum. She would rather cease living suddenly than by slow starvation.

Of the late strike amongst the miners in the district of Northumberland, and which comrade W. H. McNamara explained at length in the *Commonweal*, some months back, the outcome was a great reduction of wages. Men working some pits have suffered a loss of 1s., 1s. 6d., and 2s. per day, through the "agreement" they were forced to come to. The majority of the miners are greatly dissatisfied over their defeat, and some pits are making an attempt to come to a more reasonable settlement by arbitration; but the coal-getters will not, I think, be benefitted by these proceedings, for their masters are too cunning to be "had." It is to be feared that another fight will take place between capital and labour, in which the former will rely upon the Government for protection; for it is certain that they will employ soldiers and Nordenfeldts to keep law-'n'-order in the time of trouble.

At the present time work is slack amongst the mines; many pits are working three and four days per fortnight—men scarcely obtaining the necessaries of life, instead of "saving a little for their old days," as the thrift people tell them they ought to.

While the people on an average get a little more in wages than the workmen in Britain, it is taken from them again by their being charged exorbitant prices for the things they eat and wear. I have lived at "home" and know it. Rents are very high; tenants living in small cottages in the suburbs are forced to pay 8s., 10s., 12s., and upwards per week, also paying dear for light and firing. Sports took place at Maitland the other day, in which the public were charged 1s. for admittance into shows where only 2d. and 3d. would be the price for the same amusement at home.

Yes, Australia is drifting fast into a bad state—fast following in the footsteps of Britain and other countries. The monopolists have the land locked up in N.S.W., and production is therefore checked. "It is protection that we want," cry the majority; and protection they are going to get; the policy of restriction will come sooner or later, worse luck for the workers of this colony in the future.

One good thing could be brought about in Britain (if it is not being carried out now): if Socialists and others would warn the toilers against the notorious lies put forward by immigrant agents and other individuals, both in newspapers and pamphlets, about the "great advantages" in Australia, thus causing the people to break up their homes, leading them astray to far distant shores where there is every likelihood for the greater number of them to hopelessly starve.

The three Irish members, Dillon, Deasy, and Ormonde, have arrived in Australia; they have started their lecturing campaign, and intend to visit every prominent city in this country.

The Socialists and Anarchists are going ahead in Melbourne. They have formed a branch of the League, and all have worked tremendously hard, both in speaking on the wharfs and other places and writing on the social question, this last summer. They deserve unlimited praise.

The League in Sydney is all alive, carrying on their weekly debates, and so on, but they seem not to be so active as the newer branch in Melbourne. From over-pressure of work they have not been able to keep up constant correspondence with the *Commonweal*, and this letter has been drafted to repair the breach a little.

ROBERT STUART

New Lambton, near Newcastle, N.S.W., April 15.



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

Communications invited on Social Questions. They should be written on one side of the paper, addressed to the Editors, 13 Farringdon Rd., E.C., and accompanied by the name and address of the writer, not necessarily for publication.

As all articles are signed, no special significance attaches to them because of their position in these pages. None to be taken as more than in a general manner expressing the views of the League as a body, except it be so explicitly declared by the Editors. Rejected MSS. only returned if a stamped directed envelope is forwarded with them. Subscriptions.—For Europe and United States, including postage, per year, 6s. six months, 3s.; three months, 1s. 6d.

Business communications to be addressed to Manager of the COMMONWEAL, 13 Farringdon Road, E.C. Remittances in Postal Orders or halfpenny stamps.

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ENGLAND	Newark—Arbeiter-Zeitung	ITALY
Die Autonomie	San Francisco Arbeiter-Zeitung	Milan—Il Fascio Operaio
Labour Tribune	S. F. Coast Seamen's Journal	SPAIN
Personal Rights Journal	Valley Falls (Kan.)—Lucifer	Madrid—El Socialista
Railway Review	FRANCE	PORTUGAL
Social Demokrat	Paris—Le Parti Ouvrier (daily)	Lisbon—O Protesto Operario
UNITED STATES	Le Proletariat	Porto—A Revolta
New York—Der Sozialist	La Revolt	GERMANY
Freiheit	Lille—Le Cri du Travailleur	Berlin—Volks Tribune
Truthseeker	Comunty—Le Socialiste	AUSTRIA
Jewish Volkszeitung	HOLLAND	Wien—Gleichheit
Workmen's Advocate	Hague—Recht voor Allen	Brunn—Arbeiterstimme
United Irishman	BELGIUM	SWEDEN
Boston—Woman's Journal	Ghent—Vooruit	Malmo—Arbetet
Investigator	Antwerp—De Werker	Stockholm, Social-Demokraten
Detroit—Der Arme Teufel	Liege—L'Avenir	Gotteborg—Folkets Rost
Fort Worth (Tex)—South West	SWITZERLAND	ARGENTINE REPUBLIC
Milwaukee—Arbeiter Zeitung	Arbeiterstimme	Buenos Aytes—Vorwarts
Die Wahrheit		

COMPETITION AND WAR.

COMPETITION has been termed the bloodless war of civilisation. This, to the Socialist at least, looks suspiciously like and means much the same as another phrase we often hear—Killing no murder. It may be that it does not maim or slaughter in the same manner as on the battlefield; yet it would be difficult to form an estimate of its victims. Actual war, its horrors intensified by modern murderous inventions, is a spectacle indeed that would make the angels weep; but the misery inflicted and the lives sacrificed in this struggle of militarism, gigantic though they are, would be dwarfed if the half could only be told of the evil effects of modern industrialism. In the military phase of this necessary evil, so called, there are times of peace. But in the industrial conflict nation is ever against nation, industry against industry, man against man, wives and children against their husbands and fathers. We as a Christian nation make a great outcry when two rival nations are at war. Philanthropists of the John Bright type shriek out in holy horror at the waste of human life, the horrors of the battlefield and of war in general; yet they will uphold a system that slays its tens of thousands for every one that is destroyed in actual warfare.

Further, we Socialists declare that this slaughter directly due to war, when traced up to its primary cause, is but an effect of competitive commercialism. As this is rather a serious indictment, proof will be necessary to support the assertion. Take the recent history of this country for instance; and as the most of history is but an account of the wars engaged in, with a few particulars concerning the principal actors engaged mixed through it, so a brief survey of the recent history of Great Britain will be but a catalogue of recent wars. And they were all without exception due to this industrial conflict: forcing our shoddy goods and our shoddy civilisation, our missionaries and our rum, or some other commercial matter, on an unwilling people, has been at the root of all the trouble this last half century or so

the whole world over. The late Burmese War originated through British capitalists and traders forcing their markets and wares on a people who wanted neither. The late Egyptian War is another instance. What but the commercial interests involved in the Suez Canal and the route to India, and the British bondholders' twenty per cent., lay at the bottom of the trouble there? The Afghan War originated somewhat similarly—the commercial interests of this country at stake in India. And that shortly means the exclusive right of the British plutocrat to exploit the masses of India, and to prevent the Russian from having his finger in the pie. Those so-called interests demanded what they call a scientific frontier; hence the trouble. The wars we had with China originated through us, a Christian nation, forcing the opium traffic on the heathen Chinese. The petty wars we were engaged in on the west coast of Africa had their origin somewhat similarly. This eternal Eastern Question that crops up now and again and that keeps all Europe one vast armed camp, has its root in commercial rivalry. Who is to hold the key to the East, this mighty field for exploitation, after the sick man takes his departure bag and baggage—this is the question. In support of this commercial theory of the causes of war, hear what John Ruskin says:

"The first reason for all wars and for the necessity of national defences is, that the majority of persons high and low in all European nations are thieves, and in their hearts greedy of their neighbours' goods, land, and fame. . . . And the guilty thieves of Europe, the real source of all deadly war in it, are the capitalists; that is to say, people who live by percentages on the labour of others instead of by fair wages for their own."

It is an ill wind that blows nobody good. This old saw applies with full force to this question of war; for under existing conditions and in the present constitution of society, if a great war was to break out it would be a positive blessing in those times of depression—at least to all those not directly engaged in the melee. It would cure for the time being at least both over-production and over-population, two very serious ills that at present afflict society. The over-production would be used up in providing the over-population with the means of exterminating each other. This would be killing two dogs with one bone. There is no cure for dull trade like a good war: how often do we hear that given expression to. A good war, save the mark! Under a rational and just constitution of society, it would just be as sensible to speak of a healthy plague or a benevolent earthquake; but as in the existing order, or disorder rather, everything is upside-down, we can speak of and justly appreciate the benefits of a good healthy war. Most of us can remember the good times that accompanied and followed the last Franco-German war. Why, everyone in this country at least, from Rothschild down to the little boys that vended the evening papers, was, to use current phraseology, "getting on immense." The French and Germans having all their energies engaged in exterminating each other, we had the markets both home and foreign all to ourselves. Trade enlarged, as Gladstone told us, by leaps and bounds; wages ruled high, profits still higher, millionaires got to be plentiful amongst us, whilst working people got double the quantity of beer to drink. Yes, there is nothing like a good war. A great deal of hypocritical cant is given vent to when wars are engaged in; the time is prayed for when men shall know the art of war no more, when they shall beat their swords into ploughshares and their spears into pruning-hooks. A certain book we profess to believe in, theoretically at least, lays it down as the right thing to do; but when we consider the time and place it was written in, it shows clearly the truth so well put by the author of the Biglow Papers, that they didn't know everything down in Judaea. And apparently they failed to see the blessings that flow from a good war. Yet we who know better nowadays are hypocritical enough to ring the bells, burn bonfires, fire cannon, and so on, and make believe we are extremely glad when peace is proclaimed, when we know quite well that it means a return to hard times again. This is surely the height of insincerity. The Orkney minister who petitioned the Lord to send plenty wrecks that way through the winter was sincere and honest. Candour like that can be appreciated. But to make great demonstrations of joy when the hard times that follow peace are on us again is hypocrisy indeed. To be honest and consistent, we should wear mourning and go about lamenting, in the words of Robert Owen, our best friend the war is dead.

If anyone should think these remarks on the blessings of war callous and cold-blooded, let him bethink himself whether they are not justified in our present way of living; and if even after having done so, he still feels uncomfortable, I hope he will be rational, and join with us in our efforts to crush the competition that makes war.

WILLIAM DAVIDSON.

TWEEDLEDUM AND TWEEDLEDEE.—That it really does not and cannot much matter to the capitalists which party is in office, must in our days be plain to every watcher of the political game. In 1880 Jay Gould contributed 100,000 dollars to the late Mr. Garfield's (a Republican) fund, on the condition that Jay should have the choice of a Supreme Court judge, which of course he had later on. Before Mr. Cleveland's (a Democrat) election in 1884 Gould still continued to support the Republicans because the Democrats were then as yet an unknown quantity in politics, and considered by the monopolists to be disposed rather in favour of labour. Since then the Democrats have been in power, and in 1888 Jay Gould subscribed 50,000 dollars to the national Democratic committee, because "Mr. Cleveland's administration has not disturbed the vested interests, and that was enough for him." Republican or Democrat, Tory, Liberal, or Radical, it all comes to the same. They must serve the supreme boss of politics, Capitalism, or be turned out. And to regard it as possible that the workers can ever obtain control of the political machine on parliamentary lines is equal to believing that our capitalistic antagonists are noodles—which they are not.—H. F. C.

TO BATTLE!

SOUND the alarm-bell, sound,
Dash all your tools to the ground,
And strike,
And strike!

Ere toil in this iron age,
With hunger and cold for wage,
The grave,
The grave!

Nay, comrades, never give in;
To battle! until we win
The world,
The world!

LOUISE MICHEL, translated by LAURA LAFARGUE.

SOCIALISM IN LANCASHIRE AND YORKSHIRE.

It would be a very clever man who could tell exactly how much headway Socialism is making in the country, but one who takes events as they come, and looks at them from a Socialistic point of view, has every reason to rejoice in the progress that is being made. I have not yet visited a very large number of towns, but I intend doing so, and shall give my experiences from time to time in the *Weal*. Both in Lancashire and Yorkshire the movement is "marching on," far better than I expected to see them from the reports that reach London. Let us take Manchester; here great things are being done, and fresh converts being made at every meeting. The branch of the League has carried its propaganda into the little outlying villages around the town, and have spread the light of Socialism among the dark and dreary "homes" of the workers. It will, I fancy, take a great deal of the cant and hypocrisy of the politicians to make the villagers believe in or have much to do with them any longer. Such a strong hold are our ideas taking, that one has only to take up a local paper to see which way the wind is blowing; articles and debates on Socialism are to be found therein for and against. A County Councillor has been advising working-men not to stop at street corners listening to "Socialistic ranters," a "Liberal" too! All this points to the good result of the work being done by the comrades in Manchester. I don't say this to flatter them, but they really deserve all they can get in the way of praise.

From Manchester to Leeds, in Yorkshire, is 38 miles by train and only 37 by road. As I didn't patronise the railway monopolists, but walked it, I saw many sights on the road I should have missed otherwise. Horrible sights, some of them; hundreds of men and women tramping with pinched and haggard faces in search of work, with hardly any covering on them; *clothing* it could not be called. Little children along with them, half starved, no boots or covering to their feet. All obliged to sleep out in the open-air of a night, having no money for beds; afraid to beg for fear of getting locked up, and the parents sent to prison, the children to the workhouse, to become thieves or something worse after the fashion of this "Christian" country. I wish that the lying "Christian" scoundrels who teach the workers to slave and sweat in producing wealth for others to rob them of, and then ask them to live contentedly in dirty filthy slums, eating muck or starving, could be made to go through the same mill, and then they wouldn't after that talk so much rubbish about consolation in the sky. As for me, the sights that I have seen since I left London have made me even more incensed than ever against the present system.

In Leeds the summer propaganda has begun, and on Sunday morning I went to see the League meeting in Vicar's Croft. This is one of the local historical spots, and it is always easy to get an audience of over 600, who listen attentively. No interruptions take place, and here good work is evidently being done. There is a good Socialist club, and I doubt not that before long Leeds will be to the front. Horrible details could be given of the sweating carried on in this town; vest making for a halfpenny, a pair of trousers made for three-halfpence. Match-box making is also carried on, and the women are paid a penny a gross. One can guess how they live, when a mother and her four girls, two of them grown up, earn 1s. 8d. per day between them, twenty gross being as much as they can make. All of these things are impressing the workers, and showing them the sort of system under which they live. Leeds, like most places nowadays, is discontented, and the workers will soon be flocking around the red flag, the emblem of their liberty.

JOHN MCCORMACK.

PROVERBS.

THE following saws were picked up from an old collection, but are worth a niche in the memory of workmen to-day, if workmen have such a thing:

He that hath but a little, he shall have less,
And he that hath right nought, right nought shall possess.

A jailer's conscience and his fetters are made of one metal.

A hunger-starved belly hath no ears.

Trim up a hedgehog, he looks like a lord.

Who makes himself a sheep the wolf devours him.

What, shall we starve in a cookshop, and a shoulder of mutton by?

THE TRADES UNION CONGRESS.—On Saturday the Trades Union Parliamentary Committee issued a notice to the officers of trade societies and trade councils throughout the United Kingdom, stating that the twenty-second annual Trades Union Congress will be held in the Gilfillin Memorial Hall, Whitehall Street, Dundee, on Monday, September 2, and five following days. In the notice the trade societies and the trade councils of the United Kingdom are invited to send representatives to the Congress, the delegates to which shall only be such persons as are or have been bona fide workers at the trade they represent and who, in the case of trade councils, represent upon such councils their own particular trades. The Parliamentary Committee "expect the gathering at Dundee will be a large one, well representing all parts of the United Kingdom."

CORRESPONDENCE.

COURNET'S GRAVE.

It will interest most of your readers to hear that Cournet's grave is in Egham Churchyard, where, after some difficulty, I have succeeded in finding it to-day (in a very neglected condition). Cournet, the Socialist hero of the barricade Saint-Antoine of '48, was killed by Barthélemy, the hero of the barricade du Temple, in a duel at Priest's Hill, near Englefield-Green, and died at the Barley Mow Hotel in this village. This happened in 1852. Old inhabitants still remember the great funeral and the red flags. The part played by the two in the days of June 1848, and the fact of the disastrous duel, are mentioned by Victor Hugo in the last part of 'Les Misérables,' entitled Jean Valjean, book I. ch. i.

Vine Cottage, Englefield-Green, May 16.

J. E. BARLAS.

ST. GEORGE'S FARM.

Dear Sir,—Mr. Ruskin's name having been freely mentioned by a correspondent of yours *re* the Sheffield affair in your issue of 25th ult., and thinking Mr. Ruskin might have somewhat to say in the matter, I submitted the article in question to him, and have received the following replies.—

Faithfully yours,
27, Portland Row, Dublin, June 1st, 1889.

H. SUTTON FRIZELLE.

[COPY.]

My Dear Sir,—Not only am I grateful for your letter and enclosed bit of newspaper, but they come precisely at the moment when I want to learn all I can of what has been doing, or undoing, since I was last at Sheffield. I will answer the main points you enquire about to-morrow, having no time to read the articles to day, but in glancing at it I see one statement which should be corrected at once. I am not the owner of the farm in question. The St. George's Guild is. What legal forms exist inconveniencing my action, or yours, I don't know—and never could know—as I waste no moment of life that I can save in reading the obscure language of British law; but assuredly I get no good of the land, but have, on the contrary, paid constantly annual losses on it.

Secondly, Mr. Riley was no friend of mine. I tried him as an exponent of modern liberalism, and was as little pleased with the result as those members of your League were!

I will complete my reply to-morrow. You may print this beginning of it—and the end I shall print myself if you do not—when and wherever you like, as anybody else may whatever I write, at any time, or say, if only they don't leave out the bits they don't like!

Ever faithfully yours,
Brantwood, Coniston, Lancashire, May 29th, 1889.

JOHN RUSKIN.

[COPY.]

Dear Sir,—I have now read the cutting enclosed in your favour of the 27th inst. My letter yesterday contains all the notice of it which I think useful.—Believe me always, your faithful servant,
May 30th, 1889.

JOHN RUSKIN.

"SEAFARING."

SIR,—In reply to former letters, allow me to state that I believe the editor of *Seafaring* and the "rat type-stickers" are "birds of a feather." Paid servants (not the executive committee) made an agreement with Mr. Cowie to take ten thousand copies per week, providing the paper advocated the Union's interest. The paper has not fulfilled that contract by giving employment to "rat" printers. The members of Tower Branch do not want *Seafaring*, for when reports are sent to that paper from us they have to be sent to Sunderland before being published, if there is anything in them like the advocating of true national trades union principles. National unions should be built on the rock of truth, with stone honestly hewn, and cemented with industry and sobriety; then they will last as long as the nation. If Mr. Cowie will reply, I will show him how far I can throw a deep-sea lead, and report soundings if necessary.—Yours faithfully,

3 Mint Pavement, Tower Hill,
London, June 9, 1889.

ARTHUR R. ABBOTT,
London District Secretary.

ERRATUM.—In the second or third paragraph of my letter, "Looking Forward," you will find (it appeared May 31st) this sentence, "Albeit of noble sentiment and not a little mad." It should have been "not a little read."—JOHN ARMSDEN.

PEASANT PROPRIETORSHIP IN BRITANNY.—The British Consul at Brest, in his last report, refers to the condition of the Breton peasant proprietor, and says that although he has a great natural aptitude for tilling the soil he labours under considerable disadvantages. As a rule, he cannot furnish himself with the proper plant, cattle, and implements for agriculture, and, above all, bear the expense of draining. Nearly all the land cultivated by the peasant proprietor is worked with the spade, and the fear of losing, or even risking, the slender profit he is able to make by his severe labours effectually prevents any enterprise, and engenders a spirit of avarice difficult to describe. The peasantry apparently live in a condition of squalor—"happily unknown to the English agriculturist," says report! Thanks, however, to their extraordinary parsimony, it is perhaps doubtful if they are actually as poor as they seem; but their pale and troubled faces and bent forms, even in early life, show how badly they are fed, whether they can afford comfort or not. In Brittany, certainly, under the peasant proprietorship system, the land is not properly worked, and much goes out of cultivation. It is the custom to raise immense banks as hedges between their little plots, to grow scrub oak on. These banks, with their high crest of scrub, shade the land to a great extent on each side, and from the resulting damp little will grow under them. The object is to obtain the firewood, which is of very slow growth, and the peasant, in thus trying to get too much out of his plot, is half-starved, whilst half killing himself with labour. Many other instances could be presented of the same shortsightedness in squeezing the land. Men and women indiscriminately perform the work of the agricultural animals they cannot afford to buy, with the usual consequent evils to health. It is no common sight to see women working with the flail for hours, a labour so severe that it often breaks down the men.

THE SEAMEN'S STRIKE.

THE strike of sailors and firemen for increased pay, of which we spoke in last number, had fairly begun as we went to press, and shipowners were experiencing much difficulty in obtaining crews for their vessels. The Cunard steamer *Bothnia* sailed, however, from Liverpool with a full complement of rats. The Cunard Company's *British Queen*, bound for Havre, the *White Star* steamer *Celtic*, and the *Inman International Company's City of Chicago*, were filled with rats. The shipowners appeared determined to resist the demands of the union, and were prepared to take any course rather than grant the increases demanded. To prevent "intimidation" the police were "on duty" all over the place. At a meeting of unionists on Monday it was decided to, if necessary, forcibly fetch out rats. Telegrams were received announcing settlements at Cardiff, Swansea, and Newport. A meeting of the union in Glasgow resolved to give in their 24 hours' notice Wednesday, and come out on strike at the expiration of that time. There are about 6,000 members of the union in Glasgow.

On Thursday it was reported from Leith that owners were laying up vessels all round rather than give in. Glasgow owners were doing the same, except a few who succeeded in getting rats. From Dundee and Aberdeen came news of almost complete victory. The western ocean steamers which left Liverpool obtained their crews without paying advance. In the case of the steamer to the West Indies, the owners had to give the rate demanded. A sailing ship, the *Sagona*, which was the only one signing articles at the Sailors' Home, had also to pay the strike wages. To the casual observer nothing in the shape of a strike was apparent. The owners of the mail and passenger steamers to the west said they had plenty of competent rats. All the mail steamers sign articles on board in the various docks, to prevent the union men from intimidating others who are willing to sail on the masters' terms. No disturbance has been so far reported.

On Friday the officials in Sunderland stated that the union demands had been conceded in twenty ports. Nearly 600 men are now on strike at Leith, and as the shipowners still hold out, there are over twenty steamers laid up in the docks. The only line which is working is that of the North of Scotland Steam Navigation Company, the men on these vessels receiving the union rate of pay. A number of "men" were brought from London to form a crew for the London and Edinburgh steamer *Iona*. They were met by the secretary of the Seamen's Union, who induced some of them not to join. The *Iona* sailed with a crew made up of these men and officers of other steamers. The steamer *Kinghorn* yesterday sailed for Antwerp with a crew of Japanese and Dunkirk Frenchmen.

Saturday's telegrams said: At Liverpool matters were progressing quietly. The branch secretary having applied to the shipowners for an interview, with a view to ending the struggle was informed that no meeting was necessary, as the shipowners declined to pay any advance, and had made arrangements for bringing men from Scandinavia and Denmark, for whom they must find employment. During the week fifteen large western ocean steamers, sailing from Liverpool, each obtained a full rat crew. Seamen and employers maintain a determined attitude at Leith. A meeting of 700 seamen, firemen and dock labourers resolved to take combined action in demanding increased wages, and to pledge themselves to support each other until their demands were conceded. It was also agreed that seeing that some of the companies had begun to import foreigners into the port the Royal Naval Reserve men should in a body resign. The shipowners met and resolved to advertise for seamen and firemen at 30s. a week, with a six months' agreement.—The crews of the Dublin and Glasgow Steam Packet Company's steamers struck, and it was feared that the strike would extend itself at the Dublin port. This it had already done, the following notice having been extensively posted:—

AMALGAMATED SEAMEN'S AND FIREMEN'S UNION.

DUBLIN BRANCH.

STRIKE IN DUBLIN.

The following rates of wages shall be demanded:—

WEEKLY STEAMERS—COLLIERS.		
Sailors	...	£1 12 8
Firemen	...	1 12 8
Stewards and Cooks	...	1 16 0
Donkeymen	...	1 16 9
CHANNEL PASSENGER BOATS.		
Sailors	...	£1 19 4
Firemen	...	1 10 4

TO THE SHIPOWNERS OF DUBLIN.

We trust you will see your way to adopt this scale of wages for the future, so as to prevent any inconvenience arising either to owners or men through the stoppage of work.

CAUTION.

To the Merchants, and Public, and Cattle Shippers, and Passengers.

Do not sail or send your goods in ships manned by incompetent crews.—I am, gentlemen, your obedient servant,

J. H. WILSON, General Secretary.

Some owners have given in, others have laid up their vessels, and the men are determined.

Monday's messages said:—Affairs on the Clyde on Saturday assumed a more serious aspect, 3,000 quay labourers having joined the strike. They ask for an advance of halfpenny per hour, and the stevedores want a penny increase. The seamen appear as determined as ever to hold out. Notwithstanding the vigilance of the Seamen's Union three steamers were got to sea from Leith on Saturday with rat crews. The *Moscow* left for Cronstadt, the *Britannia* for Newcastle, and the *Meteor* for London. The crew for the *Meteor* were collected at ports in the Firth of Forth, and were taken out to Leith Roads in a tug, whence they were transferred to the *Meteor*. The seamen held a demonstration on Saturday, and marched to Edinburgh, where they held a very large and enthusiastic meeting, with the president of the Edinburgh Trades Council in the chair. Of twenty steamers that came into port during the week, only five have got away again. One hundred and fifty seamen remained on strike at Londonderry. The steamer *Volta*, after being three days laid up, shipped a crew, mostly Germans forwarded from Belfast, and left on Saturday for Liverpool. In Belfast the trade of the port is pretty well tied up. A number of owners granted the advance, but the men declined to resume work until all yielded. As to ocean-going steamers, the employers have conceded all demands, but refuse to use their influence with owners of coasting vessels to act in a similar manner. They say their hands are engaged by the month, whereas those employed on coasting vessels are paid by the week. There is no sign of any settlement. On Saturday a number of vessels were being discharged by ordinary labourers, protected

by harbour constables and Royal Irish Constabulary, while in a few cases the owners themselves and their sons were giving a hand to clear the vessels. Mr. King, who imports coal extensively, posted a notice offering half-a-sovereign for five hours' work to labourers, but there was no inclination to accept the offer.

On Tuesday we heard that the able-bodied seamen and firemen sailing from Maryport had the advance. The labourers employed in loading ships with coal also struck on Monday, but resumed on their wages being increased from 4d. to 6d. per ton. The strike only lasted an hour.

Wednesday's news spoke of no new move of any importance, but the look of affairs is rather promising for the men, whose victory we hope to report in our next.

The Annual Conference of the Socialist League on Sunday, June 9th, passed the following resolution unanimously:—

TO THE SEAMEN AND FIREMEN NOW ON STRIKE.

COMRADES,—We, the delegates of the Socialist League, in Conference assembled, tender you our heartiest congratulations upon the success with which you have welded a hitherto wholly unorganised multitude into a compact and powerful Union. The struggle in which you are at present engaged is part of the great fight for life which the working-class is compelled to unceasingly wage if it would not perish in the grasp of monopoly. That your efforts may result in a complete and crushing victory over your opponents is our ardent wish, and in achieving that end we pledge ourselves and the body we represent to afford you any and every assistance that lies within our power.

ERNEST RADFORD, *Chairman.*
R. A. BECKETT, } *Secretaries.*
A. BROOKES, }

SUTTON HALL.

In the centre of an estate of some four thousand acres or more of fertile land, situated in Derbyshire, lies Sutton Hall, the seat of Mr. Arkwright. In some ways this is rather a model estate; any one walking across it will be struck by the prosperous look of the prettily situated farm-houses and cottages; all the gates are painted white, and the roads and paths seem well kept, and the whole estate has rather the air of being a continuation of the park. It consists of undulating country, beautifully wooded; handsome trees may be seen growing in all the hedges, and often away out in the fields, and there is one wood known as Sutton Springs of some considerable size, where, besides the usual English trees, the Spanish chestnut and rhododendron may be found in abundance. The labourers' cottages are often very prettily situated, and usually have a good bit of garden, and the rents are low comparatively. Mr. Arkwright's mother, who used to live on the estate, was very good in looking after the tenantry; if they were ill she would go to see them, and let them have almost anything they wanted from "The Hall," but—oh, that little word!—they must order themselves lowly and reverently to all their betters, *i.e.*, the gentry of course, and be contented in that state of life in which it has pleased God to place them. If they do all this, and work hard and not grumble, then they will be well looked after if ill and helped a little if poor, and so on.

Such is the estate in the centre of which lies Sutton Hall, a fine square building, with a little ivy grown church hanging on to one corner, well lifted up and commanding a splendid view of wooded country, with a somewhat steep ridge in the distance, on which stands Bolsover Castle in full view, and further on Hardwicke Hall, the seat of the Unionist leader, the Marquis of Hartington. Around the Hall lies a lovely park, a fine avenue of trees runs down from the house towards the lake, and as we passed through last Sunday the deer could be seen grazing about, and a peacock and his wife were walking about the garden, adding the lovely blue of their necks to the already rich colouring of green, which was splendid with the freshness of a day's rain. But, alas! the great house looked all shut up and forsaken! I believe some servants live in the back parts out of the way, but Mr. Arkwright seldom lives there now; his rents and royalties supply him with an income of some ten or twenty thousand a-year I suppose, so he can go and live in some livelier though hardly more lovely place than Sutton Hall.

Small wonder that, as we stood looking at the house and the splendid view it commands, we should fall to talking of "the days that are going to be," when this Hall and others like it will be the centre of a happy communal life. Plenty of room in that large house for quite a small colony to live, each one having his own den upstairs where he could go to write, or sulk, or spend a quiet evening with his lady-love or his boon companion; and downstairs would be large common dining-halls, dancing-halls, smoking rooms—if indeed life shall still need the weed to make it perfect. And we chatted on, each one adding a bit to our picture; how some would till the land around and others tend the cattle, while others perhaps would start some industry, working in the outbuildings or building workshops about the park, and taking care not to spoil our view with a hideous building or blight our trees with smoke. Others, again, could work in the mines and bring up coal, of which there is a good supply just now being worked by a neighbouring company, who will have to pay, I suppose, about £6,000 a-year in royalties. And as we thought of what might be there, what health, what happiness, our indignation arose against what *was*,—the forsaken house, the wealth which should make comfort for all the people round, going to keep two or three people and their hanger's-on in idle enervating luxury. And as we turned to walk home through the beautiful Sutton Springs, carpeted with blue bells and young ferns, we all felt, I think, more than ever determined that what might be shall be.

RAYMOND UNWIN.

ANNUAL CONFERENCE.

THE Fifth Annual Conference of delegates from branches of Socialist League, was held at 13, Farringdon Road, on Sunday, June 9th. The following branches were represented at the Conference:—Hammersmith, North London, Clerkenwell, East London, St. George's-in-the-East, Glasgow, Edinburgh, Norwich, Leicester, Yarmouth, Oxford, and Manchester.

All the reports read were of the most satisfactory nature. Harmony permeated the meeting, and various important resolutions were unanimously adopted. At no previous Conference of the Socialist League were Liberty, Fraternity, and Equality so practically set forth.

The following members were elected to the new Council: J. Turner, Morris, Mowbray, Nicoll, Cantwell, H. Davis, Webb, Mrs. Schack, Sparling, Blundell, Bullock, Samuels, J. Davies, Tarleton, and S. Presburg.

Bullock and T. Davis were elected as auditors; Morris and Lane, as trustees; and Morris, Sparling, and Nicoll, as editors of 'Weal.'

THE SOCIALIST LEAGUE.

OFFICES: 13 FARRINGDON ROAD, E.C.

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

London Members' Meeting.—The next monthly meeting of members will take place on Monday, July 1, 1889, at 13 Farringdon Road, at 9 o'clock sharp.

Commonweals for 1888, handsomely bound in red, are now ready, price 5s. per post, 5s. 6d.

Notice to Branch Secretaries.—Membership Cards can now be had by the Branches at 9d. per dozen from Central Office.

Branch Subscriptions Paid.—1888.—Oxford, to end of September. 1889.—Bradford and Hammersmith, to end of April. North London, Norwich, Glasgow, St. Georges East, Manchester, Yarmouth, and Mitcham, to end of May. East London, Clerkenwell, and Leicester, to end of June.

Notice to Branch Secretaries.—Please remit to Central Office your Branch Capitation fees as soon as possible.

Defence Committee.—The Home Secretary, Mr. Matthews, seeing no reason to alter Jeffries' Edlin's sentence upon Diemshietz, a meeting of the Defence Committee will shortly be held to audit accounts and determine future action. Meanwhile, an appeal is made to enable the friends of Diemshietz to compensate him.

The Conference of the Socialist League, held on Sunday, June 9th, passed the following resolution unanimously:—"That this meeting of delegates of the Socialist League, in Conference assembled, do most emphatically protest against the brutal and unjust sentence passed on Lewis Diemshietz, steward of Berner Street Club, for the commission of no other crime than protecting the property of the club, and the persons of his wife and friends, from the unbridled brutality and organised attack of the police. And this Conference further condemns the attitude taken up by the Home Secretary in refusing to interfere, and is of opinion that by so doing he is neglecting that 'public duty' which he makes his excuse for non-interference."

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

REPORTS.

LONDON OPEN-AIR PROPAGANDA.—**Battersea.**—A good meeting was held here on Saturday evening; Samuels and Horne spoke. There were no papers present, but 8d. was collected. **Leman Street.**—A meeting was held here on Sunday morning, addressed by Samuels, W. Moore (of Norwich), and Mrs. Schack; literature went well. **Hyde Park.**—On Saturday evening, Cores and Nicoll addressed a good meeting; 30 *Commonweal* sold.

HAMMERSMITH.—At Weltje Road on Sunday evening, a very good meeting; speakers were Robinson, Lyne, jun., Maughan, Catterson Smith, and Crouch; 29 *Commonweal* sold. At Kelmescott House, W. L. Phillips (Fabian) lectured to fair audience.

LATIMER ROAD.—Good meeting held Sunday morning; speakers, Lyne, sen., Lyne, jun., Maughan, Saint, and Mrs. Edwards; 33 *Commonweal* sold.

BERKEEN.—At indoor meeting on 3rd inst., comrade Forrest's paper on "Ideal Democracy" was read and discussed. At Castle Street on Saturday night, Cooper and Leatham spoke to a most extraordinary meeting. The latter was kept on the platform for two hours and a-half answering questions, the meeting not concluding till long past eleven.—L.

GLASGOW.—On Sunday, Pollock, and T. and J. Burgoyne addressed very large audience on Jail Square. At 5.30, T. and J. Burgoyne spoke at Paisley Road, where we had a musical accompaniment from the Salvationists, who took up their position right in front of us.—J. B.

MANCHESTER.—Last Saturday, Holland, Stockton, and Baillie addressed an attentive audience; much discussion followed; 24 *Commonweal* sold. Sunday, at Stevenson Square, Barton, Baillie, and Ritson addressed a good meeting in the afternoon; collection for propaganda. At Chester Road, a large audience listened to Marshall and Barton at night. Holt Town on Monday, good meeting held; much opposition; sold in all at the above meetings, 72 *Commonweal* and 20 *Freedom*.

NORWICH.—On Sunday last, a meeting was held in the afternoon at the Market Place; comrade Mainwaring (London) unexpectedly turned up and took part, assisted by Darley; in the evening, another meeting was held in the open-air; Darley and Mainwaring spoke; *Commonweal* sold out, and fair collections.

YARMOUTH.—Large meeting Monday, June 3rd, at Belton, under the auspices of the Commons Right Association; stirring addresses given by Reynolds, Ruffold, Hadley, and Brightwell, assisted by a deputation of the Radical Association. Two meetings held at Yarmouth last Sunday, addressed by Morley (Norwich), S. Mainwaring (London), and Ruffold; sold 13 *Commonweal*, and collected 1s. 10½d. Brightwell and others held meeting on Sunday at Bradwell.

DUBLIN.—At Progressive Club, 87 Marlboro Street, Saturday June 8th, A. Shields lectured on "Socialism: Signs of the Coming Change," in the course of which he gave an interesting description of the progress of "Vooruit." A lively discussion followed, Frizelle, Toomey, J. A. Cree, and O'Gorman taking part.

NOTTINGHAM SOCIALIST CLUB.—Good meeting in Market Place Sunday, Proctor presiding, Peacock and McCormack (late of Leeds) spoke. A collection to enable McCormack to reach London realised 8s. 7d. *Commonweal* sold out. Subsequently at the club subscription made for Webb (S.D.F.), who is unemployed.—R. P.

13 FARRINGDON ROAD.—The concert and ball came off with eclat on Monday last. The weather no doubt kept a good many away. Songs in German, Russian, and English were well received and much appreciated by the audience. Readings by Nicoll and Darwood were rendered with good effect. The few that remained for dancing went into it with great spirit. Fraternity pervaded the meeting from beginning to end.

NORTH LAMBETH LIBERAL AND RADICAL CLUB, 108 Westminster Bridge Rd., S.E.—Sunday June 16, at 8.30, Hubert Bland, "Where Radicalism Fails."

BERNER STREET CLUB.—A Concert and Dramatic Entertainment will be given on Sunday June 16th, at 8 p.m., for the benefit of the *Workers' Friend*. To conclude with Dancing. Admission by ticket, 6d.

LANCASHIRE.—Meetings will be held on Friday 21st June in Rochdale, and on Saturday in Middleton; and a Demonstration will be held at Stevenson Square, Manchester, on Sunday 23rd. Speakers—Kitz, W. K. Hall (Salford), Leonard Hall (London), J. Marshall, J. Ritson, and others. Subject—"Why the Workers Live in Slums." Chairman—Packinton.

EAST LONDON BRANCH—BANNER FUND.—The members of this Branch, being desirous to obtain a suitable banner, have opened a subscription for that object. Already received—Mrs. G. Schack, 1s.; By collection, 1s. 4½d. Those wishing to subscribe to this fund will please send subscriptions to M. Matthews, 95 Boston Street, Hackney Road.

LECTURE DIARY.

LONDON.

Clerkenwell.—Hall of the Socialist League, 13 Farringdon Road, E.C. (½-minute from Farringdon Station, 1 minute from Holborn Viaduct).

East London.—Crown Coffee Tavern, 2 Columbia Road, Hackney Road.

Hammersmith.—Kelmescott House, Upper Mall, W. Sunday June 16, at 8 p.m., a Lecture. Thursday June 20th, at 7.30, Choir practice. Friday 21st, at 8, French Class; at 8.30 sharp, Business Meeting and discussion.

Mitcham.—3 Clare Villas, Merton Road. Meets every Sunday, at 11 a.m.

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

Whitechapel and St. Georges in the East.—Branch meetings at International Club, 40 Berner Street, Commercial Road. J. Turner, organising secretary.

PROVINCES.

Aberdeen.—Organiser, J. Leatham, 7 Jamaica Street. Branch meets in Odd-fellows' Small Hall, Crooked Lane, on Monday evenings at 8. Singing practice at 16 Marischal Street on Thursdays at 8 p.m.

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

Glasgow.—The Branch will meet temporarily in the Ram's Horn Assembly Hall, Ingram Street, every Thursday and Saturday evening at 8 o'clock, and on Sunday evenings at 7 o'clock. A special meeting of the branch will be held on Sunday first, at 7.30 p.m., when the question of reorganisation and other matters of importance in connection with it will be considered. A full attendance of members is most earnestly requested.

Leeds.—Clarendon Buildings, Victoria Road and Front Row. Open every evening. Business meeting Saturdays at 8 p.m.

Leicester.—Hosiery Union Offices, 11a Millstone Lane. Fridays at 8 p.m.

Manchester.—Working Men's Educational Club, 122 Corporation Street.

Norwich.—Tuesday, at 8.30, Members' meeting. Monday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday, Hall open from 8.30. Saturday, 8 until 10.30, Co-operative Clothing Association.

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

Walsall.—Lecture Room, back of Temperance Hall. Mondays at 8 p.m.

Yarmouth.—"Three Fishes" Coffee Tavern, North Howard Street. Business meeting every Tuesday evening. Elocution Class at comrade Hadley's every Friday at 8 p.m. *Commonweal* sold by Mr. House, newsagent, George Street.

FRIENDS WILLING TO AID in forming Branches in the undermentioned places are asked to write to the addresses given: **Liverpool**—W. H. Chapman, Vegetarian Restaurant, 1 Chapman St. **Walsworth and Camberwell**—3 Datchelor Place, Church Street, Camberwell Green. **Wimbledon and Merton**—F. Kitz, 3 Clare Villas, Merton Road. **Hoxton**—H. D. Morgan, 12 Basing Place, Kingsland Road. **Streatham**—J. Campbell, 98 Wellfield Road, Streatham.

OPEN-AIR PROPAGANDA.

SATURDAY 15.

7 Hyde Park Nicoll and Hill
8 Battersea—opposite Christ Church Blundell, Kitz, and Cores
8 Mile-end Waste Davis and Mowbray

SUNDAY 16.

11 Latimer Road Station McLeod, Humphries, Lyne and Maughan
11.30 Bethnal Green—Gibraltar Walk Cores and Mowbray
11.30 Hammersmith—Beadon Road Hammersmith Branch
11.30 Kilburn Road—"Canterbury Arms" Mainwaring and Brookes
11.30 Leman Street, Shadwell Davis and Turner
11.30 Mitcham Fair Green Kitz
11.30 Regent's Park Tohatti and Blundell
3.30 Hyde Park Nicoll, Brookes, and Mainwaring
3.30 Victoria Park Davis, Mrs. Schack, and Mowbray
3.30 Wood Green—Jolly Butchers Hill Blundell and Lerner
7 Clerkenwell Green The Branch
7 Weltje Road, Ravenscourt Park Hammersmith Branch
7.30 Mitcham Fair Green The Branch
7.30 Streatham—Fountain, High Street Cores

TUESDAY 18.

8 Fulham—back of Walham Green Church The Branch

THURSDAY 20.

8 Ossulton Street Cores and Hill
8.15 Hoxton Church Nicoll and Davis

PROVINCES.

Aberdeen.—Saturday: Castle Street, 7 p.m.

Bradwell (near Yarmouth).—Monday evening.

Edinburgh.—Sunday: Queen's Park, at 3.

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

Leeds.—Sunday: Hunslet Moor, at 11 a.m.; Vicar's Croft, at 7 p.m.

Leicester.—Sunday: Russell Square, at 11 a.m.; Humberstone Gate, at 8 p.m.

Manchester.—Outdoor meetings every Sunday. Stevenson Square at 3 p.m.

Viaduct, Chester Rd., at 7.30. Middleton Market Ground, Saturday at 7.30.

Norwich.—Sunday: Market Place, at 3. Bawburgh, at 11.

Yarmouth.—Priory Plain, every Sunday at 11 and 3. A Meeting at Belton every Monday evening.

SCOTTISH LAND AND LABOUR LEAGUE.

Carnoustie.—Meets every Wednesday, at 8 p.m., in the Carnoustie Restaurant.

Dundee.—Meetings every Sunday in Trades Hall, opposite Tay Bridge Station.

Edinburgh.—35 George IV. Bridge. Meetings for Discussion, Thursdays at 8.

Galaashiels.—J. Walker, 184 Glendinning Terrace, Secretary. **Gallatown and Dysart** (Fife)—Meet every Tuesday at 7 p.m. in Gallatown Public School. A.

Paterson, 152 Rosslyn Street, Secretary. **Kilmarnock.**—Branch meets on every alternate Tuesday. H. M'Gill, 22 Gilmour Street, Secretary. **West Calder.**—

Robert Lindsay, West Calder, Secretary.

AUSTRALIAN SOCIALIST LEAGUE.

Sydney.—533 George Street. Lectures and debates every Sunday evening.

W. H. McNamara, Secretary.

Melbourne.—"Golden Fleece" Hotel, Russell Street. Lectures and debates every Sunday evening. J. A. Andrews, 18 Ophir Street, Richmond, Secy.

LONDON ANARCHISTS' open-air propaganda, Hyde Park (near Marble Arch).—Sunday 16th, at 6 p.m., Lothrop Withington and W. Humphreys.

NEW LABOUR CLUB, 5 Victoria Park Square, Bethnal Green.—Thursday June 20th, F. Kitz, "The Criminal Classes, High and Low."

PADDINGTON RADICAL CLUB, Paddington Green.—Sunday June 16, at 11 a.m., Readings from 'Kimburton' will be given by John Bedford Leno.

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