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[WEEKLY; ONE PENNY.]

THE MAY DAY CELEBRATIONS AND THE "SHIPTON DEMONSTRATION."

THE 1st of May has come and gone. Labour which had sunk into a heavy slumber during the long, dreary, bitter, winter, has sprung into renewed life at the approach of spring, and all hearts have been gladdened in sweet fresh May-time with a glimpse of a new and fairer world. Throughout most countries of Europe the workers have kept holiday; everywhere we read, even in the capitalistic press, that factories and workshops have been closed, while the workers have flocked by thousands into the streets, in defiance in many cases, of the threats of their masters, resolved that at least they would be free for one day, from the tyranny of the capitalist. But the workmen of two nations have been absent for most part from this grand festival of labour. In Germany, the Social Democratic "leaders" have been too glad to follow the example of the English Trade Unionists, and go skulking away from the real battle, have advised the German workmen to hold meetings on the Sunday, and their followers have obeyed them like a flock of sheep; while in England the leaders of the New Trade Unionism, who also profess to be Socialists, in order to obtain the adherence of the immaculate Shipton and the old Trade Unions, have set the Germans this bad example. Thus, German Social Democrats and the New Unionists have found a "leader" at last. The coming man has come, behold him in Mr. George Shipton, the hero of the Sugar Bounty, and numerous other agitations, for which he has been liberally paid by the capitalist classes. It is this man, who, with the gold of the reactionists in his pocket, who led the procession into the Park last Sunday. In this he was in his proper position; it is right that the movement that has broken the solidarity of the workers, should have as its leader and "chief Marshal," Mr. George Shipton. Messrs. Aveling, Burns, Mann, Tillett, Leibnecht, and Bebel, should rejoice in the leadership of a gentleman who would have been kicked out of an assemblage of workmen in any other country in Europe, as a mean cringing knave, who could be bought by any capitalist who thought it worth while. Mr. Shipton can moreover boast that he is dictator of the Legal Eight Hours Movement. We hear that at a meeting of the delegates of various organisations interested in the demonstration, many of the delegates did not quite fancy being bossed by Shipton, and another unionist was proposed for the office of "Chief Marshal." Thereupon Mr. Shipton threatened to withdraw, and instead of giving him full permission to do so, and rejoicing in the purification of the moral atmosphere which would follow his withdrawal, most of the delegates abstained from voting, and allowed the great man to be elected by a insignificant minority. Thus far has the passion for compromise carried our Social Democratic friends, and they are now in the proud position of being bossed by Mr. Shipton; into what Slough of Despond they are likely to get under their able leader, the future alone can tell. But this is always the case; once begin compromising, giving up your principles bit by bit in order to get a large following, and in the end you find yourself without any principles left, and under the leadership of some rascally politician, whom in your heart of hearts you detest and despise, but who being an older hand at the game of political knavery, has tricked you completely.

Well, we will leave our Social Democratic friends in the mess into which the game of running with hare and holding with hounds has led them. They are too far gone for us to trouble about them, such back-boneless creatures are not worth wasting words upon.

But we do appeal to the working people of England to join the workers of the world next year, in an International Demonstration of Solidarity of Labour on the 1st of May. Even if all they care for is the obtaining of such a pitiful reform as a Eight Hours Working Day, the demonstration on a working day is far more effective than any Sunday parade, however numerously attended. Do you not think the middle classes know by this time the exact value of a Sunday demonstration? Will they believe that workmen are even serious in desiring an Eight Hours Day, when they will not even sacrifice a day's pay in order to obtain their demands. Why, anybody who wants a little amusement can go to Hyde Park on a Sunday, especially when there are ensembles of processions, with lively bands and pretty banners, not to mention the

attraction of the speeches of labour leaders. Who would not under these circumstances go to Hyde Park to spend a happy day.

The difference between the demonstration in London and those on the Continent lies in this fact; the workers of other countries in Europe are in earnest, they have not only dared to lose a day's pay, but in thousands of instances they have risked dismissal, and have thus proved to their tyrants, that they mean to have what they demand. Thus we have seen the authorities and the wealthy classes have set their faces against the movement, and so infantry, cavalry, and artillery, are arranged against the demonstrators, and peaceful processions and meetings have been brutally attacked; men, women, and children have been slashed with sabres, and furiously trampled down by the hoofs of cavalry horses; and some have been cruelly murdered. All honour to those, who, when the hired murderers of the propertied classes attacked the people, dared like our brave comrade Cipriani in Rome, to call on the workers to meet force with force, and who cheerfully faced wounds and death in the popular cause. Yes, even if they are accused of indulging in "acts of violence" by English Democratic newspapers. But how different is the attitude of the wealthy classes and their hirelings in England towards the Shipton Demonstration. Here the Chief Commissioner of Police graciously gives permission to the Eight Hours procession to creep into the Park by a back way, so that it shall interfere as little as possible with the comfort and repose of the godly English middle classes, who, after working and toiling hard at swindling each other, and sweating the workers all the week, not to mention the lighter amusements of corrupting with their filthy vices the innocent children of the poor, have great need of quiet and repose upon the Sunday. But really Sir Edward Bradford need not have taken all that trouble, it was really quite unnecessary, the procession was perfectly harmless, we can imagine some comments from the middle class people who crowded the windows to see it pass. "Ah! what a good thing it is," must these middle class ladies and gentlemen have exclaimed, "that our English workers are not like those dreadful people on the Continent, who came out on the busiest day in the week and upset business altogether. Ah! no, they are such nice, quiet, good creatures, they would not give their kind indulgent employers a moment's uneasiness. And look what a nice respectable Chief Marshal they have got, Mr. George Shipton, worthy man, why he actually led an agitation some time ago against the foreigners driving capital out of the country with bounty fed sugar. Oh, there is not the least need to feel alarmed, it is true that there are some people in the procession who used to talk about 'Social Revolution,' and 'taking back by force the wealth they had made,' but then they have now become respectable working men, and in the company of Mr. Shipton they are likely to become still more respectable."

Is not this enough? Do not workmen think even the meeting of Anarchists of London in the Park on May-day, few in number as they were, was likely to have more effect on the propertied classes than the huge Shipton demonstration of last Sunday. At least the men who met in the Park were in earnest, our comrades did not fear to make some sacrifice by leaving their work to join in a revolutionary demonstration. It is not, after all, immense multitudes that have accomplished great changes, but small bodies of men who have the courage of their convictions, who know what they want, and who will march forward undazzled by great names, and will think and act for themselves. It is not what others will do for us, no, we must rely on our own courage and self-sacrifice to gain what we desire. Then, next year, let every workman who reads this article, determine that he will not march to the Park in a Shipton demonstration, but will stand boldly with the Anarchist-Communists on May 1st, to show that he is with them, determined not to rest till tyranny and monopoly are swept away, and the world is rid of its robbers and rulers. But the task will not be an easy one, he must not be afraid of hard names, he will be called a "thief," a "cut throat," and a "murderer," by the ruling classes; but let him be not afraid, there has not been a single man who has ever worked for the welfare of the human race, who has not had to suffer this, and much more; it is not hard names or persecution from the rich, that an honest man should dread. No it is when they should fawn upon and flatter you that there is reason to fear, for then there is a danger that you may become a Judas or a Shipton. N.

LESSONS IN ANARCHISM.

THE misrepresentation and lies of the capitalist press on the one hand, and the want of ability, or perhaps the want of a clear understanding of what Anarchism means, on the part of many of our comrades, renders it most important that a short, clear, and lucid statement of the principles embodied in the term Anarchism, should be put before the readers of the *Commonweal*, in order that the propaganda shall not suffer through any fault of ours. I therefore intend in the following articles, to do my best to give an idea of the doctrines taught by the various propagandists who have penned their ideas in the past, beginning with Comrade Parsons. Who amongst us can forget the memorable 11th of November, 1887. I doubt if there is a man or woman amongst us to-day, but he or she has heard the name of Albert R. Parsons. They may not all, however, know that for some time previous to his "legal" murder, he was busily engaged in writing a history of the development of the workers movement in America, and his wife, our comrade Lucy Parsons has issued his last, and I hope never to be forgotten work, under the title of "The Philosophy of Anarchism." Here he says, in describing the present system:—

"The Wage System of Labour is a Despotism; it is coercive and arbitrary; it compels the wage worker, under penalty of hunger, misery, and distress of wife and children, to obey the dictation of the employer. The individuality and personal liberty of the wage worker and those dependent upon him, is destroyed by the wage system. Whatever the form of Government it does not alter the class servitude of the wage worker. No government could exist a day which guaranteed the inalienable right of the wage workers to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness; that government only exists for the preservation and protection of private monopoly, is becoming more apparent every day to those who belong to the wage earning class. The Parliamentary machine has been used in the past, and is being used in the present, in order that the poor, ignorant voter, by bribery, intimidation, and hypocrisy, may be induced to believe that something good can come out of such an institution. Halls of legislation are mere debating clubs of the rich—the propertied class—where legislation has for its sole object, the adjustment of the special, and sometimes the conflicting interest of this class. The judicial and executive departments of government are the offices and committees who administer the laws of the propertied class, the wage class are by their economic dependence kept in ignorance and fear. They vote, but they only vote as a class, only upon capitalist questions. The government itself is the instrument of capitalism to perpetuate the wage system. Within this circle of government the votes of the workers have been (and must be) unable to affect any permanent change for the better in their condition. This is the experience of one hundred years of government in the United States, it is further the experience of centuries of Government in Europe. Experience proves that those who control the means of life, i.e., the implements of industry and raw material, contrive also its votes, that wealth votes, that poverty cannot vote, that people who must sell their labour or starve, will sell their votes when the same alternative is presented. The working class have been deluded into the belief that they possess political sovereignty and law making powers. They have believed that they could make laws in their own behalf, although they have not made or compiled the enforcement of any law outside of capitalist interests. The wage system of Labour subjects the man of Labour to the control of monopolisers of the means of Labour, the resources of life, social misery, mental degradation, and political dependence, is the state of those who are deprived of the means of existence. Political liberty is possessed by those only who also possess economic liberty. The wage system is the economic servitude of the workers. Four hundred years ago the wage system in Europe began to gradually supersede the serfage system of labour; previous to the Fourteenth century, a system of vassalage existed in all nations, except in a few guilds or trades in the larger cities. Under vassalage, the proprietor of an estate was owner of the men, women, and children upon that estate, and when the estate was sold, these men, women, and children were inventoried and sold to the purchaser. The law, defined the status of the vassal or serf as a fixture to the soil. The law was that they could not be parted from each other, or removed from the estate. In this respect, vassalage differed from chattel slave labour, as at the present time so in the past, the history of society is the history of class struggles. Freemen and slaves, patricians and plebeians, nobles and serfs, guild members and journeyman; in other words the oppressors and the oppressed have engaged each other in this class struggle. These conflicts have sometimes been open, at other times concealed, but never ceasing. This continuous struggle has invariably terminated in a revolutionary alteration of the social system, or in the total destruction of the contending classes. In earlier historical epochs, we find almost everywhere a minute division and sub-division of society into classes or castes—a variety of grades in social life. In Ancient Rome were the patricians, knights, plebeians, slaves; in mediæval Europe, feudal lords, vassals, burghers, journeymen, serfs; and in each of these classes there were again grades and distinctions. It is this system of grades and distinctions, aided by priestcraft and government, that is the cause of the social degradation and misery which we are suffering under. The Anarchist-Communist therefore contends that the implements of industry must belong to the community, and that the means of life shall be open to all; when this is done and private property is abolished, there will and can be no need for the existence of government."

Having thus pointed out the tyranny under which labour suffers in a capitalist society, I shall in my next deal with "Wages, and how they are determined?"

Truthsman.

NOTES.

The *Christian Globe* is not a journal which I often read. Occasionally, however, it would seem to repay perusal. A correspondent calls my attention to a back number wherein the appointment of good Mr. Goschen to the Chairmanship of the Labour Commission was advocated on the ground that "his economic knowledge would be likely to prevent the Commission from adopting the wilder vagaries of Socialist reformers." It would be idle, I suppose, to attempt to make clear to the penner of this stuff that Socialism derives all its strength from the solid basis of economic truth upon which it rests, and that Karl Marx, for example, had possibly a wider and deeper economic knowledge than the present Chancellor of the Exchequer. It is significant, however, that a pious Christian bourgeois should be so enthusiastic about the Jewish exploiter of Egyptian fellaheen.

A fresh illustration of the inhuman baseness characteristic of the middle-class man has been furnished by the conduct of the Assam Commissioner in Manipur. This miscreant, as it now appears, had plotted secretly to entrap to prison and perhaps to death, in the course of an afternoon call, a prince with whom he professed to be on friendly terms. Not unnaturally, the commissioner was dealt with somewhat summarily when he himself fell into the hands of the man he had sought to snare. Yet we may be sure that our excellent jingo journalists will continue to chatter about the treachery of the "wily Oriental" and the chivalry of "English gentlemen." It is the shameless hypocrisy of the possessing classes which adds the last touch of loathing contempt to our hatred of them.

Probably, however, the hypocrisy is so shameless as it is, because in all honesty the bourgeois does not recognise his own vileness. The false Society of which he is but the product has so blinded him to the truth of things that he does not see the hopeless gulf between his professions and his practice. Von Moltke, whose whole life was devoted to the organisation of anti-social passions and anti-social acts, believed himself, apparently, to be a faithful follower of the Nazarene who preached peace on earth and sharing of wealth, and who, in his own way, died for the people, instead of sending tens of thousands to the shambles for the advantage of the robbers who suck the people's life-blood. George Livesey, in the same way, sweats his deluded wage-slaves and says his prayers to that same Nazarene. Surely, these men also, know not what they do. I do not say that on that account they should be forgiven.

It seems that certain Social Democrats here agree with Bebel in deeming a General Strike impracticable because the supplies would soon fail the workers. Those of us who advocate the Universal Strike are actually asked if we have really "thought out" the position. Is this innocence on the part of men who still style themselves Revolutionists real or is it assumed? Obviously, when all workers are starving, they will not be content to continue long in that condition in the midst of plenty. In a day or two they will begin to take the means of life from the master-robbers and the Revolution will be upon us. For some six months we need have no fear for the food supply, even if not a stroke of work is done all the time.

R. W. B.

The short-lived but daring attempt of a few cottars in the island of Lewis to take possession of the land from which their fathers had been driven, to make room for sheep grazing and deer driving, is one of the most interesting and memorable incidents of the land war in the Highlands of Scotland. Whether done in ignorance of the enormity of their offence, or in simple confidence of the ultimate triumph of their efforts, their action was a touching significance to us. It was, of course inevitable, that the filibustering power of the law would summarily put an end to their little revolutionary escapade; but one might readily prophecy that in their case as in the case of Irish Tenant Farmers, more will be gained, even from Parliament, by such an illegal assertion of their right, than by a thousand petitions to the Legislature, or a thousand times the energy spent in endeavouring to get a member of their own class sent there.

The fact that a number of them would rather suffer imprisonment than give a promise not to repeat their transgression of the law, shows that the craven spirit of civilisation has not quite subdued the native daring, for which the men of Lewis were at one time celebrated. We would ask our Land Restoration friends to note how the little enterprise of these Lewis cottars illustrates the inefficacy of mere Land Restoration, without the coincidental restoration of Capital. Although the poor fellows scraped together all the tools and means of sustenance which they could procure, in about a week the majority of them were absolutely famishing, many of them indeed were so stricken with the want of food and exposure to the cold, that the interposition of the officers of the law was regarded by them in the light of a deliverance from certain death.

J. B. G.

Poor Mrs. Grundy must be in an awful state of mind. What is this world coming to? Not only do people throng in crowds to see plays like "Ghosts" and "Hedda Gabler," which strike at the very foundations of conventional morality, but Anarchy appears its head upon the judicial bench, and judges declare that there is no law to force a woman to live with her husband whether she likes it or not. We wonder Mrs. Grundy does not die of a broken heart.

But there is worse still to follow. Certain of Mrs. Grundy's chosen sons—a journalist of high position, none of the common herd of penny-a-finers, two members of parliament, and one candidate, all of extraordinary respectability, distinguished in some cases by not only great outward morality, but even by distinguished piety in all the "observances" of religion, are accused of offences, to mention which would not only make a young person blush, but sink into the ground with shame.

Far be it from us to hint that these charges are true; that has yet to be decided—save in one instance, the worst of all, where the highly respectable person has vindicated his honour by placing the sea between him and his accusers—but the mere fact that these charges can be made against these champions of religion and morality is unfortunately calculated to advance the theories of the wicked Ibsen, and persons holding similar views, that respectable society is a whited sepulchre from whence comes the stench of rotting bodies and mouldering bones. Nay, may not some people go further and say that Mrs. Grundy is but an old Jezebel, whose painted cheeks do but hideously affect the hue of modesty, and who pretends to be horrified at breaches of mere laws of conventionality as a cover to her own crimes. It is indeed a bad day for Mrs. Grundy.

Beyond the evidence recently furnished us in law courts of the horrible corruption of the middle classes, we have other signs of social dissolution. The outbreaks among the guards at Chelsea, and the artillerymen at Gosport show what we have often proclaimed, that the propaganda carried on by our comrades in the army for many years is beginning to bear fruit, and that the rich cannot depend on their own "hired killers" to put down any further uprisings of the people. Within a few days we have seen fresh exposures of hideous social scandals among the idle classes, mutiny among the troops, and thanks to the propaganda of Anarchist-Communists, another outburst of revolt among the people in the riots at Bradford. All these are promising signs, and Anarchists can rejoice, as they hail the onward march of the forces which will make the Revolution.

Three scourges of humanity have passed away: Moltke, Norwood and Walker. One man, the instrument of despotism, has spent his life in slaughtering thousands of his fellow creatures, and carrying misery and desolation into many a home. Widows and orphans of half-starved dockers and over-worked Scottish railwaymen curse the memory of the other two. All have had grand funerals with crowds of hired mourners. For our part we wonder the grass does not wither over their graves, blighted by the imprecations of those they have wronged, robbed, and murdered. As it is their carcasses will be more useful in death than in life, as they will help to make the earth green and fertile. The world is the happier for their disappearance. N.

NEWS FROM WALHALLA.

[BY ROOSTER'S AGENCY.]

HEAVEN, 25th April.—Great commotion was caused here to-day. About noon a special train arrived here from Europe containing three typical Christians. At the town gates there was the usual inspection of luggage and record books, and St. Peter then proceeded to wash the gore off the three Christians. He fainted at the sight of them directly he recognised them—Moltke, Walker and Norwood. The magistrate on duty was called up and a Special Court was held. The first witnesses for the prosecution (in support of prohibition of entrance into the town) were three quarters of a million soldiers whose death had taken place through Moltke. Following these came half a million widows of the first witnesses and their two million orphans. Besides these Moltke was condemned by several million workers who had had to support these soldiers, besides making their arms and accoutrements. Against the defendant Walker came first the Association of Railway Passengers, killed through overworked signal and enginemen; also the Amalgamated Society of Worked-to-death Railway Servants. Against the defendant Norwood appeared the dead Docker's and Gasworkers' Society, also the deluded Hull Electors' Association. The court was crowded, and the defence is to take place this evening.

LATER.—The defence in the great Moltke-Walker-Norwood trial began this evening. The first witness for the defence was His Satanic Majesty, who said he would not have them on any account, as his place was not warm enough, besides which he feared the morality of Cain, Ananias and Co. might be lowered. Next followed several other Royalties, who said that Moltke had helped to increase their earthly riches. The Shareholders' Union appeared for the other two defendants. The principal defence was from the Old Women's Christian Association, whose delegates, let into heaven for the occasion, averred that all three read their bibles and the capitalist newspapers regularly, had not been drunk very often, but let others get drunk; and finally,

had not interfered with the trade of the prostitutes. The magistrates for the day (J. Iscariot, Esq.) said they could not admit them. The choir which followed shook the Chicago Martyrs' Monument (which stands just before the Throne.) M. W. and N. will have now to stand in the Styx, halfway between the two provinces of the Walhalla, though there are two other proposals; firstly, from the Society of Buddha, namely, that they may return to earth in the form of parasitic fleas; the second from the Roman Catholic colony of Purgatory, (near New Monagh,) which has offered them a life annuity.

CYRIL BELL.

CORRESPONDENCE.

TO THE EDITORS OF THE "COMMONWEAL."

AN indefinite idea saw the day in Pittsburgh, United States, a few years ago. This embryo began to take form for the first time in Belgium during the strikes of March 1886, and May 1887.

It was the idea of a General Strike. At that time numerous workmen's corporations, struck by the advantages this idea could produce for the worker, pushed it to the front with all the energy at their command.

Not having at that time international communication, the Belgians could only make it a national scheme, but the idea pursued its natural course, and becoming in a few years an international watchword, this embryo is beginning to sap the old world in its very foundations.

No sooner was it taken up by the workers of the world than the drones began to think what it meant; and seeing they never could pass a law in parliament to compel people to work, if they choose to be idle, they thought of Royal Commissions on the Sweating System, Housing of the Poor, Labour, Three Acres and a Cow, etc., by which they could prevent the "leaders" from making speeches in the street, and taking part in strikes and revolts, giving them instead cushioned arm-chairs on their commissions. This is just playing into the hands of the workers, for if the toiler is left to his own impulse he will make short work of the chains that bind him and his family in a perpetual slavery. Let the proletariat by all means get rid of their leaders by shelving them on Commissions; leaders are always in the way. We have seen at the Miners' Congress held in Paris in the first week of this last April that the crowd had to oust the delegates who wanted to muzzle the miners, and who said that the time had not arrived as yet for a General Strike.

Fancy those well-fed, plump representatives declaring that the time had not yet come for the slave to eat! Think of those rascals then going to the Hotel de Ville to drink the champagne of the worker! This conduct nearly cost Deputy Basly his life. Basly was for eighteen years in the mines himself, and now with his 25 francs a day tells his former colleagues to wait and drink water.

Suppose the workers were to turn round and tell their leaders and others who never do one single useful hour's work in their lives, that the times have changed, that we no longer talk of how many hours slaves shall work, and how they shall live, and so on, but propose that every drone, every leader shall get up at five o'clock every morning and work one hour in some useful productive occupation, and in return have good food, good clothing and housing. Suppose this were said I daresay the said leaders would fly at the workers' throats and fight to the bitter end, rather than except these too reasonable terms.

Yet these same squeezers of human blood, these oppressors of individual or collective initiative, say that for us to work eight hours is not near enough, although we declare that it is too much by half.

The idea of the General Strike has left far behind the Eight Hours question. Any rule about the hours man should work must necessarily lead to misrule. Nature has given to every man enough wit for him to live in a free world. For the present we have not to think how many hours one part of mankind ought to work, as it is too well proved to us that the more we work the less we enjoy, and just those who do no work at all enjoy all. There has been too much work done lately, and the General Strike should mean months of rest, and making use of all we have produced, and so accustoming ourselves to have no masters for a long time to come. I am sure this will be so new and so pleasant, the present society will be so dislocated in all its ramifications, the army disbanded, money rendered valueless, that it will be impossible to reconstitute a new slavery when once the peoples have enjoyed true freedom. Let it be repeated far and wide that Anarchy is order!

Let us banish for ever the idea of being ruled when once we are free. Let us think that all is wrong now, that we have nothing to lose and all to win. Let man be swept from the surface of the globe if he is to be a slave for ever. Let him, if he is never to be free, make room for the inferior animals, who live without leaders and without laws. We must admit, at least, that they have no Cleveland Street scandals on their records, but live in much better order and harmony than even our bible-grinders who prop up the present state of things.

Three cheers for three months' General Strike.

A. COULON.

TO THE EDITORS OF THE "COMMONWEAL."

I share the satisfaction expressed by A. Coulon in your February issue at seeing the 'Weal' move towards Anarchy. At the same time I should be loath to see you abandon the title of "Socialist" to replace it by that of "Anarchist," and would rather see the two designations

combined. It is true that the word "Socialism," while implying common ownership of at least the materials and instruments of labour, covers an indefinite variety of opinions on other points; but "Anarchism" is liable to precisely the same objection, inasmuch as while it denotes repudiation of all authority, and asserts that right is right, whether upheld by unanimity or only by one solitary individual, yet it includes among its advocates men of the most divergent and irreconcilable opinions, such as communists on the one hand and supporters of private property on the other. As an Anarchist-Communist I could no more make common cause with an Anarchist of the mutualist school than I could with the most servile majority-worshipping State Socialist. I favour the retention of the title "Socialist League," with the addition of the explanatory words "Anarchist and Revolutionary."

I send a small sum in aid of your guarantee fund, and hope that you will get the help you need and deserve from all earnest Socialists. We cannot afford to lose a single honest, straightforward paper at a critical time like the present, when there is so much temptation for propagandists to seek the approval of yea-nay Socialists who really don't want the social revolution, but recommend ways and means which they must know will adjourn its attainment *sine die*. HENRY GLASSE.

A BRAINTREE BOSS.—The following notice which has been issued by Mr. Hiller, of Braintree, to his wage-slaves, speaks for itself and needs no comment on our part:—

"Having heard nothing from you respecting the notice I placed before you on Monday, it will appear that you, one and all, are content to work upon the same conditions as hitherto. But I have reasons to believe that there is some dissatisfaction, especially amongst a few. It has therefore become my duty, for the comfort of all, to have a definite understanding with you at once. Therefore, please notice that I am paying very fair prices for my work, and having no desire to do otherwise, I fail to see the necessity of having the Union here. I have therefore decided that those who wish to remain in my employment do so as non-unionists. Those who decline to give up the Union will please finish up their work and come to the office for their money. Those wishing to remain may take out work on signing a paper to the effect that they are and will remain non-unionists whilst in my employ.

April 15th,

(Signed) J. HILLER.

Surely this insolent mandate would stimulate even "pigeon-livered" men who "lack gall to make oppression bitter," to revolt. Mr. Hiller's wage slaves feel this, and they are now on strike against his tyrannical despotism. We wish them all success.

COMMERCIAL CHRISTIANITY.—The fact is, wherever we look we find this sin against the Spirit of Truth. It is the blasphemy of our age. Insincerity, or faithlessness to conscience, is the besetting sin of our time. Men profess to believe what they do not really believe. They make believe rather than believe what they profess. They sacrifice conscience to custom, principle to profit, truth to trade,

"The age is dull, and mean. Men creep
Not walk; with blood too pale and tame
To pay the debt they owe to shame . . .
Pay tithes for soul-insurance; Keep
Six days to Mammom, one to Cant."

The first disciples left their nets and followed Jesus; now men take their nets to Church with them to catch customers. The Church is kept up for the sake of the shop, and Religion is a cloak for the schemer for riches. "A speculator was one day honoured with a call from a local clergyman, who stated that he was soliciting subscriptions for the erection of a new church edifice, and added: "The Lord will surely prosper all who aid us." "Do you honestly believe that?" "Why, certainly I do." "Here, then are £100." The clergyman said "I have no doubt the Lord will repay you for this inside of six months." Only six weeks had passed when the liberal-hearted subscriber called upon the clergyman and said: "You remember I subscribed £100 toward your church building, I now want to go £60 more for the seats and carpets." "Has the Lord prospered you, as I predicted?" "He has: he not only discounted your time one half, but he has permitted me to acquire all the stock in a railroad except about £1,000 held by a widow. I want to subscribe £60 more and have the Lord make her sell out."

REV. ALEXANDER WEBSTER.

So great has been the persecution of Anarchists in Chicago recently, that any person seen by the police wearing a red tie or wrapper is immediately watched and dogged by these blood hounds. Recently a bull chased a girl in Maine two miles, because she wore a red wrap (at least, so say our friends of the *Knights of Labour Journal*). It is now thought quite within the range of practical politics, that this bull shall become a member of the Chicago police force, the reason, I presume, is that a mad bull is fit company for a mad policeman.

The trades unionists are having a rough time of it in this glorious republic. The Box Sawyers Union have had many of their members discharged by the Truckee box factory for their adherence to Union principles.

The Boot and Shoe Makers Union of San Francisco has decided to accept the invitation of the Socialist Labour party, to listen to Professor De Levi's lecture on Socialism. It is working even in San Francisco.

MAY DAY IN LONDON.

THE Anarchist-Communist groups of London celebrated May Day by two meetings. In the afternoon between seven and eight hundred comrades and friends gathered at the Reformer's Tree, and Nicoll, Parker, Louise Michel, Burnie, Mainwaring, Hunter Waits, Mowbray, Coulon and Harragan addressed the meeting, pointing out the necessity of the workers celebrating May Day, to show their solidarity with the workers of the world. Our comrades also explained the hopelessness of political action, and uselessness of the workers hoping to improve their position by wringing such a paltry reform as an Eight Hour Day from the capitalist classes, and that nothing but the workers taking from the ruling classes the wealth they had stolen from them, and the sweeping away of laws and government could really emancipate the people. Louise Michel, in a much applauded speech said, "Let us salute every act of revolt; salute everyone who smashes windows in shops; salute robbers, because they too are in revolt against society; salute revolt in every form." The audience was full of enthusiasm, and the presence of many English workers there showed plainly that there were some at least in London who were not afraid to celebrate the First of May by taking part in a revolutionary meeting.

In the evening a meeting was held on Mile End Waste. When we arrived there we found the Waste completely surrounded by police, and a patrol of twenty-five was riding up and down the road. The presence of our "friends in blue" had attracted a large crowd to the spot, who doubtless wondered what was the meaning of this imposing display of Bradford's bludgeoners. It appears that the announcement that Anarchists were to hold a torchlight meeting in the East End of London had filled Scotland Yard with terror, and Sir Edward Bradford doubtless expected to see a furious mob with blazing torches advancing to fire the palaces in the West End, hence the guard of honour with which he had provided us. Cantwell, Arnold, Nicoll, Mainwaring, Yanovsky and Mowbray, thanks to the presence of the police, addressed a splendid meeting, largely composed of dockers and other riverside workers, and it is worth noting that the most outspoken revolutionary sentiments were the best received.

A meeting held in the Park on Sunday, largely consisting of Eight Hour demonstrators, was equally successful, and they received with hearty applause what the capitalist press denounces as "most violent speeches." Cantwell, Wess, Mowbray, Louise Michel, Peter Kropotkin, Mainwaring, Nicoll and Yanovsky were the speakers. We feel sure, from our experience during the week, that the workers are getting tired of timid and constitutional agitation, and are ripe for the most uncompromising revolutionary propaganda. Besides holding these meetings the London Anarchist Groups have distributed 100,000 copies of the Anarchist manifesto, "What's to be done?" On the whole we have been very busy, and we anticipate a rapid spread of our principles from the work accomplished. N.

INTERNATIONAL SOCIALIST SCHOOL, Autonomie Club, 6, Windmill Street, Tottenham Court Road. Conducted by Louise Michel and A. Coulon, assisted by Mrs. Carr, B.A. of the Fabian Society. Free Education in English, French, and German. The Committee have now secured large and commodious premises in the neighbourhood of Tottenham Court Rd. Funds however are urgently needed, and subscriptions should be sent to A. Coulon, Secretary, 6, Windmill Street, Tottenham Court Road, W.C.

THE YOUNG ANARCHISTS. A new propaganda group has recently been formed to spread our principles among the young. The group meets every Wednesday at 8.30, at the Club Autonomie. All young men anxious to work for the Cause are invited to attend.

TO LET, for Trade Union Meetings, Lectures, &c., three nights a week, the Large Hall of the London Socialist League, 273, Hackney Road. For particulars apply to the Secretary.

JUST OUT. Labour's May Day, by Walter Crane, on fine toned paper, suitable for framing. Sent in cardboard protector, post free, 5d.

Comrades and Sympathisers can each do something to help the Cause, and those unable to help otherwise can subscribe to our Fund for the propagation of Anarchist Communism in the Army and Navy. Subscriptions addressed to the Secretary will be duly acknowledged in the *Commonweal*.

NOTICE TO SUBSCRIBERS AND EXCHANGES.

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