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CONTENTS.

	PAGE.
Put Not Your Trust in Parliaments R. W. BURNIE	9
The Glorious Reformation; or, How the English People were Evicted, Robbed, and Murdered by the Ruling Classes.—IV. The People Driven from the Land N.	10
Correspondence	10
A Defence of Anarchist "Violence" R. W. B.	11
Poor Careworn Capitalists	11
Notes of the Scottish Railway Strike J. B. GLASIER	12
Notes F. K., M., and R. W. B.	13
Thoughts of a Ragamuffin	14
International Notes R. W. B.	14
A Well Deserved Snub F. K.	15
Executive Announcements, and Lecture Diary	15
Statement of Principles, Where to get the "Commonweal," Advertisements, etc.	16

PUT NOT YOUR TRUST IN PARLIAMENTS.

OUR friend Cunninghame Graham (one of the few honest men among the Parliamentarians) has been again urging the workers to send "representatives" to Cobbett's "den of thieves." The persistence of some men's faith, or seeming faith, in "political" action is nowadays wonderful. They find their account in it; thereout suck they no small advantage. That Graham, however, and one or two other front-rank fighters—and, alas! so many millions of workers—should still believe in the possible utility of the ballot-box, is sufficiently remarkable. The experiment of Universal Suffrage has now been made in most civilised countries, and has everywhere left the wage-slaves where it found them. Here in Great Britain we have had household suffrage in the towns for nearly a quarter of a century, in the country for five years and more; we have had that famous "point of the Charter," Vote by Ballot, for a score of years. What benefit has Labour reaped therefrom? What smallest step has been taken towards the organisation of the New Society? towards the destruction of this present false society?—a destruction which must necessarily precede any attempt to build anew. We all know the answer, and it would be miraculous indeed were there any other to give. It would be a strange fairy tale of topsy-turveydom if the capitalists and their parasites, and the half-score "labour representatives" (hoping to become parasites, if not capitalists) who sit in the oddly-named House of Commons, were to seek to destroy the "civilisation" of which they are so proud, and which enables them to live on the toil of others. "Oh! but," some answer (the good "Dodo" of *Reynolds*, for one), "if the present Parliament does not begin the Revolution (or at least—since we are not quite sure that we hold with the Revolution—initiate real reforms), it is because we have not yet quite reached to Manhood Suffrage; there are two million working-men not on the Register. Let us devote all our energies to registration reform and the creation of a really democratic party, then we may be sure that the good days will begin and at length we may sing our 'Ca ira.'"

The simple-minded "Dodo"! He has certainly chosen an appropriate pen name—only possibly "Ostrich" would be a still better one, since he has so admirable an aptitude for burying his head, as it were, in the sand—that he may not see unpleasant, though obvious, facts. Is not Manhood Suffrage in all its plenitude exercised in those "free" Republics of France and the United States? Are the workers less wretched there than here? Is the Government of the State of Illinois (where our martyrs were hanged), is the Government of the State of New York (where only the other day hundreds of armed policemen terrorised a peaceable indoor meeting of working-men) a whit less oppressive and tyrannical than the Government of Trafalgar Square? Are the Carnegies and the Goulds any more tolerable than the Norwoods and the Liveseys? Or are Rouvier and Constans any way preferable to Salisbury and Matthews? Clémenceau to Bradlaugh or Labouchère? Boulanger to Parnell? Are our comrades on strike dealt with more tenderly in the Ardennes than at Southampton? One wonders sometimes whether "Dodo" is so very simple-minded after all, whether he really succeeds in blinding himself to the patent failure of representative institutions. Let me hasten to add that, if he has

any after-thought in the matter, I like to believe it to be an unconscious one.

Some, however, would say (perhaps "Dodo" among them) that, if the workers would only use the ballot-box, not to vote for Liberal or Tory, Democrat or Republican, Right or Left, but to return representatives of Labour, Socialists if you will, very different results would be obtained. Let us see if that would really be so. We will concede that the workers are in the majority among the voters, or, if not in the majority, may, with a few more years of "political" agitation, be put in the majority. How long will it take to convert that majority into a solid compact mass voting only for Socialist candidates, and influenced, every man of them (for we shall need every man), by no trick of Tory or wile of Radical, caring nothing for "Fair Trade and No Foreigners" on the one side, for the Grand Old Spider, or Chief Justice Healy, or the Indispensable Parnell on the other? Some hundred years, shall we say, at a moderate estimate? When, about the year 2,000, you have your workers acting as one body, where are their representatives to come from? and how long, when once they have got themselves into Parliament and into close contact with the capitalists, will they remain the people's representatives? Let us grant that you induce your masters to establish Payment of Members, and so contrive to return a majority of workers (whilom workers) as your delegates. Will they not soon be bought over, if not (as is most probable) by the gold of the bourgeois, then by his snug sinecures, by the charms (as they will seem) of his society, nay, by admission to his ranks? This is what happens, you know, nowadays, with the men the toilers send to represent them. Even in Germany, where the mis-spent labour of a quarter of a century, of a generation, has succeeded in returning a small minority of Socialists to the Reichstag, are Bebel and Liebknecht themselves the Revolutionists that they were! What good, what atom of good, does the Socialist Party in the German Parliament do for the Cause?

Nay, it is clear enough that, even if in two centuries time we had a faithful majority in Parliament, the ruling bourgeois, who control the executive, would simply make a *coup d'état* and clap that majority in prison,—unless, in accord with their usual hypocrisy, they had cut the Gordian knot by simply vitiating the returns,—as they did in Chicago some years ago, when Socialists were elected at municipal elections. In any case, we may be sure that the possessing classes will not give up their possessions without a struggle. Sooner or later they will fight for them, and, if there is to be a fight, had we not better have it here and now than waste centuries in preliminary Parliamentary skirmishing!

Yet, surely, this is idle talk, at the best. We who, let us hope, are not only Revolutionists but scientific economists also, know well that the economic causes, which (more and more rapidly every day) are forcing on the Great Change, will never wait two hundred years in their operation, or half a hundred. Our duty and our pleasure is to quicken the working of those causes, and not to waste our efforts, as men beating the air, in byways that lead nowhere.

Some of our Fabian friends indeed, wise enough in their own conceit at least, tell us that for our own sakes we should strive to slacken speed, that a "catastrophic" Revolution would be a great evil, and we should endeavour to make the transition easy to the New Society. This may, or may not, be excellent advice from our wise friends. Unfortunately, or fortunately, if the teachings of history be good for aught, we may not follow it, even if we would. All great transitions in the past have, in their final and revolutionary stage, been catastrophic in character. Every sign and portent shows that so it will be with the greatest Transition of all, upon which we have now entered. We should be glad enough, some of us, to avoid the catastrophe, with all the complete economic and social dislocation which must follow it, and which Bernard Shaw has not infelicitously harped upon; but we honestly believe, and are prepared to give grounds for our belief, that the catastrophe must come. The possessing classes could easily destroy our belief, if they would; but they will not. As well might we expect a man-eating tiger to peaceably render up his prey, as ask the rich robber without compulsion to give back his stolen wealth.

Therefore, since we really and truly "love peace and ensue it," let us hasten the coming of the Epoch of Peace by intelligent co-opera-

tion with the great natural forces which are bringing on the great Day of Judgment that must precede it. Such hastening can only be done by Revolutionary action, and certainly not by Parliamentary intrigues. Even so, it may be that we shall, many of us, perish forgotten by the way, and never enter or even look upon the Promised Land. At least, we shall not have lived futile or noxious lives, as if we had entered upon what is known as a "political career."

R. W. BURNIE.

THE GLORIOUS REFORMATION:

OR,

HOW THE ENGLISH PEOPLE WERE EVICTED, ROBBED,
AND MURDERED BY THE RULING CLASSES.

IV.—THE PEOPLE DRIVEN FROM THE LAND.

ALAS! however excellent the Reformation may have been for Henry and his horde of robbers, it was not so for the working people. The beautiful enclosure system was in full swing, and the people were reaping the full benefit of it. It was a commercial age; everyone was turning trader, and the new nobility springing from the trader class were no exception to the rule. The discovery of new countries, the opening up of America, India, and all the countries of the East to trade, had stimulated a great demand for British wool, which was famous all over the world in these days for its goodness. This commodity rose tremendously in price, and the new nobility who crept into the places of the old had set their hearts on getting rich. It paid better to feed sheep than men on their estates, so the men had to make way for sheep. Even the feudal noble was turning into a modern bourgeois aristocrat; he had no mind to keep up his retainers at the risk of heavy fines from the King, so he turned them loose, dismissed them, and they wandered as bands of homeless outcasts all over the country. But now the tenants, the stout yeomen, must be sent after them; so out went the men and in went the sheep, for sheep paid and men did not. It was not like that their fathers had argued. But now let us quote a contemporary witness, a man whose testimony all will respect, even the most bigoted bourgeois. Sir Thomas More, in his famous book, gives us a terrible picture of what went on in England at that time:

"Your sheep that were wont to be so meek and tame, and such small eaters, now, as I hear say, be become so great devourers and so wild, that they eat and swallow down the very men themselves. They consume, destroy, and devour whole fields, houses, and cities. For, look you, in what part of the realm doth grow the finest and dearest wool, there noblemen and gentlemen, yea, and certain abbots, holy men no doubt, not contenting themselves with the yearly revenues and profits that were wont to grow to their forefathers and predecessors in their land, nor being content that they live in rest and pleasure, nothing profiting, yea, much noying the Weal publike, leave no ground for tillage: they enclose all into pasture; they throw down houses; they pluck down towns and leave nothing standing, but only the church to be made a sheep house. And as though you lost no small quantity of ground by forests, chases, lands, and parkes, these good holy men turn all dwelling places and all glebe land into desolation and wilderness.

"Therefore, that one covetous and unsatiable cormorant, and the very plague of his native country, may compass about and inclose many thousands of acres of ground together within one pale or hedge, the husbandmen be thrust out of their own, or else by the cozen and fraud they be put beside it, or by wrongs and injuries they be so wearied that they be compelled to sell all: by one means therefore or by another, either by hook or by crooke, they must needs depart away, poor silly wretched souls, men, women, husbands, wives, fatherless children, widows, woeful mothers, with their young babes, and the whole household small in substance and much in number, as husbandry requireth many hands.

"A way they trudge, I say, out of their known and accustomed houses, finding no place to rest in. All their household stuff, which is very little worth, though it might well abide the sale: yet being suddenly thrust out they be constrained to sell it for a thing of nought. And when they have wandered abroad till that be spent, what can they do but steal, and then justly pardie be hanged, or else go about a-begging. And yet then also they be cast into prison as vagabonds, because they go about and work not; whom no man will set a work, though they ne'er so willingly proffer themselves thereto. For one shepherd or herdman is enough to eat up that ground with cattle, to the occupying thereof; about husbandry many hands were requisite."

There is nothing more pathetic in the whole of English literature than this description of how the English peasants, the happy peasant proprietors of the golden age, were driven from the land they and their forefathers had tilled so diligently and reaped from so abundantly for a hundred and twenty-five years. Any man with a heart that reads, must curse bitterly the rising commercial system that made such atrocities possible. Now let us hear Sir Thomas More on some other evils of the age; let us see the devilish spirit of the rising commercialism. Sir Thomas says:

"And though the number of sheep increase ne'er so fast, yet the price falleth not one mite, because there be so few sellers. For they be almost all come into a few rich men's hands, whom no need forceth to sell before they lust, and they lust not before they fall as dear as they lust. Now the same cause bringeth in like dearth of other kind of cattle, yea, and that so much the more, because that after the farms plucked down and the husbandry decayeth, there is no man that passeth for the breeding of young store: for these rich men bring not up the young ones of great cattle as they do lambs. But first they buy them abroad very cheap, and after when they be fattened in pasture they sell them exceeding dear. . . . Thus the increasing covetousness of a few hath turned that thing to the utter undoing,

in which thing the chief felicity of your realm did consist. For this great dearth of victuals causeth men to keep as little houses, and as small hospitality as they possibly may, and to put away their servants: whither I pray you but a begging; or else which their gentle minds and stout stomachs will sooner set their minds unto stealing."

Then Sir Thomas raises a cry to legislators of the time, a cry as fruitless as most cries to these sublime persons:

"Suffer not rich men to buy up all, to encroach and forestall, and with their monopoly to keep the market alone as it please them. Let not so many be brought up in idleness; let cloth-working be renewed, that there be honest labourers to pass their time profitably, which hitherto either poverty hath caused to be thieves, or else now be either vagabonds or idle serving-men, and shortly will be thieves. Doubtless, unless you find a remedy for these enormities, you shall in vain advance yourself in executing justice upon felons."

From old Hugh Latimer, one of the most bluff and honest of the early reformers, we learn that the worst tyrants and most ruthless oppressors were the rich city merchants, who invested in land as a profitable speculation. Even Green, with all his admiration for the Reformation, admits that "the farming gentlemen and clerking knights," as Latimer bitterly called them, "were restrained by few traditions or associations in their evictions of the smaller tenants." In this they were unlike the old nobility and the monks, whose tenants had been on their estates for generations and generations. Green declares that the land "had been greatly underlet," a clear proof that the remaining old families and the monks were easy landlords, far easier than the commercial gentlemen from the towns. Well, the new proprietors soon corrected the lowness of the rents; they rack-rented the people mercilessly. Latimer says, "that which went heretofore for £20 or £40 a-year, now is let for £50 or a £100." Further on, Latimer tells us:

"My father was a yeoman, and had no lands of his own; only he had a farm of three or four pounds by the year, at the uttermost; hereupon he tilled so much as kept half-a-dozen men. He had walk for a hundred sheep, and my mother milked thirty kine; and he was able and did find the King a harness with himself and his horse, when he came to the place that he should receive the King's wages. I can remember that I buckled his harness when he went to Blackheath field. He kept me to school; he married my sisters with five pounds a-piece, so that he brought them up in godliness and the fear of God. He kept hospitality for his poor neighbours, and some alms he gave for the poor, and all this he did of the same farm, where he that hath it now payeth sixteen pounds by the year or more, and is not able to do anything for his prince, for himself, nor his children, or give a cup of drink to the poor."

And so the game went on; cottages were demolished and thrown down, and the people driven pitilessly off the land. To give an idea of the desolation thus caused, in a proclamation of Edward VI., an official document, it is said, "That in some places where there used to be a 100 or 200 inhabitants, there was then scarcely one poor shepherd, so that the realm thereby was brought to a marvellous desolation. Houses decayed; parishes diminished. The force of the realm was weakened, and Christian people, by the greedy covetousness of some men, eaten and devoured of brute beasts, and driven from their homes by sheep and cattle." And it was the men who did this into whose hands the monks' property and the monks' tenants fell. These poor tenants, who carried the golden age into the sixteenth century, and who had led as easy and happy a life as the worthy fathers themselves, now saw that were about to be devoured by the monsters who had hunted their brothers off the land.

D. J. NICOLL.

CORRESPONDENCE.

I am sure every friend of Liberty is pleased to see the 'Weal' move towards Anarchy, the only thing worth fighting for; the unlimited freedom of each for the freedom of all. The contributors to the present 'Weal' are all Anarchists, and still you do not count amongst Anarchists. I find it very unpleasant sometimes when speaking to French, German, and Italian Anarchists here, having seen me on your platform, where I hope to be heard again, but not as a Socialist. The name has too many side doors, and I would suggest that you should come before the public as Anarchists pure and simple, and change your title of Socialist League into that of Anarchist League, and I am sure our friends in England and abroad would be pleased with a better defined platform. I would ask you to publish this letter in your next number, and accept my Anarchist greetings, A. COULON.

PROLETARIAN LEAGUE, NEW YORK.—On Tuesday, Nov. 25th, 1890, a well attended meeting was held at the headquarters of the League. Comrade Dr. Lunn lectured on "Reminiscences of our Murdered Comrades." A good discussion followed, after which comrade G. W. Reid delivered a short speech; 2 dols. 85 cents. was collected, and two new members were enrolled. Comrade Ullmann also addressed a meeting of the Framers' Union of New York, who sent a subscription of 10 dols. to the club. On Friday the 28th, comrades G. W. Reid, J. F. Herson, and J. Millen appeared before a mass meeting of the Pioneers of Liberty in Orchard Street Hall. The hall was densely packed with Hebrews, Germans, and Bohemians. As the first speaker, G. W. Reid ascended the platform; he was loudly applauded, and every word he uttered was eagerly listened to by men who appeared surprised to see and hear an English Revolutionist. Comrade Herson then spoke with great earnestness, and declared that the time had come for the toilers to use force against force; loud applause followed. After the speakers had ended, the hat was passed round amongst the poorest paid men of New York City, and penny after penny dropped in until 10 dols. was raised for the Proletarians. We cannot hold open-air meetings in this free country, unless we belong to the Salvation Army and discourse upon the General's "Darkest England," but we are doing some active work in the meetings of other parties; neither will we rest content until we have succeeded in upsetting the present system. Whether it has to be done with guns or dynamite matters nothing to us; to all parties we can say, "Ready, aye ready!"

A DEFENCE OF ANARCHIST "VIOLENCE."

WHAT follows is a translation of the speech of our comrade Faure in defending Faugoux. The trial and its result were spoken of in our last issue. The speech seems to me to merit reproduction in the *Commonweal*, but considerations of space compel me to abbreviate it:—

"I am one of those who recognise that abuse is no argument, and I shall follow the President's advice and endeavour to be clear, knowing, as I do know, that correctness of form does not hinder substantial strength.

"Faugoux is no ordinary newspaper publisher—he is not paid to undertake that responsibility. On the contrary, like all our comrades on the staff, he pays. Anarchists have to serve their Cause as they may. Some (there are not many of these) spend their superfluous cash for the Cause, or cut down their necessary expenses; others, who can use a pen, employ that tool to help forward the attack on Capital and Authority; others, who are good at speaking, use their gift of speech for propaganda. Faugoux has neither cash, nor learning, nor eloquence; he has only his goodwill, and accordingly he has placed that good-will at the service of others who can write, and has sheltered them by his name. Faugoux is my friend, and, properly speaking, I am not defending him here to-day, but rather giving an explanation of the reasons which have led him, as they have led me, as they have led all Anarchists, to send a blast of hatred through the world. The Advocate-General has taken a great deal of useless pains to establish that which we openly confess, namely, that *Le Père Peinard* stirs up all the wretched to revolt, that it urges them to solidarity with their fellows, but to war against their governors and masters.

"In other times our attitude would have wanted logic. There was then an insufficiency of products. It was lamentable that each one should seek to feed himself, leaving others to get out of the mess as best they could, but it was natural and regular enough. At the present day, however, the development of machinery and the rapid increase in the wealth-producing power of the soil have so increased humanity's resources, that a just division would assure comfort to every one, and not comfort only but almost luxury. Yet there is no such equitable division, and we see side by side men perish of hunger while others burst with over-abundance. We notice, too, that they who lack all things, who are badly lodged, badly clothed, badly fed, whom disease strikes down and whom death watches for, are precisely they who produce the things which make life easy, they who grow the corn, they who weave the cloth, they who get the coal, they who build the mansions. On the other hand, they who lack nothing, who are sumptuously housed, luxuriously clothed, well nourished, whom careful nursing cures when they are ill, who live the longest lives, are those who make others work for them. Moreover, the gap between these two extremes is ever widening; for the social phenomenon of our times is Concentration. The capitalist grows richer every day, the manufacturer builds bigger and bigger factories, the landlord adds field to field, and the great Army of Starvation has every day new recruits.

"Society is divided into three classes. Up above are the money-lords, whether their money be represented by cash, by factories, or by lands. Down below are the people who possess nothing, who do not know at bedtime whether they will eat on the morrow. Between the two extremes is an intermediate class, a very interesting class, but a class very badly armed for the war. In face of the great establishments of the present day, of the limited companies, of the syndicates of manufacturers, of the universal providers and the great stores, of what use is the personal endeavour of the little shopkeeper or the small employer? By a vast and world-wide movement the riches of this intermediate class are pumped up, so to speak, to swell the coffers of the money-lords, while the individual members of the class are cast down to the lower depths, among the wage-earners. So is fulfilled the prophecy of J. B. Say (who was not a revolutionist, by the way): 'Riches and poverty advance on two parallel lines.' The movement is fatal, not to be avoided. In that movement is the *Revolution*. Think of it, gentlemen of the jury! We are quickly approaching the time when up above there will be a few capitalists, and down below the great body of the wage-earners and the wealthless,—clerks, workmen, proletarians, and rag-muffins. What will have become of you? Each individual among you may hope to keep your riches and your independence; but the great majority of you will be cast back among the disinherited workers and starvelings. Only the spirit of revolt will be stronger in you than in them; since having once known ease you will seek to get it back, and, as you have had the advantage of a sufficient education, you will know that you can get it back.

"However, gentlemen, observe carefully that we are no longer attacked for our ideas. We are, indeed, treated as Utopians and dreamers; but the legitimacy of our claims and the beauty of our ideal are admitted. Only people cannot agree with our exaltation of violence, with our disdain for Universal Suffrage, with our talk of slaughter, fire, and pillage. This calls for an explanation.

"Those who to-day are the governing classes, who owe their own emancipation to successive revolts, now condemn the violence they for long glorified, so often as it was directed against the nobles whose places they have taken. Those whom violence has made strong are never tired of repeating, 'Revolt is useless; it is worse, it is criminal now that with the ballot-box you can declare your claims and vindicate your rights!'

"Well, gentlemen, it may be convenient to examine the utility of this weapon of the oppressed, which they style 'Universal Suffrage.'

"This piece of jugglery has for its object and result the making men into voluntary slaves. Under the Parliamentary system authority ceases to belong to one individual only, but is lodged in one Assembly or in several Assemblies. I should like to know whether a man who is under government, is less under government because he is oppressed by 500 instead of by one? Whether authority come from above or below, whether it be based on right divine or on man-made law, whether it derive its title from an aristocracy or from the people, is it the less authority, that is to say, the right of some to command and the duty of the masses to obey? . . .

"The idiotic, inept, irrational law of the majority is still Law, that is to say Force. No longer mere brute force, that is true. In our times the advance of science, the extension of human knowledge, the uncheckable spirit of inquiry, have rendered mere brute force impossible of application. Yet it is still the masked force which is based on sophism. That disguised force is only the more oppressive and dangerous, because it gives an illusive freedom to the enslaved crowd.

"So much for the principle of the thing.

"Facts gained from forty years' experience enable us to affirm that experiment justifies this estimate of the Parliamentary system.

"Workers fancied (and intriguers persuaded them that it was so) that on the day when a certain number of men from the bench, or of persons styling themselves Revolutionary Socialists, should penetrate into the deliberative assemblies, their needs would find in the new comers eloquent apostles and incorruptible advocates.

"The innocent workers were not acquainted with the law by which an animal becomes assimilated to his surroundings. . . . Now it is impossible for the most apparently honest of men not to be corrupted by the gangrened and rotten surroundings of Parliamentary Assemblies—"

"I cannot allow you to speak in this fashion," interrupted the hoarse voice of Horteloup, President of the Court.

The Advocate-General chimed in: "The defending advocate is answering a speech for the prosecution which he imagines I made, but which I never made. I never said anything of Parliamentary Assemblies, — never, never!"

Faure continued: "The Advocate-General is all wrong. I was only authorised at the last moment to defend our comrade Faugoux, and I have prepared nothing beforehand. Under such circumstances it is not usual with us Anarchists to trouble ourselves about the speech for the prosecution."

"However, I perceive that the Advocate-General is anxious for me to come to the count which charges incitement to military insubordination. I will give him the satisfaction he desires.

"The army, gentlemen, is composed (in the ranks at least) of proletarians snatched from the workshop, the field, and the factory, of men taken by force from their homes and made prisoners in barracks for years. The army, from our point of view, is a school of brutishness and slavery—"

At this point the President imperatively required Faure to desist, and the latter concluded as follows:

"Since I may not touch upon the army, or the Chamber of Deputies, or anything else that this Court holds holy, I can only keep silence. To take any other line, to water down my beliefs, would not please Faugoux, who would be indignant with me did I express myself differently. . . ."

R. W. B.

Poor Careworn Capitalists!

We cull from the *Manchester Examiner* the following instances of the monetary wealth amongst the careworn anxious capitalists, chiefly of Lancashire and Yorkshire, the field of sweated child and female labour:

	£		£
J. M. Morgan	2,022,054	D. Carnegie	496,000
C. R. Talbot, M.P.	1,388,617	Anthony Parkin	450,762
Samuel Feilden	1,168,615	Henry Oxley	420,286
C. Allhusen	1,126,854	D. Davies	404,000
Sir R. Wallace	1,000,000	E. Bolitho	390,000
T. A. Walker	982,000	C. F. Young	349,000
R. C. L. Bevan	953,000	Joshua Heap	332,000
C. Noble	929,000	Henry Maden	327,000
John Clayton	728,746	A. Knowles	317,000
E. Lloyd	563,022	T. Braithwaite	289,000
Sir T. Moss	506,000	Rev. H. S. Watkins	251,000

Pen Picture of our Present Social System.

What is taking place to-day? Look! and you will see cheerless homes; men and women struggling for existence and vainly seeking employment; others refusing to work because of insufficiency of wages; women throwing up employment that will not pay to enter dens of vice, where soul and body are destroyed, and where all that is base and brutal in human nature is developed. Society shuts its eyes and affects not to see the terrible things in the very heart of civilisation, as if by so doing it could shut out their destructive influences. Slowly, but surely, the poisonous elements of moral corruption are poisoning the atmosphere. The palace is no more exempt than the hovel. We have learned to guard against the dangers of infectious diseases by keeping the poison germs out, but against the greater danger of moral disease we raise no cry of warning. What would we think if we were told that in one of our populous cities yellow fever or cholera held high carnival, sweeping its victims off by thousands, while adjacent cities paid no attention to the evil in their midst? Yet this is what we are doing in the moral world. Vice in all its hideous proportions is holding high carnival, and the cultured and refined, absorbed in themselves and their trifling pleasures, narrow their vision to their surroundings and remain utterly indifferent to the moral decadence and death of others. We are yet to realise the brotherhood of the race, in all its profound and even terrible significance, and know that the salvation of one is dependent upon that of all.—*Mrs. Imogene C. Fales.*

Lopping Branches.

Writing of the revolts of the slaves in ancient Rome, James Bronterre O'Brien says that the slaves never rose against slavery itself, but only against what they considered an abuse of it. It never appears to have occurred to them that there was anything inherently wrong with slavery as an institution. That one man should own other men and be at liberty to dispose of their persons and their labour as he chose seemed to them a perfectly natural and proper thing. The essence of slavery was then, as it is now, the ownership by one man of the product of the labour of another, and there are men now whose labour is owned by others who have no more conception of the intrinsic wrong and wickedness of this than had the slaves who rose against their masters under Eunus, Athenio, or Spartacus. In ninety-nine strikes out of every hundred, those engaged aim not at their emancipation, but merely at what they consider the abuse of the wage-slavery system; they do not demand—do not dream of demanding—that henceforth they and not their masters shall be the owners of their labour, but only that the conditions shall be made more endurable. Take the Eight Hour movement, while a few see in it a means to an end—a way whereby the toilers may obtain leisure to inform themselves, and thus be able to win true freedom—the vast majority see only a bettering of their condition as wage-workers, a padding of the collar, an easing of the yoke. The vast majority of the wage-workers, like the chattel slaves of ancient times, do not dream of such a thing as that it is inherently wrong for others to own their labour. It is necessary that the conscience not of employers only but of the workers as well shall be awakened to the inherent wrong of the ownership of labour. This is a matter which labour reformers cannot too earnestly impress upon the public, for until there is an awakening of the public conscience upon this matter but little real headway can be made.—*Journal of the Knights of Labour.*



NOTICE TO SUBSCRIBERS AND EXCHANGES.

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

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

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Periodicals received during the month ending Wednesday, January 24, 1891.

ENGLAND	New York— <i>Freiheit</i>	SWITZERLAND
Belfast Weekly Star	Boston— <i>Woman's Journal</i>	Arbeiterstimme
Die Autonomie	Boston— <i>Liberty</i>	Bulletin Continental
Justice	Investigator	ITALY
Labour Tribune	Chicago— <i>Rights of Labour</i>	Palermo— <i>Avanti</i>
People's Press	Vorbote	SPAIN
Railway Review	Detroit— <i>Der Arme Teufel</i>	Madrid— <i>El Socialista</i>
Seafaring	Essex (Cal)— <i>Commonwealth</i>	Madrid— <i>La Anarquía</i>
Worker's Friend	Philadel.— <i>Knights of Labour</i>	PORTUGAL
Free Russia	Peterson Labour Standard	Porto— <i>A Revolucao Social</i>
La Tribune Libre	S.F.— <i>Coast Seamen's Journal</i>	GERMANY
Manchester Examiner	San Francisco Arbeiter Zeitung	Berlin— <i>Volks Tribune</i>
NEW SOUTH WALES	St. Louis (Mo.)— <i>Die Parole</i>	Halberstadt, <i>Sonntags-Zeitung</i>
Sydney— <i>Bulletin</i>	FRANCE	AUSTRIA
Sydney— <i>Truth</i>	Paris— <i>Bourse du Travail</i>	Vienna— <i>Arbeiter-Zeitung</i>
Adelaide— <i>Quiz</i>	Le Parti Ouvrier	Brunn— <i>Arbeiterstimme</i>
VICTORIA	Le Proletaire	HUNGARY
Melbourne— <i>Bull Ant</i>	Charleville— <i>L'Emancipation</i>	Arbeiter-Wochen-Chronik
QUEENSLAND	Lille— <i>Le Cri du Travailleur</i>	DENMARK
Brisbane— <i>Boomerang</i>	Rouen— <i>Le Salariat</i>	Copenhagen— <i>Arbejderen</i>
UNITED STATES	Lyon— <i>L'Action Sociale</i>	SWEDEN
New York— <i>Truthseeker</i>	HOLLAND	Malmö— <i>Arbetet</i>
Volkzeitung	Hague— <i>Recht voor Allen</i>	ARGENTINE REPUBLIC
Volks Listy	BELGIUM	Buenos Ayres— <i>Vorwarts</i>
Freie Arbeiter Stimme	Antwerp— <i>De Werker</i>	El Perseguido
Voice	Ghent— <i>Vooruit</i>	
The World		

THE "COMMONWEAL."

Whilst thanking the many friends and comrades who have volunteered their sympathy and help during the present crisis, we wish to assure all that no efforts will be spared to resume the Weekly Issue at the earliest opportunity. We by no means despair of being able to do so if our comrades will but rally round at this juncture. The 'COMMONWEAL' now is entirely dependent upon the support of working-men. The cold and wet weather lessens our sale by stopping all outdoor meetings. The expenses of our removal, and the fitting up of new premises, have been very heavy, and we shall have great difficulty in keeping even the Monthly Issue going through the winter months, unless comrades and friends subscribe liberally to the 'COMMONWEAL' Guarantee Fund. We, therefore, earnestly appeal to all who sympathise with our work to help us to the best of their ability.—EDITORS.

NOTES OF THE SCOTTISH RAILWAY STRIKE.

THE strike of railway men in Scotland has quite confounded the capitalist classes; they never for a moment dreamed apparently that any body of workmen could by simply ceasing to work so disorganise and threaten with ruin all their gigantic factories and beautifully schemed commercial arrangements. Yet the strike of some 7,000 railway men—a mere handful of the working-class—has done all this and in addition has threatened the country with a food and coal famine!

Our entire industrial and social system has, during the last quarter of a century, become dependent upon railway traffic to an extent that few people realised until this strike began. The stoppage of probably no other branch of labour could so suddenly and terribly paralyse the industry and menace the very existence of the community.

Consequently, the capitalists and the capitalist press are fairly aghast at the revelation, and are especially wroth at the fact that the workers have had their eyes opened to the power which they can at any moment wield against their oppressors.

The fact that the men quitted their work unlawfully, without giving any notice to the companies, constitutes one of the most irritating points to the capitalists in the whole affair. It is, however, to us one of the pleasantest features of the strike. Of course, the companies are powerless to do more than prosecute a few of the strikers as "examples."

The formal demands of the strikers have not excited much interest. They are of themselves not worth fighting for. It has, however, been recognised on all sides that the significance of the struggle lies not in the demands of the men or in the men themselves, but in the representative and clearly defined character of combat as a stand-up fight between Capital and Labour.

Scottish Socialists of all kinds have participated actively in the struggle. In Glasgow, the headquarters of the Amalgamated Railway Servant's executive, none, outside the members of the executive itself, have wrought harder in the interests of the men than some of our comrades.

Haddow, Carson, Brodie, Sinclair, and Warrington, Socialist members of the Trades Council, and Glasier of the Socialist League, every night for four weeks were out to three o'clock in the morning speaking at meetings and visiting the men on picket duty.

It is gratifying to note our comrades have been everywhere heartily received, their Socialist teaching and rebellious utterances meeting with hearty approval from men who, in most instances, had never before heard anything approaching Socialism at labour meetings.

A foul was made in the strike at the end of the first week by the men of the Glasgow and South-Western Railway returning to work. The cowardly conduct of these men, who seemed quaking every day that they were out on strike lest their jobs would be given to others, demoralised many men belonging to the other systems. These South-Western men had never, however, been very enthusiastic, and were mostly drawn from a part of the country where social and political agitation has not been much pushed. The North British men have stood out the best, the traffic on that system being almost totally stopped for about four weeks.

Haddow, who along with Brodie and Glasier, went to Motherwell to "prepare" the people for the evictions, brought down quite a deluge of editorial abuse upon his head by his frank advice to the women "to take out the bed-bottoms, barricade their doors and windows, and at the same time have a pot of boiling water ready so that nobody should enter the houses without doing at least £50 damage to the Company's property, and as much more to his own skin."

Only a few of the evictions were carried out, the hostility of the people becoming dangerously manifest. The fact that the Riot Act had to be read, and that the mob wrecked a signal cabin and completely destroyed the glass roof of the railway station, are rather promising signs.

The arrival of John Burns in Scotland gave the strike a new impetus. Although the fierceness of the mere conflict made it impossible almost to excite interest in the wider Labour Question and Socialism, it is due to Burns to say that he did his best to raise the struggle above the narrow issue of the moment. Denounced with a ferocity almost unparalleled by the capitalist press, and labelled everywhere as "Socialist Burns," he was yet received by the Scotch strikers and workmen generally with unbounded enthusiasm.

Whatever may be the immediate outcome of the strike, there can be little doubt but the agitation will exercise a highly beneficial effect on the minds of the workers generally. It has created a vast interest in the labour problem, and the impress of many of the speeches delivered during the struggle will be found in future economic events in Scotland.

J. B. G.

NOTES.

WHILST the poor are perishing of want around us, and juries composed of counter prigs are recording verdicts "in accordance with the medical evidence adduced" at the inquests held on the remains of those done to death by our civilisation, two members of the rich robber class have taken their departure from this world. Their respective obituaries fill columns of the daily press. Neither did anything in particular beyond receiving rents, the produce of other men's labour, but being dukes their exit must needs be noticed by the scribes of Fleet Street.

It is very interesting to be informed of the extent of several estates, of the length of their pedigree, and the nature of their property. The Duke of Bedford, as the owner of a vast metropolitan estate yielding thousands weekly, must, in common with the other aristocratic land thieves who own the soil of London, often congratulate themselves upon the good fortune which provides a population like the English, who uncomplainingly pay toll and rent to the descendants of panders and pimps, as in the case of one of the deceased dukes.

An obliging courtier waited upon the wants and tastes of that pattern of virtue, Henry VIII., and received his reward in the shape of grants from the stolen monastery lands. To-day a teeming population, who sing "Britons never shall be slaves" upon the slightest provocation, pay rack-rents to the obliging courtier's descendants. Nay, more, they build and keep in repair the houses which the obliging descendant of an obliging ancestor accepts at their hands at the expiry of their leases, when they become *his* property. Seeing the plastic nature of this amiable population, the landlords might with Warren Hastings well wonder at their own moderation.

The ordinary opponent of Socialism, who has got it into his head that Socialism means taking of the fruits of labour and bestowing it upon the idle, might study with advantage the curious spectacle of hereditary law-givers, who have stolen square miles of houses and land, making laws which consigns the vulgar pickpocket to jail.

It now appears that the ducal owner of Bloomsbury committed suicide. It is a pity that the coroneted land thieves cannot be induced to follow this laudable example of the deceased Duke. F. K.

Our readers will see that Bruce Glasier supplies some excellent notes concerning the Scottish strike, but there is one thing I think it necessary to call general attention to. The rioting at Motherwell, which some of the strike leaders of the old school were so anxious to disown, has saved many a family from eviction. After the Caledonian Company had seen what the stalwart miners of Hamilton could do with volleys of stones, they thought the "law had been vindicated sufficiently," and they gave up evicting their rebellious servants. And why? Because they knew very well this dastardly devilish work could only be completely successful by shooting down the brave workmen who defended the women and children against the attacks of these cowardly capitalists.

Let the workers learn a lesson from this. These directors are only a type of the mass of the middle-class. They have no philanthropy, no care for the masses of the people. The workers may slave their hearts out toiling day and night for starvation wages, and their masters are perfectly satisfied. But let the people rebel in ever such a peaceful fashion, and the masters at once determine not only to starve them out, but they use all the forces of law to turn them out of their lowly homes to drive them like whipped curs back to their slavery again. But let the workers protest with blocks of granite, and the capitalist bully is cowed at once. Fear is the only emotion that softens the hearts of our tyrants, and if every workman had the courage of the men who fought the troops and police at Motherwell, the slavery of the people would soon be ended.

What applies to capitalists is true also of blacklegs. A thing who is sneak and coward enough to crawl into another man's place to take the bread out of the mouths of his wife and family, cannot be appealed to by argument or persuasion directed to his "better feelings." "Better feelings!" He has none. If he had he would never have become a blackleg. The only thing he cares about is his own skin, and when he knows that a continuance in his evil courses means getting his skull smashed in by a stone or a brickbat, or having every bone in his body broken by those who are anxious to convince him of the error of his ways, then there is some chance of his conversion.

We are glad to see that the Scottish strikers are adopting these invincible arguments. They are taking the very sensible advice of John Burns, and are putting "a little more devil into the strike." It is only a pity it was not done long before. If every blackleg knew that he was endangering his life by working on the North British or Caledonian Railways, blacklegs would have been as scarce as they were during the great strike in Wales, and long ere this the men would have gained an easy victory. Meanwhile, let workmen remember that the best way to deal with capitalists and blacklegs is to put the fear of man into their hearts.

We note that blacklegs in London and Scotland are beginning to arm themselves. It is time the strikers followed such an admirable example. Don't let all the corpses be on one side! We like to see fair fighting!

Our friend Mrs. Besant (a while ago one would have said our comrade Annie Besant) has been exonerating herself from a charge of lukewarmness in propaganda by attacking the *Commonweal* for its advocacy of "physical violence." We of the *Weal* are only individually responsible for what we ourselves individually write. For myself, what I have advocated and shall continue to advocate—even if all the wisdom of Thibet pronounce to the contrary—is abstention from all "political" action and the organisation of the Universal Strike. In the meantime, if workers are attacked by the forces of capitalism, by all means let them actively resist oppression, if they can do so with a fair prospect of even temporary success. Our middle-class foes, it may be observed, seldom hesitate to resort to physical violence against us. Indeed, their whole brutal system of society is based upon force and nothing else.

Mrs. Besant, it appears, although revolting with all her bourgeois soul from our revolutionary policy, is only a little less repelled by her sordid allies of the Fabian Society and the S.D.F., who are becoming more and more a mere political party. She dislikes very much indeed the dirty tricks which seem essential to political success, and repudiates what she regards as the immoral doctrine of the Social Democrats, that "whoso wills the end wills the means." Yet she seemingly recognises that there are only two ways of speeding the Revolution,—the one by political action, the other by what she is pleased to call "physical violence." As she rejects either way, she, for her part, intends to confine herself to teaching of economic principle and to the School Board and women's unions.

This is all very nice and pleasant for middle-class people; but surely Annie Besant does not expect it to go down with the workers. Are they, forsooth, to placidly wait until the immense majority of all classes is ready to willingly consent to the establishment of Socialism? This is the course which the apostle of Mme. Blavatsky would seem to urge on them. Who are the Utopians and the dreamers,—we who press the toilers to work out their own salvation, by force if necessary, or the esoteric Theosophists who would advise them rather to tarry until the rich robbers voluntarily surrender their prey? I should have thought this a question easy enough to answer. However, I am possibly wrong—since I have no illumination from Asiatic "Mahatmas," and I do not believe that Blavatsky has been "sent by the Masters" (whoever they may be).

The great Scotch Strike is dealt with elsewhere, and I do not propose to speak of it here, but one is naturally anxious to take an early opportunity of saying how glad one is to see John Burns back again on his true field of battle, away from the evil influences of County Councils and Parliamentary platforms. It did one's heart good to read his denunciation of the slavish superstition known as "reverence for law," a superstition which exercises quite as benumbing an influence in the South as in the North. In this speech we found the old Burns—he who once was the "man with the red flag"—no longer puffed up with the wonderful discovery that middle-class people have their own red-tape methods of conducting what they call business, but preaching in eloquent fashion the principle of revolt. If one single word adverse to Burns has ever been said by the present writer, that word has only referred to Burns as a follower of the political will-o'-the-wisp. It is a thousand pities that a man of his revolutionary vigour should give up to Main Drainage Committees (soon we may hope to be swept away by the coming storm) energies which should be devoted to active and direct hastening of the Great Change.

As was briefly noticed last month, Mr. Auberger Herbert is another of the superfine and superior persons who are shocked by our "violence." The present writer has drawn down upon himself an especial remonstrance, because he has spoken of "fanning the class war into a blaze which shall fire the world." Mr. Herbert, who, at least, is always courteous, regrets that he has mislaid a note sent to him upon the matter, and invites its repetition. This, however, will be as convenient a place as any to put briefly the justification for phrases so full of ill omen to the bourgeois ear.

The matter is simple enough. So long as the present system lasts, so long (as Karl Marx, for one, has demonstrated) must the "class-war" between bourgeois and proletarian continue. Indeed, wherever you have classes, there you have necessarily some more or less veiled class war. How is this last bitterest class war of all to be finished for ever? It can never end so long as the bourgeois has and the proletarian has not. Will the middle-class man terminate it by abandoning his property, and everywhere voluntarily becoming a worker? No such war in history has ever ended in that way. What remains then but so to stimulate the conflict that he who in the long run must, by economic evolution, prove the weaker combatant, viz., the bourgeois, may be the sooner overcome and destroyed.

Since only two classes now remain, the destruction of one of them will leave but one class alive, mankind at large; that is, in other words, will abolish classes and finish the war between them. This

destruction of the bourgeoisie as a class will naturally involve the destruction of present society, the "firing of the world." Personally, I do not particularly desire any extensive abolition of individual bourgeois. For one thing, their demeanour "on the morrow of the Revolution" will probably be exquisitely funny. As for Mr. Auberger Herbert, I daresay he would soon make himself at home.

It is quite time that comrades were making preparations for the coming First of May. There is every indication on the Continent that the ensuing Labour Day will eclipse the first one. Even Social Democrats are this time falling into line. One may trust that our legalists here will not repeat their blunder of last year, but this time will join us in a week-day demonstration, and not spoil the International character of the movement by contenting themselves with a Sunday promenade under police patronage. Hard-worked indeed must be the wage-slave who does not take one day in the year beyond those given him by his master. This May let us all take our day together, and bring home to every boss in the world his utter helplessness without "his hands."

Our comrade Mendelsohn has been warning the British public that the Russian police have been good enough to transfer a portion of their attention from Paris to London, and that we may therefore shortly expect to hear of sham dynamite plots here. I fear that the manufacture of sham conspiracies of this kind is a branch of business not confined to Russian or even to American bobbies. Police methods are very much the same in all lands, and so long as the "copper" exists, so long will his "nark" flourish. Probably the runners of the show would find him as useful an animal in Bellamy's ideal commonwealth as Chief Commissioners find him now. R. W. B.

THOUGHTS OF A RAGAMUFFIN.

[MOSTLY IN BRACKETS.]

I.

STARVATION A STIMULANT.

THERE is nothing like starvation to make a fellow enjoy a good dinner. Mind you, I am not talking of that quarter-of-an-hour's wanting to eat, which the rich folks are said to feel after a nice drive (by the way, they seem to be driven in idleness, whilst you and I are driven to work; isn't it funny?) after a nice drive, I say, in the park, and which they call appetite. No, I am not talking of that. What I mean is, honest straightforward starvation, with no nonsense about it; starvation, after the style of "slack" Bethnal Green; starvation, such as one might chance to experience if one were to discharge his or her duties towards his or her stomach on a sort of weekly (and weakly) payment system. Ever tried it? I did.

What is that? Oh, I see! You want to know who I am. Legitimate desire, but cannot be satisfied. Similar to desire of Unemployed anti-Workhouse people to eat. There is, of course, a name in my case just as there is food in theirs, but the wish somehow cannot be met. Why? I never give any reasons for anything; they are my only property, with the sole exception, perhaps, of my newly-acquired cold, and I mean to stick to them. Understand! I say! don't you turn to the end of my article; you won't find anything there, save a blank line, and even that is not quite certain, for my fame may reach the heirs of Beecham, and induce them to get their pills in at the most interesting part of my composition, which the end is sure to be. No name, then! Like the writers on the British dailies, I am virtuous, truthful, verbose, but nameless.

I repeat. (Confound my digressions! They are a curse to everybody except the stationer and the printer—I repeat.) There is nothing in this world—know very little about the other one, never having been there—which make a fellow enjoy a good dinner so much as a dose of starvation. Spoke to several "Have-got-no-work-to-do" people (His Grace the Duke of Westminster was not amongst them) who said they might have tried upon a good dinner the effects of the stimulant in question, but for the fact that they did not see where the good dinner was to come from.

I should, however, like to know what on earth put a good dinner into my head! No misunderstandings, if you please! I do not mean into my head through the large opening (and the girl I loved used to tell me it was a very large opening) in the face of it, for the state of my finances precludes the barest possibility of such a thing. Oh, no! I am speaking figuratively, as the fat parson explained when he was asked by somebody for a brotherly share in something, on the strength of the Universal Brotherhood which the reverend gentleman had been preaching from the pulpit. . . . But I am digressing again. I was wondering what made me think of a good dinner? Well, I still am. If I find it out, I will let you know. Meanwhile, let us talk of something else.

I have been reading last night an article about large fortunes (by the way, who was the miscreant who first applied the word "fortune" to ill-acquired wealth? It is a shameful, hypocritical word, and I do hate it. But let me go on.) I was saying that I have been reading an article about large fortunes left by various rich people during last year. It was in the *Pall Mall Gazette* (the lay brother-in-law of the *War Cry*), and a wonderful piece of reading I found it to be. Just fancy! No less than 68 persons died possessed, in the aggregate, of

£27,095,109, or, on an average, about £400,000 a-piece, apart from real estate, which many of them also left behind, as there seems to be nothing like our Estate Agencies, no more then there is a Money-Market in the dominions of His Satanic Majesty, whither those worthies have repaired.

Seven-and-twenty millions left by 68 men! Can the toilers realise what that means? Or have the ministers of Mammon, who preside over the dispensation of knowledge, really made it impossible for a worker to get at the meaning of such a fact? Why, such a sum would be enough to maintain the great national ornament at Windsor for another 60 years, supposing Crowns do not drop out of fashion by that time. It would be enough to civilise all the remaining barbarous races on the face of the globe, and to establish pubs, clubs, and shoddy-ware stores in the darkest spots of "Darkest Africa." It would be sufficient to convert all promoters of public companies into something resembling honest men. It would suffice to provide the whole of Europe with an aldermanic dinner, cigars and wine included. It would—

Stay! I have it! It was this that made me think of a good dinner.

Good-bye!

INTERNATIONAL NOTES.

ARGENTINE REPUBLIC.

We have received the twelfth number of *El Perseguido* (December 21st, 1890). The Buenos Ayres middle-classes would seem to be pretty well frightened by the bold course of propaganda upon which our Anarchist-Communist comrades in that city have now entered. "The terror," says *El Perseguido*, "which is gaining possession of the bourgeoisie is so intense, that a middle-class man hardly dares to go abroad lest his disordered vision should present to him in the guise of some ragged workman one of those Anarchists who dart dynamite bombs from their eyes, mouths, nostrils, and ears. . . . The only thing spoken of is Anarchy and the Social Revolution." Here, as elsewhere, the very bourgeois press is compelled to speak of the Social Revolution, so that the people, who are sick of politicians and governors, may listen to the writers.

FRANCE.

The French lawyers are still engaged in sending our comrades to prison. Let us hope that the day of reckoning for these scoundrels is coming soon. In the department of the "Upper Alps" our comrade Pierre Martin, who has been lying in prison since May last, has been at last brought to trial upon a charge of advising the Gap workers to display all their energy during the May happenings. The judges were good enough to prove their impartiality to their own satisfaction by assigning a gratuitous advocate to our comrade, an advocate who (according to the *Barcelona Productor*) did as little for his client as he well could. Our comrade, however, spoke up manfully for himself, especially addressing the young bourgeois who were present in large numbers. "To you," he said, "I address a last summons—to you who are yet young and mayhap have hearts not altogether corrupted by the noxious joys to be procured by gold—that hateful monstrosity. Do you, who have not been educated in misery's school, who know only the sunny side of life, apply yourselves to observation and reflection, and so learn that you too are criminals like older middle-class folk (although perhaps unconscious criminals), since your happiness is the result of our sufferings, your independence means our slavery, your joys and pleasures spring from our bitter pains. We, for our parts, are not willing to continue slaves, we are not willing to longer suffer, still less to longer weep. We will no longer be beasts of burden; we have resolved to enjoy some of that comfort to which we have a better right than you, since we produce it, whilst you rather hinder its production. For this reason it is that I address myself to you, crying to you: Hasten to enter our ranks, come and work with us for the emancipation of humanity, and cast aside the privileges which dishonour you in the eyes of those who understand true dignity. By taking such a course you will not condemn yourselves to a life of privation and mortification,—rather you will find that, working to help so just a cause, you have gained great material pleasure and much moral elevation. But if you are deaf to our summons, if you obstinately shut your eyes to the truth, it will be the worse for you. The Social Revolution is at hand, and without doubt you will all be swept away by that beneficent and air-clearing hurricane." Our comrade was sentenced to three years' imprisonment and five of exile.

The *Père Peinard* still rears aloft the Red Flag, despite the condemnation of its responsible publisher. The number for the 1st of January is double the usual size, and it is hoped, with a little support from comrades, to keep the paper on this scale.

Most of the various strikes of which I spoke last month are still afoot,—notably the interesting strike at Revin, where the Government of the Republic still finds it necessary to employ its soldiers to intimidate the people. Foreign toilers are "expelled" on the slightest pretext, or on no pretext at all. Even women are threatened with expulsion. Nothing of the kind has been witnessed before—not even in the days of the Empire. The strikers on their side are resorting to the weapon of boycotting with much success.

The "Allemaneist" section of the late Possibilist party would seem to be drifting in an anti-Parliamentary direction. Arcés-Sacré in the *Parti Ouvrier* for January 16th says: "We believe we should all make a considerable step in the direction of union and concentration of Socialist forces if we were to take less interest in electoral campaigns, as sterile as they are costly, and first devote ourselves to propaganda of our ideas. We should thus free ourselves from leaders like Lavy and Brousse, who play the god, and free ourselves also from ambitious persons of the second order who gravitate around the greater lights. These men, who are politicians rather than Socialists, get us into trouble with various little rings, and land us in intrigues which exhaust and enervate our party, distracting it from its one object,—the emancipation of the toilers."

The *Revolte* began the year with a good review of 1890, drawing special attention to the vague unconscious ferment which has everywhere shown itself among the workers.

ITALY.

I fear our Socialist and Anarchist comrades in this country have forgotten us of the 'Weal, or have mayhap credited the lies of the capitalist press

welcoming our decease. I have no exchanges to hand these past six weeks or more, which is a pity, since I should like to have given an account of the congress of all Italian Socialists at Lugano. We have indeed received the *Avanti* of Palermo, but this "Radical-Democratic" journal is not so interesting as our good friend *Reynolds*. Hence one may easily conceive that it is dull indeed.

MALTA.

In this British possession there seems to be as much rampant tyranny and oppression as in most places. A correspondent of the *Paris Révolte* says: "One should come here to see the cowardly scoundrelism of the thieving English bourgeois in its full vigour. Every engagement to the people is broken, and under pretence of the 'Protectorate' the most hideous slavery flourishes. Ninety per cent. of the Maltese are unable to read, and out of 150,000 inhabitants, 30,000 are domestic servants, 17,000 soldiers, and 1,000 or more either beggars or else replete monopolists, foreign or native. The rest of the population are miserable proletarians, clever tillers of the soil, but completely stupefied and dulled by their slavery. Malta is a vast barrack seasoned with priests and Jesuits. The statue of Ignatius Loyola adorns the square in front of the University. Blasphemy is punished; the simple expression of Atheist opinions is prosecuted. Socialists are persecuted here even more than elsewhere; but Jesuits expelled from Italy and other countries are masters of everybody. We are directly governed by England, yet we are the refuge of old Bourbonists from Naples. For myself, I do not know a more anti-human country. Merlino has been expelled. I have already been twice arrested." What do our kind and sympathetic Radical friends say to these statements? Good Mr. Labouchere, please note.

PORTUGAL.

A Revolução Social (the first really Revolutionary Portuguese paper) has been celebrating its third birthday. The editors sum up their programme as follows: "Objects: 1. Abolition of Authority and Government—Freedom, Anarchy. 2. Abolition of Divinity—Atheism, Humanity. 3. Abolition of Fatherland—The Earth for All. 4. Abolition of Private Property—Communism. 5. Abolition of Written Law—Natural Law. 6. Abolition of Marriage—Free Love. 7. Complete Triumph of Humanity made illustrious by Science. Method—Revolution and Social Liquidation."

The Lisbon Congress, composed of 300 workers' delegates from all parts of the Peninsula, has unanimously decided for a stoppage of work on the next First of May. R. W. B.

A WELL-DESERVED SNUB.

It appears that our old friend, Tom McCarthy, has been airing some of his crude prejudices anent foreigners at a meeting of seamen in Hull, and provoked the following retort from J. H. Wilson, of the Seaman's and Fireman's Union:

"Previous to supporting the resolution, I would just like to say, in answer to a remark which fell from my friend McCarthy with respect to foreigners, that I do not agree with him in the remarks which he has made with reference to Germans and others. I believe that the sailors and firemen have had as much to do with foreign competition as any class of working-men in this country. If foreigners have been imported, and if foreigners are working in this country to-day, I believe you will find ten to one more in the mercantile marine than in any other industry in this country, and my opinion of foreigners is this, that when you take the foreigner by the hand—whether he be a German, a Dane, a Swede, or a Norwegian—and you get that man to combine with you in your union, I will wager ten to one that you will find the contributions of the German, or the Swede, or the Dane, are there to date, and sometimes many months in advance of the date. (Applause.) And I further venture to say that the foreigners—and I think I ought to be proud to say it—that the foreigners were the foundation-stone of our union. (Applause.) It was much easier to get foreigners to join the National Sailors' and Firemen's Union than it was to get our own countrymen at the commencement."

Of course McCarthy, as his name implies, is thoroughly English you know. F. K.

SWEATERS!

To CONTRIBUTORS—Workmen could help us greatly by sending in accounts of capitalist tyranny and sweating in London and the provinces. We want the names of the sweaters. Those who write must send us their name and address, not necessarily for publication, but as a guarantee of good faith. We shall not fear to publish the truth.—Eds.

"COMMONWEAL" GUARANTEE FUND.

	£	s.	d.		£	s.	d.
H. R. C. N.	1	0	0	C. E. Ford	0	5	0
B. R. Hill	0	5	0	W. B. Scott	1	1	0
C. Saunders	0	5	0	W. Blundell	0	4	6
Vorwärts Agitation Gruppe	0	10	0				
J. S. Robertson (Montrose)	0	3	6	Total	3	14	0

NEW PREMISES FUND.

H. R. C. N., £1.

Sustenance Fund.—'Commonweal' Branch, 7s. 4½d.

For Commonweals.—F. Kaper (Newcastle Group), 13s.

Propaganda Fund.—Concert Collection, Jan. 19th, 4s. 9½d.

GLASGOW.—We are still maintaining our propaganda here, although our active membership remains small. Our open-air meetings at Paisley Road Toll continue to draw large audiences of workmen. The meetings which we are holding on Sunday evenings in Antiqua Place, Nelson Street, in conjunction with the other Socialist bodies, are growing in popularity. We have had lectures by Haddon, Glasier, Warrington, Joe Burgoyne, McNaughton, James Bigger, and Leo Melliet (of Edinburgh), which have been fairly well attended, especially the latter, when we had quite a number of prominent trade unionists present. The discussions after the lectures are usually of a very lively and vigorous character. Some of our members have been actively engaged in the railway strike, their speeches assisting in no small degree to put spirit and resistance into the men. We held our third annual Hogmanay gathering, and brought in the New Year with songs, readings, and dance.

LECTURE DIARY.

LONDON.

- Commonweal Club*.—273, Hackney Road, N.E. Lectures every Sunday at 11 a.m. and 8 p.m. Admission free. Membership: 1s. entrance fee, and 6d. per month subscription.
- Hammersmith Socialist Society*.—Kelmescott House, Upper Mall, W. Lecture every Sunday at 8. French Class conducted by Mlle. Desroches on Friday evenings at 7.30.
- North Kensington*.—Clarendon Coffee Palace, Clarendon Road. Meets every Wednesday at 8 p.m. Band practice every Tuesday at 8, in the hall at the back of the "Britannia" public-house, Latimer Road—more fifiers wanted.
- North London*.—6 Windmill Street, Tottenham Court Road. Meets every Wednesday evening at 8 o'clock.

PROVINCES.

- Aberdeen*.—Organiser, J. Leatham, 7 Jamaica Street. Branch meets in Odd-fellows' Small Hall, Crooked Lane, on Sunday evenings at 6.30. Singing practice, etc., Mondays at 8 p.m.
- Glasgow*.—Lectures and Discussions every Sunday evening, at 7, in the Hall, Antiqua Place, Nelson Street, City.
- Hatfield*.—Socialists meet every Sunday at 6.30 p.m. at Helliwell's Hotel, Northgate.
- Hull*.—Club Liberty, 1 Beets Court, Blanket Row.
- Leeds*.—Socialist League Club, 1 Clarendon Buildings and Front Row, Victoria Road. Open every evening. Business meeting Saturdays at 8.—International Educational Club, near St. James's Hall, York Street. Open every evening. Lectures every Saturday at 4. All kinds of Socialist literature for sale at both clubs.
- Leicester*.—Room No. 7, Co-operative Hall, High Street. Branch meeting on Thursday at 8 p.m. Lecture in the Spiritualist Hall, Silver Street, every Sunday at 6.30.
- Manchester*.—Socialist League Club, 60 Grosvenor Street, All Saints. Open every evening. Branch weekly meeting on Tuesdays at 8.
- Nottingham*.—Socialist Club, Woodland Place, Upper Parliament Street. Club contribution, 1d. per week; Dancing every Wednesday, 8 till 10.30—fee 3d.
- Norwich*.—Members' meeting held every Tuesday at 8.30.
- Oxford*.—Temperance Hall, 25½ Pembroke Street. First Friday in every month, at 8.30 p.m.
- Sheffield*.—Socialist Club, 63 Blonk Street. French Class, Tuesday at 8.30. Discussion Class, Wednesday at 8.30.
- Walsall*.—Socialist Club, 18 Goodall Street, Walsall. Meetings every night.
- Yarmouth*.—Socialist League Club, 56 Row, Market Place. Open every evening. Business Meeting, Tuesday at 8. Singing Practice, Wednesday at 8.30. Discussion Class, Thursday at 8.30. Elocution Class, Friday at 8.30.

OPEN-AIR PROPAGANDA.

(Weather permitting.)

SUNDAY.

- 11 Commercial Road—Union Street The Branch
- 11.30 Hoxton Church The Branch
- 11.30 Regent's Park Nicoll
- 3.30 Hyde Park—Marble Arch Mainwaring and Nicoll
- 3.30 Victoria Park Commonweal Branch
- 3.30 Streatham Common The Branch

FRIDAY.

- 8.15 Hoxton Church The Branch

PROVINCES.

- Aberdeen*.—Saturday: Castle Street, at 7.30 p.m.
- Glasgow*.—Sunday: Jail Square at 2 o'clock; Paisley Road at 5 o'clock.
- Leeds*.—Sunday: Market Gates, Kirkgate, at 11.30 a.m. and 7 p.m.
- Leicester*.—Saturday: Old Cross, Belgrave Gate, at 8 p.m. Sunday: Russell Square, at 10.45 a.m.
- Liverpool*.—Landing Stage, Sundays at 11.30 a.m. and 3 p.m.
- Manchester*.—Saturday: Middleton market ground, at 7 p.m. Sunday: Philips Park Gates, at 11; Stevenson Square, at 3. Monday: Market Street, Blackley, at 8.
- Nottingham*.—Sunday: Sneinton Market, at 11 a.m.; Great Market, at 7 p.m.
- Norwich*.—Saturday: Haymarket, at 8. Sunday: Market Place at 11, 3, and 7.30.
- Sheffield*.—Sunday: Monolith, Fargate, at 11.30; West Bar, at 11.30; Newhall Road, Attercliffe, at 11.30; Grimsthorpe, at 11.30; Rotherham, at 3; Woodhouse, at 3; West Bar, at 8; Attercliffe Road, at 8.
- Yarmouth*.—Sunday: Priory Plain, at 11; Fish Wharf, at 3; Hall Quay, at 7.

DUBLIN.—Dublin Socialist Union, 87 Marlboro Street. Lecture every Saturday at 8 p.m.

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

GLASGOW.—Leo Melliet will lecture on "Socialism in Schools" on the first Sunday of February; the Hall will be duly announced.

SCOTTISH SOCIALIST FEDERATION.—EDINBURGH—Labour Hall, 50 South Bridge. Business meeting, Fridays at 8 p.m. Lectures every Sunday, at 6.30 p.m.

ON Sunday, Feb. 8th, at 7 p.m., C. W. Mowbray will speak at the Fountain, Streatham, on "Socialism."

A CONCERT AND BALL was held on Monday, January 19th, at our Hall, 273, Hackney Road, on behalf of the *Commonweal*. Comrades from the Club Autonómie, Vorwärts, and Berner Street assisted in German, French, and Yiddish, and with the assistance of our own comrades a very successful and enjoyable evening was spent. As soon as the returns can be made a balance sheet of the concert will be submitted to the members. Concerts will be given every Saturday evening, beginning Feb. 7th, at 8 p.m. Good programmes will be submitted, and proceeds for the same purpose.

To Help the Paper.—There are several ways in which you can help to spread the *Weal*. Ask your newsagent to try and sell it. Get those who don't care to buy it month by month to subscribe direct. Arrange for the posting of contents bills anywhere you can. Any number of other plans will suggest themselves if you think about it.

Postal Propaganda.—Some who would like to do propaganda but dare not openly, or who cannot spare the time to do it personally, can find many ways in which it can be done quietly. Not the least useful among possible plans would be to order and pay for a number of copies to be sent to persons in whose hands they might do good. We will send six copies to six different addresses for 7d. Write the names and addresses legibly.

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STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLES.

THE Socialist League advocates International Revolutionary Socialism. That is to say the destruction of the present class society, which consists of one class who live by owning property and therefore *need not work*, and of another that has no property and therefore *must work* in order that they may live to keep the idlers by their labour. Revolutionary Socialism insists that this system of society, which is the modern form of slavery, should be changed to a system of Society which would give every man an opportunity of doing useful work, and not allow any man to live without so doing, which work could not be useful unless it were done for the whole body of workers instead of for do-nothing individuals. The result of this would be that livelihood would not be precarious nor labour burdensome. Labour would be employed in co-operation, and the struggle of man with man for bare subsistence would be supplanted by harmonious combination for the production of common wealth and the exchange of mutual services without the waste of labour or material.

Every man's needs would be satisfied from this common stock, but no man would be allowed to own anything which he could not use, and which consequently he must *abuse* by employing it as an instrument for forcing others to labour for him unpaid. Thus the land, the capital, machinery, and means of transit would cease to be private property, since they can only be used by the combination of labour to produce wealth.

Thus men would be *free* because they would no longer be dependent on idle property-owners for subsistence; thus they would be *brothers*, for the cause of strife, the struggle for subsistence at other people's expense, would have come to an end. Thus they would be *equal*, for if all men were doing useful work no man's labour could be dispensed with. Thus the motto of Liberty, Fraternity, and Equality, which is but an empty boast in a society that upholds the monopoly of the means of production, would at last be realised.

This Revolutionary Socialism must be International. The change which would put an end to the struggle between man and man, would destroy it also between nation and nation. One harmonious system of federation throughout the whole of civilisation would take the place of the old destructive rivalries. There would be no great centres breeding race hatred and commercial jealousy, but people would manage their own affairs in communities not too large to prevent all citizens from taking a part in the administration necessary for the conduct of life, so that party politics would come to an end.

Thus, while we abide by the old motto

Liberty, Fraternity, Equality,

we say that the existence of private property destroys Equality, and therefore under it there can be neither Liberty nor Fraternity.

We add to the first motto then this other one—

FROM EACH ACCORDING TO HIS
CAPACITY, TO EACH ACCORDING
TO HIS NEEDS.

When this is realised there will be a genuine Society; until it is realised, Society is nothing but a band of robbers. We must add that this change can only be brought about by combination amongst the workers themselves, and must embrace the whole of Society. The new life cannot be given to the workers by a class higher than they, but must be taken by them by means of the abolition of classes and the reorganisation of Society.

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