

# THE COMMONWEAL

## The Official Journal of the SOCIALIST LEAGUE.

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WEEKLY; ONE PENNY.

### NOTES ON NEWS.

THAT organ of renegade Radicalism, the *Echo*, has startled the world recently by a new discovery. It states *gravely* enough that the Whitechapel murders have their origin in the incendiary speeches of Trafalgar Square agitators.

To back this extraordinary assertion it is good enough to give the authority of Mr. W. Thompson, who happened to point out that these outrages occurred at the same time as the agitation of the unemployed. Probably Mr. Thompson intended to suggest that the attention Sir Charles Warren was giving to the unemployed agitation prevented the police from attending to their ordinary duties, for it would certainly never occur to the mind of any sane person outside the *Echo* staff that denunciation of the apathy and luxurious cruelty of the rich can have anything to do with the beastly barbarities committed upon the persons of the weakest and most helpless of the poor.

Let the editor of the *Echo* try again. Some time ago there was a play produced at Farringdon Hall, written by our comrade William Morris, in which a policeman accuses a Socialist of inciting to disembowel the capitalists of London. Perhaps the *Echo* will suggest, on a future occasion, that the Whitechapel murders sprang from the Socialist drama of "The Tables Turned; or, Nupkins Awakened," and the *Echo* is welcome to this idea if it chooses to seize upon it with the frantic originality which characterises that excellent journal.

The Whig element is, I am glad to see, giving its last kick in the Metropolitan Radical Federation. The Great Mr. Foote, who has constituted himself the leader of this party, received two crushing defeats last Wednesday night, the proposals to extend popular control to voluntary schools, and the one free meal a day resolution of Social Democrats, being carried against him by overwhelming majorities, in spite of his strenuous opposition.

This is good news, not because we look upon the resolutions carried as any but the semiest of semi-Socialism, but we remember the fact that it was mainly owing to Mr. Foote that the Radical Federation abandoned their intention of contesting the right of public meeting in Trafalgar Square. The "moderation" of "the soldier of freedom" at that time has doubtless had its share in producing his crushing defeat last Thursday.

Whig Radicalism has had its day, and, judging by the present rate of progress of the Radical Clubs, it will not be long before they recognise that the salvation of the working classes can only be obtained by the overthrow of the robbers who rule and plunder us. Although we, as revolutionary Socialists, may not think much of such a pitiful palliative as the one free meal a day to the children of starving workmen, still we must acknowledge that its adoption by the Metropolitan Radical Federation is a significant sign of the way in which the world is moving.

A horrible story comes from the Dark Continent. Socialists have never been blind to the real mission of philanthropic British explorers, but we were not aware that "the benefits of civilisation" were to be extended to benighted savages at the merciful hands of cannibal tribes. We hear now, on the authority of a Christian missionary, Mr. De Winter, that the late Major Barttelot did not hesitate to employ these monsters for this purpose. Nay, he made a treaty with them to the effect "that if four hundred of the cannibals in question would consent to accompany him, that they should not be interfered with, so that pillage, murder, and man-eating might lay waste the country along the line of march."

What matters it? for we hear that by the benevolent aid of these amiable savages "the column will thus be able to throw open still more the virgin country to Manyemas, who will be able to supply the Stanley Falls trading factory with marvellous cheap ivory." Dead men will tell no tales, and the midnight volley and shrieks of dying men far back in the gloomy forest will never be heard by the passing

Congo steamers, and the new governor, Tippoo Tib, can scarcely be expected to object to deeds which only struck Englishmen as sensational scenes for their sketch-books, and which called forth no protest because "our object was to get on well with the Arabs." Hurrah for "cheap ivory" and "Christian civilisation"!

Yes, Christian English officers have gazed unmoved upon "human feet and hands sticking out of the cooking-pots of the Manyemas." They have looked on with pleasure "while their Manyema allies have fired at the heads of unhappy men and women who had leaped into the river and were trying to swim across, and have gathered round the Manyema camp fires at night to hear them relate their prowess."

What upset even the barbarous Zanzibarees and Soudanese had no effect upon the strong stomachs of robust Englishmen. What mattered it if fiendish atrocities were committed, so long as ivory was cheap? And yet we are denounced as bloodthirsty scoundrels because we would overthrow the system that makes these devilish deeds possible, calling them Christianity and civilisation.

We can at least congratulate ourselves on this. One practical Christian has met with his deserts, and is by this time doubtless comfortably reposing in the stomachs of his cannibal allies. Major Barttelot will sanction no more cannibal raids. Would that the other scoundrels could also receive justice. Hail to the Revolution! Ah, even though it be carried by sweeping the earth clear of these miserable wretches! That will make extension of this kind of Christianity and civilisation impossible. May it soon be here! D. N.

If there is any truth whatever in the reports concerning Major Barttelot, one can only rejoice that such a human fiend has had justice dealt out to him. It is stated that, in addition to various unmentioned barbarities on the members of the expedition he had got together to help him pioneer the conquest of central Africa for commercial purposes, he deliberately tortured one of these unhappy victims to death. Is it not a commentary on the mechanical and newspapering nature of the emotions of the average Englishman that he can go into fits over the mutilation of a *dead* woman in Whitechapel (for that that is to most people the main element of horror in this case there can be no doubt), and yet can continue to complacently talk of the execution of Barttelot, who caused a *living* man to be murderously mutilated, as a disaster? This extraordinary anomaly (the average Englishman) thirsts for the blood of some presumably poor, ignorant, and squalid wretch in the East-end of London, and regrets that vengeance has overtaken a bloody and brutal gentleman in Africa. For our part, we can only say we sincerely trust that the whole ruffianly gang of philanthropists, quondam suppressors of the slave-trade, missionaries and explorers, which at the present time infests those regions, may share a like fate. E. B. B.

"If anything could lend weight to the theories of the dreamers who want to see all private property destroyed, it would be the selfish and criminal co-operation of these syndicates to make their millions out of the difficulties and embarrassments and ruin of a whole trade. For such greedy wretches there should be no mercy. They live by the spoiling of the community. If, in return, they could be stripped of their last farthing by the action of the community, we should rejoice at the administration of so wholesome a lesson." So says the *Standard*, when speaking of the "Trusts" and "Rings" which are springing up on all sides to-day. By-and-bye folk will find that all capitalists are even as these; that no profit at all is made anywhere to-day but out of the "difficulties and embarrassments of a whole" class.

But as long as that class remains as apathetic as it is to-day, there is little hope of the "wholesome lesson" being taught at all quickly. Even one section of the working class cannot combine and pull together for its own benefit. Surely there could be no class of men with so much solidarity of interest as coal-miners; but they are split up into ever so many societies, and so are beaten in detail. They are wholly unable to rise to the level of a large combination which should cover the country and bring the strength of all to bear on the wrongs of each.

A glance at our "Labour Struggle" columns week by week will soon show what a sluggish creature is the British worker, and how tardy in recognising his own needs, much less those of his fellows. Next week we will give an item there which eloquently speaks of his apathy and of his gullibility as well; the list of rat papers read to the Trades Union Congress; it includes no single Socialist, Radical, or Free-thought paper; every one is a religious or temperance organ, which thousands of workmen will go on reading with devout attention.

They will not stop to ask the value of the religion or the virtue that is kept up on sweated labour and maintained by means of screwing the last penny from half-starved workers! To take one crucial instance: how many working men Good Templars will ever take the trouble to raise the question of their Watchword being a rat sheet? Or other teetotalers as to the *Alliance News*?

Sobriety! Thrift! Religion! Judging by outward appearances, it would seem that "Sobriety" keeps men's heads cool and their hearts cold; that "Thrift" on their own behalf leads to the compulsory poverty of others; and that "Religion" makes heaven for them here after, but allows them to make a hell for others now! S.

## LABOUR'S TRIANGULAR PROBLEM; OR, MEN VERSUS MACHINES.

(Continued from p. 298.)

The *Times* (December 27, 1882) reported on northern coal trade as follows:—

"On the question of production, it may be said that in South Durham in 1875 each person employed in and at the pits brought to bank on the average 339 tons of coal. That rose to 350 in 1879; in 1881 it was 370, and there is ground for the belief that 1882 has given a further increase."

And Mr. Burt, speaking at the Durham miners' gala, said:—

"In 1873, a year of high wages, they produced 35,000,000 tons of coal less than in 1883. During those ten years the average produce of each person had increased no less than 20 per cent. Those employed were producing 80 to 90 tons per man more than in 1873; not all due to improved machinery, the bulk due to increase of manual labour."

"Not all due to improved machinery" is important to note, for it is the expression of a curious confusion of thought; it is an error with much truth. It is correct that the increase is "due to increase of manual labour," but this increased effort is extorted by fear of machinery; extorted from each labourer by the knowledge that there is a large surplus of unemployed men desirous of taking his place if he does not do the extreme task demanded; so therefore the increase is indirectly the result of improved machinery. The man in one pit is matched against the machine in another.

Returning to agriculture for a moment, W. Saunders (*Democrat*, March 7, 1885), on increased productiveness, says:—

"One man with a reaping and binding machine drawn by three horses can cut and bind 12 acres in a day—an amount of work which formerly required 20 persons."

In shipping, he continues, some records dealing with Hull show, in

"twenty-eight voyages from Hull to New York and back in 1835, 15,500 tons of cargo were carried; average length of voyage 119 days, the total number of days for the crew being 53,440. The same quantity of cargo this year carried in five Hull ships, average voyage being 47 days, total days being 8,295, or less than one-sixth of the days formerly occupied, the labour of the crews being six times as effective."

In spinning, 1 person is equal to 750 of a hundred years ago."

Sketchley, in his 'Review of European Society,' p. 214, quotes from Carpenter on machinery the following table of productive powers of machinery:—

Year.	Population.	Estimated number of workers.	Productive powers equal to the labour of men.	Productive power in relation to workers.
1817	20,250,000	5,200,000	200,000,000	As 37 to 1
1832	24,500,000	6,200,000	400,000,000	As 52 to 1
1840	26,500,000	6,600,000	600,000,000	As 90 to 1

And from 1840 to 1878 they had again doubled, being equal to the labour of 1,200,000,000 of men, and as 130 to 1 compared to the number of workers. At p. 223 he quotes from a letter of James Caird to the *Times* of June 5, 1875, that one reaping-machine would do the work of ten men; that in the harvest of 1875 40,000 machines were employed, equal to the labour of 400,000 men; that one steam-plough is equal to the labour of eight men and twenty horses.

Kolb (1880, p. 908) says:—

"Great Britain manufactures at least as much cotton as all other countries together. From 1735 to 1749 only 1,000,000 lbs. were consumed annually, but by 1860 at least 1,000,000,000—that is, more in one working day than in three years of the former period."

The total population of England and Wales, Scotland and Ireland in 1801 is given as 15,717,287; in 1861 the population was 28,974,362. Roughly, one might say population multiplied by 2 in a period during which production is multiplied by 1,000!!

Sidney Taylor in his speech at the evening demonstration of Co-operators made a laboured but poor attempt to show that the people who lay so much stress on inequalities of distribution are wrong:—

"If it be urged that the rich eat more than their fair share of food, and wear more than their fair share of clothes, I reply that after all the rich have only one stomach a-piece, of limited capacity; and that if they were restricted to one or two suits of clothes each the surplus would go a very little way towards covering the nakedness of our widespread destitution."

*Democrat*, August 8, 1885.

This is really very little else than fooling in economics; more, it is not true economically. Every rich man is a consumer with as many stomachs as he has immediate retainers and dependents, who are like himself pure consumers only, and not wealth producers. It will need something stronger than Taylor's "only one stomach" argument to explain how it comes that ten or fifteen pounds per head is spent on one banquet; there must be a few poor men's coats consumed somewhere to allow one man to be sued for a tailor's bill of £750 for one year's clothing for one man. The women who spend two and three thousand per annum in dress, although having only one back to cover, do so at the expense of sweated East-end shirt-makers' shifts, and Sedley Taylor ought to know it, if he does not.

An increase of a thousand-fold of production, against three-fold of consumers (not consumption) shows distribution to be a little unequal; and in urging this I am not forgetting the exports argument. This is discounted by the fact that other countries have also increased vastly in powers of production. For instance, take America.

"In 1880 it was estimated we in Britain produced 5,439,645,000 yards of piece goods, and the home consumption about 27 yards per head of population. This would give less than 1,000,000,000 yards, leaving about 4,500,000,000 for export. Now take the United States. In the same year the stated production was 2,131,580,000 yards, and the home consumption equal to 40 yards per head. This would give a total of about 1,900,000,000 yards, leaving about 200,000,000 yards for export. She exported cotton goods to the value of 9,981,000 dols. In 1881 she increased this to 13,571,000—an increase in one year of 3,590,000 dols."

The same report also makes the important statement that while the average consumption per spindle in Britain is only 32 lbs. of raw cotton, in the United States it is 66 lbs.; therefore one American operative works up as much material as two English. In piece goods the American production is 2.75 against English 2.50.

In coal, iron, and steel the figures given by different authorities are more crushing in their completeness than even in cotton.

In coal the output increased in the term 1869-1880 in Belgium 9 per cent.; Austria, 28 per cent.; Great Britain, 34 per cent.; France, 42 per cent.; Germany, 76 per cent.; United States, 135 per cent.!!

In pig-iron in same period, Belgium, 18 per cent.; Great Britain, 28 per cent.; Germany, 64 per cent.; France, 66 per cent.; United States, 126 per cent.!!

Steel production, United States:—

	1872.	1875.	1878.	1880.
Net tons:	120,108	375,517	732,226	1,203,173

According to Parliamentary Paper, April 2, 1883, the total production of steel in all European states in 1882 (including England) was 2,200,000, while the production in the United States was 1,800,000 tons. By the same paper we find that during 1882 the quantity of iron ore imported into the United States was only 580,207 tons, value £337,535, of which Spain sent 246,941 tons, France 142,856 tons, England 98,690, and Italy 31,237.

These figures, which I quote from Sketchley's useful handbook, prove that America, once our very best customer, has set up business for herself, and starts with many advantages over her teacher. Note the very important detail *re* the increased output per spindle, 66 lbs. against our 32 lbs. It explains several knotty points. It explains how it is that America can underbid us in what we used to call "our" markets, even in our own home markets; it also explains how it is that the American operative has so little advantage in comfort over the English or Continental worker.<sup>2</sup>

John Bright to-day is using all his influence to secure to the landlords of Ireland the high rents obtainable years ago. In January 1885, however, he wrote a letter to the treasurer of the National Industrial Association in explanation of his statement that "if land is not worth rent, it should be, and will be, rent free"; and he went on to say that "in Lancashire there are scores of mills closed now owing to the competition of modern mills of better construction." The most modern mills are of course those started in America and abroad, where the capitalist embarked with the newest machinery and without any old-fashioned lumber of sunk capital and useless obsolete machinery.

(To be continued.)

THOS. SHORE, jun.

EMIGRATION FROM GERMANY seems to be flowing on in a steady stream. According to official statistics the total number of emigrants from Germany to oversea countries during the period from the beginning of January to the end of July this year was 63,505, while in the corresponding period of the previous year the number was 63,979, a decrease of only 474.

The "triumphant democracy" of Andrew Carnegie's ideas and the "effete monarchies" of the old countries must be twins, for this triumphant democrat hires Pinkerton thugs just as readily as the Czar of Russia orders out his troops. It seems to us "we could be happy with either were t'other dear charmer away."—*Granite Cutters Journal*.

METROPOLITAN PAUPERISM.—The weekly return of metropolitan pauperism shows that the total number of paupers relieved in the second week of the current month was 91,488, of whom 55,239 were indoor and 36,249 outdoor paupers. The total number relieved shows an increase of 1,624 over the corresponding week of last year, 4,752 over 1886, and 5,986 over 1885. The total number of vagrants relieved on the last day of the week was 985, of whom 787 were men, 178 women, and 20 children under sixteen.

<sup>1</sup> Fourth Annual Report of the Bureau of Statistics of New Jersey, U.S.A., 1881, and quoted by Sketchley.

<sup>2</sup> This, by the way, is only a repetition of what took place between England and France. "It is said by one of our factory inspectors that in France one workman looks after 14 spindles; in England one minder and two assistants can manage a mule with 2,200 spindles" (*Trades Unions*, 1884, p. 136). This is an increase of 5,235 per cent., a greater increase than between England and America, which is only a shade over 100 per cent.

## REVOLUTIONARY CALENDAR.

WEEK ENDING OCTOBER 6, 1888.

30	Sun.	1793. Riot at Bristol. 1830. Belgium separated from Holland. 1857. Aug. Comte died.
1	Mon.	1803. Trial of John McIntosh for high treason. 1842. Trial of rioters, Stafford. 1843. Repeal demonstration on the Rath of Mullaghast. 1849. Klapka surrendered Komorn.
2	Tues.	1853. D. F. Arago died. 1887. Right-of-way demonstration at Latrigg, Keswick.
3	Wed.	1803. Trial of Thomas Keenan for high treason. 1846. Sir Chas. Wolseley died. 1833. Pittsburgh Convention of Socialists of U.S.
5	Thur.	1810. Felix Pyat born. 1871. "Seven points" excitement.
	Fri.	1789. Rising of women in Paris. 1803. Trial of D. L. Redmond for high treason. 1840. Lassalle born. 1887. Revolt of 6,000 Work-women in Madrid.
6	Sat.	1642. Parliament raised army. 1842. Trial of Cheshire rioters. 1848. Revolt in Vienna.

NOTE.—By mistake the Battle of Worcester was given last week as fought on September 23rd, having already been correctly given for Sept. 3rd.

*Sir Charles Wolseley.*—Born July 20, 1769; died Oct. 3, 1846. This great Radical of the early years of the century received a great part of his political education in France, and was at the taking of the Bastille. About the close of the Napoleonic wars he made himself prominently known in England in connection with parliamentary reform. His family seat being near Birmingham, he was placed at the head of the Radicals of that place and of the organisations that afterwards went far towards gaining the Reform Bill. In those days, electing a member for Birmingham was little short of treason; but this, however, was done, and Wolseley was the man selected by a meeting of about 50,000 Brunites, principally workmen. For their performance Woeler and others were imprisoned; soon after, Wolseley himself was imprisoned for a seditious speech at Stockport. Again in 1820 he was sentenced to eighteen months' for sedition; but nothing could damp his ardour, and he continued to work assiduously as long as Reform meetings continued to be held; but when they were resumed in 1830 after the lull, he was, though only sixty, already feeling the effects of what he had undergone, and left the leading places to younger men. He was a man of good parts, well educated, and of sterling worth; although by no means belonging to the most advanced school of reformers even of his own time, he was one who achieved some solid work and deserves to be held in remembrance.—S.

Unavoidably held over from last week:—

*Thomas Muir.*—Born in Glasgow, Aug. 24, 1765; died at Chartilly, near Paris, Sept. 27, 1793. One of the most attractive personalities among the British revolutionists of last century. At the grammar school and university he was notable for a quiet and studious disposition, having a taste for old books and an easy mastery of languages; intended for the church, but decided for the bar, studying civil law under one of the best jurists that even his native country had ever produced. In the troubled times which followed the removal of Prof. Anderson (founder of the Andersonian Institution) from his office in 1783-4, Muir was one of the warmest upholders of student-rights, and was largely instrumental in deposing Edmund Burke from the Lord rectorship and installing therein the reformer Robert Graham of Gartmore.<sup>1</sup> In consequence of the part he played, he, with twelve others, was excluded from the classes of the university, a proceeding which excited great indignation and disgust. He then went to Edinburgh, completed his studies there, and was in 1787 admitted a member of the Faculty of Advocates. A fluent and ready speaker, well versed in law and general knowledge, and possessed of a winning presence, he soon became popular and acquired influence. The French movement was then exciting much interest in other countries, and naturally attracted Muir's attention; a society calling itself the *Friends of the People* had been founded in London, and on October 16, 1792, a public meeting was held at the Star Inn, Glasgow, at which Muir and many others were present, and a similar society was there organised. Their object was to agitate for political reforms, and their example was followed by like associations that sprang up all over the country. William Pitt, the great renegade, was naturally irritated to see the principles he had hung behind him for the sake of office preached with such vehemence by men whose character and very existence was a standing reproach to him. Many public meetings or "conventions of delegates" as they were called, were held in 1792-3 in Edinburgh, and in all these Muir was prominent. On Dec. 21, 1792, he read the celebrated address of the United Irishmen to the Scotch reformers. On the other hand, the Ministry was active. Burke had stooped his mighty head to the yoke, and was a hired writer against liberty; he was but the giant of the pension-list; spies, provocateurs, libellers, swarms of lesser vermin, shared it with him. Muir was one of the first reformers to feel the clutch of the Government; Jan. 2, 1793, he was arrested on a charge of sedition, and was liberated on heavy bail to appear when called on. While on bail he visited France, arriving in Paris on the eve of the execution of Louis XVI.; this was a very unwise step, as in spite of his public announcement of his intention and the openness with which he proceeded, it gave many openings to his enemies. When he was called on to stand his trial, the war then raging prevented his return except by a roundabout route, which precluded his arriving in time; on February 25, as he had not surrendered, he was declared an outlaw, and on March 6 struck off the rolls of his Faculty. In July he returned, and was at once seized and on August 30 brought to trial before judges who were known to have fore-condemned him, a well-packed jury, and an array of bought witnesses, who was headed by a parson whose name for years afterwards adorned the pension-list of Scotland. After a "trial" lasting eighteen hours, he was condemned to fourteen years' transportation. The disgraceful character of the case and Muir's powerful speech in defence, excited great attention everywhere, and was the subject of several warm but unavailing debates in Parliament. After being subjected to many indignities, Muir, Palmer, Margatrot, and Skirving were shipped on board the *Surprise* transport for New South Wales, arriving at Sydney Sept. 25, 1794. On Feb. 11, 1796, he escaped on board the *Oter*, which had been fitted out in America for the purpose, but after four months at sea was wrecked near Nootka Sound, and reached shore with two others, sole survivors, in a state of destitution. After wandering 4,000 miles on foot, dependent on Indian charity, he reached Panama, and finding it impossible to reach the United States from there, went to Havana to renew the attempt, was there imprisoned for a few weeks as a dangerous man, and then shipped off to Spain. Just as the ship in which he was and her consort were off Cadiz, they were attacked by two English frigates, and after a bloody battle were taken; Muir being desperately wounded and left for dead. Landed at Cadiz, the French Directory heard of his position and sent a special messenger to look after him and defray all expenses. In September 1797 they followed this up by conferring on

<sup>1</sup> By the way, Mr. Graham founded an annual prize, in perpetuity, being a gold medal, value at least £5, to be presented to the student who wrote the best *Discourse on Political Liberty*. Is this prize still given?

him the honour of citizenship and inviting him to France, demanding of the Spanish Government that he be set free. On his entry into France he was entertained at a fraternal banquet by the citizens of Bordeaux, Dec. 4, 1797. Travelling by painfully slow and easy stages, he reached Paris February 4th, and was received with the greatest honour; but the hardships endured in the convalescence, his lonely American wanderings, and the Cuban prison had done their work, aggravated by the fearful wounds he had received off Cadiz, and he lingered awhile and died in spite of all that could be done. He received a public funeral by order of the authorities. A monument has been erected at Edinburgh to his memory and that of his fellow-martyrs, but it may be doubted if there be one in ten thousand in all "modern Athens" who could tell what it means.—S.

## CORRESPONDENCE.

## "SWEATED BASKET-MAKERS."

Sir,—Would you kindly allow me space to ask a few questions of Mr. Cantwell, as I have been somewhat startled by some of his statements contained in your issue of September 8, 1888. Firstly, is his evidence good that Mr. Chamberlain obtained the whole of the first year's contract, and can he substantiate his statement about this year's contract? I would like to know if his statement of the trade union wage is correct, because I deem the correctness of these statements to be of the greatest importance. My shopmates and I agree with him that it is a scandal that our Government should encourage anything that would lead to sweating, and I can assure him of our hearty co-operation in giving such a state of matters publicity by bringing it before our Trades' Council, or in some form before the House of Commons. I would be obliged to Mr. Cantwell if he could tell us if the protectors and umbrella baskets are got up by sweaters, as we understand they are?—I am, etc.,

JAMES DRYDEN.

43, Potter Row, Edinburgh, September 17, 1888.

## PROPAGANDA.

As winter approaches it behoves us to consider ways and means of carrying on our agitation during the "cold season." Now it appears to me that our lectures should be made considerably more attractive than at present. In saying this I don't wish to insinuate anything against Socialist lecturers but rather the blame, if any, rests upon the organisers of meetings. As at present conducted a chairman is elected, the lecture follows, and the only thing to enliven the audience is (sometimes) a discussion, and it is to this dull rignarole that I attribute the small meetings. Now, in addition to this, why not have a series of diagrams, or dissolving views introduced into our meetings? For instance, we could have depicted, "all 'ghly color'd" the average Monster of Averages, with a representation of a Sweater taking £4 10s 0d. and his victim taking 10s. weekly, with the *Political Economist* pointing and saying, "The average wage of the workers is £2 10s. weekly." Or any other instance that will readily occur to the reader. And why not use this simple means of propaganda? What are the use of lectures but to point the moral? And a diagram will do this most effectively, as all other parties have discovered and utilised years ago. Even the Radicals use this means, and why not we? One instrument would do for London if properly exchanged among the branches, and the collections would soon pay for the initial expense. Then again, I should suggest always having a resolution proposed at all meetings, such resolution to be advertised with the meeting, as the discussion of a resolution adds greatly to the interest of a lecture. Lately singing has been introduced with very satisfactory results at some of our meetings; this ought to be greatly extended, as it is an excellent means of raising the enthusiasm of an audience, especially where the songs have a good chorus. I hope that this note will bring forward some further ways and means of making our propaganda more attractive and effective to the tired and worn out wage-slaves.

T. R. C.

## "THE SOCIAL REVOLUTION."

"Tausin," whose letter appears in your columns of this date, is evidently a superior person, in touch with all things excellent in this world and the next, and I feel considerable deference in questioning anything he says, but he irritates me to the speaking point when he sneers at the Social Revolution, now in the womb of Time, and does what little he can to make an abortion of it. According to this oracle the revolution is now present, and he leads us to infer that a future definite and united uprising of the people is a foolish and fatuous fancy. If this be his conviction it is assuredly not mine, and not that of the vast majority of intelligent and earnest Socialists the world over. Our eyes have not yet seen the Messiah which sages and prophets have named the Social Revolution, and our hearts still wait its coming with expectation and with hope. Truly the time of its appearing draweth nigh, and some of us have already seen its star in the east. Tausin says we should not sound a note of triumph while our work is undone. Poor Tausin! An army that is sure of winning feels triumphant before the battle is begun, and all the time it is in progress.

Let Socialists drop this rot about the revolution being here and in process of accomplishment. It is not here and we are not ready for it. Nor will its battles be fought in office, factory, and mine, although the enlistment and equipment of recruits may for the present be very usefully carried on in these places. The Social Revolution will have a definite and distinct time and place in the history of our race. It is not a national affair, but must be effected in concert and in friendship with the workers of all countries. The system it seeks to overturn was established by force, and force will have to be used in the destruction of it. Moral suasion has been a long time trying to kill the drinking habit and it has not succeeded yet, but it would prove a thousand times more ineffective if arrayed against the sacred interests of Property. Let us take all we can get through the slow, hesitating, and devious ways of parliament, but let us never lose sight of the coming day when that bungling benefactor, along with monarchy, aristocracy, and a host of useless encumbrances, shall be swept away by a supreme effort of mankind to accommodate itself to present circumstances.

I agree with Tausin when he emphasises the importance of amity and unity among Socialists, and I have been pleased to observe of late that trivial points of dissension do not prevent comrades of different schools from working together. The end we aim at is so desirable, and ultimate defeat in attaining it so impossible, that all should be of one mind in a religious, or if you please, a fanatical determination that the behests of Justice shall be done.

ROBERT GRIERSON.

Sept. 15, 1888.



HAVE YOU NOT HEARD HOW IT HAS GONE WITH MANY A CAUSE BEFORE NOW: FIRST, FEW MEN HAD 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.

'LABOUR REFORMER' (Toronto).—If still in the land of the living, we shall be glad to see you again; it is some months since a copy came to hand.

G. McL.—Much obliged by letter and enclosures, duly utilised.

REPORTS must be addressed to sub-editor, and reach office Tuesday morning. Addressing them to other people causes delay, and sending them later keeps them out.

'ANARCHIST' (S. E.).—Thanks for your letter, which is just the kind we want.

A. C. (Dublin).—Will do as you ask in a very short time and also write you direct. Glad to hear from you.

'DER ARME TEUFEL' (Detroit).—We gladly acknowledge your esteemed paper whenever it reaches us, which it does not always do. An exchange copy is regularly mailed to you.

**Periodicals received during the week ending Wednesday September 26.**

ENGLAND	Chicago—Knights of Labor	ITALY
Labour Tribune	Chicago (Ill)—Vorbote	Rome, L'Emancipazione (daily)
Norwich—Daylight	Detroit—Der Arme Teufel	Cremona—Il Democratico
Railway Review	Fort Worth (Tex)—South West	Turin—Il Muratore
The Miner	Milwaukee—National Reformer	Turin—Nuovo Gazzetta Operaia
Worker's Friend	Paterson (N. J.) Labor Standard	SPAIN
NEW SOUTH WALES	Coast Seamen's Journal	Seville—La Solidaridad
Hamilton—Radical	FRANCE	PORTUGAL
INDIA	Paris—Cri du Peuple (daily)	Lisbon—O Protesto Operario
Bankipore—Behar Herald	Le Parti Ouvrier (daily)	Porto—A Revolucao Social
Madras—People's Friend	La Revolte	GERMANY
UNITED STATES	Le Coup de Feu	Berlin—Volks Tribune
New York—Der Sozialist	L'Attaque	AUSTRIA
Freiheit	Lille—Le Cri du Travailleur	Brunn—Arbeiterstimme
Truthseeker	HOLLAND	Malmö—Arbetet
Volkszeitung	Hague—Recht voor Allen	WEST INDIES
Jewish Volkszeitung	BELGIUM	Cuba—El Productor
Workmen's Advocate	Ghent—Yooruit	
Boston—Woman's Journal	Liege—L'Avenir	
Libertas	Antwerp—De Werker	
Buffalo—Arbeiter-Zeitung		

## SCRAMBLING.

"SCRAMBLING absolutely prevents pleasure, however much there may be—multiply what we have of means of enjoyment fifty-fold, and still let it be scrambled for, and the very same evils must still be, and surely even worse. So treated there cannot be enough."

This little quotation from some MSS. of James Hinton very aptly gives the reason for the poverty and misery of to-day, and also points to the only possible remedy. When we once realise that it is impossible for any amount of wealth to go all round so long as we scramble for it, we begin to look in a new direction for a remedy for poverty; until people realise this their hope is in the increase of wealth or in the reduction of the number of people who have to live out of it. But once let people realise that no increase of wealth can bring enough for all so long as we scramble for it, and they will cease to be engrossed in the attempt to get more and more wealth produced, and will begin to turn their attention to the finding of some better method of sharing it than the present one of scrambling.

Let any one try the experiment among a large party of children; set them scrambling for nuts or cakes, and keep them going until every child has got at least as many as it can eat, and they will find, before that point is reached, that they will have used as many cakes as would have satisfied them all round for several meals had they been handed round at a table, each one being able to have as many as it could eat. And the reason will be that even in such a simple matter as scrambling for cakes there will be a great difference amongst the children; some will be sharper, more eager, or less considerate of their neighbours than others; and so before the most backward in the scramble have been able to get enough to give them one fill of cakes, some of the others will have got enough to last them a fortnight.

So it is in our scramble for wealth to-day; before the backward one can get enough to keep body and soul together, many of the more forward ones have collared enough to last them and their children for generations—nay, in some cases they have enough to keep them and their families for thousands of years, if they could only live as long!

But it is often urged that all this scrambling tends to the picking out of the best men and rewarding them, and so to the survival of the

fittest; and the animal and vegetable kingdoms are pointed to as showing that the law of scrambling is of universal application. But one may point out, in the first place, that the analogy with the rest of nature breaks down, for this reason amongst others, that when an animal or plant has had its fill of meat and drink it ceases to consume or collect, whereas there is no limit to the amount of wealth over which a man will acquire the right of preventing others from using. The struggle for existence would look rather different if an acquisitive buffalo could take to itself enough prairie-grass to last it a thousand years and prevent all others from touching it! Moreover, man has not only, in a greater degree than the animals, the power of adapting himself to his surroundings, but also the power of adapting the surroundings to himself.

If we grant for the sake of argument the full force of the contention that the scrambling results in the survival of the fittest, we need not therefore be convinced that this end is a desirable one; we may even think that it would not be half a bad thing if we could do something to prevent these fittest from surviving. For what sort of people will they be? Well, they will be energetic, quick, and persevering. So far, good. But they will also be the most unscrupulous, the most regardless of the needs or feelings of those around them, and the most ready to use their elbows to shove others aside or climb on their backs. On the whole, it may be very much questioned whether the survival of these people is worth the price we pay for it—the price of the poverty and misery we see around us—and whether by doing away with the scramble we might not give a chance to a much pleasanter and altogether more desirable sort of people to survive; and, in short, whether the abolition of the scrambling method of sharing wealth would not make the world a very much happier place than it is.

Even if we waive the point that "the fittest" are after all not a very pleasant sort of people, and try to look upon them as the most desirable people possible, I should still question whether it is a sensible way to make the mass of the people poor and wretched in order that these few may be selected out and rewarded to such an extent. I think if all the people could have a decent share in the good things of life we could bear with tolerable resignation the loss of those splendid people whose existence the present scramble fosters so much! If there was any end to the system, one might put up with it better; if, after the scramble has selected these so wonderful people, and rewarded them, there was an end of it, and the people generally could have a chance to enjoy life, it would be different. One can do with a scramble at a children's party, because the fun compensates for the inequality, and as soon as it is over they all go in and enjoy a good supper, where the fittest only gets his share with the rest! But for a society to go on endlessly scrambling, keeping the great majority of its members in poverty, misery, and toil, in order that a few may be able to rise on the backs of their neighbours, even if those few are the best possible sort of people, is unbearable, and must be put a stop to as soon as possible.

Our society is in the form of a pyramid, in which all are struggling to get at the top; the higher the few get the broader must be the base of poverty and misery to support them; in the struggle the strong and unscrupulous scramble up and trample down the weak and considerate people to form the base for them to stand on.

So, by building society in the form of a pyramid, we first create an enormous weight that has to be carried, and then we set the weakest to carry it. And so long as we maintain the pyramid form there is no help for it. Some have rejoiced at the increase of the middle classes of society; but it simply means that the pyramid is a little enlarged about half way up, and there is all the more weight to be carried by those at the base.

Against this form of society let me place another, again using the words of James Hinton: "If there must be poverty—which it does not appear there need be—the strong should take it, not the weak endure it." Our aim is to do away with the pyramid and develop a society in which the good things of life shall be shared—handed round, as it were, to all—not scrambled for, and in which, if there need be any extra burden carried at times, it shall not be thrust upon the weakest, as it is to-day, but the strong shall take it, thinking it an honour so to help the weaker ones; and an honour it shall be to them too!

RAYMOND UNWIN.

## THE ECONOMICAL CONDITION OF THE LABOURERS IN DENMARK.

For some time past, a committee has been appointed in Denmark to investigate to what extent the intervention of the State would be necessary for the sake of insurance of old and disabled workers, and our comrade P. Knudsen, Secretary of the Danish Social Democratic Federation, in his capacity of member of the above-named committee, has just published a very extensive report dealing with that subject and kindred matters. This highly interesting publication, which forms a volume of 320 pages, contains a considerable amount of statistical information as to the economical condition of the Danish workers, their annual wages, and their expenses for necessaries of life, as also on the activity of the various benefit societies and sick funds, and it concludes with an exposition and critical review of the question of insurance of old and disabled workers.

The most valuable part of comrade Knudsen's book, for consideration and instruction of English Socialists, is certainly that which deals directly with the economical condition of their fellow workers in





## THE LABOUR STRUGGLE.

BRITAIN.

The officers of the United States warship *Enterprise*, are trying to engage men at Leith at the rate of £5 per month, three years engagement, for American navy.

The labourers in Fairfield shipbuilding yard, Glasgow, on Thursday, 28th, came out on strike bodily for an advance of wages. Their pay is at present 15s. 9d. weekly, and they demand 18s.

Goods guards on the Irish Great Southern and Western Railway, who used to have an assistant, have now to work single-handed 14 or 15 hours at a stretch, for the same wages as before.

**STRIKE AT AUCHTERARDER.**—250 power loom weavers in employ of Hally and Company, Auchterarder, struck work on the 20th inst. in consequence of the imposition of fines for short lengths.

**STRIKE AT GOVAN.**—Riveters and platelayers in boiler department of Ross and Duncan's, Whitefield Road, Govan, came out on 21st ult. The riveters demand advance of a halfpenny, and the platers a penny per hour.

**CALENDERS' STRIKE IN DUNDEE.**—About 50 girls employed partly as learners in Trades Lane and Ladywell Calenders came out on strike last week for an advance. The girls have at present 6s. per week, and want 1s. advance.

**CRADLEY CHAINMAKERS.**—The chainmakers' strike has now practically come to an end. The majority of the small chain-makers have resumed work at the 4s. list, but there are still a large number of men who cannot find employment.

**LEEDS CLOTHWEAVERS.**—The 500 clothweavers in employ of Wilson and Sons, Wellington Street, Leeds, struck on Wednesday, 19th, against a revised wages list which they say will reduce their earnings from 1s. 6d. to 4s. 6d. per piece. The strike will cause 700 hands employed in the mill to be idle.

**END OF THE CARPENTERS' STRIKE AT GREENOCK.**—The apprentices of Caird and Co., who have been on strike on account of several carpenters who had served their apprenticeship elsewhere being engaged without being "brothered," had an interview with their employers, and have gone back to work.

**EMPLOYERS ASHAMED!**—A large number of warehouses in South Staffordshire and East Worcestershire district have intimated to their operatives their willingness to concede 10 per cent. in wages, some of them remarking that they had for some time been ashamed to pay the miserable low rate of wages!

**AN ADVANCE CONCEDED TO CLYDESDALE STEELWORKERS.**—On Wednesday 19th the Clydesdale Iron and Steel Co. intimated to their hammermen and steel-smelters that their wages are to be advanced 10 per cent. It is believed other large steel-producing establishments will follow suit, as the contracts booked recently have been numerous.

**END OF CRADLEY ANCHOR TRADE STRIKE.**—The operatives in Cradley anchor trade, numbering about 300, in Cradley, Cradley Heath, Old Hill, Netherton, and other districts, who have been out for an advance, decided on Wednesday, 19th, to resume, the whole of the employers having acceded to their demand of about 15 per cent. advance on prices paid during last eighteen months.

The *Economist* cannot understand how it is that the Scotch railway companies have been enabled to carry without increased cost a very much larger volume of traffic, whereas on the English lines fully half of the gain in the gross receipts of the half year was absorbed by the additional expenditure. Perhaps the workmen employed by the Caledonian and North British lines understand how it is done.

**LIVERPOOL BOILER-MAKERS.**—The strike of the boiler-makers and iron-ship builders in Liverpool has terminated, and the men have resumed work, the masters having conceded the advance demanded. Pieceworkers now receive an advance of 5 per cent. on previous rates, and smiths, platers, and riveters an advance of 1s. 6d. a-week all round. These terms are similar to those paid on the Tyne and at Belfast.

**SALFORD GAS STOKERS' STRIKE.**—About 80 stokers employed at the Salford Gas Works, Regent Road, struck over a new system of retort charging which has been introduced by the manager. On Friday morning 30 stokers at the Bloom Street Gas Works gave notice of their intention to strike if the demands of the Regent Road men were not conceded. A compromise has since been arranged, and the men have returned to work.

**SAILORS WILL CONFER.**—Last week we recommended English sailors to take a lesson from the Pacific Coast. This week we see from the *Coast Seaman's Journal* that the advice was taken before given. The "National Amalgamated Sailors' and Firemen's Union" has written to 'Frisco inviting delegates to an international Conference, at which they hope to also have the Australian organisation represented. J. H. Wilson, of Sunderland, is secretary.

**A KNEADED UNION.**—A meeting was lately held at Digbeth, Walsall, to form a branch of the Amalgamated Union of Operative Bakers and Confectioners for the town; there was good attendance. The chairman explained object of their association, which was not only a friendly and a trade society, but also a source of information on practical details of their work; he also mentioned that in some places he knew men who had to work 100 hours a-week, the result being that many men who were able and willing to work were kept out of places.

**THE "ISLAND LAMBS" GO IN.**—The strike in the Belfast shipbuilding trade ended last week, Harland and Wolff's works opening at the usual hour on Saturday morning. Terms of settlement: Advance of 1s. 6d. per week to riveters throughout works and to platers employed in shipyard, and 1s. per week to platers working in boiler-makers' shop. The men, on their part, concede piecework prices to the firm at same rates as paid in other parts, and in other yards in Belfast. Fitters, however, are standing out for a 2s. rise, and another lock-out is expected.

**ABERDEEN STRIKE.**—Sheriff Dove Wilson, to whom recent dispute between Aberdeen Banner Mill Company and their employees was referred—the strikers having meanwhile resumed work—has issued a decision that the workers' claim for a 5 per cent. rise has been made too soon, on the ground that capital is entitled to a certain percentage (not specified) before labour can claim anything more than bare subsistence. If, however, trade improves at its present rate till the end of present half-year, he thinks there will be a fair case for an increase. By arrangement previously made, the decision is binding on both sides, despite the rage of the entrapped workers.

**LONG HOURS ON THE TAFF VALE RAILWAY.**—Below are the number of hours given by the *Railway Review* as being worked on what is termed the Newport Pilot—a branch mineral train—by men belonging to Treherbert. The train is booked to leave the latter place at 6 a.m., but is not booked to return, having to get back when it can. It is quite evident that the train has too much work imposed on it, as there is only a single day out of the ten given on which the work has been done under 18 hours. Dec. 13 (1887), 23h. 15m.; Dec. 14, 22h. 50m.; Dec. 15, 23h. 10m.; Dec. 16, 21h. 10m.; June 17, 21h. 30m.; June 12 (1888), 18h.; June 13, 20h. 40m.; June 14, 20h. 50m.; June 15, 21h. 15m.; June 16, 15h. 30m.

**MORE OVERWORKING AMONG CHESHIRE TEAMSMEN.**—The overworking of Cheshire teamsmen seems to continue, as was evidenced by another case at the Sale Petty Sessions on Monday 17th, when Frederick Wild was fined 10s., including costs, for being asleep in his cart at three o'clock in the morning, when returning from Manchester market. He stated that he had not been in bed from the Wednesday night up to the time he was found by the officer (Friday morning). He might have had two hours' sleep or so, but he had not been asleep above two or three minutes when he was booked. The bench "considered 41 hours out of all reason to work, and that the masters were quite as much to blame as the men"; our readers will word it otherwise.

**LANARKSHIRE MINERS.**—The leading districts of the county have adopted Saturday as an idle day in each week in order to carry out their policy of restriction. The men are agitating for advance of 10 per cent., which even according to the master's criterion for fixing wages, ought to have been given long before now. According to trade and prices, the second advance of 10 per cent. is now due, and some masters have conceded—generously, no doubt—the first 10 per cent. Messrs. Dunn, of Wellshot Colliery, Cambuslang, gave the first advance on Saturday last, on condition that the men come under obligation to work 12 days a fortnight. That's good for Messrs. Dunn. In that stroke they force the men to break through their restrictive policy, and secure increased supplies without the full legitimate advance, while the men are disorganised in order to fight them the better when organised.

**ADVANCES DEMANDED BY IRONWORKERS.**—The South Staffordshire ironworkers have given notice for a 5 per cent. advance, which has been refused, and there is now talk of arbitration.—The men in engineering trades of North Staffordshire will come out Saturday 29th, unless employers increase wages to the rates of 1886. In that year wages were reduced in Lancashire and North Staffordshire, but the employers in the latter district promised that when an increase was granted in Lancashire they would grant the same. Lancashire rates have advanced to the old scale, but in North Staffordshire there has been no change. No alteration has been made since January 1886. Wages were then reduced 10 per cent., bringing puddlers to the present 6s. 9d. per ton. Since then marked bars have been reduced 10s. Common bars and sheets show little alteration in price as compared with the date of the last wages reduction.

**COLLIERY DISPUTES.**—At a meeting of South Staffordshire and East Worcestershire miners at Dudley on Monday last, it was resolved to give notice Saturday 29th for 10 per cent. advance. This decision affects upwards of 12,000 workmen. At a meeting of the Committee of Management of the Coal Masters' Association held on the previous Thursday, it had been resolved that a meeting should take place in Birmingham on Thursday October 4 between employers and miners' representatives, to consider some self-adjusting arrangement for the regulation of wages.—The labourers at Battsfield Colliery, the largest works in Flintshire coalfields, struck work Monday 24th for a reduction of underground working hours. Their action has brought the works to a standstill, and some hundreds of men are, in consequence, without employment. Disturbances being feared, a force of police was picketed in the neighbourhood of the works.

**LONDON TAILORING.**—Some time ago we gave a list of prices paid for making clothing at Messrs. J. R. Bousfield's, 126 Houndsditch. By the kindness of a correspondent we are now enabled to give more. At that time they were paying the handsome sum of 1s. for making a double-breasted pilot reefer, and that is surely bad enough, but now they have actually reached as low as 8d. and 9d. No goods are made on the firm's premises, and the "hands" have to find their own thread, etc., out of this enormous sum. Juvenile cord knickerbockers, lined, are made for 3d. Boys' lined tweed trousers, from 5½d. upwards. Men's ditto, from 7½d. Men's worsted overcoats, with bound edges, from 1s. 9d. Boys' ditto, from 1s. 6d. Men's print and common tweed overcoats, from 1s. 6d. Boys', from 1s. 4d. Juvenile overcoats, from 9d. Ditto, with capes, from 1s. Juvenile sailor suits (jacket, knickers, and flannel), from 1s. 1d. Men's common unlined tweed jackets are made (?) for 6d. and 7d. Boys' ditto, for 5d. and 5½d. "These prices are paid," says our informant, "by a Christian firm who, a short time back, gave one of their employes the 'sack' for being an Atheist, after eight years in their employ as a steady, honest, and sober workman. In this same firm the prices paid for cutting were reduced a short time back, thereby making it impossible for the cutters to earn anything like the same money. The men submitted like a lot of sheep. If they had had a union, they might have resisted, or even have stood out for a larger share in the wealth they had produced. But no; the majority of cutters in this establishment are Tories, who think that workmen have no right to dictate to employers what their wages shall be, etc., and who are too thick-headed to see what can be gained by combination."

**COTTON TRADE.**—The twistors and drawers, fifteen in number, are on strike at Derker Mills, Oldham. The firm has been paying 5½d. per thousand ends for twisting, less 8 per cent., and 7½d. per thousand ends for drawing, less 8 per cent., the drawers having to pay their own reachers. Their boss declared this was more than was being paid elsewhere, and in future proposed to pay 4½d. per thousand ends for twisting and 6½d. per thousand ends for drawing, or a reduction of 12 per cent. in twisting and 8 per cent. in drawing. The men declined to accept, and struck, and at present a few boys are trying to fill their places. Mr. Greaves, the employer, says he will only pay Blackburn prices in future, but the men point out a great difference between their work and that at Blackburn. They have to twist and draw all counts at the same price, and they say there is generally a great difference between the warp they have finished and the one they have to put in, while they have to find all their own work, which generally causes them to lose an hour between finishing one warp and beginning another. At Lower House Mill 6½d. per thousand is paid for drawing, and it is all lease work there, whereas at Derker it is slashers' work, which ought to be paid 1d. per thousand extra. What will be the result of the struggle is difficult to say, but the foreman of the twistors and drawers has given in his notice and joined the men.—A few mills in Bury and Elton district still follow out the

system of running overtime, starting before time and stopping after time, making up a considerable amount during the length of a week; but no one seems to know how to begin kicking.—Great dissatisfaction exists among the weavers at Lock Gate Mill, Haslingden, in consequence of overtime and underpaying, and the weavers' committee have determined should no understanding be arrived at during present week, to bring the weavers out on strike.—The weavers at Banfield Mill, Blackburn, have tendered their notice, and it expired on Wednesday. The dispute is under-payment.—The spinners at Moss Bridge Mill, Darwen, have served a fortnight's notice, which terminated Friday 21, on account of extra work.—The strike of tenters at Meanock's mill, Micklehurst, Mossley, has been settled. A fortnight ago, Mr. Meanock, who is making an alteration in the hank roving, which he claims makes less work for the tenters, deducted 2s. each from their wages. As they had had no notice, they struck, and Meanock filled their places with hands from his mill at Uppermill, but these met with such a warm reception that on Wednesday, 12th, they refused to serve any longer, and the carding room was stopped; by Friday the whole place was at a standstill. On that day and on Tuesday the men's representatives had interviews with Meanock; he agreed to refund the 2s. and to put the tenters on standing wages until the change in the hank roving had been fully effected, after which they are to be paid by piece. Work has since been resumed on these terms.—Two-thirds of the spinning-trade using American cotton having agreed to adopt short time, it was decided at a meeting of the executive committee of the United Cotton Spinners' Association held at Manchester on the 21st that the resolution take effect. By this means it is hoped the operations of speculative rings will be thwarted. The employés are co-operating with the employers on this point.

### CIVILISING AFRICA.

THE great obstacle in the way of the "Civilisation of Africa" (a polite rendering of the coarse but more exact phrase of "The Exploitation of the African") has been very frankly put forward by the Deputy-Governor of the Niger Company. "The natives," says this gentleman, "being unaccustomed to labour, are averse to it. They have been accustomed hitherto to supply their own immediate wants, and no more." This is indeed shocking, but, at the same time, very natural, and, I should say, decidedly wholesome. The African negro is, in fact, perhaps to his own moral injury, in a position to lead, without injuring anybody else, very much the sort of life which the British Peer or millionaire leads to the infinite detriment of all the classes beneath him. The nigger is happy (perhaps wickedly) and idle at his own expense. The Peer is happy (most wickedly) and idle at the expense of other people.

Now for my part,—but then, of course, I have no pecuniary interest in the higher ethics, whether expressed in "loaded" calico or bad rum,—I feel a certain sympathy for these—

"Whom Ocean's friendly distance  
Preserves still unenslaved; for whom  
No tasking of existence  
Makes this one rich and that one poor,  
In Gold's illusive treasure,  
But all, of easy life secure,  
Are rich in wealth of leisure."

Whether this be "the wise, free way of life, indeed," may be questionable. But at any rate it is better than the life of grim and grinding and unremitting labour which forms the lot of the mass of the population in "civilised" countries. I would, therefore, implore all "gentlemen and others" who take up, from a sense of duty or dividends, the exploitation of the Dark Continent, to clear their minds and prospectuses of cant, and to say boldly, "We think we can do a good thing in niggers. We calculate that we can make 25 per cent. out of Quashee." This, I think, would be better than all the talk (but utterly empty talk) about "Christianity," and the "suppression of the slave trade," and the "raising of the negro in the scale of humanity." What does Manchester or Birmingham care about the scale of humanity? The only thing which operates to secure to the niggers a continuance in their present ignorance is the rivalry of the various European Powers. If an arrangement can be effected in this respect, the probable fate of the African Continent is to be divided, at no distant day, into a number of European-ruled Indias, all over-taxed, all worked out to the last possible degree, all governed by an over-paid European bureaucracy. I confess that, though a European, I can't work myself up into any great enthusiasm for the programme. If I were an African, the project would find me not merely enthusiastic but decidedly hostile. I should prefer to remain "uncivilised" and unexploited. "After all," I should say to myself, "tall hats and new rum may have their attractions, but it is better to be black, as nature made me, and bareheaded, and even sober, than to wear a tall hat, and get drunk, and be done brown by the Bible-reading Pale-face."—*Truth*, Sept. 22, 1888.

### THE DOCTRINE OF "CONSENT."

CHICAGO, Aug. 15.—A meeting of the Western Window Glass Manufacturers' Association was held here yesterday. It was decided to keep all the factories controlled by the association out of blast until Oct. 8.

B. F. Jones: Our works will close down to-morrow, and remain closed until a satisfactory—that is, a lower—scale is presented to us by the workmen.

J. G. Blaine: I say here that the wages of the American labourer cannot be reduced except with the consent and with the votes of the American labourer himself.

Chorus of Individualists, led by the basso-profundo C. B.: "Legislative interference is the very worst of crimes; you must give the workman liberty in these here blessed times!"

"Protected" by a duty of 75 cents a ton on their product, and paying wages about as low as the wages paid abroad, the owners of Mine No. 6, at Rich Hill, Mo., neglected to take precautions to prevent the explosion of gas, because such precautions would cost money, and dollars were more to them than the lives of the poor fellows they had employed to work the mines. The result was a series of explosions and a terrible loss of life not long ago. The poor miners who are dead had to compete in the labour market, and were given none of the benefits of protection. Their rich employers will reopen the mine as soon as possible and go on in the old way. The industry they protect and that they court protection for is their own. Necessity will spur other poor men to take the place of the dead. —*Troy Press*.

### A PRISONER'S NIGHT THOUGHTS.

ERNEST JONES.

My life is but a toil of many woes,  
And keen excitement wearing to the core,  
And fervently I hope an hour's repose,  
My duty done and all my labour o'er.

Loud shouts have beaten on my tingling brain,  
Lone prisons chilled the fevered thread of life;  
The trophies perish, but the wrecks remain,  
And burning scars survive the dizzy strife.

Oh, 'tis a dreadful war for *one* to wage,  
Against deep-rooted tyranny and power;  
Crush in one life the seeds of many an age,  
And blast black centuries in a single hour!

Who dares it, throws his life into the scale,  
Redemption's voluntary sacrifice;  
His hope—to be a martyr should he fail,  
Or, at the best, to conquer as he dies!

### FREE SPEECH IN HYDE PARK.

THOMAS BOLAS sends us the following account of the treatment of Socialists at our so-called Courts of Justice:—"At Marlborough Street Police-court on Wednesday, Sept. 14th, the grossest possible travesty of justice was perpetrated. The police stated that McCormack had used language calculated to bring the Royal Family into contempt, and that he had incited a crowd to sack shops in the West End, but the latter allegation McCormack was quite able to confute by witnesses. The magistrate ordered McCormack to be bound over in two sureties of £25 to keep the peace for three months, or to be imprisoned for a month in default of finding sureties, a course unusually corrupt, for magistrate Cooke would not have dared to commit McCormack to prison on the offence charged, unless after hearing his defence; so he sentenced McCormack to a month's imprisonment in default of finding sureties, and left it to the Court officials to take every care that he should not find the sureties. Surely a cowardly and miserable way of getting imprisonment for a political prisoner, without fair trial and by a side issue. Various tricks were practised and false statements made by the Court officials to prevent McCormack obtaining bail, and just before the Court rose, T. Bolas obtained a hearing of the magistrate and bitterly complained of the conduct of the Court officials. McCormack was imprisoned, not because he could not find bail, but because the Court officials just made false statements to keep bail away, and then when substantial bail was tendered they would not accept it, all this being no doubt at the instigation of that Government which so much dreads Free Speech, and which must suppress it even though all law and justice be outraged. On Saturday, September 22, substantial bail was offered to magistrate Newton, and at the same time T. Bolas complained to him of the continual obstructions offered by the Court officials, but the slanderer of Miss Cass was insolent, and refused to take the offered bail. All this made it pretty clear that the authorities intended to keep their political prisoner in Millbank for a month on the false issue—not finding bail—although substantial bail was offered; but on Sunday, September 23rd, such revolutionary grumbings were heard in London as made the authorities conclude that to retain McCormack longer by refusing bail would be unsafe. So on bail being again tendered on Monday, the 24th, it was intimated that the bail would be accepted. Incidentally it may be remarked that what should have taken not more than ten minutes, was stretched out by the officials from 12.15 to 4.30 p.m., every obstruction being offered to tire the bail out; and among the incidents was the illegal demanding or taking of a fee or fine not inflicted by the magistrate; but this was returned when the clerk found that a prosecution would probably ensue. Those who conspire to defeat justice by such means are the men who really incite to breach of the peace, and if the English workers were not exceptionally forbearing, Millbank Prison where McCormack was confined would soon be razed to the ground, and there would indeed be a riot."

### THE SOCIALIST LEAGUE.

OFFICES: 13 FARRINGTON 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, Oct. 3, 1888, at 13 Farringdon Road, at 9 o'clock sharp.

### "COMMONWEAL" PRINTING FUND.

Langley, 2s.; P. W., 6d.; C. J. F., 2s. 6d.; K. F., 1s.

### REPORTS.

LONDON (OPEN-AIR)—*Clerkenwell Green*.—Last Sunday evening, good meeting addressed by Nicoll and Turner. *Ossulton Street*.—Friday last, large meeting addressed by Cantwell and Parker. *Leman Street*.—Meeting held Sunday morning. The St. George's-in-the-East branch is thoroughly working the district. *Regent's Park*.—Meeting Sunday morning, Cantwell, Nicoll, Turner, and James speakers; fair sale 'Weal. *Hyle Park*.—Some three thousand persons assembled at unemployed meeting Sunday afternoon; speakers were Underwood (S.D.F.), an Indian, Cantwell, Parker, Nicoll, Brooks, and Presberg. Two collections made, first for unemployed funds, second for League propaganda. Revolutionary songs were sung, including the "Marseillaise," "No Master," "The Proletariat," and "La Carmagnole." *Victoria Park*.—Good meeting Sunday last by Mainwaring, Bullock, Davis, and Mordhurst; some opposition easily disposed of.

CLERKENWELL.—On Sunday, Sept. 23, W. B. Parker (S. L.) and B. Moffat (S. D. F.) debated on "The Futurity of Parliamentary Agitation to Assist the Social Revolution." Good attendance of members of both organisations. At close of debate there was general discussion, and evidently much difference of opinion.—B.

FULHAM.—Tuesday evening, opposite Liberal Club, Bullock, Beasley, and Groser spoke. Sunday morning, McCormack (S.D.F.), Mrs. Schack, Samuels, and Tarleton spoke. In evening, Mrs. Schack lectured on "Ought Women to join the Workmen's Movement?" Tochatti, Groser, Davis, and Maughan also spoke. 2s. 9d. collected during the day.—S. B. G.

HAMMERSMITH.—Weltje Road, Sunday morning, meeting held by Bullock, Sparling, and Mordhurst. In evening another meeting by Tarleton, Tochatti, and Maughan, the choir singing "No Master." At Latimer Road usual meeting in morning by T. Spire, Tochatti, Maughan, Fox, and Davies. In evening Carruthers lectured on "Capital." Meetings good and appreciative throughout the day.

**MITCHAM.**—Last Sunday, good meeting morning and evening at Mitcham Fair Green, addressed by Eden and Kitz. On Monday evening, at Wimbledon Broadway, a good meeting, addressed by Eden and Kitz. The audience listened very attentively. At close a resolution was put to meeting condemning action of Free Library in boycotting our paper and misrepresentation of local press; was carried unanimously.—E.

**ABERDEEN.**—At indoor meeting, on 17th, Sidney Webb's lecture on "The Progress of Socialism" was read and discussed by Barron, McIntyre, and Leatham. Leatham thereafter gave an account of the proceedings at the Glasgow Conference of Sunday, 9th. At usual Saturday night open-air meeting Duncan and Leatham had large crowd. Choir made good appearance.

**GLASGOW.**—Thursday evening meetings of members continue well attended. Sunday, 2 o'clock, Glasier and Joe Burgoyne spoke on Green. At 5 o'clock Glasier, Joe Burgoyne, McCulloch, and Tim Burgoyne held excellent meeting at Paisley Road Toll. Our French Class made a capital start on Sunday forenoon.

**EDINBURGH.**—On 16th Montgomerie, Noble, and John Smith spoke in Queen's Park. On 23rd same speakers held most successful meeting in same place, Smith speaking brilliantly.

**NORWICH.**—Thursday last, good meeting on Church Plain (Yarmouth) by Mowbray. Police asked for his name, but, being refused, they quietly walked away. Friday, meeting on St. Catharine's Plain, addressed by Poynts, Morley, and Reynolds. Sunday afternoon, usual meeting in Market Place by Mowbray; in the evening another large meeting, when Mowbray gave an address upon "What Socialists have Done." Audience very attentive; fair sale of *Commonweal*; 9s. collected for Propaganda.—A. T. S.

**EAST-END PROPAGANDA.**—A most enjoyable evening was spent by the crowded audience on Saturday night at the Berner Street Club. English, Russian, German, and French songs were sung and speeches made, after which there was dancing. The proceeds of this entertainment will be given to the Yarmouth Free Speech Fund. The next meeting will be held at this club on Saturday, October 6th, when the subject for discussion will be "Our Winter Propaganda."—W. B. PARKER, sec.

**LECTURE DIARY.**  
LONDON.

**Bloomsbury.**—This Branch will shortly be actively working. Socialists resident in this locality should send their names in at once to 13, Farringdon Road.

**Overtown.**—Hall of the Socialist League, 13 Farringdon Road, E.C. Sunday Sept. 30, at 8.30, p.m., Wm. Blundell, "Internationalism: Does it interfere with Modern Politics?"

**Fulham.**—8 Effie Road, Walham Green (opposite the railway station). Sunday September 30, at 8 p.m., J. Macdonald, "Socialism from a Worker's Standpoint."

**Hackney.**—Business Meeting on Tuesday October 2nd, at 9 p.m., in Berner Street Club. All members requested to be present; important business to be discussed.

**Hammersmith.**—Kelmescott House, Upper Mall, W. Sunday, Sept. 30, at 8 p.m., Thomas Shore, jun., "About a Market."

**Hoxton.**—Persons wishing to join this branch are requested to communicate with H. D. Morgan, 22, Nicholas Street Hoxton.

**London Fields.**—All communications, etc., to Mrs. G. G. Schack, 26 Cawley Road, South Hackney.

**Merton.**—Club-house, 3 Clare Villas, Merton Road, Singlegate. Lecture on Sunday evenings at 8.30.

**Mile-end and Bethnal Green.**—95 Boston St., Hackney Road.

**North London.**—Secretary, Nelly Parker, 143 Cavendish Buildings, opposite Holborn Town Hall. The business meetings will be held on Friday evenings at 6 Windmill Street, Tottenham Court Road, after the open-air meeting at Ossulton Street. All members are asked to attend at Ossulton St. at 8 o'clock.

**St. Georges in the East.**—General Meeting of Members on Friday October 5, at 8 p.m., in Berner St. Club. Reckmann, secretary.

**PROVINCES.**

**Aberdeen (Scottish Section).**—Douglas M'Intyre, Sec., 17 Queen Street. Branch meets in Oddfellows Hall on Monday nights at 8. Choir practice at 46 Marischal Street on Thursday evenings at 8.

**Bradford.**—Read's Coffee Tavern, Ivegate. Meets Tuesdays at 8.

**Carnoustie (Scottish Section: Forfarshire).**—Meeting every Tuesday, at 8 p.m., in the Carnoustie Restaurant. Samuel Wilson, Secy.

**Coventry (Scot. Sec.).**—J. Duncan, 30 Arthur Pl., sec. Meets every Sunday in the Trades Hall, opposite Tay Bridge Station.

**Edinburgh (Scottish Land and Labour League).**—35 George IV. Bridge. Meetings for Discussion, Thursdays at 8 p.m.

**Glasgow (Scot. Sec.).**—J. Walker, 6 Victoria St., sec.

**Galloway and Dysart (Scottish Section: Fife).**—Meet every Tuesday at 7 p.m. in Gallatoun Public School. Secretary, A. Paterson, 152 Rosslyn St.

**Glasgow.**—84 John Street. Reading-room (Draughts, Chess, etc.) open 10 a.m. till 10 p.m. daily. Weekly meeting of members on Thursday evenings at 8. French Class (teacher, Theodore Bonin) meets every Sunday at 11.

**Leeds.**—Clarendon Buildings, Victoria Rd. and Front Row. Open every evening. Business meeting Saturdays at 8 p.m. communications to T. Paylor, 11 Sheldon Street, Holbeck, Leeds.

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

**Lochgelly (Scottish Section: Fife).**—Secs. (*pro tem.*), John Greig and Hugh Conway, The Square.

**Norwich.**—Tuesday, at 8.30, Members' Meeting. Wednesday, at 8, Educational Class—subject, "Historical Basis of Socialism." Saturday, 8 until 10.30, Co-operative Clothing Association.

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

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

**West Calder (Scottish Section).**—Sec., Robert Lindsay, West Calder.

All persons who sympathise with the views of the Socialist League are earnestly invited to communicate with the above addresses, and if possible help us in preparing for the birth of a true society, based on equality, brotherhood, and freedom for all.

**OPEN-AIR PROPAGANDA.**

SUNDAY 30.

- 11.30...Latimer Road Station ...Hammersmith Branch
- 11.30...Mitcham Fair Green .....G. B. Shaw
- 11.30...Regent's Park .....Mainwaring & Davis
- 11.30...Walham Green, opp. Station.....The Branch
- 11.30...Weltje Rd., Ravenscourt Pk .....Hammersmith
- 3.30...Hyde Park .....Parker
- 6.30...Weltje Road, opposite Ravenscourt Park .....Hammersmith Branch
- 7.30...Broad Street, Soho .....Hammersmith Branch
- 7.30...Clerkenwell Green .....Parker
- 7.30...Mitcham Fair Green .....The Branch

Monday.

- 8 ...Wimbledon Broadway .....T. Burns

Tuesday.

- 8.30...Fulham—opposite Liberal Club.....Fulham Bb.

Friday.

- 7.30...Euston Rd.—Ossulton Street.....Brooks

EAST END.

SUNDAY 30.

- Mile-end Waste ... 11 ...Nicoll.
- Leman Street, Shadwell 11 ...Parker.
- Victoria Park ... 3.15...Davis & Nicoll.
- London Fields ... 8 ...Schack, M'waring

TUESDAY.

- Mile-end Waste ... 8.30...Mainwaring.

WEDNESDAY.

- Broadway, London Fields 8.30...Nicoll.

FRIDAY.

- Philpot St., Commercial Rd. 8.30...Davis.

SATURDAY.

- Mile-end Waste ... 6 ...East-end C'mittee.

PROVINCES.

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

**Edinburgh.**—Queen's Park, every Sunday, at 3 p.m.

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

**Ipswich.**—

Sproughton, Wednesday evening.

Westerfield, Thursday evening.

Needham Market, Sunday morning and evening.

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

**Leicester.**—Sunday: Russel Square, at 11 a.m.

**Norwich.**—Sunday: Market Place, at 11, 3, and 7.30.

North Walsham, Sunday at 11.

Yarmouth, Church Plain, Sunday at 3.

Yarmouth, Church Plain, Thursday at 7.30.

St Catharine's Plain, Friday at 8.15 p.m.

**BATTERSEA BRANCH, S. D. F.**—W. Morris will lecture on Clapham Common, Sunday, Sept. 30, at 3.30, on "Equality."

**THE SOCIALIST CO-OPERATIVE FEDERATION.**—The Committee will meet at the Socialist League, 13 Farringdon Road, on Saturday, September 29th, at 7.30 p.m. Subscriptions received and members enrolled at 9 p.m.

**NORWICH.**—Friday next comrade Cores will be released, after doing a months' imprisonment for obstruction at Yarmouth. A small fund has been opened to supply him with clothing. On Monday next, Oct. 1, a special Concert will be held in the Gordon Hall, for the benefit of comrade Cores, to enable him to get some tools so that he can start work. Songs, recitations, choruses, and instrumental music will be given by members and friends. Admission 3d. each. It is hoped our own comrades will turn up in strong force and help to make it a success.

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