

THE COMMONWEAL

The Official Journal of the SOCIALIST LEAGUE.

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WEEKLY; ONE PENNY.

NOTES ON NEWS.

THE right of asylum is threatened in Switzerland; nay it seems pretty much as if it had come to an end, since Switzerland is so completely between the pincers of the great absolutist tyrannies. "Grief in your neighbours' garth is grief at your own door," says an old proverb of the North; so we may well look at home to see what is likely to happen here in case any spy-supported absolutist government finds it convenient to pick a quarrel with Great Britain. Truth to say, it seems improbable that there will be a recurrence of the indignation which the Bonapartist colonels stirred up here which cost the popular Palmerston his place. There is no doubt as to what the Tories and Liberals would say and do, judging by the reactionary *Standard* and shabby-respectable *Daily News*. Let us hope the *Star* really represents the opinions of the Radicals in this matter, and that they will remember their old traditions.

To make the world not only a prison, but an utterly hopeless prison, is the great ambition of these tyrants. After all, they are not likely to advance their ends by attacking what even political Radicals must think the very elements of liberty. They will find that the sweep of their net is too wide, and that their miraculous draught of fishes will make a hole in it.

A citizen complained of a nuisance, in the form of a stink, in a police-court the other day, and the whole subject was thought to be very funny, the magistrate (Mr. Plowden) leading off the laughter. We cannot tell from the report what the merits of this particular case might be; but we do know that a neighbourhood may be stunk out without a legal nuisance being established, which is indeed ridiculous enough, though not more ridiculous than most of our law. Perhaps the magistrate and his audience were laughing at English law in general. Or perhaps they thought it a preposterous joke that a well-to-do citizen should make a fuss about commerce annoying him with a mere stink when it murders so many poor people day by day. No doubt this is a joke, but I can't laugh at it. There is another explanation, which is that these laughers were such dullards that they had no conception that people might possibly restrain commerce so as to allow people to live decent lives. That also is no laughing matter.

W. M.

We don't care for commercial advertisements as a rule, but here is one that really merits some attention from us. We give it in full:

"THE UNEMPLOYED IN EAST LONDON.—At a time when much thought is being given to this matter, a practical suggestion may be of service. Last year more than £300,000 worth of foreign matches were purchased by inconsiderate consumers in this country, to the great injury of our own working people, so true is it that 'evil is wrought by want of thought, as well as want of heart.' If all consumers would purchase Bryant and May's matches, that firm would be enabled to pay £1,000 a-week more in wages."

One would have thought it would be no great hardship to our working people *not* to be employed by Bryant and May; and for our part we prefer the "evil wrought by the want of thought" than by the want of heart displayed by certain pious dividend-grabbing firms and their shareholders. Let us look at the great benefit bestowed upon the workers. If you spend £300,000 a-year upon Bryant and May, they will give their workers £52,000, and reckoning £48,000 for manufacturing expenses, the rest, £200,000 will go into the pockets of the dividend grabbers. All working people anxious to benefit Bryant and May's shareholders please buy their matches of that excellent firm. We will charge them nothing for this advertisement.

Last week appeared a short note in the *Commonweal* concerning the death of Arthur Meakin, poisoned while at work for his master at Nottingham with nitric acid gas.

Now it appears, according to an article and some correspondence that appeared in the *Daily News*, that an invention has been patented by a well-known inventor, M. Fleuss, by which all risk of such deaths could be guarded against. This invention, though admirable in every way, and not too expensive, has not found the slightest patronage

among the capitalist classes. There is no money to be made out of it. It would only save the insignificant lives of working-men, and that is not necessary. Should a workman be "carried off" by poisonous fumes, it is easy enough under the present beneficent system of commercial competition to find another to take his place. His death would only reduce the surplus population, and by lessening the number of the unemployed, who are likely in the near future to become dangerous, be a positive benefit to the "respectable classes."

These are your masters, workmen. These people with religion and humanity upon their lips, and the bitterest cruelty and hatred of their victims, the slaves of their splendour, in their hearts. They will not spend a single penny in an invention for saving human life, but let it be a machine for turning men in crowds upon the street, and desolating hundreds of homes by driving the wives of the workmen to prostitution and their children to beggary, while at the same time it fills the pockets of the employers with stolen wealth, then out come their guineas, and the capitalist rubs his hands gleefully at the prospect of riches which this invention will shower upon him.

Mr. John Morley surpassed himself in the House on Tuesday night. This "modern Radical," this philosophical prater of the worn-out cant of the Manchester school, did not alone trot out the dead doctrines of which he is truly a disciple, but took occasion to insult Cunningham Graham in a phrase full of the sneering snobbery so common among the "educated" middle classes. Why, a plain rough workman from the forge or the mill could not be guilty of such a piece of sneaking insult as that conveyed in the phrase "professional philanthropist." Luckily the insult falls back upon the mean politician who used it. Who are "professional philanthropists" but Mr. Morley and the party of which he is a representative. The worst of it is, they never get beyond the "professional" part of the business, and the people are pretty sick of that, as Mr. Morley will soon find out.

They talk of the encouragement which the present society gives to the inventor. Here is an example, a notice issued by a railway company which has found its way into the pages of the *Railway Review*, from which I take it. I give it in full:

Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway,
Engineer's Office, Manchester, June 4th, 1889.

Circular.

INVENTIONS BY OFFICERS AND SERVANTS OF THE COMPANY.

The directors have ordered that, in the event of patents being taken out by officers or servants of the company, the company is at liberty to use the inventions free of charge, unless the directors should, in any special case, decide otherwise.

Please sign and return to me the attached form, stating that you agree to these terms.

WILLIAM HUNT, Chief Engineer.

Isn't this charming. Those who read 'Uncle Tom's Cabin' will remember that one of the most flagrant abuses of the old slave system arose from the fact, that any invention created by the ingenuity and intelligence of the slave was not his own property but that of his master. The directors of the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway seem to be of an opinion that the slave system is still in full force. Perhaps they are not far wrong, especially in respect to their own line.

Slave-driving has always been common with railway companies, but it strikes the present writer as a perfect marvel of avaricious greed that a Lancashire mill-owner, who in the good old days worked little children to death to fill his pockets, might envy; to be not content by sweating a man for 14 or 16 hours a-day, but even to claim any invention that he might make during his "leisure."

Those people who believe in the moralisation of capitalists, might find a field for their exertions among the directors of the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway. They will have their work cut out for them.

D. N.

THE PRIMROSE LEAGUE AND THE WORKING CLASSES.

WE hear a great deal just now of the energy, the progress, and the great services of the Primrose League. No one doubts the energy of the different Habitations, whether in urban or rural districts, and none can deny the wisdom they display in utilizing so largely the services of the female element in their work of propaganda. Like the Church of Rome, they know the value of female energy—of female devotion. When ladies of rank, as they are termed, are prepared to go from house to house and chat and shake hands with the wives and daughters of the working classes, such propaganda is not to be despised—it must be recognised. It is a danger not to be lost sight of. It is a force, a power, that must be combatted, and by similar means. We may laugh at it, but an organization that numbers its tens of thousands—over one hundred and thirty thousand enrolled members—cannot be ignored.

Let us, then, look at the kind of propaganda carried on by the dames of the Primrose League. In one of their magazines (June, 1888) we have a kind of programme, officially put forth, on page 1. There we are told that: "The principles and objects of the Primrose League are practically identical with those of the Tory Party." No thinking person ever doubted it; but there are many among the working classes who believe the principles and objects of the Primrose League to be something very different from those of the Tory Party—something far in advance of the old Tory rule.

But the very next sentence is a most remarkable one. It is, "The Tory party is the party of the people." What an astounding statement! What! The party of plunder; the party of blood, of rapine and murder, the wide world over? The party of oppression, of cold blooded massacres, through all the regions of the earth? The party of despotism in all its nakedness, of tyranny in every shape and form, the party of the people? What a monstrous perversion of historical fact; what a wilful misrepresentation of principle. Nevertheless, there are many men and women of the working classes who believe the statement, and who are amazed at the shortsightedness of those who do not accept it. We may laugh at the cool impudence of those who put forth the statement, but the statement is there, and the danger and our difficulty are in the fact of the mental darkness of so many of the workers who embrace it as true.

We are next told that the Primrose League is the largest political society in the world, and that it is "a society of men and women, each of whom undertakes to do all they can to defend and maintain: 1st, our religion; 2nd, the constitution of our country; 3rd, the safety and honour of Englishmen all over the world." To defend and maintain our holy religion. What a remarkable degree of simplicity or of mental blindness must characterise our Primrose dames, for them to go their rounds of house-to-house visitation, in defence of our holy religion! Of course it is only a cant phrase, by which is meant the archbishops and bishops, with the clerical army of twenty thousand white-throated black bats, who have a legal right to prey on the vitals of the people to the tune of ten millions a year. And then, the constitution of the country. Oh, happy thought. I will not say it came from "dreamland," oh, dear, no; but who can wonder at the audacity and occasional arrogance of our Primrose dames, when they look down from their lofty position as the defenders of our religion and the constitution of the country upon any poor mortal who even appears to doubt the veracity of their statements? As for the third part, it only means the safety and protection of our aristocrats while on their roving commissions or their plundering expeditions in foreign regions.

We are then told that "The objects of the Tory Party have been authoritatively declared to be: 1st, to maintain the institutions of the country; 2nd, the maintenance of the Empire; and 3rd, the elevation of the condition of the people." The first and third are a contradiction in terms, and the second an absurdity and impossibility. What are the institutions to be maintained? Royalty, with its million-a-year out of the pockets of the workers, and its baneful influence on our relations with other countries; 2nd, the State Church, with its crowbar brigade, supported by batons, bullets, and bayonets, whenever its propensity to plunder meets with resistance; 3rd, the landed aristocracy, with its right to take at least two hundred millions a-year from the pockets of the people, supported if need be by all the forces of the Crown, the pulpit, and the press, with the help of bribery and corruption, and all the other resources of modern civilisation. Another is the sacredness of usury, which takes from the people at least three hundred millions per annum in the name and in virtue of the supremacy of brute force. Then we have another institution growing out of the present conditions of society, and the position of the mass of the population as mere wage-receivers, viz., the trading classes, who, according to Mulhall, have a stake in the country of the annual value of two hundred and forty-four millions. There are others to which I might refer.

In dealing with the programme of the Primrose League you can grasp the principle involved in all its fullness—despotism in all its nakedness; you cannot be misled, you cannot be deceived. It is not like the wishy-washy Socialism of some of our friends, who, like Sir W. Harcourt and many of the Moderates, are all Socialists now, although their so-called Socialism is nothing more than a species of contemptible Opportunism. Unlike our easy-chair-summer-pleasure-hunting-and-winter-campaigning Socialists, the Primrose dames know the need of organisation, and that to be consistent they must be de-

voted. Hence they go at once for the maintenance of present institutions, no mere steps in the "right" direction. With them there is no compromise; their task is to uphold the supremacy of our glorious constitution in Church and State, and they organise and prepare for the combat. Yes; to preserve existing institutions is their task of to-day.

Now all these are sacred, and form the glorious foundation of social order, without which society would fall to pieces and the poor workers doomed to perish. Whoever the writer of the statement of the principles and objects of the Primrose League may have been, nothing is more certain than that if existing institutions are maintained the condition of the people must remain what it is to-day. Tory peers may promise, and Primrose dames may flatter and beguile, but so long as the reign of plunder lasts, the lot—the only possible lot—of the workers will be misery and poverty. It is logically impossible for it to be otherwise. If you take from the workers seventy or seventy-five per cent. of the wealth they produce by their labour, it is morally impossible for them to be otherwise than poor and degraded.

In all periods of agitation, especially in times of revolution, the political pedler is always with you. He is always present as a kind of marplot, as an apple of discord. By a little political tinkering he will get rid of political tyranny, and free us from departmental corruption and incapacity. By a grand display of social and economical patchwork, beautifully variegated, he will improve the condition of the workers and banish human misery. And those who cannot comprehend the sublime art of political tinkering, or the simple grandeur of social and economical patchwork, well, they are impracticable and therefore obstructionists. But all the Primrose dames in the world, assisted by all the *pro*-Tory penmen and orators of the age, will never make it possible to improve the condition of the mass of the people while the present institutions continue.

And then, what is royalty but an institution of barbarous origin, and whose great attraction lies in the barbaric splendour of its saturnalia. Why should it be retained? What is the church but an institution of the dark ages, a relic of the pride, the arrogance, the wild dreams and the still wilder notions of the priests of past ages. Why should it not be swept away, and the human soul freed from the idle hopes and childish fears engendered by a false, because a priest-directed system of education? And the aristocracy, why should it be retained? Emblem of all that is base and vicious, all that is villainous and revolting in human nature, a relic of the brutal tyranny of the middle ages; breathing, like royalty, an atmosphere of corruption, living on plunder, and representing only confiscation based on usurpation. Who dare defend it, who can wish for its continuance? As for usury, with its three hundred millions of yearly plunder, it is too monstrous to be defended and too villainous to be retained. All these and others arising from the ignorance and credulity of the past, the feudal tyranny of the middle ages, or resulting from our modern system of production and exchange, will be swept away by the coming Social Revolution.

Instead of political tinkering let us take our stand on principle, and let us never descend to compromise. Let us seek the abolition of tyranny in all its forms, and not its mere modification. And instead of wasting time in the impossible task of patching up our present rotten and degrading institutions, let us work consistently and devotedly for the triumph of Revolutionary Socialism, the only sure remedy for existing evils and the only hope of the down-trodden millions.

J. SKETCHLEY.

PROVINCIAL PROPAGANDA.

COMRADES.—It has long been a complaint among many Socialists that we have given but little attention to the Provinces. This has mainly been the result not of a want of inclination on our part, but want of money. Feeling this, our comrade Mowbray some weeks ago drew up a plan for the propagation of our principles throughout the manufacturing and rural districts of England. This plan, after undergoing some important modifications, has been approved of by the Conference, the Council, and the Propaganda Committee. Speakers are to be sent to centres like Manchester, Leicester, Leeds, Newcastle, Birmingham, and Oxford, from which the surrounding districts can be worked with the aid of our friends in these large towns. It now remains for us all to do our utmost to further this good work by sending in subscriptions, for if only part of the programme is carried out it must result in a great benefit to our common cause.

Subscriptions will be acknowledged under the head of Provincial Propaganda Fund, and should be sent to D. J. NICOLL, Secretary of the Propaganda Committee, 13, Farringdon Road, E.C.

CAP MAKER'S SOCIETY.—It was by no means too soon that a Society was formed in this trade. The workmen as a rule work from seven in the morning to nine in the evening for a paltry wage of from 18s. to 20s. a-week, besides other inconveniences. There is a firm in Commercial Street kept by one Konigsberg; he employs about 200 hands. Last week a workman, T. Sugerman, handed in some work, and his master being dissatisfied with it boxed his ears. The man, fearing starvation, had to submit to it (the said Konigsberg is a very religious man); I could say more. The Society is progressing very satisfactory, the number of members being doubled in one week; this has had a good effect on the employers. Our meeting-place being too small, a change of address was found necessary. The members will now meet at the "Lord Vincent," Philpot Street, E., on Saturdays, at 4 p.m.—R.

SCOTCH NOTES.

The seamen's strike has been the chief matter of importance in the labour struggle here. The newspapers have daily given a full record of the progress of the strike throughout the country, but except at the docks and in the offices of the shipowners and shippers little or no interest is manifested in this great battle between capital and labour. Working-men as usual appear as ignorant and indifferent about the matter as though seamen and dock labourers were some obscure barbarous tribes, and the Clyde was a river in mid Africa. Indeed, I am certain that more working-men have read the recent account of Mr. Stanley's journey in the southern Soudan than have read the accounts of the strike of their fellow-workers in Britain. Scarcely a single newspaper expresses sympathy with the men—they mostly affect a neutral attitude. So powerful is the influence of the shipowners over the press, that even those newspapers which usually profess to be on the side of labour dare not avow sympathy with the demands of the strikers.

Shipowners advertise a great deal—and sometimes newspaper owners happen to be shipowners also.

Mr. Cunninghame Graham is the only member of Parliament who has ventured to champion the cause of the strikers. His speeches at Leith and Alva were very vigorous and very Socialist. The newspapers are very angry with him, but they have to report him. Mr. Graham, since he has ventured to call himself a Socialist, has lost none of his popularity and none of his wit; and if he continues to speak as he has recently been doing, he will accomplish more for the salvation of the workers of Scotland than all the parliaments or members of parliaments have succeeded in doing during the last centuries!

The dock-labourers who have come out with the seamen and firemen here are not nearly so well provided for a strike as the seamen and firemen are. They are fighting, however, with extraordinary enthusiasm. Many of the poor fellows have been on picket duty for three days and nights at a stretch. A number of "scabs" imported from other towns have been obtained by the masters; but in many instances these have been induced to "come out," and have been sent home. This sending home of scabs has been a very serious drain upon the slender funds of the union.

The scabs have to be guarded as carefully as if every one of them was an Irish Chief Secretary. Few more wholesome sights could be seen than the terror of death that has been put upon these traitors.

A number of shipowners have conceded the advance demanded by the seamen and the labourers—notably the Messrs. McBrayne and Co. of the Highland steamers; but the great Channel and ocean companies have formed a shipowners' union, and have resolved not to yield.

Members of the Glasgow branches of the Socialist League and Social Democratic Federation have been very busy amongst the strikers, distributing literature and conversing with groups of men. Comrades Gilbert and Carr have been especially active in this way.

On Friday, June 14th, an incident occurred which illustrates the cowardice and stupidity, which seems to be characteristic of not a few of the paid organisers of trades' societies—men who appear to think that the chief object of trade organisations is the organisation of places of power and pay for themselves. A number of members of the League and myself were conversing with groups of men outside the Dock Labourer's Union office. A desire having been expressed by some of the dock labourers to hold a meeting with the view of hearing us speak, one of the officials—a Tory of old—seized a chair, and mounting it advised the crowd to have nothing whatever to do with the Socialists; the Socialists were not, he said, wanted there. At the same time he directed some ill-natured sneers at us. I insisted upon the right of being heard in reply, and in the course of a fifteen minutes address, maintained the principles of Socialism and the right of Socialists to speak to the workers on strike. During my speech there were frequent demonstrations of approval, and when I concluded it was manifest that the entire audience of some 2,000 men was in our favour, numbers of the men loudly complaining against the interference of the official. Afterwards the labourers fraternised with us more heartily than ever. It is highly improbable any one of the officials will again be so indiscreet as to assail Socialists before an audience of dock labourers.

In going amongst the Glasgow dock labourers one is impressed with the fact that the men are remarkably in earnest, and that if their funds would sustain them in existence at all they would compel their masters to surrender. They have come out on strike to a man. The "scabs" do not altogether number more than 200 or 300. Only a few ships have as yet been loaded or discharged since the strike began. But the funds of the men won't last.

The seamen's strike at Leith has already collapsed. There was dissension between the seamen and dock labourers there.

The tramway servants here have been advised not to strike in the meantime. Some concessions of advanced pay and reduced hours have been granted by the directors, and the leaders of the newly-formed Union think that it would be folly to strike until the society has funds to fall back upon.

A large number of riveters are still on strike in the Clyde shipyards for an advance of pay.
J. BRUCE GLASIER.

LEGAL MURDER.—At the Brandon Petty Sessions on Thursday last week, George Gross, a gamekeeper to Colonel Mackenzie, was charged under section 2 of Poison to Flesh Prohibition Act, 1864, with unlawfully laying on a piece of land certain flesh or meat—namely, eggs—which had been impregnated with poison. The defendant placed a number of poisoned eggs in a plantation, and in the path of a gang of poachers, one of whom picked up an egg and sucked it, dying afterwards in great agony. The Bench dismissed the case, holding that the Act of Parliament "did not include eggs." Quite natural with a bench of game-preservers; but if a poacher had killed a gamekeeper even by accident, I wonder if he would have escaped without punishment?

REVOLUTIONARY CALENDAR.

WEEK ENDING JULY 6, 1889.

30	Sun.	1637. Prynne, Bastwick, and Burton pilloried, cropped, and branded. 1794. Rev. W. Jackson tried for high treason. 1797. Parker (Nore mutineer) hanged. 1837. Pillories abolished. 1855. J. Silk Buckingham died. 1874. Pillgrimage of locked-out agricultural labourers began. 1882. A secret printing press of the <i>Will of the People</i> seized in Moscow.
1	Mon.	1841. Darnes beheaded at Paris. 1867. T. F. Meagher drowned.
2	Tues.	1644. Battle of Marston Moor. 1774. Jean Jacques Rousseau died. 1784. Diderot died. 1846. Anti-Corn Law League dissolved. 1855. Agitation and rioting in London against the Sunday-trading Bill.
3	Wed.	1450. Jack Cade enters London. 1849. Oudinot enters Rome.
4	Thur.	1591. Henry Smith died. 1776. Declaration of Independence. 1777. Trial of John Horne for libel. 1798. Trial of J. and H. Sheares for high treason as United Irishmen. 1807. Garibaldi born. 1826. Oration containing a "Declaration of Mental Independence" delivered by Robert Owen in the Public Hall of New Harmony. 1839. Great meeting of Chartists in the Bull Ring, Birmingham, attacked by police, causing serious riot and conflict with the military. 1840. Third series (enlarged) of the <i>New Moral World</i> began at Leeds.
5	Fri.	1535. Sir Thomas More beheaded. 1798. Trial of John McCann, W. M. Byrne, and Oliver Bond for high treason as United Irishmen. 1816. Bilston colliers stopped at Maidenhead on their march to London. 1819. Large meeting of "Radical Reformers" at Stockport. 1882. Inauguration meeting of L.P.D.L. 1885. First General Conference of the Socialist League.
6	Sat.	1373. Huss born. 1415. Huss burnt. 1787. <i>Edit du Timbre</i> of Brienne promulgated. 1792. Reconciliatory scene in the French Assembly, derisively called <i>Baiser Lamourette</i> . 1813. Granville Sharp died. 1872. Baudouin and Rouilhac shot as Communards.

INTERNATIONAL NOTES.

SWITZERLAND.

The Iron Chancellor is again busily engaged in his devilish work of despotism, preparing a general invasion of the rights of those countries where a few liberties are still left to the peoples. At this very moment he is attempting to destroy the right of asylum for political refugees in the republic of Switzerland, and he is aided in this contemptible business by Austria, by Russia, and even by Italy. If Bismarck succeeds in Switzerland—and there cannot be any doubt about that—the independent existence of Belgium, Holland, Denmark, Sweden, Norway, etc., will also very soon be seriously imperilled, and despotism, under Bismarck's hegemony, will reign absolute and supreme. The crushing tyranny that has been set up at Berlin and, since 1878, prevails throughout Germany, is to spread all over the Continent and to rule every nation. The minor countries, if they are bullied by Bismarck, cannot possibly help themselves, as the actual case of Switzerland shows us well enough. France and England are the only European Powers that could interfere, but what have they done? The French press, of course, is sympathetic to Switzerland, but the bourgeois Government don't care very much whether Socialists should be expelled or not from Swiss territory. The English press, almost entirely got up for the interests of the capitalistic class, either openly approves of Bismarck's action or hypocritically weaves a few yards of disgusting prose in favour of those who are "rightly struggling to be free," which means in favour of shopkeepers, not of Socialists or of Anarchists, who are not *rightly* battling for freedom and equality. As for the Government, they know very well that a blow to Swiss liberty is at the same time a serious blow struck at the very heart of democracy all over Europe, and that is enough to fill Salisbury's soul with joy and delight. Switzerland, being isolated, and practically left alone to answer the threats of autocratic Germany, has not as yet gone so far as to refuse access to Swiss soil to any Socialist unprovided with credentials from his own Government, but at least she has already resolved to make a compromise of an extremely unfortunate character, namely, to appoint an "attorney-general of the confederated cantons, whose duty it will be to prosecute any Socialists or revolutionists, if by their actions they endanger international peace, or imperil the internal security of foreign countries." This first step in the way of concessions to the demands of the German Chancellor will unavoidably lead Switzerland to further acts of weakness and subserviency, for it is obviously certain that this Swiss attorney-general will receive his briefs from Berlin. But why should Switzerland be left alone? If the Governments that could successfully interfere and defy Bismarck's murderous plans are loth to do so, why should not all the revolutionary democracies of Europe unite in an immense and determined protest against the nefarious man who tries to trample under foot and crush out of the world all those who happen to think and act better than he ever did? A good opportunity will soon arise. In the middle of next month representatives of several millions of revolutionary Socialists of various nationalities will meet together at Paris in order to discuss the real and vital interests of society at large, interests which they alone truly represent if indeed society is one day or other to become a vast community of free and equal and happy men, and why should not those representatives of the world's toil and wealth enter a most emphatic protest against the crimes daily perpetrated by Bismarck and his tools? By far the largest part of those who will attend the next International Revolutionary Socialist Congress have suffered imprisonment and exile for liberty's sake; is it not indeed in their hands that the cause of liberty shall be best placed? In a memorable sitting of the National Convention, the deputy Isnard once exclaimed, "If despotic kings continue engaging their peoples in levying war against free nations, we will persuade all peoples to wage war, and war to death, against all kings!" Times are drawing near when the same warning might possibly be uttered once more, to be followed by far more disastrous consequences both for the tyrants of society and those who help them in their abominable work of oppression.



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

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.

CONTENTS.

	PAGE.
Notes on News	MORRIS AND NICOLL 201
The Primrose League and the Working Classes	J. SKETCHLEY 202
Scotch Notes	J. BRUCE GLASIER 203
Revolutionary Calendar	203
International Notes	VICTOR DAVE 203
The Vital Question	LIZZIE M. S. HOLMES 204
In the United States	H. F. CHARLES 205
The Labour Struggle—The Seamen's Strike—The Tram Slaves—The Northumberland and Durham Miners	206
Executive Announcements, Reports, Lecture Diary, and Notices of Meetings	207
Advertisements, New Publications, etc., etc.	208

Periodicals received during the week ending Wednesday June 24.

ENGLAND	Chicago—Knights of Labor	SPAIN
Brotherhood	Vorbote	Barcelona—El Productor
Die Autonomie	Detroit—Der Arme Teufel	Madrid—El Socialista
Justice	Fort Worth (Tex)—South West	Cadiz—El Socialismo
Labour Tribune	Milwaukee—National Reformer	PORTUGAL
London—Freie Presse	San Francisco Arbeiter-Zeitung	Lisbon—O Protesto Operario
Norwich—Daylight	S. F.—Coast Seamen's Journal	Porto—A Revolta
Railway Review	San Jose—Pacific Union	GERMANY
Sozial Demokrat	St. Louis (Mo.)—Altruist	Berlin—Volks Tribune
Worker's Friend	FRANCE	AUSTRIA
NEW SOUTH WALES	Paris—Le Parti Ouvrier (daily)	Wien—Gleichheit
Hamilton—Radical	La Revolt	HUNGARY
INDIA	La Revue Socialiste	Arbeiter-Wochen-Chronik
Bankipore—Behar Herald	Lille—Le Cri du Travailleur	ROMANIA
Madras—People's Friend	Commentary—Le Socialiste	Jassy—Municipal
UNITED STATES	HOLLAND	DENMARK
New York—Der Sozialist	Hague—Recht voor Allen	Copenhagen—Arbejderen
Freiheit	BELGIUM	SWEDEN
Truthseeker	Ghent—Vooruit	Malmo—Arbetet
Volkszeitung	Antwerp—De Werker	Stockholm, Social-Demokraten
Jewish Volkszeitung	Liege—L'Avenir	Goteborg—Folkets Rost
Workmen's Advocate	ITALY	ARGENTINE REPUBLIC
Boston—Woman's Journal	Milan—Il Fascio Operaio	Buenos Ayres—Vorwärts
Herald		

THE VITAL QUESTION.

In the present phase of the labour movement, the philosophic or argumentative aspect is most prominent. At least it is so in America. I am reluctant to say that the old spirit of devotion—the determination, desperate courage, and whole-souled anxiety to work in the cause—that fearlessness of conventionalism, and utter disregard of the opinions of the "respectable" element, which characterised the agitators of twelve, seven, and four years ago—have utterly died out. But these qualities are not conspicuous. The worker "with a job" is apathetic and obedient, for he doesn't want to lose it; the man without one is discouraged, hopeless, enfeebled, his highest ambition to get a "steady position." The one-time agitator who gave his time, strength, and pennies, almost day and night, looks on this strange dead quiet, and thinks for the time being he may as well be looking out for himself a little until the people are ready for him.

In the meantime the polite discussion of economic questions is becoming quite a "fad." No first-class magazine is without its article on an industrial subject, by some high-sounding Prof., who knows nothing whatever of genuine work. No pulpit but devotes a Sunday now and then to the "labour question" and the "labouring classes." No rostrum but is open to a dainty handling of the working-man's cause, with kid gloves, and where now and then a bare-handed lover of truth walks in and shakes up their aesthetic nerves with a few wholesome criticisms. Debating societies, clubs, associations, where the air is redolent with "culture" and opulence, exist, whose members dive as deeply into the economic sea as though after a new idea in art or an old one in *bric-a-brac*. There are clubs which give weekly banquets, and where, over plates that are spread at a cost of five dollars a-head, they discuss "eight hours," "single tax," "free land," and "wages" as glibly as though these things did not mean the destruction of their privileges.

Not long since, one of our oldest and ablest agitators had the floor on a question of labour in a society where Julius S. Grinnell presided as chairman! Such a fact either shows up mighty well for Grinnell or very bad for the agitator. I think many of our truest men and women could not speak and address that atrocious perjurer and murderer with calmness or patience on any subject.

The old time Radicals are in the meantime too much inclined to discussing different "schools of Socialism," philosophic points of difference, definition of terms, and "hair-splitting." A few have established a society with a creed almost as close as a close-communion Baptist's, and all not subscribing to those principles have no right to call themselves Socialists, and "do so at their peril."

Of course this general discussion of economic questions must result in good; a greater number of people will arrive at some inkling of the truth; but there is danger, under this veil of respectability and mild arrangement of societary wrongs, that the great urgency of the question, the keen, living importance of its settlement to all humanity, will be forgotten—glossed over with cultured conventionalism—lost in a labyrinth of isms and abstractions. We may not all agree on the finely drawn differences as to what constitutes "personal liberty." We may differ as to the efficacy of "eight hours," "single tax," "mutual bank," or individual co-operative schemes. We may cherish lingering affections for the State, and hope it will yet steer us out of poverty and slavery; or we may be certain there is no hope as long as legalised Authority holds sway. But there are some things we can all agree on, and some we ought never for a moment to forget.

We all agree that the earth is for man; without it he must die. His birthright is as much of the natural elements as he needs; and when he is robbed of these and made to toil for his necessary share, he is robbed of so much of his life. We know that human labour applied to nature's resources alone creates wealth. We know that the labourer is wronged when in every land he is poor, helpless, dependent, duped and enslaved, instead of being in the enjoyment of his productions, walking upright and free before his fellow-creatures. We know that his deplorable condition is due to established and lawful systems in society, continuous methods, ever increasing in disproportionate results, recognised and accepted ways and means of production and distribution. We know that the present standard of right, which does not recognise every man's need and right to the land, nor to the full results of his labour, is working most terrible suffering among the human race, when there is literally no excuse for poverty on the face of the bountiful earth. We all know, but we do not realise it, that all the boasted advantages of civilisation are obtained at a fearful cost of human suffering.

And *this* is what we ought never to forget.

If we are comfortable—shut up in cosy rooms away from wan and hungry faces, we can easily discuss tweedledee and tweedledum. The bricks of houses do not show the drops of blood from little children's rasped arms that carried them. The coal that burns so cheerily in the grates bears no mark of the drudgery and agony of men and women's lives, the wasted youth of hopeless children; nor do the ghosts of the dead, sacrificed in its procuring, peer out from the blue dancing flames. The comfortable clothing we wear carries no stain of the tears dropped from weary eyes at midnight, the stitches tell no tales of the worn lives and faded youth sewn into the seams.

Our cosy tea-table bears no mark of the gambler's art; the crisp loaves tell no story of the farmer's unrequited toil, his mortgaged farm, nor of the bursting elevators and full bank vaults of "brokers," manipulators of the world's food. Sitting quietly at home, we realise nothing of the many men wandering homeless, hopeless, friendless; of the uncared youth, to whom no pathway is open but the road to crime and prison life; of the hungry children, whose wan pleading faces seem asking why they were born to suffer so.

But, bringing these dismal facts home to ourselves, I do not mean that we should be charitable—go out and feed a few hungry people, or save one or two boys from jail; if we did this we but make room for more. The causes beneath the surface of society continuously produce such results; the seething pool of injustice and corruption is constantly making wrecks of human beings, and casting them up as mere driftwood. The whole of societary arrangements must be changed, and soon, or civilisation will go backward. While we are philosophising, the most terrible suffering is going on; the degraded are becoming more degraded, the poor poorer, and the ruling classes wealthier and more greedy.

It is well enough to cry "Patience!" when you are not in the fire. One can wait for the slow growth of better conditions if one is never hungry; but how can we look out upon the gaunt, woeful, hardening faces that peer at us from the highways and byways, from dark cellars, from factory doors, and from frightful mining shafts, and still cry "Patience!"? How can we feel "patient," when knowing that this repressed, smothered, smoothed-over crater of wrong, suffering, and discontent, must burst forth into more terrible ebullitions than anything the world has ever seen if the present course is pursued?

The only hope there is, is that a general sense of "danger" may be infused among intelligent people; there is little time for waiting, for patience, or for philosophising. Not that I would stop the discussion of economic subjects, be they discussed ever so mildly and politely; but I would urge upon the already converted the necessity of more determination, more zeal for work, more of the spirit of self-sacrifice, less regard for respectable and conventional observances, and more for the truth, and a keener sense of the importance of the vital question.

LIZZIE M. S. HOLMES.

IN THE UNITED STATES.

THOMAS K. SNYDER, the policeman who, during the late strike of the tram-car employes in New York City, shot at and killed a striker, has been presented by some law-abiding people with a medal as a token of their admiration for his "heroic" deed. The medal was fastened to the lapel of his coat by Col. Elliott F. Shepard, the pious editor of the *Mail and Express* newspaper, son-in-law of the late W. H. Vanderbilt, and a lay preacher, who acted as chairman of the presentation committee. The medal is nearly a quarter of an inch thick and two inches in diameter, and is made of solid gold. On the bar from which it is suspended is inscribed, "Thomas K. Snyder," and on the medal itself, "N. Y. Municipal Police, February 5th, 1889. Fearless—Decisive—Successful." In the centre is set a two and a half carat diamond. It is said that Col. Shepard took for the subject of his next sermon the text, "Blessed be the poor, for they do get enabled to enjoy the blessings of heaven; and blessed be the police, for unto them the Almighty Dollar gives their due reward."

The police monument in Chicago in commemoration of the 4th of May, 1886, has at last been unveiled. It consists of a pedestal, to the right and left of which are attached gas candelabres. On the top stands a policeman over life-size, with drawn club and in an attitude clearly conveying to every onlooker every policeman's ideal: "It's a fine day, and I'm going to kill something." To the pedestal is fastened a marble slab, with the inscription, "In the name of the people of Illinois, I command peace." Rather a queer way to command peace, it must be confessed, if all the circumstances of the historic incident are recollected—200 law-and-order lambs advancing with swinging clubs and cocked revolvers on a peaceable meeting of working-men and ordering them to disperse. It looks more like premeditated murder, and that is what it was in truth. Young Degan, a son of policeman Degan who was killed by the bomb, performed the unveiling ceremony on the 29th of May. The monument is situated on the famous Haymarket. The whole affair fell exceedingly flat; no more than about five hundred persons could be got together for the occasion, most of whom were of a juvenile age. The "law-and-order" bullies have got their monument of stone; it took them a long time and much begging to get it. "Our Five" need no monument of stone nor of bronze nor of marble; their memory will be ever green as long as liberty-loving people are in existence. Would the police like to swap position?

Poor Captain Michael J. Schaack! He was not permitted to enjoy the sweets of office very long. On the 4th of June he was dismissed from the Chicago police force for neglect of duty and wilful disobedience of orders. He got himself mixed up in the Cronin mystery and tried to shield, of course against a heavy compensation in cash, his old friend and protector Alexander Sullivan, one of the dictators of the Parnellite movement over here. Sullivan is strongly suspected of having had a hand in the "removal" of the unfortunate Cronin. Schaack coolly admitted in his evidence before the coroner's jury that "he had suppressed testimony; that he had never entered into the case with any enthusiasm; that he had made many mistakes; and that he had been guilty of disobedience." It's somewhat strange that poor Mike was disciplined for such paltry reasons. He might well ask, Are the people losing faith in "law-and-order," that the authorities do not mind sacking so quickly a high police officer for what after all is committed every day by every official protector of "law-and-order"? But then perhaps Schaack wanted to go. He has found a new occupation since he joined the literary gents. This well-bred and highly refined ex-policeman, who is reported to be able, with plenty of time, plenty of ink, and plenty of paper at his disposal, to paint his signature, has written a book numbering seven hundred pages, entitled "Anarchy and the Anarchists; a History of the Red Spectre and of the Social Revolution in America and in Europe." The book is compiled in the style of the average penny horrible, and intended to make every bourgeois shiver in his shoes. As the Anarchists scare is about played out, Mike's literary botch may prove a drug in the market, and he had better return again to Wisconsin and re-start cultivating cabbages.

The miners on strike in Indiana are in a bad condition. Over 9,000 people are on the verge of starvation. The women are selling their wedding-rings and other little treasures, whilst the fathers are disposing of the trinkets of their children to get bread to keep them from starving. All of their furniture and more substantial belongings have been sold weeks ago. The miners have been out since May 1, and have been refused all offers to arbitrate and to settle their differences with the operators. For the past five years the maximum wages received by the men have been five dollars a-week. However, as Laurence Gronlund, writing in the capitalist press, puts it, "For after all the American nation remains a brotherhood of men." Reading this, who is not reminded of G. B. Shaw's description of brotherly love: "I believe that if Moses, instead of being a foundling, brought up as the pet of a princess, had had practical experience of brothers, he would have said, 'Sirs, ye are brethren, therefore ye do wrong one to another.'"

It is a pitiful sight to see one who claims to be a Socialist lower himself so much, and to become the lickspittle of that coarse, repulsive imposture, the American Republic.

Incredible and exaggerated as it may appear at first impulse to some sentimental people, yet at the bottom of that horrible disaster at Johnstown can be discerned the social question. A gang of vulgar thieves, people who have grown wealthy on stealing the fruits of some other people's toil, founded in Pittsburgh the South Fork Hunting and Fishing Club. They leased from the Pennsylvania Railroad for sporting purposes the huge reservoir the breaking of whose dams caused all the loss of life. Never for one moment did these marauders consider that their means of pleasure formed a standing danger to thousands of human beings. Why should they? Were they not independent, respectable gentlemen? They showed the utmost criminal negligence in the construction of the dams, in their maintenance, their management, their repairs, and the keeping of the gates. The dams were built of clay, instead of stone. They contained a body of water far beyond the strength of the construction. The leaks were "stopped" with straw. The gates were completely clogged with stone. Time upon time the club members were memorialised upon the condition of the dams. They were asked to do something. But why should they? Happily they live in a Christian country, where everybody is for himself and the devil takes the hindmost. They had their pleasure, and what concern was the safety of other people to them? A dam broke. The artificial flood killed 8,000 people, destroyed 30 millions of property, and rendered about 20,000 more people homeless. Wasn't there an outcry of righteous and just wrath throughout all America against the conduct of these sportsmen? Oh, dear, no. Trust your Yankee! Every American found the behaviour of these rich people in all respects correct. Why should he not? No member of that club ever

disturbed "law-and-order." They never questioned the correctness and the justice of the system which rules our actions and our fate. If they had, there would have been plenty of reasons for hanging them. But in their case—well, after all, if we come to think of it, they do deserve some consideration for their heavy loss. Let us get up a public subscription for their sole benefit, and let us buy for them some medals, golden medals, with a diamond in the centre, and with the inscription "Fearless," for they never feared for their reservoir, "Decisive," for they sternly rejected all memorials for the safety of the people, "Successful," for they killed something.

It is reported that some poor Hungarians, bearing the truly Hungarian names of Brown, Jones, and Smith, were caught robbing some of the dead. All America trembled with indignation at these vandalistic outrages. The black criminals were lynched on the spot. Serve them right. What right has a poor person to steal? It's vulgar to steal so that you can fill your belly; it's cultured and refined to "accumulate" millions. And robbing the dead, horrible—the dead who have so much use for silver dollars and golden rings and diamond bracelets! And right surely is the Rev. T. de Witt Talmage, the Spurgeon of America, in advising all honest folk that "those who have been guilty of robbing the dead should be hanged or shot without judge, jury, or trial." Truly a kind Christian spirit!

Some readers may think I am joking. I have never been more earnest in my life. Just read these newspaper cuttings:—

"There is no possibility of exacting an adequate penalty in the way of damages or retribution, even if it were practicable to clearly fix the responsibility for this calamity. Nothing would be gained by the sacrifice of a few more human lives, while few, if any, individuals would have the means necessary to make indemnification for the financial losses that have been sustained, to say nothing of those lives which no money payment can make good. But the disaster will be without its proper lesson if it does not lead to the examination of other dams."—*Boston Morning Journal*.

"If, therefore, it shall be shown that the Johnstown disaster was due to negligence and might have been averted by due care, both a civil and a criminal liability will fall upon those guilty of the negligence. That is the legal, the theoretical view of the case. But what will it amount to practically in view of the fact that ten thousand lives and seventy millions of property have been destroyed? What penalty can atone for this great loss? What civil remedy can repair the vast damage."—*New York Herald*.

"It is rather severe to lay the blame for the sad disaster at Johnstown on the members of the South Fork Fishing and Hunting Club, who owned the defective dam. They may have been culpable for allowing such a structure to exist, and the State authorities may be blamed for the same reason; but that they ever dreamed they were jeopardising the lives of the people in the valley of the Conemaugh isn't to be thought of for a moment."—*Boston Herald*.

"JOHNSTOWN, Pa., June 6, 1889. There will be no inquest held on the bodies of the thousands of residents of the Conemaugh valley who lost their lives. The law of the State does not require such an investigation, and the responsibility of the disaster, which can be directly charged to the insecure wall which held the water of the Conemaugh lake, will never be legally determined, unless the survivors should take independent action. All reports that arrangements for an inquest had been commenced are untrue."—*A Telegram*.

And how comforting is this philosophy of the *New York World*:

"There is no danger of an unsafe dam, or probably any dam at all, being again built at Conemaugh Lake. . . . However true it may be that a spiritual advancement of the race has been secured through the blood of martyrs, there is no question that much material wisdom has been gained only through the sacrifice of countless lives. Hundreds of victims were burned to death in railroad accidents before the abolition of the car stove was inaugurated. And more yet will, no doubt, be required to stop its use generally throughout the country. . . ."

These are only a few examples. Through the whole capitalistic press runs but one desire: To shield the murderers.

My respect for the human character has been lowered considerably in consequence of this event. If some of the surviving relatives of the drowned had rushed on to Pittsburgh and shot or hanged or kicked some of these millionaire murderers, I should have considered such action reasonable and just, aye, even praiseworthy. Yes, if the criminals had been some poor people or rebels against "law-'n'-order," they would now be suspended from some cross-beam, indicate how the wind blows in this glorious Republic, you bet, dear reader; and yet, "For after all the American nation remains a brotherhood of men!"

The charitable spirit now stalks through the land. The power behind the throne of this charity may be ascertained when we ponder over the words this nation's chief executive magistrate spoke during a meeting over which he presided in Washington: "I think I am in duty bound to myself and to you to state right here that I myself have already subscribed five hundred dollars for the relief of the sufferers in Johnstown." If one gets a good advertisement for one's moral character, one may as well subscribe some money to a charity. And as a result plenty of money is coming in. To relieve the sufferers? Will they get the mammon? I guess not. All the solid business men in good standing from Pittsburgh, from Philadelphia, from New York, and so on, have departed for Johnstown to superintend the proper distribution of the money; and properly distributed it will be, any one can take his oath on that, and some people's banking accounts will swell considerably. It's perfectly sickening to live in America, the hell of creation.

There were 75 strikes, involving 26,186 employees, reported to *Bradstreets* during May, 1889.

Boston, Mass., June 12, 1889.

HENRY F. CHARLES.

The miners of Lancashire have obtained from their owners on Wednesday, June 19th, the same terms as those already obtained by the Yorkshire men, namely, an advance of 5 per cent. on July 1st, and another 5 per cent. on October 1st. This is a compromise on the original demand of 10 per cent.

WAGES IN THE LACE TRADE.—Two of the three branches of the Nottingham lace trade—viz., the levers and curtain branches—are on the verge of a desperate struggle with the masters. The latter, on the bogus plea that 70 per cent. less is paid in the outlying districts, seek to reduce wages in the curtain branch by 40 per cent. and in the levers branch by from 15 to 25 per cent. A mass meeting of lace hands was held in the Mechanics Large Hall on Saturday afternoon, and it was unanimously resolved to approve of the action of the Trade Council in refusing to entertain the question of a reduction. The spirit of the meeting was excellent, and only deepened one's regret that so few of them were alive to the necessity of constant warfare on the capitalist or to the knowledge that there is "no other name under heaven than Socialism whereby they may be saved."—R. P.

THE LABOUR STRUGGLE.

The Seamen's Strike.

The battle still continues, though it has entered a phase which lacks the vivid interest of the incidents of last week. This is mainly owing to the precautions taken by the authorities to preserve "the freedom of labour"—that is, the freedom of the scabs to cut the throats of the strikers. It has now, however, become impossible for the men, thanks to strong force of police concentrated in the neighbourhood of the docks, to prevent the scabs from playing the game of the masters. The strikers, however, are still very hopeful of victory, although the Government declare that the Board of Trade has no power to interfere in regard to the manning of vessels with incompetent crews. People who travel by such vessels must take their lives in their hands and be content to run the risk of drowning. A paternal government can do nothing in their behalf.

Some exciting incidents occurred at Glasgow on June 17, which have not yet been chronicled in our columns. On Monday evening, it appears that half a dozen scabs were got into a couple of cabs to be taken from Allan Line offices to the company's docks. While the cabs were standing at the door of the offices a labourer rushed from the crowd and tried to drag the scabs from the vehicles. He was immediately seized by the police, and hauled in the usual brutal fashion. Mr. Smith Park, freight manager to Messrs. Allan, came out to encourage the police, and called out to keep hold of their victim. A number of the strikers immediately "went for" Mr. Smith Park, and in common parlance he "got it hot." The poor gentleman's head was cut open, and it is probable that he will not encourage the police to arrest strikers for some time to come. A man was arrested by the police who, according to them, had committed this assault. On their way to the station an attempt was made to rescue him, and in the struggle a constable had his face cut open and Mr. Park was again assaulted. However, the police being reinforced, were enabled to keep their prisoner and succeeded in making another arrest, afterwards reaching the station with both their prisoners. These incidents I have given to show how bitter is the feeling of the men against both the scabs and their tyrannical masters.

A number of men have been heavily fined for intimidation during the past week. How slight the intimidation is in most cases may be seen by the following case, taken from the *Glasgow Evening Citizen*:—James Muir was remitted to the Sheriff, from the Southern Police-court to-day, on a charge of intimidating a man named James Whally, who was being driven down King Street in a cab on the 15th. Whally was on his way to the harbour, and Muir, it is alleged, caught the horse by the head, looked into the cab, and asked Whally where he was going. If this is remitted to the sheriff as "a serious case," how slight must be the offences which the magistrates have dealt with.

Some of our readers must have been astonished at hearing from our Glasgow correspondent that the capitalists were engaged in useful work in company with convicts. This was made necessary by the strike of the dock labourers, which forced them to unload vessels laden with perishable goods. Here is an account from the *North British Daily Mail* of the honest work done under these circumstances by members of the idle classes: "One gang consisted of young men, most of whom wore trousers *a la mode* and suitable to the season of the year, while in some cases coats and vests were cast, displaying to the gaze of wondering crowds newly laundered white shirts. Managers, checkers, and foremen were, as on Monday, assisting in the discharging and loading work. A captain of a boat was observed battling with a cargo of pig-iron along with a few cattle-men. A section of the fair passengers on board of the 'Prussian' had also greatly amused the labourers when they ungloved and began to shovel coal." This solves the problem of providing work for the capitalists after the revolution; we can give them a job as dock labourers. I confess I should have liked to see the middle-class damsels shovelling coal! It is marvellous what good qualities emergencies will produce among idle people.

Things were a little lively a few days back. A scab crew were working on the steamer *Fintera*, when a number of strikers swooped down upon it, scattered the scabs, and took possession of the steamer. The strikers held the steamer for some time, till the police arriving in strong force, the strikers abandoned the vessel. Both at Glasgow and Liverpool the strikers hold out firmly and have strong hopes of victory, despite the lying reports circulated by the capitalist press.

The Tram Slaves.

The slave-drivers have slightly changed their policy; they now treat their men like children, a sugar-plum in one hand and a cane in the other. While they have sacked men for joining the union that policy has not succeeded in breaking it up, so they are now trying the effect of some trifling concessions. On the Greenwich road the six journeys a day system has been abandoned for the five journeys asked by the men. This may indicate a coming surrender, and the men should take courage and not be content with this sop to Cerberus, but insist on their full demands. Among those dismissed have been five of those who were most prominent in forming the union. We are glad to hear that all those discharged have been engaged by Mr. Hansford, the secretary of the union, in the heavy work of organisation, and will be fairly paid for their work. We hope, however, that none of the men who have been discharged will be forgotten by their comrades. The tram men should remember the action of Bryant and May's girls, who all struck work sooner than let any of their comrades suffer starvation for the common cause, and their courage received its reward in a complete victory. The men should remember that a strike is their trump card, and it is only fear of it that has wrung from the directors even the present mild concessions.

Meanwhile, the union is spreading. The West Metropolitan Tramway men held a meeting at the Mission Hall, Chiswick, early on Thursday morning. There were a small number of officials present under the leadership of Mr. Gayner, the manager, who did their best to create a disturbance in the interests of law-'n'-order. They were also useful in finding out for the Company what men were present and who were the most active. Despite all this an amendment moved by the manager, to the effect that men were satisfied with their kind treatment by the Company, only got the support of the gang of officials, who came for the express purpose of voting for it, and a resolution declaring for the formation of a branch of the union was carried amid loud applause. The officials of the Company present at the meeting were Mr. Gayner, the manager, Inspectors Ling, McDonald, Shortland, and Berge; Fairman, clerk; and Ross and Mackay, foremen. What

were these people there for, if it was not to intimidate the men who are struggling for some slight instalment of justice? But we don't hear of any of these clerks, managers, and foremen getting 40s. or a month. Who can doubt after this that our laws are passed in the interest of the class that made them, the aristocracy of capital?

The newspaper reports which led comrade Nicoll in his article last week to state that the Glasgow Tramway directors had conceded the demands of the men were, as usual, incorrect. As a matter of fact, while the secretary of the company, Mr. Duncan, has several times publicly stated that the hours have been reduced to an average of twelve hours a-day, the men themselves report that in many cases the men have still to work fifteen and sixteen hours, while the authorised advance of wages is simply a piece of barefaced public deception. The men were very anxious to strike; but Mr. Chisholm-Robertson, their chairman, strongly opposed that course, as he knew the company were prepared to replace the strikers at a moment's notice, while the funds of the union, which is just being formed, would be totally inadequate to maintain the men during a conflict. The Glasgow Trades Council have appointed a sub-committee to arrange a great demonstration on the Green, for the purpose of demanding that the Town Council should take over the tramways on the impending expiry of the company's lease. As this sub-committee is under the convenship of George Carson, a member of the Socialist League and late president of the Trades Council, we may expect that something "practical" will be done. Last Sunday a meeting of the tramway men was held in the Albion Halls, which was addressed by Mr. Conybeare, M.P. Mr. Conybeare's speech was a most disappointing one, his advice not rising above the average trades union level, in this respect contrasting very unfavourably with the vigorous Socialist utterances of Mr. Cunninghame Graham. It was resolved that a petition should be sent by the men to the half-yearly meeting of the shareholders which will be held early next month, and that meanwhile the men endeavour to strengthen their union as much as possible. A number of the members of the Glasgow Branch of the Socialist League were present, and distributed the leaflet "Tram-car Slavery" amongst the men, which we hope will give them a higher purpose and hope that the mere reduction of their hours from sixteen to twelve and an increase of 2s. on their weekly pay.

The Northumberland and Durham Miners.

The ballot by Northumberland miners has resulted in the acceptance of the 5 per cent. advance recently offered as a compromise of the general demand for 10 per cent. The Durham miners are holding out for an advance of 25 per cent. The feeling is that the masters may offer 10 per cent., but the men continue to agitate for the full amount, and, the sliding scale terminating, the position is serious, 20,000 men being involved. Here is an instance of what we must call the lamentable disunion among trades' unionists. Here are two bodies of workers living practically in the same district, working under similar conditions, and yet they cannot make a uniform demand for an increase in wages. The Northumberland miners ask for 10 per cent. and take 5, and the Durham miners ask for 25 per cent. and hope to take 10. The result probably will be that the Durham miners will have to put up with the very moderate concession accepted by the Northumberland men. Why cannot all the miner's unions federate, and act in a solid body? They would then carry all before them. The position would be "serious" then, not for the men but for the masters.

GLASGOW CARTERS WILL STRIKE.—The labour troubles in Scotland are threatened with another serious augmentation. The carters of Glasgow have resolved to be allowed time to eat their meals—a carter must eat—and to be paid overtime after six o'clock. The masters refuse this, but instead offer an advance of 2s. per week. The men won't accept that offer, and will insist upon their meal hours and overtime; and if that be not granted the carters' strike is set down for July 2nd.

STRIKE AT KILSYTH.—The handloom weavers at Kilsyth are out on strike for an advance of wages. It is alleged they are at present paid at the rate of 20 per cent. less than those employed at Kirkintilloch in the same class of work. The operatives are mostly girls and women, with a few men. They are very industrious, but after working from early morn till late eve, the highest wage the strongest can make, after loom rent, coals, gas, tallow, etc., are deducted, is about 8s. per week. They are noted for being a well-behaved and intelligent people, and their employer is a "good Liberal," who takes an active part in politics, and yet they are not content. But even a worm will turn, and the Kilsyth weavers' strike is but a symptom of how deep the revolt is in canny Scotland against what Cunninghame Graham calls "political humbug." Why does the factory inspector not visit Kilsyth?

INTERNATIONAL SOCIALIST WORKING-MEN'S CONGRESS.

We have received a notice from our comrade Paul Lafargue, 60, Avenue de Champs Elysees, Le Perreux, Seine, France, inviting all delegates to send in their names to him *at once*, so that due arrangements may be made as to their lodging. The cost of living will be from 5s. to 6s. per diem not counting extras. It is hoped that delegates will be at Paris on the 13th. The first sitting of the Congress will be on the *afternoon* of the 14th, so as to enable the delegates to take part in the national *fête*.

Members wishing to go with a party of the Socialist League, leaving Saturday, July 13th, for Paris Congress, should communicate with secretary at once, so that sufficient accommodation may be provided. We hear that Auguste Coulon will represent the Dublin Socialist Club.

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.

Banner Fund (East London Branch).—Comrades and friends desirous of assisting this branch to purchase banner will please send on subscriptions to M. Matthews, 95, Boston Street, Hackney Road. Received:—Mrs. Shack, 1s. 3d.; by collection, 9d.

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

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REPORTS.

CLERKENWELL.—Good meeting on Green, addressed by Hill and Blundell. In hall, J. McCormack gave an interesting account of "A Socialist's Tramp through the Provinces." Several persons present, who admitted that they were not Socialists, testified to the accuracy of lecturer's statement with regard to the condition of the poor and their bad dwellings.—B.

EAST LONDON.—At Gibraltar Walk on Sunday, a good meeting was addressed by Parker, McCormack, and Brookes; 10 *Commonweal* sold. At 5 o'clock in Victoria Park, a splendid meeting was started under exceptionally difficult circumstances, owing to a meeting of teetotallers taking place in our immediate vicinity; Brookes opened the meeting, but when McCormack began to speak some spirited opposition was offered by our temperance friends. An unknown friend and comrade also spoke on our behalf, and was loudly applauded; Davis then replied, and the meeting was brought to a close at 8 o'clock; 30 *Commonweal* sold. At our branch room at 9.30, Brookes lectured on "Order without Law" to a small but attentive audience; good discussion on marriage question, which arose out of the lecture; Davis promised to deal with this question in a few week's time.

HYDE PARK.—A good meeting was held here last Saturday evening at eight o'clock, when Samuels, Davis, Cores, Humphries, Hill, and Furlough (S.D.F.) addressed a very fair audience; we had some opposition from a Gladstonian, and a lively discussion followed which lasted over three hours; 2s. collected.

MITCHAM.—On Sunday, Mrs. Schack spoke to a fair and attentive audience. One good Conservative hardly believed his eyes, for he put his spectacles on when he saw Mrs. Schack speaking, and he was only kept quiet by our comrades. The speakers will please notice the importance of advertising the paper, as it improves the sale considerably.—G.

NORTH KENSINGTON.—A good meeting at Latimer Road; speakers, Tochatti, Lynes, sen., Lynes, jun., Saint, Dean, and Maughan; 9 new members made and 2s. 3d. collected; three ministers at the meeting. At 7.30, an excellent meeting was held at Archer Street, when Lyne, sen., Tochatti, Maughan, Dean, and Saint spoke; choir sang and 1s. 10d. collected; 73 *Commonweal* sold during day.

NORTH LONDON.—A good meeting was held in Regent's Park on Sunday, addressed by Hill, Cantwell, Crouch, and Nicoll; good sale of *Weal*. A fine meeting also held in Hyde Park by Cantwell, Bullock, Lynes, Tochatti, and Nicoll; some friendly opposition by Sinclair, M.P., who appeared to think that Socialism meant a dividing up of the land; he was well replied to by Bullock and Lynes; 3s. 6d. collected.

ST. GEORGE'S.—A fine meeting held on Mile End Waste on Tuesday, opened by Leech, Turner speaking about an hour to a very sympathetic audience. Good member's meeting on Wednesday; discussion opened by Turner on "Socialist Opposition," Hemmings, Leech, Wess, Smith, and Harris taking part. On Sunday morning, one of the largest meetings ever held at Leman Street was opened by Leech, Turner speaking especially of the seamen's strike, suggesting control of all shipping by the sailors; all *Commonweal* sold out, and good sale of our pamphlets.—I.

ABERDEEN.—The Liberal party having held a demonstration in favour of "free education," it was decided by our branch to hold one of our own to explain our views on the question. It took place last Saturday, and was attended by a large and enthusiastic audience. The Rev. Alexander Webster, Cooper, Leatham, and Duncan were the speakers. Two resolutions were carried amid loud cheering, one calling for "free, national, and secular" education, and the other demanding the ownership and control of the land and means of production by the whole community.

GLASGOW.—During the past fortnight our members have been busy speaking to and distributing literature amongst the seamen and dock labourers on strike, who everywhere welcomed our comrades amongst them. We collected for the dock labourers—At Govan, 2s. 4d.; Jail Square, 6s. 5d.; and Paisley Road Toll, 4s. 4d. Last week, comrades Gilbert, Carr, and Pollock continued their efforts. On Sunday at 2 o'clock, Joe Burgoyne, Tim Burgoyne, and Glasier addressed a large meeting on the Green, where 4s. was collected for the dock labourers. Many of our members turned up at Mr. Conybeare's lecture, held under the auspices of the Irish National League, and Glasier spoke from the platform. They afterwards attended a meeting of the tramway men, and distributed a large number of the leaflet on "Tram-car Slavery." At a business meeting of the branch held on the preceding Sunday, the council of the branch was re-organised, and Daniel McCulloch was appointed secretary in place of Bruce Glasier, who has resigned.

LEICESTER.—On Sunday last Raymond Unwin, of Chesterfield, lectured in the morning at Russell Square on "The Waste of Competition"; good audience. In evening, Unwin again lectured, on "What we Want" in Humberstone Gate. There was this time a much larger audience. An earnest and able address, which was listened to with the greatest attention, followed by an animated discussion, the crowd breaking up afterwards into discussion groups. On the previous Sunday we were prayed for at the principal Baptist Chapel, containing the largest dissenting congregation in Leicester; special reference was also made to us in the sermon! If this has had any result, it must have been favourable, for we have increased our audience, have much more discussion, and have about doubled our sale of literature.—T. P. B.

LEEDS.—Last Sunday afternoon Paylor spoke in support of the bricklayers' labourers of this town, who are forming a union. In the evening another meeting was held, when Corkwell, Maguire, and Paylor spoke. Reference was made to the strikes of the seamen and tramcar men. It has been stated in a local paper that tramcar slavery in Leeds is as bad, if not worse, than it is in London, but that body of nonentities the Leeds Trades Council has not a word to say on the subject.

NORWICH.—On Tuesday last comrade Netlow was elected delegate by the branch for the Paris Congress. On Sunday usual open-air meeting was held in the Market Place; a large audience present, addressed by comrade Mowbray. In the evening another good meeting was held; Darley opened, followed by Mowbray, who delivered a capital address. Good collections, and *Commonweal* sold out.

YARMOUTH.—Last Sunday morning we had a capital audience; comrade Mowbray gave a long and earnest address, which was listened to with great interest; collection 7s. In the evening we held a meeting near Colman's granary, on the South Quay, and considering this was new ground the meeting was most encouraging; Ruffold and Reynolds spoke. We sold all our *Commonweal*. Total collection for the day, 8s. 6d.—C. R.

DUBLIN.—At Progressist Club, 87 Marlboro Street, June 22, H. Sutton Frizelle lectured on "Workers, Beggars, and Thieves," an excellent discussion resulting—King, Toomey, Wilson, Graham, and Cree taking part.

NOTTINGHAM SOCIALIST CLUB.—Usual meeting on Sunday in the Market Place, Rooke in the chair; Peacock, Proctor and Whalley (S.D.F.), who will run together as Socialist candidates at the School Board elections in November, explained their programme. Collection for election fund, 4s. 3d. Several new members joined.—R. P.

LECTURE DIARY.

LONDON.

Clerkenwell.—Hall of the Socialist League, 13 Farringdon Road, E.C. (3-minute from Farringdon Station, 1 minute from Holborn Viaduct). On Sunday June 30, at 8.30 p.m., A. Brookes will lecture on "Order without Law." **East London.**—Crown Coffee Tavern, 2 Columbia Road, Hackney Road. On Sunday June 30, at 9 p.m., J. Hicks, "Poverty: its Cause and Cure." **Hammersmith.**—Kelmescott House, Upper Mall, W. Sunday June 30, at 8 p.m., a Lecture. Thursday July 4, at 7.30, Choir practice. Friday 5, at 8, French Class; at 8.30 sharp, Business Meeting and discussion. **Mitcham.**—3 Clare Villas, Merton Road. Meets every Sunday, at 11 a.m. **North Kensington.**—Clarendon Coffee Tavern. Meets every Wednesday at 8.30. Members please turn up. **North London.**—6 Windmill Street, Tottenham Court Rd. Meets every Friday evening at 8 o'clock. **Whitechapel and St. Georges in the East.**—Branch meetings at International Club, 40 Berner Street, Commercial Road. J. Turner, organising secretary.

PROVINCES.

Aberdeen.—Organiser, J. Leatham, 7 Jamaica Street. Branch meets in Odd-fellows' Small Hall, Crooked Lane, on Monday evenings at 8. Singing practice at 46 Marischal Street on Thursdays at 8 p.m. **Bradford.**—Laycock's Temperance Hotel, Albion Court, Kirkgate. Tuesday at 7.30. **Glasgow.**—The Branch will meet temporarily in the Ram's Horn Assembly Hall, Ingram Street, on Thursday evenings at 8 o'clock, and on Sunday evenings at 7 o'clock. Communications to be addressed to Daniel McCulloch, Secy. **Leeds.**—Clarendon Buildings, Victoria Road and Front Row. Open every evening. Business meeting Saturdays at 8 p.m. **Leicester.**—Hosiery Union Offices, 11a Millstone Lane. Fridays at 8 p.m. **Manchester.**—Working Men's Educational Club, 122 Corporation Street. **Norwich.**—Tuesday, at 8.30, Members' meeting. Wednesday, at 8.30, Discussion in Gordon Hall, opened by comrade Adams, subject "Anarchism." Monday, Thursday, and Friday, Hall open from 8.30. Saturday, 8 until 10.30, Co-operative Clothing Association. **Oxford.**—Temperance Hall, 25½ Pembroke Street. First Friday in every month, at 8.30 p.m. **Walsall.**—Lecture Room, back of Temperance Hall. Mondays at 8 p.m. **Yarmouth.**—Branch meets at comrade Headley's, near Co-operative Stores, every Tuesday evening. Elocution Class Friday at 8 p.m.

OPEN-AIR PROPAGANDA.

SATURDAY 29.

7.30..... Hyde Park.....Davis, Davies, and Nicoll
8.30..... Battersea—opposite Christ ChurchSamuels and Charles
8.30..... Mile-end WasteHill

SUNDAY 30.

11 Latimer Road StationMrs. Lahr, Maughan, and Dean
11.30..... Bethnal Green—Gibraltar WalkCharles and Brookes
11.30..... Eelbrook CommonHammersmith Branch
11.30..... North Kensington—William StreetCrouch, Lyne jun., and Saint
11.30..... Kilburn Road—"Canterbury Arms"Samuels and Mainwaring
11.30..... Leman Street, Shadwell.....Nicoll and Mrs. Schack
11.30..... Mitcham Fair GreenParker
11.30..... Regent's Park.....Turner
3.30..... Hyde ParkCantwell and Brookes
5 Victoria ParkDavis and Hill
6.30..... Wood Green—Jolly Butchers HillNicoll
7 Clerkenwell GreenBrookes
7 Welteje Road, Ravenscourt ParkHammersmith Branch
7.30..... Mitcham Fair GreenKitz
7.30..... Streatham—Fountain, High StreetThe Branch
7.30..... Walham Green—back of ChurchThe Branch
8 North Kensington—Archer StreetThe Branch

TUESDAY 2.

8 Fulham—back of Walham Green ChurchThe Branch
8 Mile-end Waste.....St. George's-in-the-East Branch

THURSDAY 4.

8 Ossulton StreetNicoll and Cantwell
8.15..... Hoxton ChurchMowbray

PROVINCES.

Aberdeen.—Saturday: Castle Street, 7 p.m. **Bradwell** (near Yarmouth).—Monday evening. **Edinburgh.**—Sunday: Queen's Park, at 3. **Glasgow.**—Sunday: Jail Square at 2 o'clock; Paisley Road at 5 o'clock. **Leeds.**—Sunday: Hunslet Moor, at 11 a.m.; Vicar's Croft, at 7 p.m. **Leicester.**—Sunday: Russell Square, at 11 a.m.; Humberstone Gate, at 8 p.m. **Manchester.**—Outdoor meetings every Sunday. Stevenson Square at 3 p.m. Viaduct, Chester Rd., at 7.30. Middleton Market Ground, Saturday at 7.30. **Norwich.**—Sunday: Market Place, at 3 and 7.30. North Walsham at 11. **Yarmouth.**—Priory Plain, every Sunday at 11 and 3. A Meeting at Belton every Monday evening.

SCOTTISH LAND AND LABOUR LEAGUE.

Carnoustie.—Meets every Wednesday, at 8 p.m., in the Carnoustie Restaurant. **Dundee.**—Meetings every Sunday in Trades Hall, opposite Tay Bridge Station. **Edinburgh.**—35 George IV. Bridge. Meetings for Discussion, Thursdays at 8. **Galashiels.**—J. Walker, 184 Glendinning Terrace, Secretary. **Gallatown and Dysart** (Fife)—Meet every Tuesday at 7 p.m. in Gallatown Public School. **A. Paterson**, 152 Rosslyn Street, Secretary. **Kilmarnock.**—Branch meets on every alternate Tuesday. **H. M'Gill**, 22 Gilmour Street, Secretary. **West Calder.**—Robert Lindsay, West Calder, Secretary.

NORTH LAMBETH LIBERAL AND RADICAL CLUB, 108 Westminster Bridge Rd., S.E.—Sunday June 30, at 8.30, J. R. Macdonald, "Practicable Socialism."

LONDON ANARCHISTS' open-air propaganda.—Sunday 30th, Hyde Park (near Marble Arch), at 6 p.m., Harragan, Humphreys, and Drugen on "No Rent."

ST. JAMES'S HALL.—Henry George and H. M. Hyndman's Debate comes off on Tuesday July 2nd. Chair taken by Prof. Beesley at 8 o'clock. The subject is "Single-Tax v. Social Democracy." Tickets, 1s. and 2s. 6d.

PROGRESSIVE ASSOCIATION, 81 Pentonville Road.—Sunday June 30, at 7.45, E. O. Greening, "A Festival of Labour."

SOCIALISTS in Hull willing to form a branch are requested to put themselves in communication with J. T. Smith, "Freiheit" Club, 1 Beets Court, Blanket-Row, Hull.

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