

THE COMMONWEAL

The Official Journal of the
SOCIALIST LEAGUE.

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SATURDAY, OCTOBER 18, 1890.

WEEKLY; ONE PENNY.

NOTICE.

A LECTURE WILL BE GIVEN AT THE
ATHENÆUM HALL, 73, Tottenham Court Rd.,
(UNDER THE MANAGEMENT OF THE 'COMMONWEAL' BRANCH OF S.L.)
ON MONDAY EVENING, OCTOBER 20, BY
WILLIAM MORRIS,
ON
"ART FOR THE PEOPLE."

Doors open at 8 p.m.; Pianoforte Recitals till 8.25;
Lecture at 8.30; and Trains at 11.

ADMISSION BY TICKET . . . SIXPENCE.

Tickets can be had from Wm. Reeves, 185, Fleet Street; J. Turner, Socialist Co-operative Federation, 7, Lambs Conduit Street, W.C.; Scandinavian Club, Rathbone Place, Oxford Street, W.; Club Autonomie, 6, Windmill Street, Tottenham Court Road, W.; International Club, 40, Berner Street, Commercial Road, E.; United Democratic Club, 58, Chancery Lane, W.C.; Vorwarts, City Road; F. Kitz, S.L. Secretary, 24, Great Queen Street, W.C.; Wm. Blundell, Branch Managing Secretary, 24, Great Queen Street, W.C.; and of all London Branch Secretaries of the League.

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"REVOLUTIONARY WARFARE."

I.

NO RENT AND A GENERAL STRIKE.

WHAT are you Revolutionary Socialists going to do? what is your programme, your policy? is the cry which greets us from opponents and enquirers alike. Let me try as a Revolutionary Socialist to answer this question by pointing out the means by which the present society can be overthrown.

What are we doing now? We are preaching the Gospel of Discontent in every highway and byway; and the spread of that gospel, as shown by the great Labour Movement, that has filled society with scarcely-concealed terror, shows that our preaching has not been without its effect. But the period of what we may call purely educational Socialism is passing. Education is still needed, admitted; but it is no longer the first thing. Thanks to the cheap productions of the modern printing-press, thanks to almost innumerable lectures delivered in all parts of London and of England also, anyone who really desires to know what Socialism is can easily find out for himself. Besides, there

is no reason why we should not carry on educational work with the revolutionary warfare which we intend to wage against capitalist society. Nay, the work in itself will be an education, for we mean to teach the people how to take their own, and finally how to hunt the landlord and capitalist out of the land.

What are the first steps? We have already frequently mentioned them in the *Commonweal*—the No Rent movement and the General Strike.

The most immediately practical of these is the No Rent movement, so let us deal with this first. It is agreed by all that a fearful trade depression is coming. How are the people, the slaves of the capitalist, to meet it? Are they to starve patiently while the landlord wrenches from them the money which should keep their hungry children alive? No, certainly not; the people must no longer pay shameful rack-rents for the rotten slums in which they dwell. Do you not know, you wretched workers, that you have paid in rent the value over and over again of the stinking bricks and mortar in which you are forced to dwell, worse housed than dogs and swine.

It is time this was ended. The people have suffered dumbly too long; the moment has arrived for action; and in the coming winter those brave men who do not fear to sacrifice themselves for their principles must be prepared to act. Let us set the example, let us be willing to endure some slight risk for the good of humanity, and we shall soon rouse the people from their apathy into bold and vigorous rebellion.

What is to be done? We have already answered. Let a house be taken in the centre of a slum by a man not well known in the movement, and whose appearance will not arouse suspicion. Let the house be garrisoned—five resolute men will be enough. Let us then placard it with bills advising the people to pay No Rent. Let the slums be flooded with revolutionary and No Rent literature. And if the house is well barricaded and fiercely defended with bricks, stones, and hot water, it will not be long before the whole neighbourhood—especially if there is a strong infusion of Irish blood among the inhabitants—will be in open revolt against the house-farmer. And what will that mean? Unless the authorities can suppress it—and it will take more than police and bailiffs to do that—the No Rent movement will spread through every district in London.

But some may ask, how could you defend a district that had gone in for improving the landlord off the face of the earth, so as to defy police and bailiffs? We will tell them how the people might defend it, for it is the people who will have to fight this battle.

Any revolutionist who has walked through the slums, which eighty years ago were suburbs of the city of London, must have noted how well suited they are for a No Rent campaign. The streets are narrow and easily barricaded as they wind among high lofty houses, which women and children might defend against men. Imagine the streets torn up and blocked with overturned barrows, carts, and heaped-up paving-stones. In a No Rent campaign it will not do to stick at trifles. Imagine police and bailiffs climbing slowly and painfully over these barricades under a hail of bottles, bricks, stones, hot water, and missiles of all kinds. Dost thou like the picture? Then do you but to make it a reality.

The No Rent movement has one great advantage, which should commend it to Anarchists. It is not alone at the landlord it strikes a heavy blow, but at all forms of government. What happens to the landlord without rent is what happens to a government that can get no taxes; both are starved out. The workman pays rates and taxes when he pays rent, and when rent ceases taxes cease also. Thus government, having not wherewithal to pay officials, police, and soldiers, will perish of starvation. But supposing the capitalist classes voluntarily tax themselves in order to keep up the government? We have an answer for this. Let the Rent Strike become general, and the General Strike also comes within "the range of practical politics." Nay, has it not become practical now? Did we not nearly see London in the throes of a general strike on that famous Tuesday in 1889, when the labour revolt was at its height? Was there not practically a general strike a few months ago in South Wales, and in Australia also it has since become almost an accomplished fact. The miners, too, have shown how by a few days' cessation of work they can bring the whole industrial machine to a sudden stop. With all these examples before

us it is impossible to say that the project of a general strike is impracticable.

It is certain that a general strike of workers cannot be made an international or even a national affair at once. We feel sure that first attempts will be confined to a single large town, or perhaps a district containing several towns, where revolutionary ideas have gained a firm hold upon the people. I have an idea that it may first break out in London, where the idea has been widely preached by Anarchists, Revolutionary Socialists, and even by Social Democrats. The pretext for the strike may be an eight hour day; but its real aim must be the Social Revolution. Revolutions have been repeatedly made for what seemed very trifling demands. For instance, the dismissal of Neckar, a popular minister, was the spark which set fire to the powder-magazine in Paris in 1789. In 1848 it was the prohibition of a Reform demonstration by the Government that led to the upheaval of that famous year. And the Commune of Paris was proclaimed through the disgust of the people at the cowardice of their bourgeois republican Government, while the immediate pretext arose from the question as to whether the National Guard were to keep in their charge the cannon they had paid for with their own hard cash. So it is not unlikely that the General Strike which will herald the coming revolution may be brought about by the demand of the workers for an "eight hour day." The working-classes of all countries are unanimous in demanding it; the middle and upper class will be as unanimous in refusing it. It will be impossible to get it through the capitalist Parliament; and in despair the workers who hope that it will make a paradise of this earth will, as a last resort, decide upon a General Strike. Remember that the situation in a few months' time will be so desperate, so many thousands will be out of work and starving, that new unionists and old unionists in despair will throw by their ideas of legislation, and endeavour to obtain what they want by the only means left open to them.

D. J. NICOLL.

(To be continued.)

THE REDCAP IN THE CITIES.

OUR comrades of the Midland Socialist Federation have published an article by the Rev. A. Reaney in the form of a halfpenny pamphlet. The article is so good, taken from the point of view of an intelligent and friendly middle-class man, that we think some of it is worth quoting:

"Redcap is not the 'rough' nor the 'rowdy,' he is the 'revolutionist.' The rough is quite another sort of being. He is generally a sot, with not a little of the simpleton in him, who goes with his pals and plays their little game. The rowdy is a rough, plus the criminal, vicious, venomous, and vile, but not generally dangerous, save when the police play the fool with the harmless and useless political demonstrator; then the rowdy sees his chance, uses it, and the 'West End' is a little looted and greatly scared. The rough and the rowdy are comparatively brainless, having no ideas on organisation, utterly non-political, and usually cowardly. The 'redcap' on the contrary, is the man of virile mind, with a lurid imagination, full of notions, with a ready eloquence, and quite capable of fighting it out in the streets to the death—his own or another's. The redcap is not a criminal, only so far as a rebel *in posse* is a criminal. . . . He would not harm a child, and he is generally most polite to women; but child, woman, man, or dog, if they get in his way—the way of the revolution—so much the worse for them. He contemplates civil war as the only remedy for things as they are. The redcap is of all nationalities. In Berlin he is a Socialist; in St. Petersburg he is a Nihilist; in Paris a Commundar; in New York a Knight of Labour; and in London he is the redcap. As a politician he is filled with scorn of all political parties. The Tory he pities, sneers at the Liberal, hates the Radical, and looks upon the Socialist as a mere mouth! For all these statesmen he has the utmost contempt. 'They are,' he says, 'surgeons who would stop a bleeding artery with a bit of sticking plaster, and mend a broken leg with a poultice.' Society is rotten, and must be rooted up. Monarchies, parliaments, churches, councils, trade unions, poor law, Sundays, etc., must all go, and will go. The first mission of the redcap, he admits, is to destroy—to be an iconoclast; and then, when the ground is cleared, he would create—a home, a city, a commonwealth, a world!

It may be said, Where is he? Is he numerous, or is he the one mad earnest man, only to be met with here and there? It is a little difficult to answer that question. In all our great cities there are thousands of men discontented, disaffected, defiant, and yet inactive. Redcap is the strong man rising to the surface of their social condition. Count such men from the unit, and they would seem many; reckon them down from the million, and they would look few, very few. I have met them, and have heard others speak of them as being numerous. The foreign element is doubtless, large; but between the English redcap and the Continental redcap there has never been much real sympathy. I remember hearing of a very excited meeting at the time of the West End riots, at which there were some two hundred men, redcaps, with revolvers. Happily the weapons were not used, but they were in hand. But, to rightly estimate the extent of the redcap condition, it is needful to consider this point: Are they representatives of a quiet but deep and extensive feeling which possesses the hearts of thousands in our great cities, but is silent? I am inclined to say, Yes. Three scenes in London life have been very strongly impressed upon my mind and memory. There was a meeting at Stepney Hall a few years since to discuss immigration. The audience was composed of some 700 Socialists, and of about an equal number who were supposed to be anti-Socialists. During the debate a noted Socialist leader was speaking about East End poverty, and stopping for an instant, said, 'There is wealth enough for us all at the West, and shall we take it?' The answer came, as it seemed to me, from the whole audience, 'Yes.' I have seen men moved by the oratory of Gladstone and Bright; but I have never seen men so moved as those East Enders were that night. To some it was the thought of their life put into words; to others it was a new idea, but passionately welcomed. Another scene full of significance was the funeral of the man killed in some row at Trafalgar Square. What a sight it was that winter Sunday after-

noon from Whitechapel to Bow Cemetery. Men by thousands, tens of thousands, quiet, moody, too angry and grieved to talk. And another time, at Dod Street—the street pulpit of the Socialists at the East End, from which some assinine inspector ran in two Socialistic preachers. I bailed them out. The next meeting was a sight; it was said forty thousand men were there. Possibly redcaps! There is the quantity unknown. Given some grave social trouble—bad times, a big blunder by the Government or police—and the redcap might colour the life of our cities like an epidemic."

In the same pamphlet there is an account of what is called "An Attempt to Realise Bellamy's Ideal," but as it was started before Bellamy's Book was written we prefer to call it an attempt to realise Socialism:

"My visit to Kaweah will be one of the pleasantest memories which I shall carry with me across the Atlantic. Here I found such a bond of union between the members that they seemed to be really one family. Kaweah is founded on the principle of co-operation. Everything is bought at wholesale prices, and sold at cost to the members. Meals are served at ten cents (5d.), of the most abundant nature, and other things in like manner. At present the people all live in tents, the supports for which have been cut from the trees, and covered with 10 cent drill. A prettier sight cannot be imagined than in the evenings when they are lighted up. Many thousand acres of land are in possession of these colonists on the banks of the Kaweah river, whose rushing waters are the music of the place. The most gorgeous scenery—something like the Yosemite—is the surrounding of as happy a people as live on this green earth. If there is a reflection of the higher summerland it is there, where all men's weal is each man's care. Everything is carried on after the principles of Bellamy's book, although the colony was commenced before that book was written, four years ago. It is situated in Tulare Co., California, thirty-six miles from Visalia. To become a member 100 dols. (£20) cash is paid. Then if the applicant is judged a fit character, he or she is admitted and allowed to work out 400 dols. more, such labour being paid in time checks, which are exchanged for goods in the colony. This 500 dols. (or £100) constitutes life membership, and entitles the recipient to one share in this joint stock company. No member is allowed more than one share and one vote. This is a guarantee that no one member or members can alienate the property away. It seems to me that the future of this colony is protected on every side, not even the trustees, of whom there are five, can have more than one vote, or any power not possessed by the weakest member.

"Men and women are exactly on an equal platform; their labour is paid exactly alike. Eight hours is the length of the day's work. Each chooses the occupation they like best. There are no overseers. I asked one member, 'Do they ever take credit for more than they do?' 'Such a thing has never been known,' said he, 'if it ever was, the member would be so ashamed that it would not occur again. Indeed there is a great deal of work done that is never rendered. I work ten hours a day,' he continued, 'but I never hand in more than eight hours time. I know that it helps the colony.' This is the feeling of all; even of the little children, who are like the children of all the colony. Their education is carefully carried on, the kindergarten system being the foundation of all education. Here, if nowhere else, the divine principle of human brotherhood is carried on."

It does not look as if Socialism was so "impractical" after all.

CUNNINGHAME GRAHAM ON POVERTY.

WE have had reason to differ with Mr. Graham recently, but we will say that if he always wrote and spoke in the style of the following article in this month's *Journeyman*, the organ of the Amalgamated Society of Tailors, there would not be much difference of opinion between us. He says:

Now, what's the reason of it all? Why is it that there are so many bare backs and such a plethora of coats? Some will answer you, monopoly; others something else. All have their own idea. Mine is, because the balance of mankind are idiots! How easy it would be to change all this. How? you say. My friend, that is my secret. If, though, let us say, merely for purposes of argument, that all the poor of London had resolved to remain so no longer? You may say, "What man by taking thought can add a cubit to his stature?" That is so, of course, and a good thing too, or what a race of giants we should all be;—not that that, by the way, would do much damage to your craft. However, suppose these poor—and poor also predisposes rich; for to develop thoroughly your rich you must also have your poor—well, suppose these all united in one thing, who could stand against them? Hell let loose would not be in it.

Do you know the rich pass lives (in these latter days) of terrible dread of the poor? To be poor is, as we all know, to be a rogue. What a feeling it must be for a rich man to walk out and scarce find (unless in the course of his walk he happens upon Rothschild or Carnegie)—to walk and walk and walk, and never see another honest man! Naturally the poor fellow begins to sweat with terror, and to think, "Fancy if all these (poor) dishonest rogues had the least idea how few of us really honest (rich) men there are in the world!" It is horrible to contemplate the feelings of that man!

Some say, "Poor, but honest." I say, "Bosh!" The rich are honest, wise, handsome, and all the rest of the combined virtues; but the poor—why, of course not; how can they be? The only crime that is never pardoned or forgiven is poverty.

Well, fear is a good lever, too, you know. Having your lever, though, you want a fulcrum. Some old toff, I think it was Archimedes, could have moved the world (at least, he said so) could he have found a fulcrum. Where is your fulcrum? This leads me back again to moralise about the decadence of man. Once there were men, men who shrank at nothing, holding it just as lively after all to die once (fighting, let us say) as to pass a life of slavery. And what is slavery, too? Slavery is that blessed state in which a man works all his time, every day of his life, for some one else, urged on by grim starvation, always waiting, hardly in the middle distance of the picture.

Now, Mr. Graham, you would do far more good by writing like this than by talking about Eight Hour Bills. After all, the capitalist is more afraid of the Revolutionary Socialist than of the mild Labour Reformer.

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

NOTES.

The *People's Press* returns to the charge *re* their pet leaders, after restating the falsehood that I bolted from the docker's meeting at Southampton. It adds another by saying that I attempted to stir the meeting into revolt against its appointed trade leader. It will interest the Southampton men as a piece of news to be told that they appointed McCarthy their leader; they think differently.

The literary scullions and paragraph mongers, the Fleet Street hacks who hide behind the anonymous "we," have been the curse of the Labour movement. Some of them have been great wavers of the red flag, but now, having either satisfied their exigencies, or being disappointed in their quest for pelf and notoriety, abuse those who keep with the moving column of Revolutionary Socialism.

The *People's Press* say that an introspective study of myself would be humorous. An exposure of the hungry ink-slingers who have infested the Labour movement would be very funny indeed. Well, well, they shall have it presently. Cobbett said that he wished all newspaper writers could be paraded in Hyde Park, so that the public might be able to see what a contemptible lot of curs are the "we's" of the press.

F. K.

Our prophecies of impending trouble this winter are likely to be fulfilled. It is quite evident that Messrs. Allan and Co. are determined to bring on a fight with their corn-porters at the first opportunity. Their policy of writing a string of slanders to papers, stating that the only thing necessary to "reform" their men is to smash their union at the first opportunity, is but the beginning of the campaign of slander and force which the capitalists of this country are preparing to carry on against the labour unions.

There are more ways of telling a lie than one, and Messrs. Allan have hit upon a very ingenious method. They informed the public that the men in their employ were earning 15s. a-day, but they forgot to mention that the work of the corn-porters is exceptionally dangerous, unpleasant, and unhealthy, and also that it is very irregular. They also forgot to mention that the ordinary dock-labourer was certainly not earning 15s. a-day, but barely averaged 20s. a-week. Ingenious gentlemen.

The hirelings of the capitalist press did not hesitate to lie boldly, and told the middle-class world that that bloated aristocrat of labour the London docker was earning 15s. a-day, and then was not satisfied; and though the lie has been contradicted, the majority of the middle-class men and a good many workmen are also of the opinion that that is the rate of wages down at the docks. This lie no doubt will also have its effect in increasing the rush of blacklegs to the docks when "the cold weather comes," and brings with it the Great Lock-out.

Yes, this inhuman threat of Messrs. Allan and Morgan shows what dockers may expect. They will first cruelly slander the men, and when they have turned "public opinion" against them, will ruthlessly turn them out to starve, importing shoals of blacklegs to take their places. Let it clearly be understood that these gentlemen are going to wage a ruthless war of extermination against women and children, and their allies in this infernal warfare will be hunger and cold.

When the "cold weather" comes there will be starving men, women, and children down by the docks. Cupboards will be empty, grates fireless, little children will cry to their parents for bread and they will have none to give them. And for what? That the unholy alliance of the blackleg and the sweater may cut the throat of organised labour, and bring back the old slavery of shameful sweating and starvation wages.

Will the men bear this patiently? We think not. We are sure that "bloody times" are coming, and we cannot afford to lose a single man in skirmishing with the police. It would doubtless please these valuable officers to get all the "dangerous men" in London under lock and key before the Great Lock-out takes place, but we must not play into their hands. We must not waste our strength in fruitless struggles before the great battle is upon us. Wait till the iron is hot before you strike, and then *Strike* and strike hard.

We were startled last week by the news that our brave friends the Guards were dying of fever in Bermuda. There has since been an "official contradiction," which nobody believes. It is clear that these gallant soldiers have been sent out to an unhealthy station to be swept off through fever and pestilence by our present government. It is not the first time this mode of "punishing" rebellious soldiers has been adopted by the "authorities." Our friends are referred to Dickens' "Uncommercial Traveller" for a similar case. We do not know what the members of the present Government call the sending of soldiers to a station where they know they will be swept off by pestilence, but we call it MURDER. We also hope that the soldiers will remember the gentlemen who sent their comrades out to perish in an unhealthy climate because they had revolted against their small-minded tyranny.

N.

Various Radical newspapers (of course including the *Star*—under the inspiration, I presume, of "Colman's-Mustard" Stuart) are working themselves into quite a frenzy of admiration over W. A. Hunter's State Insurance scheme, which, it seems, is another infallible nostrum warranted to cure all social diseases. Even that eclectic-minded scribe, "Dodo," in *Reynolds's*, thinks it has much to recommend it, although of "such magnitude" that it is "open to criticism." Who would believe that all this fuss was about a plan for giving a starvation pension to a stray workman here and there who has contrived to survive to 65 (the average length of life of his class being 27 years) and to subscribe 6d. a-week during his life of toil?

The fact is, of course, that the middle classes are so firmly persuaded of the necessity of their own continued existence and the impossibility of any root and branch change in social organisation, that even the more kindly-natured of them are ever seeking for some feeble palliative of present ills which does not involve the destruction of that bourgeois civilisation which is so dear to them. To do our Radical friends justice, they have never realised the horror of present conditions—a horror which, once realised, does make some half-a-dozen born bourgeois as irreconcilable revolutionists as are to be found in the proverbial day's march. Most of them, too, are really profoundly ignorant of what the Socialism, of which they speak so glibly, really means. They are authorities, it may be, on Roman Law or Austin's Jurisprudence (learning which has less importance or value in modern life than the disquisitions of Thomas Aquinas); but they know nothing of Marx (not to speak of Kropotkin), and they think themselves wonderfully well read in revolutionary literature because they have skimmed through the "Fabian Essays."

If, for my part, in these Notes I seem to harp unduly on the one string of bourgeois ignorance and bourgeois incapacity, it is because that touching faith of the proletarian in the "educated" man which has so often led him astray in the past appears to me to be by no means yet dead. Yet die it must, if the Revolution is not to fail as former revolutions have failed. If middle-class men join the movement, they must do so as privates in the ranks, and the workers must take care to guard themselves from any exaggerated regard for their opinions. The present writer feels every moment of his life the poisonous influence of the vaunted bourgeois education and the hateful bourgeois surroundings—an influence from which it is hard indeed to shake oneself free. Slavery does not as a rule produce ideal types of humanity, and the worker has doubtless defects enough of his own, but in his advance towards the more perfect day let him not seek aid from middle-class professors—blind leaders of blind folk.

R. W. B.

CORRESPONDENCE.

"A TREACHEROUS ATTACK."

Sir,—Having read your leader of last week and Mr. Hubert Bland's article in the *Sunday Chronicle* to which it refers, I hope you will allow me through your columns to utter a word of protest. The opinions expressed by Mr. Bland in the article are neither here nor there. False or true, he has the same right to hold and to express his own opinions as any one else. But the whole gist of Mr. Bruce Glasier's attack lies in the use of the word "cowardly." What are the facts? When Mr. Bland wrote his article he was on the point of starting on a lecture campaign in Lancashire, on platforms where free discussion was invited, and where it would have been perfectly possible for the "Socialist leaders" to meet him and overthrow him. He appears to have thought it desirable to advise the Lancashire folk to see that they got their Socialism undiluted with "Bleat, bletcher, and bunkum," whatever may be the true inwardness of that alliterative trinity. This he might easily have done by means of an anonymous article, *noms de plume* only being usually attached to articles appearing in the *Sunday Chronicle*. Even had he adopted this course, I fail to see how a charge of cowardice could have been sustained against him, but he deliberately threw away the shield of anonymity and stated his opinions above his signature. In these circumstances the epithet "cowardly" is singularly unfortunate, and can only be excused by the assumption that Mr. Bruce Glasier's brain at the time of writing was somewhat overheated by the too closely-fitting cap with which Mr. Bland had gratuitously supplied him.

As to Mr. Bruce Glasier's astounding interpretation of the closing sentence of the article of which he bletheringly complains, if his penultimate name be any indication of his nationality, explanation is useless and I am dumb. Neither Mr. Bland, nor I, alas! have the requisite surgical skill which alone could elucidate the point to Mr. Glasier.

Trusting to your sense of fair-play to give the same publicity to this letter as you have given to the eloquent bleat of Mr. Glasier,—I am, Sir, Your Obedient Servant,

F. E. MARSHALL STEELE, *Hon. Sec.*

Lewisham and Lee Liberal Club, 170, High St., Lewisham, Oct. 13th.

Practical Malthusianism.

The old spartans had a wiser method; and went out and hunted down their Helots, and speared and spitted them, when they grew too numerous. With our improved fashions of hunting, Herr Hofrath, now after the invention of firearms, and standing armies, how much easier were such a hunt! Perhaps in the most thickly peopled country, some three days annually might suffice to shoot all the able-bodied Paupers that had accumulated within the year. Let Governments think of this. The expense were trifling; nay, the very carcasses would pay it. Have them salted and barrelled; could not you victual therewith, if not Army and Navy, yet richly such infirm Paupers, in workhouses and elsewhere, as enlightened Charity, dreading no evil of them, might see good to keep alive?—*Carlyle's: 'Sartor Resartus.'*



OFFICES: 24 GREAT QUEEN STREET, LONDON, W.C.

HAVE YOU NOT HEARD HOW IT HAS GONE WITH MANY A CAUSE BEFORE NOW? FIRST, FEW MEN NEED IT; NEXT, MOST MEN CONTEMN IT; LASTLY, ALL MEN ACCEPT IT—AND THE CAUSE IS WON

The COMMONWEAL is the official organ of the Socialist League; but, unless definitely so announced by the Editors, no article is to be taken as expressing in more than a general way the views of the League as a body. In accordance with the Manifesto and Statement of Principles of the League, the COMMONWEAL is an exponent of International Revolutionary Socialism. On minor differences of opinion the widest freedom of discussion is maintained. As all articles are signed, no special significance attaches to their position in the paper.

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

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TO CORRESPONDENTS.

WILL Branch Secretaries please write Reports and Orders for Literature on separate pieces of paper.

A CORRESPONDENT wishes to know what are the municipal privileges and franchises of Paris. Will some friend send particulars to us?

WILL a Leytonstone comrade, who sends an order for literature, furnish us with his address?

Periodicals received during the week ending Wednesday October 15.

ENGLAND Belfast Weekly Star Die Autonome Justice People's Press Personal Rights Journal Railway Review Seafaring Seed Time Worker's Friend	Boston—Woman's Journal Nationalist Buffalo—Arbeiter-Zeitung Detroit—Der Arme Teufel Kaweah (Cal) Commonwealth Ottawa—Progress and Liberty Paterson Labour Standard S.F.—Coast Seamen's Journal San Francisco Arbeiter-Zeitung St. Louis (Mo.)—Die Parole	ITALY Milan—Il Fascio Operaio
NEW SOUTH WALES Sydney—Bulletin Truth Austral Star Evening News Labour Defence Journal Sunday Times	FRANCE Paris—Bourse du Travail Paris—La Revolte Le Parti ouvrier Le Proletariat La Societe Nouvelle Charleville—L'Emancipation Lille—Le Cri du Travailleur Rouen—Le Salariat	SPAIN Madrid—El Socialista Madrid—La Anarquia Barcelona—El Productor Seville—El Proletario
QUEENSLAND Brisbane—Boomerang Brisbane—Worker	HOLLAND Hague—Recht voor Allen	GERMANY Berlin—Volks Tribune Halberstadt, Sonntags-Zeitung
INDIA Bankipore—Behar Herald	BELGIUM Antwerp—De Werker Ghent—Voortuit	AUSTRIA Vienna—Arbeiter-Zeitung Brunn—Volksfreund Reichenberg—Freigeist
UNITED STATES New York—Reasoner Phrenological Journal, etc. Volkszeitung	SWITZERLAND Arbeiterstimme	HUNGARY Arbeiter-Wochen-Chronik
		DENMARK Copenhagen—Arbejderen
		SWEDEN Malmo—Betelot
		CAPE TOWN Cape Town—Aigus
		ARGENTINE REPUBLIC Buenos Ayres—Vorwarts

THE CRY FOR WORK.

AGAIN we hear that lamentable cry, which becomes more loud and fierce every year—the cry for work. Already the Social Democrats are stirring, and meetings of the unemployed are daily being held in London. I have been a patient listener to some of the speeches delivered, and must say that the language used has been plain and unmistakable; and if such plain speaking continues we may, during this winter, look out for squalls, as our nautical friends put it.

"Pray, what is all this talk about?" said a bystander (evidently one of the classes) to me at the steps of the Royal Exchange. "The old story," I replied; "agitating for work for the unemployed; for the opening of municipal workshops, shortening the hours of labour, and so on." "Ugh!" grunted my enquirer, "then they will never get it." I silently agreed with him that they would never get it, unless they were victorious over the batons of the police and bayonets of the soldiery. I ventured to say so to one of the speakers (privately, of course), and he answered, "Well, I agree with you; but at any rate we will have a damned row, and so help the Revolution forward." Mr. Edward Sansom puts it like this—that if you lock up a dozen pigs in a sty without food, they will set up such an agitation that life in the neighbourhood will become unbearable, and the pigs will get food, if only for the sake of peace and quietness; and such, it appears to me, will be the case with the unemployed. The classes will, no doubt, give a little food to the people—whose numbers this winter will, as

John Burns puts it, be upwards of one and a half millions—in order to stave off the dread day of reckoning which is fast approaching. Deputations from the unemployed are to wait on the executive of the Dockers and other unions to urge them to take up the question, with what result still remains to be seen.

I venture to say that, judging by the action of the capitalists in this and other countries, and the activity shown by the various governments the world over in sending soldiers and police to their assistance, the classes are getting into a great funk, and are intent on a little blood-letting if needs be, in the hope that they may stay the great Social Revolution, if only for a time. Seeing all this as we do, is it wise, I ask, that the Revolutionary Socialists should hold their hand, as it were, or would it not be wiser and better that they should enter the breach at once, before the position is taken up by our quondam friends the charitable philanthropist and his kindred, and point out that nothing short of the complete overthrow of the system will or can sweep away this everlasting misery for the workers? The fear of being unemployed makes a man a coward, because he is bound to submit to the whims and caprices of the capitalist and his bullies, more especially if he is a married man. Furthermore, being unemployed also makes a man a coward, for he also has too often to cringe and beg for work, very often becoming a blackleg against his will, because he has a stomach to feed and perhaps a wife and children.

It seems to me, in face of this, that plain speaking is necessary above all things, and that is why I venture to pen these remarks. I contend that there is no time to waste if we wish to prevent the useless shedding of blood. That the authorities are bent on mischief is shown by such an expression as the following, which dropped from an inspector of police who accompanied Chief-Superintendent Foster on Saturday last. This officer called out "Drive over the ———!" to a Custom-Office carman. No doubt his intention was to provoke a premature conflict, in which (as there were some two hundred police in reserve) the people would no doubt have had a rough time of it at the hands of those believers in "moral persuasion." However, their hopes were not realised.

Now, it appears to me that if fighting is to be indulged in this winter, it should be for something better than municipal workshops, or eight-hours day legislation, neither of which are worth the shedding of one single drop of the workers' blood. I contend, therefore, that we ought to lose no time in putting before the workers, either employed or unemployed, the real and only cause of their misery—namely, the existence of a legalised band of robbers, who make them strangers and paupers as well as slaves in their native land. This band of robbers are known by many names, such as landlords, capitalists, shareholders, debenture and consol holders, and usurers. Let us tell the people that the workers' misery will continue until these are got rid of. Let there be no mistake, for if people are taught to look to Parliament and municipalities for relief, the rising, if there be one, will only be for a change of masters. We must teach them something more—i.e., the abolition of the master class altogether. There are not wanting signs throughout the country that this cry of the unemployed will become very loud and savage during the next few weeks, and we ought, I think, to preach the doctrine that the country people should seize on the land, the mechanics on the workshops and factories, the miners should take the mines, while all workers should help themselves to the stored up wealth produced by their labour. Our cry should be—Death to thieves and idlers! and if we are agreed and determined, who shall say us nay?

In a recent number of the *Whirlwind*, a paper for the classes, we find that about half of the British army are not to be trusted. If this be true—and from what I have seen and heard personally from soldiers I have come in contact with in various parts of the country it is not far wrong—the day of revolution is near at hand. I have recently paid visits to the soldiery near Leicester, Sheffield, Hull, Leeds, Nottingham, Derby, and other places, circulating among them revolutionary literature, and have received from them many expressions of sympathy and support. We may also be able to do the same with the 19th Yorkshire Regiment presently, and if it has no other effect, it will make them not quite so eager to use their bayonets as in the Southampton strike. There will be plenty of work of a disagreeable nature for soldiers to do this winter with strikes and the unemployed. We should be at all times ready for whatever may turn up, and not hesitate to take advantage of every circumstance that may offer itself by striking a blow at our common enemy. I hold that anything done to check the growing encroachments on our right of public meeting, and any action that may be taken to check the mock patriotism of some of the soldiery and police, will be of infinite value to the revolutionary cause.

Our masters seem bent on appealing to force to settle labour's appeals. Well, I see no reason to fear or dread their action. If force is appealed to on their side, it is surely no time to parly about "moral persuasion" or heroically standing with arms folded to be shot down. We shall only be called cowards on the one hand and fools on the other. Our answer must be in the words of Lingg of Chicago: "If you cannonade us, we shall dynamite you"; and this, I contend, is and can be our only answer. It is no use becoming sentimental. This agitation is growing, and the question of the hour, wherever I have been, is not what is Socialism, but "How can we get it: we are ready to act, show us how and we will do it?" And I firmly believe that the first blow struck, be it where it may, will be the signal for a general uprising all over the country—aye, even in places where as yet Socialism is little known.

In conclusion, my advice is: Be ready, for there is no knowing at what hour the Revolution cometh.

C. W. MOWBRAY.

CAPITALIST CATCH-WORDS.

THE fact, daily becoming more evident, that the capitalist class has found itself out should be an encouragement to Socialists. The feudal lord and the Elizabethan squire no doubt sincerely believed that they were heaven-sent blessings to their dependents; the modern Sir Gorgius Midas has begun to have an uneasy consciousness that he is a useless humbug, and he is taking infinite precautions against the catastrophe which history warns him must follow the general acknowledgment thereof. An oligarchy that believes in itself may live long; a ruling class that has no faith in itself or in anybody else may linger, but cannot last.

Significant is the outcry of the capitalist press when the Dilkes, Dunlos, Colin Campbells, and Cleveland Streetists by their impudence reveal to the proletariat who has a spare penny what a flimsy thing is his master's "morality." These exposures we often hear must shake the respect of the people for their masters, and this point is cynically emphasised in "Society in London by a Foreign Resident," a work that had a big sale a few years ago. The "Foreign Resident" tells us frankly that "Society" does not care what its members do provided they don't make a scandal about it, and he mentions that the Prince of Wales (the "little fat man in red," as Mr. Stead's young man once called him) is most particular about church-going, and insists on maintaining a respect for religious ordinances. So we also find that unscrupulous wire-puller, Mr. Gladstone, keeping up the game with articles on the "Impregnable Rock of Holy Scripture,"—for he knows that plenty of Christianity is good for workmen.

The patronage of the "Labour members" by the rich, which enabled Mr. Broadhurst at the Trades Congress to unctuously talk about advocating the Cause of Labour "in the palace and in the cottage," is another ingenious little dodge of the capitalist. But most typical of all is the attitude of the press in the event of a strike, such as the gas-stokers at Leeds and the dockers at Southampton. No cry is too mean to use to disparage the workers, and the press exults as they are drenched with a fire-hose or given a "taste of cold steel"—the latter being much in favour in Fleet Street. The strike leaders are taunted with urging their dupes to violence while keeping their own skins safe, the real meaning of this being that the capitalist would like to get the orators, the organisers, and the advisers of a strike into his clutches to make an example of them by slowly murdering them in his prisons. When the dispute hinges on the recognition of a union, the public are told that this is the miserable vanity of the agitators, who want to get power into their own hands, while all the time lawyers, parsons, police, and military, who have nothing to do with the dispute, are working their hardest against the workers.

The latest hypocrisy is the cry of "free labour," which bids fair to be the shibboleth of aggressive capitalism for some time. Although all concerned know that the sole object of the capitalists is to increase their own profits, they and their apologists have the assurance to pretend that they are only anxious about protecting those who desire to work untrammelled by the tyranny of agitators. Newspapers who find it no hardship to be compelled to employ only society men, and lawyers and doctors, who boycott practitioners who try to undersell them, combine in denouncing any interference with "blacklegs," and it would seem that the whole machinery of Government instead of being directed, as Brougham said, to getting twelve men into a jury-box, is intended to get a blackleg into a capitalist's employment. It is satisfactory to find that the hypocrisies of capitalism have less power than of old to mislead the workers, and there can be no doubt that the capitalist beginning by finding himself out will end by being found out by others. And then the end is near!

A NEW VERSION OF THE BATTLE OF HASTINGS.

THE year one thousand and sixty-six was, I think, the year of the great battle. I think so, but am too lazy to consult the guide-book—and Battle Abbey is supposed to stand on the spot where the fight was thickest. Battle Abbey is an old, old place now, and Englishmen—so the guide-book says—"cannot look upon it without emotion." Perhaps this is true. I cannot say, because I did not look upon it. But I looked upon the fleet of boats which disfigured the bay with their painted advertisements of patent pills, and I thought if Englishmen can see that sight without emotion, they may manage calmly to contemplate the spot on which eight centuries ago the Norman pirates and the Saxon brigands fought for plunder's sake, and filled the trenches with their broken block-heads and sullied the rivers with their boozey blood.

The Normans spent the night before the battle in prayer and praise. The Saxons spent it in riot and drunkenness. The Normans won the battle; and having buried the murdered men and built an abbey to the glory of God, they set to work and robbed the country from end to end, sharing out the spoil amongst the professional footpads, broken-down libertines, pot-house bullies, and hireling cut-throats, from whom many of our haughty English nobility are so proud to claim descent. Well, so much for Hastings. If you want a good and graphic account of the battle, I can recommend Dickens's "Child's History of England." There is only one fact in connection with the battle which I want to remind you of, and that is the fact that William the Conqueror is dead. I mention that fact because the majority of my countrymen do not seem to realise it. William has been fatally dead these eight hundred years or so. But the people of this country are still very much like serfs. They still endure the pressure of feudal institutions; they still suffer the land to remain in possession of the spoiler. These are facts which I, as an Englishman, "cannot contemplate without emotion."—"Nunquam" in Manchester *Sunday Chronicle*.

BELFAST.—On Sunday evening Mrs. Besant delivered an address in the Secular Hall on "Why We Advocate Socialism." Crowded audience.

Review.

THE main attraction in the October number of *Igdrasil* is a poem by Roden Noel. There is a good deal of Christianity about it, which in our opinion rather spoils it; but the writer shows considerable power in his description of the horrors of the life of the poor, as the following extract will show. It is the soliloquy of a starving workman who is about to commit suicide, listening to the merry peal of the Christmas bells:

O Christmas bells, ye chime to jeer
 Poor folk shut in with mortal fear!
 "Peace and goodwill to all mankind!"
 —Save those whom want and rich men
 grind—
 Art, Science, Banquet, Church, and
 Revel
 Westward feed sense, heart and mind;
 Down East, the unshared rule of the
 devil!

Long have I sought; I cannot find
 God who delivers men from evil! . . .
 (Bells peal) Well I loved those chimes
 In happier times. . . .
 Once more we have our cheerful home,
 Around the window roses blow;
 I see my Mary fair as foam,
 Blithely singing, come and go,
 While rosed with health the children
 roam. . . .
 Now we are ground 'twixt two mill-
 stones—
 The man that wrings the murderous
 rent,
 Yet shelters not the naked bones
 Cooped in his plague-fraught tenement,
 And vampires who suck sleek content
 From human anguish, tears, and groans,
 Clutch the fruit of our life's toil
 And batten upon the unholy spoil—
 Throwing a wage-scrap back for fuel,
 Lest man-mills stop the labour cruel,
 And cease with Death unequal duel.
 Shall we, chained starvelings, go,
 buy law,
 To save us from the robber's claw?
 Law is a cumbrous thing to move;
 It will not come and help for love!
 Buy women to starve at "market-
 price."

With regard to the robber above we think it a great pity he was not "clutched," and "clutched" so securely that his speedy decease would have been a certainty. If poor people would only stick together and pay "No rent," they would soon make an end of the land thief. In the poem the husband commits suicide, and the poor woman stitches herself into her shroud. This is not so uncommon after all, and yet middle-class political humbugs, with their cant of moderate reform, say that "violence" is very wicked. We think that if the poor were a little more "violent" (the prisons, it is true, might be fuller), but, at least, *there would not be so many deaths through over-work and starvation.*

Gallio-Law, with looks of ice,
 Smiles placid; poor man, steal a crust,
 To feed them, Jefferies, judge most
 just,
 Thee, wrath-red, into gyves will thrust.
 "Church and State will guard," saith
 he,
 "The sacred rights of property!"
 England wrestles for the slave
 Enthralled beyond the alien wave;
 Why doth this mother of the free
 Let her strong sons with cruel glee
 Crush weak sisters at her knee?
 Set thine own house in order—then
 Go and preach to evil men!
 In feudal dungeons underground
 They buried their live victims bound,
 And we in our vile vaults immature
 These whose crime is to be poor,
 Starve babes and women innocent,
 Tortured, in black prisons pent,
 Feudal lords would feed the slave;
 But Capital from his despair
 Extorts more toil than flesh can bear,
 Keeps him half-living in his grave, . . .

That robber's rent was in arrear;
 He came with flint-face, cane, black
 coat,
 Would fling us on the street; yea, here,
 Shook my poor Mary, white with
 fear—
 No strength was mine to clutch his
 throat!
 My dying wife must stitch at those;
 Rich sick folk may lie abed,
 Or fly from our black smoke and snows
 To where blue air and ocean wed. . . .
 Man's right! we are powerless to
 assert it.
 And man himself is God-deserted!

PIONEER AID AND SUPPORT ASSOCIATION.

TO THE WORKING MEN AND LOVERS OF LIBERTY OF ALL COUNTRIES.

FRIENDS AND COMRADES.—A heavy burden rests upon our consciences. An indelible stain clings to the American name. We allowed on November 11, 1887, several of the best of our class to be sacrificed to the tyranny of class hatred. The generation that perpetrated, or allowed to be perpetrated, the judicial murder cannot atone for the crime. The cemetery of Waldheim encloses the strangled bodies of our immortal friends. Thousands of brave men and women every year make a pilgrimage to this Golgotha of the proletariat, to dedicate tears to the memory of our heroes, and hear their voices—more powerful in death than in life—crying out, "Lift up your hearts!"

Hence it behoves us to erect a token to show the pilgrims the sacred ground where their dead rest. We are aware that the preservation of their memory does not require a monument of stone or bronze, for they already have erected themselves an eternal monument in our hearts. It is not an imitation of the customs of a conventional world that induces us to direct this request for your help for the erection of this sign of remembrance. This monument shall be worthy of our martyrs—a monition to our duties, an appeal from the dead to the living! The Pioneer Aid and Support Association—whose object is the providing for the families of the murdered and imprisoned labour leaders and other victims of the reaction, as well as to erect a monument to the entombed leaders of the people in Waldheim Cemetery—has, by acquiring title to their graves, removed all obstacles to the execution of their project.

It is the intention to unveil the monument at the next World's Congress of Working-men during the World's Exposition in 1893, to be enabled to show to the visitors that four hundred years after the discovery of this continent a new era has commenced for the wage-workers.

There is no doubt that in Chicago alone the necessary funds could be raised for this monument, a considerable amount having already been obtained; but everywhere the desire has been clamoured to give all comrades and lovers of liberty an opportunity to contribute their mite to the erection of this monument. We, though opponents of the monument culture, consider this clamour as justified. We perceive in the projected monument a symbol of the fraternisation of the wage-workers which has to precede the freeing of an enslaved world. It therefore appears to us appropriate that everybody sign his name to the roll of honour, no matter how small the amount may be.

Please send moneys to the treasurer, Mr. Thomas Greif, 54 West Lake Street, Chicago, Ill., and forward letters-of-advise to the secretary, Mr. Lacher, Avondale Station, Chicago, Ill.

WORKING MEN'S COLLEGE, Great Ormond Street, W.C.—Sidney Webb will give a series of six lectures on "The Economic Results of an Eight Hours Bill," on Thursday October 23rd, and following Thursdays, at 8 p.m. Fee, 2s. 6d.

THE LABOUR STRUGGLE.

Trouble at the Docks.

We have referred in another column to the probable end of Messrs. Allan's dispute with the corn-porters. The *Daily Chronicle* states that far from earning 15s. a-day at their work, the men were really not receiving more than half that sum, and the fact is that the dispute has simply arisen from Messrs. Allan and Co. wanting to break the agreement of last November. It is clear that Messrs. Allan intend to bring back the old state of affairs, and in order to get sympathy for the blacklegs they desire to employ they have published a very "pathetic" letter, which we imagine was written by some blackleg reporter on a newspaper or by Messrs. Allan's office-boy. It relates the supposed woes of a broken-down small middle-class man, from the point of view of the ordinary begging letter-writer. This gentleman is thirsting for employment as a corn-porter, and suggests that Messrs. Allan should advertise for broken-down clerks and shopmen to go blacklegging down to the docks. Possibly when Messrs. Allan in their "benevolence" have locked out corn-porters and dockers they will despatch a contingent of these abject creatures to take their places. Might we also suggest that Messrs. Allan and Co., in their benevolence, should insure their lives before starting? After all, you know, it is only right that some provision should be made for their "wives and children of tender years" in case of "accidents." N.

The Unemployed.

A correspondent writes: It was rather amusing on Saturday last to see a large number of policemen, sergeants, and inspectors huddled together round the tomb of the Roman-nosed knight—to wit, Wellington—in St. Paul's Cathedral. It was impossible to imagine a more incongruous mixture than Christopher Wren's magnificent building and about a hundred fat, healthy, uniformed City police. What was the cause of this vast and awe-inspiring assemblage? The unemployed had threatened to hold a meeting on the steps of the sacred edifice. Aye! actually proposed to ventilate their grievances in public. Therefore, this force was hidden away, ready to spring forth at a moment's notice to baton them without mercy, if necessary. But somehow the unemployed didn't turn up in the number expected. Those that did assemble were headed by Power, who, as soon as he tried to speak, was promptly arrested and conveyed to Bridewell Lane Police-station. This broke up the meeting entirely; still the police remained ensconced around Wellington's tomb as though something further was expected. But, alas, nothing occurred, and at four o'clock, just in time to escape the service, about a hundred constables poured forth from the doors of London's cathedral and dispersed. And this is in Christian England—England, the home of the free, where they would sooner profane a "sacred" building with the presence of a horde of perjurers than allow the victims of our corrupt society to protest against their being crushed out beneath the wheels of the Juggernaut of Capitalism.

On Sunday, H. H. Chapman was arrested for attempting to speak in Trafalgar Square. He was dragged to the police-station, and charged with attempting to cause a "breach of the peace." Trafalgar Square must be a very explosive sort of a place, when the deliverance of a speech which would be quite harmless, say, in Hyde Park, causes there "a breach of the peace." We cannot understand why a change of locality should totally alter the character of the act. Surely what is harmless in Hyde Park should be harmless in Trafalgar Square. Our "admirable" and intelligent police think differently; but why, we do not know; we should like an explanation.

On Monday Chapman and Power were bound over to keep the peace for six months. They will be thus prevented from taking part in an agitation during the winter. We must say, we think the sacrifice of two good men is a mistake at this period of the agitation. We cannot spare a man, as we shall need all our forces in a few weeks' time. J. L.

ESCAPED SLAVES.

From the Executive of the Cape Town Trade and Labour Council to the Executive of the Socialist League, 24 Great Queen Street, Lincoln's Inn Fields, London.

COMRADES,—With the same mail as this you will receive colonial papers containing particulars of the case in which we desire your help. We leave the manner in which you can help us in your own hands, but think some of the Labour members in the House of Commons ought to be requested to bring the matter before the Government. Not that we expect much help from that quarter, but that an explanation might be got as to how to prevent a similar case from occurring, and perhaps be of some service to the unfortunate men whose case we now submit to your consideration.

The particulars of the case are as follows. The Portuguese mail steamer "Rei-da-Portugal" put into the port of Cape Town with a cargo of slaves on board. The vessel was from Mozambique, en route to St. Paulo-da-Laonda, west coast of Africa. On Monday, 15th September, fourteen of the slaves made their escape, and a writ was applied for to the Supreme Court by the Attorney-General to have the men on board produced in court, but owing to the application having been made on behalf of the escaped men instead of and from the men detained on board, the application was not granted. The result was that before another writ could be moved for, the vessel had got clear away, so that forty-two or thereabout are still in slavery. If the Socialist League can do anything to make this matter public and can get it brought before the Government of the country you will help us in this matter greatly.

The Executive of the Trades Council interviewed the men through the aid of an interpreter who had been brought as a slave from the same district (Mashalla, four or five days' journey from Mozambique) several years ago, and found that they had been seized by the Portuguese authorities and thrown into gaol for a month, thence shipped on board the "Rei-da-Portugal" for conveyance to the west coast, St. Paulo-da-Laonda, and brutally treated during the time they had been detained. We will forward you, if possible, a photo of the group of slaves, with several members of the Trades Council included, as it may be of some use as evidence.

Signed on behalf of the Trades and Labour Council,

JAS. BAIN, Chairman.

Cape Town, South Africa, September 24th, 1890.

We have received a large number of newspaper cuttings, which are at the service of anyone who may like to take up the case.—Eds.

SOCIALISM IN LONDON AND THE PROVINCES.

SOUTH NORWOOD AND STREATHAM.

STREATHAM is waking up! Announcements of speakers from London by our local speakers bring good audiences. Being a middle-class village, our audiences are very critical and hard to please; but our experience is that the economic basis of Socialism is dealt with by the speakers, well-to-do folks not only listen, but are heard by comrades in the meeting to exclaim, "That is true; you cannot get away from it." Now, this is very encouraging. Our *Commonweal* always sell out, and good literature is in demand here.

September 13th Smith and Osbourne spoke at Fountain to fair audience. Smith dealt chiefly with the wasted energies of the worker in finding and supporting Socialist candidates to Parliament, and with such effect that he was asked to open a debate at the Battersea Labour League, 164 Lavender Hill, September 25. This was gladly accepted by our comrade. After speaking forty-five minutes, was called on by the chairman to close for discussion, which amounted to disgraceful disorder; three questions aimed at once; no debate was intended. When questions were answered, a fresh batch ready on the organisations of Socialist bodies and their numbers. The climax was reached when our comrade asked every man to produce his trade-union card; only one responded, that of a mason with 9½d. per hour. When denouncing the anti-parliamentary party (the committee of John Burns's election) will never forget the licking-up they had by a Revolutionary Socialist. I quite expect every one has since joined a union.

Sunday 20, no meetings were held. Smith attended the meetings at Thornton Heath and South Norwood; reports per Miss Lupton. September 27th Couchman and Smith spoke at Fountain to good audience; Couchman's first attempt at active propaganda. *Commonweal* sold out. In the afternoon both comrades went to South Norwood and spoke to large audience, mostly gas-workers and general labourers. We found the *People's Press* on sale, but after Smith's address Couchman sold out the *Commonweal*. At the close Smith was asked to sing the "Marseillaise." Cheers for the revolution closed the meeting. October 5th Miss Lupton and Smith spoke on the Common to an audience that did not seem to receive us very favourably, but comparing numbers at ours with the "Gospelers," we had by far the largest, in spite of the attraction of a brass band. Fair sale of *Commonweal*. At night Mrs. Lahr spoke at the Fountain to a crowded audience, the police having all their work to keep the footpath clear—so much so that Mrs. Lahr was threatened with arrest if the obstruction continued. To satisfy this bully the chairman asked the people to close up, which had the effect of wearying the speakers, not having a platform. Mrs. Lahr spoke over an hour and promised to come next Sunday—expect good meetings all day. *Commonweal* sold out; 2s. 3d. collected. The "Marseillaise" by Smith closed the meeting, and a most useful month's propaganda was closed. R. SMITH.

YARMOUTH.

"HURRAH for the Social Revolution!" Prepare for the great revolt so that we be not taken by surprise, for it is coming as sure as light follows darkness. Everywhere we look we see signs of discontent. The spirit of revolt is spreading even in Yarmouth, and the least spark will set fire to the whole country. Therefore it behoves us all to be prepared, for we know not what this winter will bring forth.

In Yarmouth we are working with all our might to educate the people in revolutionary ideas. Our comrades have taken it up lately with great energy, being thoroughly convinced that authority and monopoly has but a short time to live. The lack of funds is the great drawback to the branch. During the summer months 10s. weekly has been spent to pay the fares of speakers from London, besides bill printing, etc., and being all working-men and women, earning at the best of times only from 10s. to 18s. per week, we cannot do much financially, but what is done is done with a willing heart, willing even to sacrifice our lives for the advancement of our noble Cause.

Our comrades of the Hammersmith Branch have assisted us greatly, especially Tochatti, who has been working hard but willingly for us, sacrificing money, and pleasure for the Cause. On Tuesday, August 26th, and during the week, good propaganda has been done in the club-room. Comrades Wess and R. Turner (of London) were with us on a visit for a week or two, revolutionary songs being sung every evening. On Sunday, August 31st, in the morning, on Priory Plain, comrade Wess gave a thoroughly revolutionary speech, which was much appreciated by the audience, assisted by comrade Rogers (of London). A clod-hopper in blue tried to upset the meeting, but seeing we were determined to stand our ground he went away like a dog with his tail between his legs. In the evening on Colman's Quay, Rogers again addressed a fair audience of workers, Wess and Turner having gone to Norwich to assist the comrades there. On Sept. 2nd, a revolutionary concert was held in the club room, comrades A. Tochatti and Headley assisting with their fiddles; altogether a most enjoyable evening was spent. On the 7th, Sunday morning, comrade Leggatt (of London) delivered a pointed address to a large and attentive audience, his plain and open speaking having a marked effect on the attentive listeners. In the evening, comrade Mills (of Norwich) addressed a meeting. On the following Sunday morning, a most successful meeting was held on Priory Plain; comrade Bradley (of London) acted as chairman, and opened the meeting by reciting Morris's chant, "The Day is Coming," very effectually; Mrs. Tochatti followed, singing "A Song for Socialism." Comrades Tochatti, Mrs. Tochatti, and family, and Bradley, Mrs. Bradley, and family were on a visit to Yarmouth for a week. Comrade Tochatti then gave an address on the "Practicality of Socialism" and "Some Objections to Socialism," which was well received by a large working and middle-class audience, the meeting being continued for over two hours, and three new members joining as a result of the meeting. In the evening on Colman's Quay, on arriving at the place of meeting, some 50 or 60 children occupied the ground, singing "When Leisure and Pleasure shall be free." This in itself is a healthy sign; they were rather noisy at the beginning of the meeting, but were very attentive a little while after. Mrs. Tochatti sang "No Master," and comrade Tochatti gave a lecture on "The Principles of Socialism." Although the audience was not so large as usual, much interest was shown towards our comrade's able and sensible remarks; good sale of *Commonweal*. We have again started the Bradwell meeting, comrade Brightwell being the speaker. As a result of our propaganda here a club is going to be started on Socialistic principles.

It is encouraging to see the Cause making such headway in the North of England and the Midlands. The only thing we want is more workers. Unless every Socialist does his utmost to educate his brother or sister workers, if they cannot speak publicly, they can to their shopmates or workmates, also by writing to *Commonweal* facts of their every-day life, by distributing literature, and those who can by financial help, for the Cause is in great need of it. Work with all your might, comrades, losing not an hour or a minute for the overturn of the present rotten Society. Since last report we have sold 240 *Weals*, besides *Freedom* and other literature; collection, 7s. 7½d. J. HEADLEY.

SCOTTISH SOCIALIST FEDERATION.—EDINBURGH—Labour Hall, 50 South Bridge. Business meeting, Fridays at 8 p.m. Lecture, Sunday October 19, at 6.30, Comrade Howie, "The Energy We Waste." LEITH—Henderson Street Hall, Sundays, at 6.30.

THE SOCIALIST LEAGUE.

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

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

Branch Subscriptions Paid.—1890:—North Kensington, to end of April. Glasgow, Oxford, Hammersmith, 'Commonweal' Branch, Manchester, and Norwich, to end of May. Yarmouth, to end of June. East London, to end of July. Leicester, to end of August. North London, to end of September. Streatham, to end of December.

NEW PREMISES FUND.

Collection by Council on October 14th, 4s. 1d.

"COMMONWEAL" GUARANTEE FUND.

	£	s.	d.		£	s.	d.
H. R.	0	1	0	B. W.	0	0	6
C. Saunders	0	2	0				
N.	0	0	6	Total	0	5	0
J. S. S.	0	1	0				

REPORTS.

'COMMONWEAL' BRANCH.—Good meetings have been held at the Hoxton and Union Street stations, *Commonweal* selling well. The second lecture of the course arranged by this branch took place last Monday, October 13th, at the Autonomie Club, 6, Windmill Street, W., when D. J. Nicoll lectured on "The Glorious Reformation: or, How the English People were Evicted, Robbed, and Murdered by the Ruling Classes." Very interesting lecture indeed. The choir opened and closed the proceedings with revolutionary songs. Collection, 7s. 7d.—W. B.

SOUTH SIDE BRANCH.—Three meetings have been held during the past week. At Short Street on Wednesday, Oct. 8th, large audience; speakers were Leggett, Buckering, and Miss Lupton. Short Street again on Sunday morning; speakers were Leggett, Miss Lupton, and McCormack; 34 *Commonweal* sold, and 2s. 3d. collected for branch of International Federation of Trades and Industries, the stick umbrella makers, who are on strike. On Sunday evening, meeting at Crown Hill, Croydon; speakers, Leggett and Miss Lupton; 33 *Weals* sold. No meeting was held in the afternoon, as Miss Lupton spoke in Victoria Park on behalf of East London Communist-Anarchists. The secretary has to report that this branch, though in its infancy, is in a very flourishing condition; the audiences are large and continually increasing in number, and very attentive and appreciative. There is a great lack of speakers and comrades who could assist from other branches who would be heartily welcomed, also comrades to sell literature, etc.; 7s. 6d. received for branch propaganda from E. Harding.—E. L.

ABERDEEN.—A good meeting was held at Woodside on Sunday, October 5th. The speakers were W. Cooper, Rennie, and Leatham; the singing was excellent. At night our hall was crowded to hear Kropotkin's "Scientific Basis of Anarchy" read; there was a good discussion. The Thursday night meeting on Castle Street was addressed by comrades G. Cooper and Leatham, and on Saturday night in the same place W. Cooper, Rennie, and Leatham spoke to a large crowd. We are looking about for a larger hall for our Sunday night meetings.

GLASGOW.—On Friday Glasier spoke at Bridgeton Cross. On Saturday afternoon comrades Haddow and Glasier went to Tollcross and addressed a meeting of blast-furnacemen and miners, together with a number of their wives. Both speakers explained the principles of Socialism at length, and were enthusiastically received. At the conclusion a quantity of back numbers of the *Commonweal* were distributed. On Sunday Glasier addressed the Joe Biggar Branch of the Irish National League on Socialism. His criticism of the parliamentary party and his revolutionary statements created quite a spirited discussion, but were heartily approved by the great majority present. In the evening Glasier spoke at Paisley Road Toll, where our members gathered in good force. 7s. 7d. was collected in aid of the blast-furnacemen now locked out.

LEEDS.—We held three splendid meetings here on Sunday, although comrade Sketchley was unable to come from Hull. Our best meeting was on Woodhouse Moor, when Sweeney, Sollit, and Samuels spoke to a most attentive audience, who showed their appreciation and sympathy by subscribing to our funds and buying up nearly all our *Commonweal*. They sold very fast, owing to the list of "scab" printing houses in London which it contained. I don't think anything could have gone better just now here, as we are at present troubled with a scab evening paper, which is getting roundly abused. We collected 8s. 9d., and sold 130 *Commonweal*, besides many pamphlets.—H. S.

SCOTTISH SOCIALIST FEDERATION—EDINBURGH.—On Sunday, in Labour Hall, comrade Ritchie addressed a good audience on "The Two Nations." Many questions were put and replied to, and a lively discussion followed. At Leith comrade Bell delivered a good lecture on "What Socialism is not." There was a large audience, and a good discussion, in which Chalmers, president of the Dockers' Union, took part.

DUBLIN.—On Monday, Oct. 6th, Annie Besant and Herbert Burrows (S.D.F., London) addressed a meeting of Dublin factory-girls at St. Patrick's Hall, Clanbrassil Street. Mrs. Besant dealt with the methods of organisation, and showed how the London match-girls had won their great strike. Later in the evening Mrs. Besant lectured in the Antient Concert Rooms, Great Brunswick Street, taking as her subject "The Class War." Mr. James Walker was chairman. There was a good audience, who listened attentively. Discussion was rather poor—O'Hea, Foreman (Railway Workers), Brown, and Fitzpatrick, the last named "going for" the lecture from the Anarchist standpoint. Several dozen of *Commonweal* and leaflets were distributed.

Commemoration Meeting of the Chicago Martyrs and Bloody Sunday.

On Thursday, November 13th, a great meeting (convened by the Socialist League) will be held in the large Hall of the Radical Club, Kay Street, Hackney Road, to commemorate Bloody Sunday and the Murder and Imprisonment of our Chicago comrades. Full particulars, names of speakers, etc., will be given next week. See small bills.

The Wrongs of the Poor.

It is not because of his toils that I lament for the poor: we must all toil, or steal (howsoever we name our stealing), which is worse; no faithful workman finds his task a pastime. . . . But what I do mourn over is, that the lamp of his soul should go out; that no ray of heavenly, or even of earthly knowledge, should visit him; but only, in the haggard darkness, like two spectres, Fear and Indignation bear him company. Alas, while the Body stands so broad and brawny, must the Soul lie blinded, dwarfed, stupefied, almost annihilated! Alas, was this too a Breath of God; bestowed in Heaven, but on earth never to be unfolded!—That there should one Man die ignorant who had capacity for Knowledge, this I call a tragedy, were it to happen more than twenty times in the minute, as by some computations it does.—*Curlye: 'Sartor Resartus.'*

LECTURE DIARY.

LONDON.

Battersea.—All communications to E. Buteux, 45, Inwith Street, Battersea Park Road.
Commonweal Branch.—24 Great Queen Street, Holborn, W.C. Tuesdays, Singing Practice. Thursdays, Business meeting. Saturdays, Social Gathering. Sunday, October 19, at 8.30 p.m., Songs and Recitations by Members and Friends.
East London.—H. McKenzie, 10 Victoria Dwellings, Clerkenwell Road, E.C.
Hammersmith.—Kelmecott House, Upper Mall, W. Lecture every Sunday at 8. French Class conducted by Mlle. Desroches on Friday evenings at 7.30.
North Kensington.—Clarendon Coffee Palace, Clarendon Road. Meets every Wednesday at 8 p.m. Band practice every Friday at 8 p.m. On Sunday, October 19, at 7.30, a lecture.
North London.—6 Windmill Street, Tottenham Court Road. Meets every Wednesday evening at 8 o'clock.
South Side Branch.—E. Lupton, 59 Selhurst Road, S.E., secretary *pro tem.*
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 Sunday evenings at 6.30. Singing practice, etc., Mondays at 8 p.m.
Glasgow.—Members are invited to meet on Thursday and Sunday evenings, at 8 o'clock, in the Secretary's house, 250 Crown Street, S.S. All communications to be sent to that address.
Halifax.—Socialists meet every Sunday at 6.30 p.m. at Helliwell's Temperance Hotel, Northgate.
Hull.—Club Liberty, 1 Beets Court, Blanket Row.
Leeds.—Socialist League Club, 1 Clarendon Buildings and Front Row. Open every evening. Business meeting Saturdays at 8.—International Educational Club, Templar Street. Open every evening. Discussion class every Friday at 8; lectures every Saturday at 4. All kinds of Socialist literature on tables and for sale.
Leicester.—Room No. 7, Co-operative Hall, High Street. Branch meeting on Thursday at 8 p.m.
Manchester.—Socialist League Club, 60 Grovesnor Street, All Saints. Open every evening. Branch weekly meeting on Tuesdays at 8. Saturday, October 18, lecture by Wm. Clarke (Fabian), "The Politics of Labour."
Nottingham.—Socialist Club, Woodland Place, Upper Parliament Street. Club contribution, 1d. per week; dancing every Wednesday, 8 till 10.30—fee 3d.
Norwich.—Members' meeting held every Tuesday at 8.30.
Oxford.—Temperance Hall, 25½ Pembroke Street. First Friday in every month, at 8.30 p.m.
Sheffield.—Socialist Club, 63 Blonk Street. French Class, Tuesday at 8.30. Discussion Class, Wednesday at 8.30. Open-air meetings are held as follows:—Sunday: Monolith, Fargate, at 11.30; Newhall Road, Attercliffe, at 11.30; Pump, Westbar, at 8; Heeley, Maresbrook Park, at 7.30; Monolith, Fargate, at 6.30; Rotherham, College Yard, at 3.15. Wednesday: Nursery Street, Wicker, at 8. Thursday: Bramall Lane, at 8; Eckington, at 6.30. Friday: Duke Street, Park, at 8. Saturday: Woodhouse, at 7.
Walsall.—Socialist Club, 18 Goodall Street, Walsall. Meetings every night.
Yarmouth.—Socialist League Club, 56 Row, Market Place. Open every evening. Business Meeting, Tuesday at 8. Singing Practice, Wednesday at 8.30. Discussion Class, Thursday at 8.30. Elocution Class, Friday at 8.30.

OPEN-AIR PROPAGANDA.

SATURDAY 18.

8 Euston Road—Ossulston Street Nicoll and Cantwell
 8 Mile-end Waste Mrs. Lahr and Kitz

SUNDAY 19.

11 Commercial Road—Union Street The Branch
 11 Latimer Road Station North Kensington Branch
 11.30 Hammersmith Bridge Hammersmith Branch
 11.30 Hoxton Church Kitz
 11.30 New Cut—Short Street Leggett and Miss Lupton
 11.30 Regent's Park Nicoll
 3.30 Hyde Park—Marble Arch The Branch
 3.30 Victoria Park Commonweal Branch
 3.30 Streatham Common The Branch
 6 Streatham—Fountain Mrs. Lahr
 7 Hammersmith Bridge Hammersmith Branch
 7 Wormwood Scrubs North Kensington Branch
 7.30 Croydon—Crownhill Miss Lupton
 8 Kings Cross—Liverpool Street The Branch
 8 South Norwood South Side Branch
 8 Walham Green—back of Church Hammersmith Branch

WEDNESDAY 22.

7.30 New Cut—Short Street Miss Lupton

FRIDAY 24.

8.15 Hoxton Church Kitz

PROVINCES.

Aberdeen.—Saturday: Castle Street, at 7.30 p.m.
Glasgow.—Sunday: Jail Square at 2 o'clock; Paisley Road at 5 o'clock. Friday: Bridgeton Cross, at 8.15.
Leeds.—Sunday: Hunslet Moor, at 11 a.m.; Woodhouse Moor, at 3 p.m.; Vicar's Croft, at 6 p.m.
Leicester.—Sunday: Russell Square, at 10.45 a.m.; Market Place, at 6.15 p.m.; Humberstone Gate, at 8 p.m. Monday: Belgrave, at 8. Tuesday: Sanvey Gate, at 8. Wednesday: Braunstone Gate, at 8. Friday: Infirmary Square, at 8. Saturday: "Cross," Belgrave Gate, at 8.
Liverpool.—Landing Stage, Sundays at 11.30 a.m. and 3 p.m.
Manchester.—Saturday: Middleton market ground, at 7 p.m. Sunday: Philips Park Gates, at 11; Stevenson Square, at 3. Monday: Market Street, Blackley, at 8.
Nottingham.—Sunday: Sneinton Market, at 11 a.m.; Great Market, at 7 p.m.
Norwich.—Saturday: Haymarket, at 8. Sunday: Market Place at 11, 3, and 7.30.
Yarmouth.—Saturday: Church Plain Trees, at 8 p.m. Sunday: Priory Plain, at 11; Bradwell, at 11.30; London Boat Landing Stage, at 3; Colman's Granary Quay, at 7. Monday: Belton, at 8 p.m.

SOCIALIST LEAGUE PUBLICATIONS.

Leaflets.

All pamphlets not published by the Socialist League will in future be charged to Branches and Allied Societies at the following rates:—1d. each, 1s. 6d. per quire of 26; 2d. each, 3s. ditto.

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