

# THE COMMONWEAL

## The Official Journal of the SOCIALIST LEAGUE.

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WEEKLY; ONE PENNY.

### NOTES ON NEWS.

At first sight the programme put forward by the Gladstonians at Manchester seems like an advance towards the Socialist-Radical position, and as if they were determined to avoid being dished by the Tories. However, the Radicals had better not halloo till they are out of the wood; for they must remember that there is a very wide distance between what a caucus meeting of the Outs will put forward as a promise, and what a party in office will attempt to carry.

Let the Radicals who think that they have a chance of being something more than the tail of the Liberal party, note the significant difference between the reception of such startling revolutionary novelties (?) as the giving of some real powers to the County Councils, the taxing of ground-rents, etc., and a bit of the regular old caucus programme, the Disestablishment of the Scotch and Welsh Churches. The assembled delegates had received the announcement of the former with decent signs of approbation, but they roared with delight at the announcement of the latter.

Now, certainly, we must all admit that it is a good thing that all churches should be disestablished; but to express such unbounded enthusiasm for a subject so stale, such a foregone conclusion, is ominous of the Gladstonian future, and shows that the Liberal party might almost as well be called the Nonconformist party, and that we may look forward after the tremendous birth-pangs of the political mountain to see a small Whig mouse (or rat rather) creep forth on to the surface of things, and the Radicals with their mongrel and impossible demi-semi-Socialist programme as hopelessly excluded from any Parliamentary political power as ever.

Whatever power the Radicals may have now, they have in virtue of their making some approach toward Socialism amongst a population which is beginning to have an inkling of Socialism; but that very power with the people makes them weak in Parliament, which is a mere drag on popular aspirations. And in any case they (the Radicals) only have any reason for existence as a party because the mass of the people is only *beginning* to turn towards Socialism. When the people understand the matter better, those Radicals of to-day, who are anything better than political tricksters, will have become Socialists, and the rest of them will be declared reactionists.

There never will nor can be again a Radical party in Parliament; that belongs to the days when Radicalism saw nothing ahead of itself in progress. It has now become quite conscious of some form of Socialism being its necessary development. It is accepting its transitional position, and is waiting for the transformation to take place. Such a body must necessarily be too nebulous to form a political party, for it is of the essence of a political party to consider its position as a final one; that is to say, that a political party is the outcome of opinions which have been superseded in the minds of all thoughtful persons by new developments of thought. It is no longer the growing fruit-tree, but the dead log; useful—for burning.

The Radicals, therefore, are to be congratulated for their powerlessness as a political party; it is a sign of life and growth in them. As for Mr. Gladstone's Manchester audiences, it is clear that they were, as aforesaid, Nonconformist Whigs; and they were engaged in devising the best form of giving the people stones for bread.

The strikes which are now taking place have a tendency which is noteworthy, and surely, amidst all shortcomings, encouraging. They are not merely strikes for a rise of wages, but show a desire for independence on the part of the men; strikes against blacklegs, or against the imposition of conditions under the guise of a gift. This, we may well hope, shows that the workers are gradually becoming conscious that their existence as workers means that they are engaged in a class

war. That whatever gains they make, whatever improvements in their condition they conquer, must be at the expense of the master-class.

They will be aided in this new acquirement of knowledge by the attitude of the middle class, which a month or two ago was so "sympathetic." For in the struggle against blackleg treachery and the dictation of conditions by the masters they need look for no "sympathy" from the master-class. Expressions of sorrow at their having made such a mistake as to take the step absolutely necessary to true combination they will get in plenty, if that is any good to them; but, for the rest, it will be the kind masters who are so generously offering to share profits with their men who will receive the "sympathy of the public."

A word about this profit-sharing. What is it but a feeding of the dog with his own tail? It means on the one hand a writing down in the account-books of wages as profits shared by the men; while on the other hand it gets more work out of the men than the obvious wage-paying for the same money paid, and is, of course, praised by its advocates for that very reason. For the rest, the men are quite right in seeing in it a dodge to break up their organisation; an instrument for detaching some of the men from furthering the interests of their class by deluding them into thinking that their interests are one with those of their masters, who, if only they had eyes to see, are visibly living on their labour. Whether the gas-stokers' strike fails or not, the mere fact that the men have gained this much of insight into the capitalist trickery is very encouraging.

A curmudgeon (name of no importance) is determined to put the pretty river Mole, or certain reaches of it, into his own pocket, and the public is naturally angry at the proceeding, to the extent of forming a society for the protection of the said river; but as their only means of "protection" seems to be going to law with its owner, it is certain that the Mole will remain pocketed till "when the revolution comes."

For my part, I sympathise heartily with the sorrow of those who have been locked out of the Mole; for I should like to live on a river three quarters of the year; and the Mole is an exceedingly pretty little meadow-stream. But on the other hand it is no bad thing that the middle class—even the lower at that—should have a reminder of their position in relation to the landowners. I must say to them, "You *would* have it so, my friends! Now perhaps you begin to understand the meaning of the 'sacred rights of property,' the right of using and *abusing* wealth, which is so dear to the souls of the Liberty and Property Defence League. Turn Socialists my friends, and one day you shall have the Mole again." W. M.

The *New York Herald* (the real one), writing the other day about a shooting case, says that we live in "a world in which hard cash wins the victory over poverty every time. Wealth can whistle all fear of being caught down the wind, for the law's delays are a purchasable commodity." But if it had been a Socialist or Anarchist who had said that in his paper, the *Herald* would have been calling for his head before now.

"When slaveholders and land monopolists in Brazil seek a nominal republic, the better to accomplish the ends of injustice, the old query is recalled—What's in a name?" This is the question which the *Boston Globe* asks; and those who have been abusing Cunninghame Graham for his letter had better ponder awhile before they try to answer it.

An aristocratic mixture of matrimonial relations has brought out the fact that in England, while a man is strictly prohibited from marrying his deceased wife's sister, there is nothing to prevent his marrying his divorced wife's sister, even while the divorced wife is alive. The ways of law are wonderful, and its paths past finding out!  
S.

## MONOPOLY.

(Continued from p. 389.)

Secretary to-day is divided into classes, those who render services to the public and those who do not. Those who render services to the community are in an inferior position to those who do not, though there are various degrees of inferiority amongst them, from a position worse than that of a savage in a good climate to one not much below that of the lower degree of the unserviceable class; but the general rule is, that the more undeniably useful a man's services are, the worse his position is; as, for example, the agricultural labourers who raise our most absolute necessities are the most poverty-stricken of all our slaves.

The individuals of this inferior or serviceable class, however, are not deprived of a hope. That hope is, that if they are successful they may become unserviceable; in which case they will be rewarded by a position of ease, comfort, and respect, and may leave this position as an inheritance to their children. The preachers of the unserviceable class (which rules all society) are very eloquent in urging the realisation of this hope, as a pious duty, on the members of the serviceable class. They say, amidst various degrees of rigmarole: "My friends, thrift and industry are the greatest of the virtues; exercise them to the uttermost, and you will be rewarded by a position which will enable you to throw thrift and industry to the winds."

However, it is clear that this doctrine would not be preached by the unserviceable if it could be widely practised, because the result would then be that the serviceable class would tend to grow less and less and the world be undone; there would be nobody to make things. In short, I must say of this hope, "What is that among so many?" Still it is a phantom which has its uses—to the unserviceable.

Now this arrangement of society appears to me to be a mistake (since I don't want to use strong language)—so much a mistake, that even if it could be shown to be irremediable, I should still say that every honest man, must needs be a rebel against it; that those only could be contented with it who were, on the one hand, dishonest tyrants interested in its continuance; or, on the other hand, the cowardly and helpless slaves of tyrants—and both contemptible. Such a world, if it cannot be mended, needs no hell to supplement it.

But, you see, all people really admit that it can be remedied, only some don't want it to be, because they live easily and thoughtlessly in it and by means of it; and others are so hard-worked and miserable that they have no time to think and no heart to hope, and yet I tell you that if there were nothing between these two sets of people it would be remedied, even then should we have a new world. But judge you with what wreck and ruin, what fire and blood, its birth would be accompanied!

Argument, and appeals to think about these matters, and consciously help to bring a better world to birth, must be addressed to those who lie between these two dreadful products of our system, the blind tyrant and his blind slave. I appeal, therefore, to those of the unserviceable class who are ashamed of their position, who are learning to understand the crime of living without producing, and would be serviceable if they could; and on the other hand to those of the serviceable class who by luck maybe, or rather maybe by determination, by sacrifice of what small leisure or pleasure our system has left them, are able to think about their position and are intelligently discontented with it.

To all these I say, you well know that there must be a remedy to the present state of things. For nature bids all men to work in order to live, and that command can only be evaded by a man or a class forcing others to work for its stead; and, as a matter of fact, it is the few that compel and the many that are compelled, as indeed the most must work or the work of the world couldn't go on. Here, then, is your remedy within sight surely; for why should the many allow the few to compel them to do what nature does compel them to do? It is only by means of superstition and ignorance that they can do so; for observe that the existence of a superior class living on an inferior implies that there is a constant struggle going on between them; whatever the inferior class can do to better itself at the expense of the superior it both can and must do, just as a plant must needs grow towards the light; but its aim must be proportionate to its freedom from prejudice and its knowledge. If it is ignorant and prejudiced it will aim at some mere amelioration of its slavery; when it ceases to be ignorant it will strive to throw off its slavery once for all.

Now, I may assume that the divine appointment of misery and degradation as accompaniments of labour is an exploded superstition among the workers, and, furthermore, that the recognition of the duty of the working-man to raise his class, apart from his own individual advancement, is spreading wider and wider amongst the workers. I assume that most workmen are conscious of the inferior position of their class, although they are not and cannot be fully conscious of the extent of the loss which they and the whole world suffer as a consequence, since they cannot see and feel the better life they have not lived; but before they set out to seek a remedy they must add to this knowledge of their position and discontent with it, a knowledge of the means whereby they are kept in that position in their own despite; and that knowledge it is for us Socialists to give them, and when they have learned it then the change will come.

One can surely imagine the workman saying to himself, "Here am I, a useful person in the community, a carpenter, a smith, a compositor, a weaver, a miner, a ploughman, or what not, and yet, as long as I work thus and am useful, I belong to the lower class, and am not re-

spected like yonder squire or lord's son who does nothing, yonder gentleman who receives his quarterly dividends, yonder lawyer or soldier who does worse than nothing, or yonder manufacturer, as he calls himself, who pays his managers and foremen to do the work he pretends to do; and in all ways I live worse than he does, and yet I do and he lives on my *doings*. And furthermore, I know that not only do I know my share of my work, but I know that if I were to combine with my fellow-workmen, we between us could carry on our business and earn a good livelihood by it without the help (4) of the squire's partridge-shooting, the gentleman's dividend-drawing, the lawyer's chicanery, the soldier's stupidity, or the manufacturer's quarrel with his brother manufacturer. Why, then, am I in an inferior position to the man who does nothing useful, and whom, therefore, it is clear that I keep? He says he is useful to me, but I know I am useful to him or he would not 'employ' me, and I don't perceive his utility. How would it be if I were to leave him severely alone to try the experiment of living on his usefulness while I lived on mine, and worked with those that are useful for those that are useful? Why can't I do this?"

My friend, because since you live by your labour, you are not free. And if you ask me, Who is my master? who owns me? I answer *Monopoly*. Get rid of *Monopoly*, and you will have overthrown your present tyrant, and will be able to live as you please within the limits which nature prescribed to you while she was your master, but which limits you as man have enlarged so enormously by almost making her your servant.

And now what are we to understand by the word *Monopoly*? I have seen it defined as the selling of wares at an enhanced price without the seller having added any additional value to them, which may be put again in this way, the habit of receiving reward for services never performed or intended to be performed; for imaginary services, in short.

This definition would come to this, that Monopolist is *cheat* writ large; but there is an element lacking in this definition which we must presently supply. We can defend ourselves against this cheat by using our wits to find out that his services are imaginary, and then refusing to deal with him; his instrument is fraud only. I should extend the definition of the Monopolist by saying that he was one who was *privileged* to compel us to pay for imaginary services. He is, therefore, a more injurious person than a mere cheat, against whom we can take precautions, because his instrument for depriving us of what we have earned is no longer mere fraud, but fraud with *violence* to fall back on. As long as his privilege lasts we have no defence against him; if we want to do business in his line of things we must pay him the toll which his privilege allows him to claim of us, or else abstain from the article we want to buy. If, for example, there were a *Monopoly* of champagne, silk velvet, kid gloves, or doll's eyes, when you wanted any of those articles you would have to pay the toll of the Monopolist, which would certainly be as much as he could get, besides their cost of production and distribution; and I imagine that if any such *Monopoly* were to come to light in these days, there would be a tremendous to-do about it both in and out of Parliament. Nevertheless, there is little to-do about the fact that all society to-day is in the grasp of *Monopoly*. *Monopoly* is our master, and we do not know it.

For the privilege of our Monopolists does not enable them merely to lay a toll on a few matters of luxury or curiosity which people can do without. I have stated, and you must admit, that everyone must labour who would live, unless he is able to get somebody to do his share of labour for him—to be somebody's pensioner in fact. But most people cannot be the pensioners of others; therefore, they have to labour to supply their wants, but in order to labour usefully two matters are required: 1st, The bodily and mental powers of a human being developed by training, habit, and tradition; and 2nd, Raw material on which to exercise those powers, and tools wherewith to aid them. The second matters are absolutely necessary to the first; unless the two come together no commodity can be produced. Those, therefore, that must labour in order to live, and who have to ask leave of others for the use of the instruments of labour, are not free men but their dependents, *i.e.*, their slaves, for the commodity which they have to buy of the monopolists is no less than life itself.

WILLIAM MORRIS.

(To be concluded.)

## IMPORTANT NOTICE.

To those who have obtained copies of the *Commonweal* through the propagandist work of our comrades, by free distribution in the streets and public conveyances, or by purchase at our outdoor stations, we ask if in agreement with our principles to help the sale of the *Commonweal* by ordering it of their newsagents, and sending on to us the names of newsagents willing to sell it; and still better, as our outdoor work must shortly be reduced, by joining the local branches and helping on the work.

In the newly-drafted constitution for the State of Wyoming it is provided that "eight hours shall constitute a lawful day's work in all mines and on all State and municipal works."

The Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Firemen, Knights of Labour, Switchmen's Mutual Aid Association, and Brotherhood of Railway Brakemen, all in the employ of the Union Pacific system, have signed articles of federation. The agreement was submitted for approval to the general session of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers.

## SONG OF THE BRAVE.

On, what is the Life of the brave?  
A gift which his Maker hath given,  
Lest nothing but tyrant and slave  
Remain of mankind under heaven.  
And what is the life of the brave  
When staked in the cause of his right?  
'Tis but as a drop to the wave—  
A trifle he values as light.

And what is the Death of the brave?  
A loss which the good shall deplore:  
Who freedom hath striven to save,  
Mankind shall revere evermore!  
'Tis the close of a glorious day,  
'Tis the setting of yonder bright sun;  
A summons that welcomes away,  
To a heaven already begun!

And what is the Fame of the brave?  
'Tis the halo which follows his day;  
The noble example he gave,  
Still shining in splendid array!  
The blood of the coward runs cold;  
The wise and the good do admire;  
But in the warm heart of the bold,  
Oh, it kindles a nobler fire!

Then who would not live with the brave?  
The wretch without virtue or worth.  
And who would not die with the brave?  
The coward that clings to the earth.  
And who shall partake with the brave  
The fame which his valour hath won?  
'Tis he that will fight with the brave,  
Till the battle of freedom is done!

SAMUEL BAMFORD.

## IN THE UNITED STATES.

HERE are two items clipped from the capitalistic press of November 13th. This one is from the *Boston Globe*:

"The word 'Anarchist' is used very loosely in the press reports. Schevitch, the so-called Anarchist, who made the incendiary speech in Cooper Union the other night, is anything but an Anarchist in the strict definition of that term. He is a State Socialist. Instead of favouring the abolition of all law, as the Anarchists do, he believes in piling law mountains high, and giving to it the control of every kind of business. Of the two extremes, that of Schevitch is probably the worse."

And the following is from the *Transcript*, the organ of "culture":

"The meeting announced to be held in Philadelphia last Sunday night 'in memory of the working people murdered at Chicago on Nov. 11, 1887,' was forcibly prevented by the police. One thousand persons, a considerable proportion of whom were ladies, had been provided with tickets for the meeting, and seven hundred policemen were massed around the building to prevent these people from entering. At the next meeting announced in Philadelphia in sympathy with the Anarchists, two thousand people will want to attend. The thing always works in that way."

We are getting nearer and nearer Caesaristic methods of government. About 40,000 people are out of employment in Chicago. They are regarded by the fathers of that rotten city as a dangerous class. And well they may! In order to calm this unruly element somewhat, a new system of water supply and drainage is to be undertaken, which will employ 10,000 labourers, a host of politicians, and will cost the city 60 million dollars.

The meeting in honour of our martyrs in New York was a most gigantic success. The *Morning Journal* estimated the people who surged about the doors of Cooper Institute as over ten thousand, and says "the streets for blocks around the entrance were black with men and women, struggling to attend the great demonstration in 'memorial of the martyrs of the working people; murdered at Chicago.'" There is talk in the newspapers about the prosecution of John Most and Sergius E. Schevitch for the speeches they delivered, but I don't believe anything will come of it.

The most important event during the last week in the labour movement was the convention of the Knights of Labour at Atlanta, Ga. Samuel Gompers, President of the American Federation of Labour, addressed a letter to the assembled Knights on the proposed eight hour movement, in which he proposed the cordial co-operation of both bodies. He reviewed at length the work of the American Federation in endeavouring to promote the movement, and said:

"At present it is impossible to say definitely what action will be necessary to be taken by the working people to secure the eight-hour work-day. Some have stated that it will be conceded upon the demand of organised labour; that the employers will recognise the necessity of so doing, if not from a spirit of humanity, at least from a wise discretion. Such, permit me to say, I hope may be the case. Others again believe that our employers will not manifest such good judgment, and that organised labour will be compelled to resort to a cessation of work to enforce the demand. It is the policy of the American Federation of Labour to inaugurate good labour organisations, to avoid the harsh measure of strikes whenever possible; but if we cannot obtain justice, if in the light of the immense improvements in machinery as applied to the modern methods of production; if with all the civilising influence of this latter part of the nineteenth century, we cannot secure a substantial reduction of the hours of labour, so that all may find an opportunity of remunerative employment, without a strike, then probably that must be resorted to. We appeal to you for your co-operation in this movement, because we believe that the interest of the toiling masses are identical. We recognise the necessity for unity of action and purposes in the whole body of organised labour, and spurn with contempt the policy of isolation. Nor do we attach any more importance to the fact that the American Federation of Labour inaugurated this present movement and asked your co-operation, than if you had initiated it and asked our organisation to aid you."

Before the convention, Mr. Powderly stated in an interview:

"The eight-hour system will be discussed very fully. The American Federation of Labour has decided that the eight-hour system shall go into effect all

over the county on the 31st of May, 1890, but, as I stated in my recommendations to the General Assembly, I do not think we can adopt any such measure according to the preamble of our constitution, but I think we should adopt the eight-hour system gradually. If it should go into effect all over the country at the same time it would disarrange business too much."

Before I go much further, I may say that considerable secrecy surrounds the deliberations of the General Assembly of the Knights this year. For the purpose probably of concealing the weak condition of the Order and the bad state of the finances, very scant information is given. Wright, the editor of the *Journal of United Labour*, a good, honest, able man, but weak in his make, doles out all the information—but of course he must obey general instructions.

The convention opened on the 13th inst. This year is the 20th anniversary of the birth of the order. General Master Workman Powderly said this in his report, and after saying that the order has passed through a trying period, but that it had passed through it better than he expected, he continued:

"I now wish to speak very plainly. Your officers have done all they could do, and unless they receive more encouragement from the order the struggle will be in vain. It must be understood that we make the fight, not for ourselves, but for all, and the battle must have the support of all or fail. I have had to stand on the public platform and deny charges, explain actions, and face accusers in defence of this order, when, if called on to do it in my own behalf I would have refused to stir hand or foot; and yet it is supposed that I do these things for self. Our members unfortunately do not realise that they are the ones for whom this struggle is made, and not for your General Master Workman. To say that he is tired and weary of such doings is to tell but part of the truth, and if the struggle is to continue for the future as it has during the past three years, some other man must take the place now occupied by your General Master Workman, for he is convinced that it is a waste of time and energy on his part to keep on fighting the same old battles with men who should be promptly silenced by the order itself, while the majority of our members regard the general officers as something apart from themselves, and look upon attacks on these officers as personal and in which they are not concerned. Upon this convention devolves the solemn duty of making the effort to again arouse the zeal of our members throughout the land. You have the opportunity to make or mar the order forever, and I sincerely hope that we will not leave here with our duty undone. . . . At the session of 1887, I notified that I would not again accept the position of General Master Workman, I could not therefore consistently advocate a reduction of the salary of that officer. . . . I now recommend that the salary of the Master Workman be reduced one-half—not that I consider 2,500 dollars, or even 5,000, enough for the duties and responsibilities of the office, but the order cannot well afford to pay any more. . . . Last year I called for contributions to enable me to send out lecturers, and it is a question with me whether that act has not done more harm than good to the order. . . . In future the *Journal of United Labour* should be our educator, and it should be in every member's hands if possible. I again recommend that the name of the journal be changed, to conform to existing circumstances. When the name was selected the order was working in extreme secrecy. Hence the adoption of the present title. I recommend that the name be changed to the "Journal of the Knights of Labour," or something more suitable than that now in use. . . ."

"Our declaration of principles calls for a gradual reduction of the hours of labour, and I urge upon the convention to give serious attention to that question before adjournment. I do not regard a reduction of the hours to be a cure-all and the end of the struggle, but merely as a means to an end. . . . I am not hostile to the eight-hour question. It is because I am deeply concerned in it that I will not sanction any foolhardy or unwise methods of hastening it. Had we acted on the proposition presented by Mr. Edwin Norton in Cleveland in 1886, this year would see the end of the long-hour work day. His recommendation was that 9½ hours constitute the work day for 1887, 9 hours for 1888, 8½ for 1889, and 8 hours for 1890. That was and is a practical plan. It was feasible, and so gradual as not to estrange business, or in any way work hardship to either side in the controversy. Men who will deliberately enter into such a plan to carry forward the short-hour movement may be depended upon to retain the benefits of a reduction in hours, but those who wait until the last minute and then attempt to inaugurate the new system with a hurrah will abandon organisation and live in the memory of the glory of the achievement, while the employers are taking from them what they so suddenly gained. I submit for your consideration the plan above alluded to, and ask you to make an effort to put it into practical operation."

The per capita tax amounted to 52,945 dols. 59 c. On July 1 the balances were: General Fund, 4,036 d. 31 c.; Educational Fund, 4,138 d. 47 c.; Insurance Fund, 882 d. 83 c. No wonder that Powderly volunteered to give up half of his salary!

On the 15th L. F. Livingston, president of the State Farmers' Alliance of Georgia, addressed the Knights, speaking for 100,000 men, describing the pitiable condition of the farmers of the State and the South, and stating what was being attempted to aid the farmers in their fight against monopoly. He was convinced that in many things the Alliance and the Knights are working side by side, and he saw no reason why they may not join, at least as far along the road as they went together. He hoped the Knights would in some way be represented at the coming national convention of various farmers' organisations, to be held at St. Louis, December 3. His address was heartily applauded, the general assembly at the close rising to its feet and giving three hearty cheers for the Farmers' Alliance.

The substance of the report of the K. of L. Legislative Committee upon its action at Washington during the last session of Congress, was that nothing was accomplished, as all the Bills in which working people were interested that originated in the Senate were buried in the House, and *vice versa*, so that honours were easy between them in their ingenuity in smothering such legislation.

The capitalistic papers say to-day that an amalgamation of the Knights and the Farmers would be next to invincible.

Boston, Mass., Nov 18, 1889.

HENRY F. CHARLES.

Of all the great minds that have made the labour problem a study, there is not one to-day that will not admit that woman has become a factor in all the affairs of the world, and that she is in as great a degree as man a wealth-producer, and should, therefore, be entitled to her full share of the gains and honours of advancing civilisation. We say greater because, according to the definition given by one that "wealth is all money over and above the necessities of life," she, by working for smaller wages, certainly increases the wealth of her employer faster than a man, who is paid a more equitable share for his labour. The reasoning and thinking minds of the age have also come to see clearly the truth that with equal privileges woman will be man's equal in any and all vocations of life. Therefore it is very apparent to those who have labour's cause at heart that we cannot longer afford to allow our women to toil without recompense or be driven to lives of shame. We ask only that woman may be given an equal chance with man in every way, and not be obliged, as now, to rob him of his honestly earned loaf that she may have a crust.—*Living Issue*.



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

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

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

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

Advertisements can only be inserted if unobjectionable in all particulars. Scale of charges and special quotations may be obtained from the Manager.

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Periodicals received during the week ending Wednesday December 11.

ENGLAND	FRANCE	GERMANY	ITALY
Brotherhood	Chicago (Ill)—Vorbote	Paris—La Revolte	Rome—L'Emancipazione
Justice	Detroit—Der Arme Teufel	Le Proletariat	Madrid—El Socialista
Labour Elector	Milwaukee—National Reformer	Bourse du Travail	Barcelona—Revolucion Social
Labour Tribune	San Francisco Arbeiter-Zeitung	Lyon—L'Action Sociale	Porto—A Revolucao Social
London—Freie Presse	S. F. Coast Seaman's Journal	Philadelphia—United Labour	Berlin—Volks Tribune
Norwich—Daylight	FRANKFURT	Brunn—Arbeiterstimme	Brunn—Arbeiterstimme
Personal Rights Journal	Paris—La Revolte	Middelburg—Licht en Waarheid	Copenhagen—Arbejderen
Railway Review	Le Proletariat	Antwerp—De Werker	Malmö—Arbetet
Worker's Friend	Bourse du Travail	Ghent—Vooruit	Stockholm, Social-Demokraten
Illustrated Weekly	Lyon—L'Action Sociale	Liège—L'Avenir	
	HOLLAND		
	Middelburg—Licht en Waarheid		
	BELOGIUM		
	Antwerp—De Werker		
	Ghent—Vooruit		
	Liège—L'Avenir		
	UNITED STATES		
	New York—Der Sozialist		
	Freiheit		
	Twentieth Century		
	Workmen's Advocate		
	Boston—Woman's Journal		
	Buffalo—Arbeiter-Zeitung		

THE WORKMAN'S COMPASS.

SHALL the "docker's tanner" be the end of the "greatest labour movement of the century," or shall the strike whereby the "tanner" was won be only the beginning of a far greater movement—the first step along the road that shall lead the working people from poverty and misery to plenty and happiness?

The road is sure. There need be no mistaking it. For the strike should teach lessons that will prove like signposts all along the way, giving certain directions to those who will learn to read them.

The main lessons to be learnt are five. I. The absolute dependence of all life upon labour. II. The inter-dependence of labour. III. The necessity of union. IV. The value of organisation. V. The uselessness of government.

Let us take these lessons in their order.

I. The dependence of life upon labour. This is the key to the whole position. The strike closed only one of the sources of supply of London; yet it paralysed trade, hindered production, and interfered with distribution. If the other great source of supply—the railways—had been closed by a similar strike, what would have happened? In one week London would have been starving; because the rich man's money would not buy him food if the working people refused to bring it in for him to buy. So that it is plain that all people, rich and poor alike, depend for their very living on those who work. And instead of the companies—the capitalists—starving the strikers into submission, the strikers might have starved their masters into submission, and made what terms they liked with them.

Therefore it is plain that capital is useless without labour. But labour is not useless without capital, for it can produce capital. When

the docks and the railways were made, and the machinery you work with and the houses you live in, labour was producing capital. And the labourers were not kept by the capitalists' money, but by the food brought into London by other labourers.

All who live depend upon labour; if not on their own, then on some one else's.

II. The inter-dependence of labour. The skilled workman is therefore not more useful to society than the unskilled labourer. He gets higher wages, because his class of work is more scarce than the labourer's; not because it is more useful. If all men had learnt a trade, competition would have lowered the wages of skilled labour.

But the skilled workman is not only no more useful than the unskilled. He cannot get on without the latter. During the strike there were many artisans obliged to stand idle for want of the materials kept back in the docks by the dockers. This would have been much worse had the railways also been closed. Then it would have been seen at once that all classes of labour depend on one another, and especially on those who supply the daily food.

Therefore all labour is inter-dependent, and the interests of all working men and women are common.

III. The value of union is plainer since the strike; but if the working men and women of London had all been united, the duration of the strike might have been reckoned by days instead of by weeks.

We have seen how a general strike would enable the working classes to make what terms they like with their masters. But the proclamation of a general strike was withdrawn, and wisely withdrawn under the circumstances. Why? What were the circumstances which made it wise not to take a step that should have ensured immediate victory for the men? They were three: (a) There was not enough unity to ensure its success. (b) The men could not depend entirely on the help of the other working-men of London. (c) They were therefore afraid of losing the help of those who were not working-men, but who live on the labour of the workers.

Now, if there had been more complete unity amongst the working people, (b) the dockers would have had the help of all other labourers, (c) they could have done without the help of the rich, and (a) they would have ended the strike and got all they wanted.

Therefore, for the future, unity of labour is a necessity (and it should include eventually all clerks, Post-office employes, domestic servants, shop-assistants, and the police).

IV. The value of organisation is especially notable in connection with the distribution of relief to the dockers. It was stated that the Strike Committee practically knew every genuine docker personally, and so could regulate the distribution of relief-tickets. (Whether or not this was taken advantage of does not matter.) It could be managed in this way. The dockers, when employed, work in gangs. Each gang is under the direction of a well-known man, who is more or less acquainted with the men who work with him. By putting these "gangers" in connection with the leaders of the strike and with the general distributors the relief could be afforded with a regularity otherwise impossible. Every man might be sure of his fair share, and no man could obtain more. Happily the men seem to have behaved so splendidly (it is a glorious thing to think of!) that there was little need of such precautions. Heroes do not cheat one another. Yet it is well to have some check against sneaks and traitors.

These four facts are the north, south, east, and west of the untried future. The fifth is the Compass, whereby the working class may steer a direct course across it.

V. Neither Parliament nor the County Council did, or could do, anything to help the strikers. All that was done, was done by the men themselves, under trusty leaders. But further, the Government was equally powerless to help the dock companies against the strikers. For Parliament could not compel one single man to work; neither could the police prevent picketing. Therefore the workers need not expect either help or hindrance from any but themselves. They must take their own cause in their own hands.

Government is useless. The people must help themselves.

And now, steering by this Compass, which points away from government, straight towards self-help, what is the course for the working classes to pursue?

They depend upon each other for their life. Let them unite in order to make that life happier. At present their life is rendered hard and miserable by competition amongst themselves. The large profits of their employers are made at the expense of the welfare and happiness of the workers, who keep all men. If the toilers wish to be better off they must persuade their masters to be content with smaller profits. If they cannot persuade them, then they must force them. They will be able to force them when they can threaten to starve them out by a general strike.

Therefore all the workers in London should combine. Perhaps in separate unions, but if so, these unions should amalgamate and form a general combination of working people—a labour syndicate.

As soon as this is sufficiently accomplished they will be able (1) to fix a minimum wage; (2) to fix a maximum working day—say eight hours; (3) to protect every man and woman in London from ill-treatment by a master; (4) to make short work of the slums, and insist upon every worker having a decent home at a reasonable rent; because if the landlords are obstinate they will be able to persuade them by the force of a general strike!

But much more than this may be achieved by such a combination of all the workers. For out of their higher wages a large fund of money would be contributed to the central union. Strikes would

hardly be necessary, for the masters would not dare resist. Therefore this money might be used for other purposes. The sick and the old would have to be well provided for. Then with the remainder of the money co-operative stores might be started, to supply the workers with food and clothes at cost price. Bakeries, shoemakers' shops, tailors' shops, etc, might also be conducted on the same principle.

And now observe what this leads to. These stores and shops would have to be built. Many men would be employed in them. Vans and machinery would be required, which would give work to still other men. The Relief Committees have shown how these men may be paid. Their work will be equally valuable; their wages too must be equal.

Thus the workers of London would begin to be their own employers. They would not only be dependent on one another; they would be working for one another. And they would then keep for themselves all that extra labour which now makes their masters rich. Then they might still further reduce the hours of labour: and so there need no longer be any starving unemployed.

Other towns will follow suit, and other countries too. There will be no fear of foreigners being brought in to help the capitalists starve Englishmen. The Australians are even now with you. The Americans will follow suit. (You saw them come out and join you, rather than work against you for 3s. 6d. an hour. They treated you as brothers; do not treat yourselves worse, but be worthy to call such men brothers!) The Germans and Jews in London will labour side by side with you in perfect friendship, taking their part in keeping themselves and you.

When other towns and countries have followed suit, you may buy your goods of them at cost price, extending your union to your brothers all over the world. You may acquire your own farms all over the country: they will belong to you in common, and those working on them will not be slaves of landlord and farmer, but will be your comrades, working happily with you for the good of all.

You and your children will be on the road to a happiness hitherto only dreamt of, but now shown to be possible, if you will only take the first step, and combine.

Your enemies will tell you that this is unpractical. Try it. It will be a good deal too practical for them. For nothing can stand against you when your watchword is—COMBINE. G. S.

CORRESPONDENCE.

J. BRONTERRE O'BRIEN OR HENRY GEORGE.

Last week I answered the charge that Henry George plagiarised from P. E. Dove. This week I am pained to see that another correspondent suggests that J. Bronterre O'Brien was the originator of 'Progress and Poverty.' Such an innuendo is not deserving of notice except for the purpose of appealing to Socialists generally to raise themselves above the temptation to carp and cavil at the success of any man who, while striving to reach the same goal as they, does not travel along the same road. Any man who realises the solemnity and grandeur of the cause for which it is our privilege to work should beware of allowing his personality to drag him down below the level of his own ideal.

As to the specific charge that Henry George borrowed his ideas from this man or that, anyone who reads his 'Land Policy' of 1871 will have no need to search further for the source of his inspiration. The book dealt with the results of the United States policy of alienating the national inheritance; and by the collation and study of facts, and the patient tracing out of the various forms of "land-grants" and their influence on the national life, the iniquity and deadly effect of private property in land became so glaring that the mere fact of such an investigation having been undertaken by a man of Henry George's qualifications irresistibly led to the writing of the more elaborate work, 'Progress and Poverty,' which, whatever we may think of some minor points of opinion and method, has had a widespread influence in awakening thought among the present generation, for which all sincere Socialists owe him a debt of enduring gratitude.

As to the question of abstract originality, is it not the fact that the greatest genius of any age merely gathers the threads spun in the past by others, and, in the increased light of his own day, weaves them into a harmonious whole? Allow me, therefore, to entreat the numerous possible Donnellys among your readers to hold their hands, and to utilise their energies in some nobler and more helpful endeavour than in thoughtlessly attacking a co-worker in social reform; the more especially as any such attack only tends to lower the standard of the cause which they desire to advance.

Birmingham, Dec. 8, 1889.

THOS. F. WALKER.

Collapse of the Silvertown Strike.

We are sorry to say that the Silvertown strike has collapsed. After a gallant fight of 12 weeks these brave workers have been forced to yield by hunger. Their defeat must be laid upon the shoulders of the executive of the richest trade union in England—the Engineers. They refused to call their men out, who were acting as blacklegs, and thus lent their aid to one of the worst sweating firms in London. It is to be hoped the members of their trade union who are not blacklegs will remember this.

South Wales Miners.

It will be remembered that action on the eight hours question was postponed at the recent miners' conference till the negotiations of the South Wales men with their masters for an eight hour day under the sliding-scale were settled. It now appears that these negotiations have practically fallen through; there is a complete deadlock between the delegates of the men and the masters upon the eight hour and other questions. The whole business has now been referred to the men, of whom 50,000 are affected. Altogether, the situation in South Wales is very serious, and masters and men are probably on the verge of a bitter struggle. N.

SOCIALIST SING-SONG.

I.  
A SINGLE bud in bursting shows,  
A million ready to unclose.

II.  
The earliest song-bird falleth chilled,  
Yet soon with song the world is filled.

III.  
Dead leaves that rot in rain and cold,  
Shall feed fresh shoots with fruitful mould.

IV.  
The hard frost breaks the iron earth,  
That rain and grain may bring to birth.

V.  
Of life relinquished joyously,  
Who shall measure the force set free?

VI.  
Ere one through hope may find death fair,  
How many perish in despair?

VII.  
Like many a fool of poison fain,  
The rich man's passion proves his bane.

VIII.  
A false step on a darkened stair,  
And lo! the highest step is there.

REGINALD A. BECKETT.

REVOLUTIONARY CALENDAR.

WEEK ENDING DECEMBER 21, 1889.

15	Sun.	1793. The Three Votes on the French King, 15th—17th. 1794. J. B. Carrier guillotined. 1794. Abolition of the Revolutionary Tribunal.
16	Mon.	1687. Sir W. Petty died. 1689. Bill of Rights passed. 1819. Motion in the House of Commons "That a Select Committee be appointed to enquire into the plan of Mr. Owen for ameliorating the condition of the lower classes": Ayes, 16; Noes, 141. 1843. No. 1 of the <i>Movement</i> , edited by G. J. Holyoake and M. Q. Ryall.
17	Tues.	1792. P. W. Duffin and Thomas Lloyd tried for posting on the chapel door of the Fleet Prison a notice: "This house to let! Peaceable possession will be given by the present tenants on or before the 1st day of January 1793, being the commencement of the first year of liberty in Great Britain. The Republic of France having rooted out despotism, their glorious example and success against tyrants render infamous bastiles no longer necessary in Europe." 1806. Jas. Ferguson, Michael Grant, and James Connell, "Thrashers," transported for life. 1830. Bolivar, liberator of Columbia, died. 1875. Violent bread-riots in Montreal. 1881. Lewis H. Morgan died. 1883. Patrick O'Donnell, executioner of Carey, hung in Newgate.
18	Wed.	1773. Tea-riots at Boston. 1792. Thomas Paine found guilty of seditious libel in 'Rights of Man.' 1817. W. Hone tried for publishing a parody, Wilkes's 'Catechism of a Ministerial Member.' 1866. Petrashevsky died in Siberia. 1876. Famous demonstration in the Kazan Place, St. Petersburg, where the people were openly invited to strive for freedom and fatherland, brutally dispersed by the police. 1887. Funeral of Linnell, first victim of "Bloody Sunday."
19	Thur.	1793. Toulon taken by the Republican army from the English under Lord Hood. 1806. Peter Morris sentenced to death, and Thomas Fitzsimons, Patrick Coyle, and James Kilbride to be twice publicly whipped in the town of Granard, as "Thrashers." 1817. W. Hone tried for publishing a seditious parody on the Litany. 1865. Bryan Dillon, John Duggan, and John Lynch sentenced to ten years' penal servitude, and Jeremiah Dovovan to five years, for treason as Fenians. 1877. Riots at Montreal. 1879. Hanged at Odessa: V. Malinka, L. Maidauski, J. J. Drobiansky.
20	Fri.	1769. Richard Oastler born at Leeds. 1817. Trial of W. Hone for publishing a seditious parody on the Athanasian Creed. 1828. Death of Archibald Fletcher, Scottish Reformer and member of the British Convention.
21	Sat.	1795. Trial of James Weldon, a "Defender," for "high treason" in conspiring to aid the French armies if they landed in Ireland. 1830. Trial of MM. de Polignac, de Peyronnet, Chantelauze, and de Guernon, before the Chamber of Peers, for having conspired against the rights of the citizens and the safety of the State. 1865. Underwood O'Connell, Fenian, sentenced to ten years' penal servitude. 1883. Ten dynamitards sentenced at Glasgow; five to penal servitude for life, the remaining five for seven years.

LITERARY NOTES.

ARTICLES OF INTEREST to Socialists in December magazines:—*Contemporary*: "The Gross and Net Gain of Rising Wages," Robert Giffen; "The Limitation of the Hours of Labour," Sidney Webb. *New Review*: "Mr. Morley and the New Radicalism," (1) By a Socialist Radical, (2) By a Libera Conservative; "What to do with our Old People," Max Müller.

The request of the destitute strikers of Morton County, Kan. coal (owned by the State and mined by convicts) was refused.

## THE LABOUR STRUGGLE.

### Threatened Strike of London Gas-stokers.

When I noticed a week or two ago the "benevolent" scheme of which Mr. Livesey, the chairman of the South London board of directors, was the author, I had no idea that it would have such serious consequences; but now, thanks to this gentleman's "goodness," South London will be plunged in darkness in a very little time. It was quite evident from the beginning that the scheme was only a cunning plan to break up the union and place the men completely at the mercy of the directors. At first, according to the terms of the agreement, the workers were to forfeit their share of the profits if they went on strike. This has now been withdrawn, but the men must still agree to serve for a year, and will forfeit their bonus if they give notice and the engineer of the works does not choose to accept their notice. If the scheme were accepted by the men, not only would the present union be broken up—for what use would a union be if the workers were bound over to keep the peace by the beautiful bonus scheme?—but it would be impossible to form another one, and the men would sink back into the old state of degrading slavery. The bonus, too, would prove a very uncertain gift, depending as it does upon the present low price of gas, which, as coal is going up in price, is not likely to remain as cheap as at present, and directly it rises away goes the bonus. Now, when the men saw that the "blacklegs" who had signed the agreement were becoming the special pets of the company—Mr. Livesey having declared that they and all others who sold themselves into slavery by signing the agreement should be kept on in the slack summer season, when the majority of the men were discharged—they informed the directors through their union that the company must give up the bonus scheme or dismiss the blacklegs who had signed, the men backing up their demands by sending in their notices to the number of 2,000 on Friday Dec. 6th. The directors are doing their best to obtain blacklegs. They managed to get a number of the men from the country by false pretences on Friday, but when informed by the pickets of the true state of things, they refused to do the company's dirty work. They afterwards applied to Mr. Livesey for their fares home, which request was indignantly refused. That worthy gentleman is now busily superintending the erection of iron butts for his blacklegs inside the works. A plentiful supply of provisions has been collected with a rapidity that shows that this capitalist Pecksniff, who conceals his greed and cunning under an outward appearance of unctuous benevolence, has been preparing for the strike which he has deliberately forced on for a long time. This virtuous and worthy gentleman is one of the shining lights of the temperance platform, yet among the provisions he has collected are numerous barrels of beer, enough to make his blackleg crew roaring drunk for weeks. Mr. Pecksniff Livesey doubtless knows that his pets are some of the most sneaking contemptible cowards that ever crawled on the earth's surface; and though he always recommends temperance and thrift to the working class as the foundation of all virtue, yet he finds strong drink the only means of infusing into the breasts of his protégés a bad imitation of the virtue they most conspicuously lack. Meanwhile the regular hands are not working too hard, owing to "excitement," and the consequence is that the supply of gas is getting very limited. The gas-holders at the Old Kent Road are very low indeed, Lamb, the largest, being nearly down to the ground. The good folks of South London had better lay in a good stock of candles and lamps, for it is to be feared that gas will be very scarce when the men come out. Meanwhile a new peril threatens the middle class, for the coal-porters are not only coming out in South London, but are also going to abandon their work all over the metropolis. The middle classes without coal or gas will be in a very awkward plight indeed; no wonder their papers do not like the prospect.

### Strike of Gasmen at Woolwich.

The Woolwich gas men are already out; they came out on Sunday, December 9th. They find that they are expected to do heavier work under the eight hour system than under the former twelve hour arrangement. Formerly, they had sixty retorts and six fires to do in gangs of three men; now with only two-thirds the time to do it in they have fifty-four retorts and eight fires, and have to do all their own coal wheeling and all the work connected with the retorts; they get 5s. a-day. What they ask is that each gang of three shall have a coal wheeler, that they have 5s. 4d. a-day, the usual 1s. 6d. a week good time money, and double time for Sunday work when carbonising. At a large meeting of friends and sympathisers on Sunday night, it was decided to go on with the strike. N.

### Manchester Gas Workers and the City Council.

The struggle, which last week in these columns was anticipated, has begun with apparent determination on the part both of the workers and their freely elected masters, the citizen's representatives. The latter had been making extensive preparations to carry on the fight for some time previous to the expiration of the notices of the gas workers. It is worthy of note that the workmen who are employed to erect sheds and construct rooms and habitations inside the various gas works of the Co-operation, to accommodate the poor cattle (I mean the scabs) who have been induced to take the places of the men on strike, are members of the different trade unions in the building trade, the contractor who got the job from the Corporation having none but unionists in his employ. But this shows the powerlessness of mere trade unionism to effect the solidarity of labour. The first cause of the dispute was the presence of a number of non-unionists among the gas workers, and who, it appeared, were especially favoured by the officials of the works. The Gas Committee, refusing to discharge these obnoxious persons, or to remove them to work away from the union men, a strike was resolved upon. A deputation of the men met the Mayor (a successful grocer) and the deputy Chairman of the Committee (a master painter who never had a union man in his employment) and an ex-Mayor a few days before coming out, when these people refused to recognise their union, or unionists as such in any way, and declined to undertake not to discharge or punish any of those taking a prominent part in the agitation. After this the Gas Committee posted the city denying any knowledge of what the men were coming out for, and offering four month's work to all who would apply and permanent places to well-conducted men. Consequently, an assortment of all ages and conditions of human beings were got together, most of them being either over 60 or under 20 years of age. They are provided, at the public expense, with provisions of all kinds, beer without limit, medical and cooking attendance, sleeping accommodation in the shape of boards sloping down on either side from a centre, upon which the poor "scabs" are meant to lie

head to head with a blanket to each. Certainly, loafers of all kinds are likely to have a good time of it through the kindly considerations of our municipal rulers. Little progress, however, is being made in the supplying of gas; indeed, it is questionable whether plentiful potations of beer and general pampering will tend to produce efficient carbonisers. The streets of Manchester are in almost complete darkness, through Salford entirely so, the shops and warehouses eking out the miserable light supplied them by the Corporation with oil and candles; two shops have already been burnt out by paraffin explosions. How long the traders of this commercial centre will submit to the consequence of a few stupid and incompetent civic autocrats' mismanagement is not much a matter of speculation. The gas men are determined to stick together till the bitter end; all the gas works are well picketed, and some of the pickets have already been arrested and fined for obstruction, a most excellent way of demonstrating on which side "law'n' order" always throws its weight when the workers are concerned. Meetings and processions are held every day. John Burns arrived on Saturday, primarily to organise branches of the new Railwaymen's Union, but he has thrown himself fully into the cause of the gas workers. On Sunday, in Stevenson Square, over 30,000 people attended their meeting at which Burns spoke. Resolutions supporting the strikers were passed unanimously, and over £21 collected at the meetings on Sunday. The calumnies upon the men, and the confusion as to the objects of the strike which the Corporation have been spreading, are getting cleared away. The issues are becoming plainer, and let us hope success will speedily attend the efforts of the Manchester and Salford gas workers to maintain their splendid organisation. W. B.

### Railway Men Moving.

Thirty-six delegates from the leading centres of the North-Eastern Railway between Berwick and Leeds held a conference at Darlington on Sunday. Many delegates urged immediate action, consequent on their programme of hours, and Sunday and overtime pay being refused. A majority, however, decided to make a last appeal to the directors at an interview which was asked for on Wednesday last. If such interview be refused, the men would at once enter the battle to obtain their demands. A resolution supporting the goods men at Newcastle, and urging railway men to refuse to take their places, was adopted.

### Railway Strike at Cork.

The men employed in the goods shed department of the Great Southern Railway at Cork are now on strike. The strikers include sixty porters, and also about sixty yardmen and shunters. On leaving the goods yard they were loudly cheered, much sympathy being felt in Cork with the strikers. The men complained that they are overworked and underpaid, their wages only being 16s. to 18s. weekly, and they have often to work 16 hours a-day, besides Sunday. They demand a work-day of 12 hours, pay for overtime, and pay for Sundays.

### Sheffield Labourers.

A strike of labourers has taken place at John Brown's, one of the largest ironworks in Sheffield. These workers two years ago were working six days in the week and receiving 36s. for making three flues for steam boilers, etc. They now make from six to seven flues in four days and receive as their share 24s. weekly. The smiths who contract for the job from the firm, and whose chief work seems to be looking on, took about £6 weekly two years ago, and about £12 weekly now as their share of the plunder. Our Sheffield comrades have taken an active part in the agitation, and have held several meetings in support of the strikers. The blacklegs have had a rather warm time, and twenty-five summonses are out against the men for intimidation. The whole district is in a state of considerable excitement. All the working people are up in arms against the blacklegs, and there have been some very lively times.

### Leicester Hosiery Union.

We have received the reports for October and November, 1889, of the Leicester Hosiery Union. We are glad to see that the members of this trade union have grasped the fact that the wealth of the rich is merely the creation of the plunder of the poor. The report says, "Where does all the interest, profit, and rent come from if not from labour?" and then, after pointing out the source of rent and profit, it thus deals with interest: "Then take interest on capital invested, where does the £5 come from? Suppose the £100 has been lent, and the person lending it goes abroad, what can he do towards creating a penny by labour? So it is clear that labour only earns or increases the wealth. No man can get rich by his own labour alone; and if none received only what they earned by their own labour, none would be rich and very very few need be poor." Further on, the report criticises the speech of the Mayor at the famous dinner where capital and labour met in loving companionship, and the lion laid down with the lamb, the lamb being inside the lion. The writer says, "The Mayor's motive, no doubt, was good. The way he asked working-men to try and work at a reduction to compete with the Swiss, was very suspicious; also when he said that those who were advocating the eight hour day were the worst enemies the working-men had." So the writer and the workmen of Leicester are quite up to the benevolent little dodge of the worthy Mayor in trying to feast and flatter them into working cheap and for long hours. The hosiery trade seems in a flourishing condition, and all, on the whole, is going well, but still the old workman stands very little chance of employment. One sentence of the report tells his story with short and simple pathos, "In the struggle for work now, when a man begins to wear spectacles he is passed on one side." Do any of the younger workmen who are now earning good wages think of this? that all our competitive system does for them if they live till they become old and greyheaded, is to throw them aside to die in a ditch by the roadside, or to linger, longing for death, in that cheerless prison, the workhouse. If they think of this, they will find the report of this trade union a battle call urging them forward to end the wrong and oppression which makes these things possible. N.

WOOLWICH RADICAL CLUB, William Street.—Sunday December 15, J. Hunter Watts, "Politics for Working Men."  
STAR RADICAL CLUB, 8 Mayall Road, Herne Hill.—Sunday Dec. 15, at 8.30, J. Loman, "The French Revolution."  
EAST FINSBURY RADICAL CLUB, 134 City Road, E.C.—Sunday December 15, at 11.30 a.m., George Bernard Shaw, "The True Radical Policy."

# THE SOCIALIST LEAGUE.

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

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

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

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

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

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

**Chicago Celebration.**—J. Armsden, 2s. 6d.

**For Silvertown.**—Council of Socialist League, 10s.; collected Nov. 11th, 2s. 1d.; and Old Harry, 2s.

**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.

## "COMMONWEAL" GUARANTEE FUND.

The following further sums have been received towards this fund:—Webb, 1s.; Nicoll, 6d.; B. W., 6d.; and Mrs. Schack, 1s.

## REPORTS.

**MITCHAM AND MERTON.**—Outdoor meetings discontinued for the present, but perfecting of the organisation of both League and Labourers' Union going on steadily. Last Sunday, a meeting of delegates was held at the Merton Club to revise rules of Labourers' Union. Reports from Streatham, Mitcham, South Norwood, and Croydon show great progress of the Union and League.—F. K.

**NORTH KENSINGTON.**—We held a meeting at Latimer Road on Sunday morning; speakers were Dean, Crouch, and Mangian; a few 'Weals' sold. Comrade Webster lectured at our rooms in the evening to a fairly good audience; many questions and good debate; 1s. 9d. collected and fair sale of 'Weal'.

**ABERDEEN.**—On Saturday night, in the Tea Room, Café Buildings, Shiprow, the Aberdeen Branch of the League celebrated the second anniversary of its formation. As the branch was formed in October, 1887, this faction should have come off two months ago, but it was delayed by pressure of work on certain active members. It was a thoroughly enjoyable meeting, and there was so large a turnout of members and friends that an overflow company had to take their tea in an ante-room. However, we all got together before the choir-singing, solos, readings, speeches, and pianoforte music began. Comrade Webster occupied the chair; Mr. James (organist in the Unitarian Church) played the accompaniments; Duncan, Gray, and Leatham sang songs, Socialistic and other; whilst Webster, Leatham, and Rennie (an old comrade just returned from America) gave speeches. Dancing was engaged in for two hours to music supplied by a capital string-band of six, of whom it may be said that God and comrade Aiken alone know where they came from. A desire was expressed that a similar meeting should be held on Hogmanay night.—L.

**GLASGOW.**—On Sunday, Joe Bargoeyne addressed a good crowd on Jail Square, and replied to some objections. Meeting at Paisley Road 'oll not held owing to rain. In the afternoon, Glasier lectured on "Ireland and Socialism" to the Sexton Branch of the Irish National League; and in the evening, lectured upon the same subject to the Glasgow Branch of the Irish National League. On both occasions his address was well received, all the subsequent speakers being quite favourable to Socialism, a few of them insisting that the Home Rule question should be settled first.

**LEEDS.**—On Sunday morning Rogers and Disch held a meeting at Vicars Croft. In the afternoon a big meeting was held at the Vicars Croft of gas-workers and general labourers, when J. L. Mahon, Maguire, Paylor, and Sweeney addressed the meeting. *Commonweal* sold out, and 6s. worth of League pamphlets sold. On Sunday evening at 8, a meeting was held at the Jewish Workers' Club of Jewish tailors, etc., who had met to discuss the objects of their union. Rogers attended and spoke in favour of union and combination, and was well received; many questions asked afterwards.

**LEICESTER.**—Sunday 8th the usual meeting in Russell Square. In the evening Barclay occupied the Radical Club platform on "The Origin and Claims of Private Property"; a warm discussion followed. The same evening, a discussion on Socialism was carried on at the Irish National Club, in which several of our comrades took part. At our weekly branch meeting the adjourned debate on comrade Timson's paper was concluded.—T. B.

**MANCHESTER.**—At the gas-workers' meeting on Sunday in Stevenson Square the branch sold 135 *Commonweals*, 40 *Freedom*, and a quantity of other literature, besides distributing a large number of leaflets. At the Club, in the evening, comrade Barton gave a lecture on "Socialism and Politics."

**YARMOUTH.**—On Sunday, comrade Poynts, of Norwich, came and lent us a hand. No meeting in morning, owing to bad weather. In the evening, at Colman's Granary Quay, comrade Poynts delivered an earnest address. Fair sale of *Commonweal*.—J. H.

**DUBLIN.**—At Progressist Club, 87, Marlboro' Street, Dec. 7th, A. Kavanagh delivered a lecture on "Chattel Slavery v. Wages Slavery." Brisk discussion, in which King, Toomey, Hamilton, Fitzpatrick, and others took part.

**EDINBURGH (S.S.F.).**—On Tuesday Dec. 3, we held a social meeting in honour of Stepniak, who met with an enthusiastic reception. After partaking of tea and cake, short and earnest speeches were made by Stepniak, Glasse, Melliet, Lacroix, and McKenzie, and songs were rendered by several comrades, and a recitation by Miss Nicol. A very enjoyable evening was wound up by the singing of "Auld Lang Syne" and a hand-shaking all round. On Sunday Mr. Ritchie delivered an able lecture on "International Co-operation." After the usual "heckling," a good discussion took place, in which comrades Smith, Davidson, Hamilton, and others took part.

**NOTTINGHAM SOCIALIST CLUB.**—Socialist Hall, Woodland Place, Upper Parliament St., on Sunday Dec. 15, at 7.30, W. Doleman, "Is Socialism Practicable?"

**CHILD'S HILL.**—Co-operative Hall, near Midland Railway Station, Sunday Dec. 15, at 7.30, A. E. Dryhurst, "A Socialist Programme for London."

**CHELSEA S.D.F.**—Co-operative Lecture Hall, 312 Kings Road, Chelsea.—Sunday December 15, at 8 p.m., Geraldine Spooner, "What Women may do for Socialism."

# LECTURE DIARY.

## LONDON.

**Battersea.**—All communications to E. Buteux, 20 Abercrombie Street, Battersea Park Road.

**Clerkenwell.**—Socialist League Hall, 24 Great Queen Street, Holborn, W.C.

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

**Hammersmith.**—Kelmescott House, Upper Mall, W. Lectures every Sunday at 8. French Class, Friday, 8 to 9.

**Merton.**—3 Clare Villas, Merton Road.

**Mitcham.**—"Lord Napier," Fair Green. Meets every Sunday at 12.30, to enroll members, etc.

**North Kensington.**—Clarendon Coffee Tavern. Meets every Wednesday at 8 p.m. On Sunday December 15, at 8 p.m., F. R. Wright, "Objections to Socialism."

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

**Southwark.**—Secretary, George Evans, 56 Lucy Road, Bermondsey, S.E. Hill's Coffee Tavern, Great Charlotte Street, Blackfriars Road, S.E.

**Streatham.**—Meets every Thursday at the "Leighnam Arms," Wellfield Road, at 8.30 p.m.

**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. Meets every Tuesday at 7.30.

**Dundee.**—Address to W. Cameron, 17 Laurence Street, Dundee.

**Glasgow.**—Ram's Horn Hall, 122 Ingram Street. Branch meets on Thursday evenings at 8 o'clock and Sundays at 7 o'clock. J. Bruce Glasier will lecture on "Ought Irish Nationalists to be Socialists," in the Hall of the Glasgow branch of the Irish National League, Gallowgate, on Tuesday evening first at 8 o'clock. Brisk discussion expected.

**Halifax.**—Socialists meet every Sunday at 6.30 p.m. at Helliwell's Temperance Hotel, Northgate.

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

**Leicester.**—Exchange Buildings, Rutland Street. Branch meets on Monday and Thursday, at 8 p.m.

**Manchester.**—Working Men's Educational Club, 122 Corporation Street, corner of Hanover Street. Weekly meeting of members every Tuesday at 8 p.m.

**Norwich.**—Sunday, at 8, Gordon Hall. Tuesday, at 8.30, Members' meeting. Thursday, at 8, Discussion Class. Saturday, Social Meeting. Hall open every evening from 8 p.m.

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

**Walsall.**—Socialist Club, 18 Goodall Street, Walsall. Meetings every night.

**Yarmouth.**—Branch meets at comrade Headley's, near Co-operative Stores, every Tuesday evening. Elocution Class Friday at 8 p.m. On Sunday afternoons during winter a Discussion Class will be held at 3 o'clock. On Tuesday Dec. 17th comrade Brightwell, "What Socialists should do in the coming Revolution." Comrades please turn up.

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

## OPEN-AIR PROPAGANDA.

### SATURDAY 14.

8.30..... Mile-end Waste .....The Branch

### SUNDAY 15.

11 ..... Latimer Road Station.....R. J. Lyne, Dean, and Crouch

11.30..... Kilburn—"Old Plough," Kilburn Lane .....Mainwaring,

11.30..... Commercial Road—Union Street .....Cores

11.30..... Mitcham—Fair Green .....The Branch

11.30..... Regent's Park .....Cantwell

11.30..... Southwark—Flat Iron Square .....The Branch

3.30..... Hyde Park—Marble Arch.....Cantwell and Mowbray

3.30..... Victoria Park.....The Branch

7 ..... Weltje Road, Ravenscourt Park .....Hammersmith Branch

7.30..... Walham Green—back of Church .....Hammersmith Branch

### TUESDAY 17.

8 ..... Walham Green—back of Church .....Hammersmith Branch

### THURSDAY 19.

8.15..... Hoxton Church .....The Branch

## PROVINCES.

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

**Glasgow.**—Sunday: Jail Square at 2 o'clock; Paisley Road at 5 o'clock. Tuesday: Cathedral Square, at 8 p.m.

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

**Manchester.**—Sunday: Philips Park Gates, at 11; Stevenson Square, at 3.

**Norwich.**—Sunday: St. Faiths, at 11; Market Place, at 3.

**Yarmouth.**—Sunday: Priory Plain, at 11; Colman's Granary Quay, at 7.

**LIVERPOOL SOCIALIST SOCIETY**, 1 Stanley Street Dale Street.—Meets weekly at 8 p.m.

**DUBLIN.**—At Progressist Club, 87 Marlboro' Street, Saturday Dec. 14, at 8, G. King, "State Socialism."

**EDINBURGH—SCOTTISH SOCIALIST FEDERATION.**—In Moulders' Hall, High St., on Sunday December 15, at 6.30, Comrade McCulloch, of Glasgow, lectures on "Wealth and its Producers."

**CHRISTIAN SOCIALIST SOCIETY.**—At St. Luke's Church, Berwick Street, Soho, on Thursday Dec. 19, at 8.30, E. D. Girdlestone will lecture on "Employment of the Unemployed."

**MANHOOD SUFFRAGE LEAGUE**, "Three Doves," Berwick St., Oxford St., W.—Sunday Dec. 15, at 8.45 p.m., Lothrop Withington, "Profit-sharing and Profit-sharing."

**ENTERPRISE CLUB AND INSTITUTE**, Manchee House, High Road, South Tottenham, N.—Sunday December 15, at 11.30 a.m., Annie Besant, "Drifting into Socialism."

# WHERE TO GET THE 'COMMONWEAL.'

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Wilson, 24 Highgate-road  
Meek, 132 Drummond-street.

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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 prop-  
erty 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 harmo-  
nious combination for the production of com-  
mon wealth and the exchange of mutual  
services without the waste of labour or mate-  
rial.

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 subsis-  
tence 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 produc-  
tion, would at last be realised.

This Revolutionary Socialism must be In-  
ternational. 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 com-  
bination 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.

COUNCIL OF THE SOCIALIST LEAGUE.

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