

# THE COMMONWEAL

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### THE NECESSITY FOR A NO RENT CAMPAIGN.

(Continued from page 91.)

THE rapacity of the owners of these dens, who fatten upon the starvation, disease, and misery of the suffering poor, might make an Irish landlord hold up his hands in mute admiration. A story told before the Commission by Inspector Bates of the T Division is a splendid illustration. It appears that early in March, 1884, this police officer visited a house in Prospect Terrace, and found a workman, his wife, and four children occupying a single room. The wife had a piteous story to tell—her husband was out of work, and they had not tasted meat since Christmas. The man had been breaking stones in the stoneyard, but on that day he was too ill to go there, and the Inspector could not see a particle of food in the house. Yet through all this long period of suffering and starvation one person had to be satisfied, and that was the landlord. But let us tell the rest of the story in the Inspector's own words. He said, "She told me that the landlord had refused to take her money because she was a halfpenny short in the rent. She had 4s. 5½d. wherewith to pay 4s. 6d., and the landlord, or his agent, positively refused to take the money, and told her she had better put it in a flower pot until it grew; and she sold her bedstead to raise the money for the rent. She showed me her rent book, and there it was made up, I think, to the 3rd of March, as well as I can remember; and from the few inquiries I made after I have no reason to doubt her word." The landlords of this property own 18,000 houses in London, as was proved in evidence before Sir Richard Cross's Committee. Can anyone feel any scruple at making war upon these human vampires? If we are merciless to the snake and tiger, why should we spare these assassins of the poor, who snatch from the lips of the starving, the crust that would save them from famishing?

Another tale told by Mr. Geo. R. Sims in "How the Poor Live" is more humorous, although the greed exhibited is quite as terrible as that of the landlord in the Inspector's story. Mr. Sims says:—"Some landlords do repair their tenants' rooms. Why, certainly. Here is a sketch of one, and the repairs we saw the same day:—Rent, 4s. a week; condition indescribable. But notice: A bit of box lid nailed across a hole in the wall big enough for a man's head to go through, a nail knocked into the window frame, beneath which still comes a little fresh air, and a strip of new paper on a corner of a wall. You can't see the paper because it isn't up. The lady of the rooms holds it in her hand. The rent collector has just left for her to put up herself. Its value at a rough guess is threepence. This landlord has executed repairs. Items: One piece of broken soap box, one yard and a half of paper, and one nail. And for these repairs he has raised the rent of the room threepence a week." Well, here are all the evils which politicians bemoan in rack-rented Ireland at our doors, but no great statesman, no party leader, uses them as a cry to attain office. Why is this? Is it because the poor of London has been so dumb, patient, and submissive that the questions that concern them have never been forced upon the attentions of these great men by methods that have been common enough in Ireland? It would seem so.

But now what attempts have the ruling classes made to remedy this. Poor and half-hearted as all these attempts have been, they have but intensified the existing misery and increased the rack rents. This was proved by the evidence of numerous witnesses before the Commission; one of the most striking instances given was the statement of Mr. A. Young, the Surveyor of the London School Board, who stated that the improvement in Great Wild Street, Drury Lane, by the erection of the Peabody Model Dwellings, had increased the overcrowding, and thereby raised rents among the poorer classes, whom the Peabody Trustees would not have as tenants. The rents of single rooms had been raised by 6d. and 1s., and where one had been previously from 3s. to 3s. 6d., it would fetch from 4s. to 4s. 6d. now. We may be quite certain that schemes like that of the County Council for buying out the landlords of the Boundary Street Area for "twenty-four years purchase of the rateable value," at a cost of £300,000 will not improve matters. Fancy "buying out" the owners of dens like

these described, where the people die off at a rate of 40·13 per 1,000, as compared with 22·8 per 1,000 for the rest of half-starved overcrowded Bethnal Green. Remember that in dens like these little children perish at the rate of 30 in a hundred in the first year of their innocent lives, while among the rich only 8 per cent. die in the same time, that is, for every rich man's child that dies, four perish among the poor, and why do they die? In most instances because of the rack-rented fever-breeding dens in which their parents are forced to live.

Think of this little picture presented by G. R. Sims of one of these dog-holes. He describes how a widow with her daughters of seventeen and sixteen, her sons of fourteen and thirteen, and her two younger children, dwelt in a room for which she paid 4s. 6d. a week, of which the advantages were as follows:—"The walls were mildewed and streaming with damp; the boards as you trod on them, made the slushing noise of a plank spread across a mud puddle in a brickfield; foul within and foul without, these people paid the rent of it gladly, and perhaps thanked "God" for the luck of having it." We wonder what it was made the "slushing noise" when you trod on the boards of the room; liquid sewage most probably. And what shall we call the man who exacts 4s. 6d. weekly for a stinking dog-hole like this? What shall we say of the fate of little children who die off by thousands through living in places like these? Shall we call this landlord a murderous monster of greed and avarice? Shall we say that he is the murderer of these children as much as if he cut their throats with his own hands, or ripped them up like the imitators of the fiend of Whitechapel? No, my friends, this slum-owner is a most respectable person; he goes to Church every Sunday, he is received in the best society; he may even represent the people in Parliament or on the County Council, and award himself as compensation for the many benefits he has bestowed upon a grateful public, "twenty-four years purchase of the rateable value" for his foul hovels. The people who denounce this man in strong language, who tell the poor to pay "No Rent" to him, these are the dangerous people, these are the criminal classes, these Anarchists! Lock them up if you please, Mr. Policeman, and wealthy Socialists of the Fabian school shun them as some hideous embodiment of evil, unfit to associate with persons of your distinguished respectability!

The public may be pleased to learn that "thrift and industry" are greatly encouraged by the slum-owner. Mr. Sims, in telling us of another "home," says, "It is a tidy room this, for the neighbourhood. A good, hard-working woman has kept her home neat, even in such surroundings. The rent is 4s. 6d. a week, and the family living in it number eight souls; their total earnings are 12s." Twelve shillings a week gained by incredible toil and slavery at match box making at 2½d. a gross, shirt making at 7d. a dozen, or trousers finishing at 4½d. a pair, toiling for 16 hours a day to earn 12s., of which the landlord takes 4s. 6d., or more than a third, leaving 7s. 6d. for "eight souls" to live upon. Perhaps by this time, thanks to the County Council and other "improvements," the landlord has raised the rent to 5s., and perhaps one of the widow's daughters has gone upon the streets to pay it. What wicked and criminal people they must be, who would desire the destruction of a society in which these things are possible. But what have you reformers done. You have driven the poor man from slum to slum, you are pulling down the dens in which at least they could exist, to erect model dwellings and warehouses where they may not live. Thanks to your philanthropic efforts, overcrowding has intensified and increased. Even in the time of the Royal Commission on the Housing of the Poor, seven or eight persons living in one room was not uncommon in the slums of Clerkenwell. The number of people living in the Boundary Street Area is 373 persons per acre, as compared with 168 per acre in Bethnal Green generally. Well may the slum-owners rub their hands with delight, as they see "improvement" after "improvement," slum after slum pulled down with thumping terms of compensation to the "owners," while the tenants are driven in a thicker and thicker swarm to the hovels that are still standing, to force up rent by increased competition for these wretched dens, to force up rents higher and higher by the slavery, disease and overcrowding of the starving poor. The landlords may well

welcome these "improvements" and "reforms." What is over-crowding, fever, starvation, and death to them, so long as they get their rents, so long as their purses grow fat and swollen with gold.

Yet think of this question of over-crowding, seven or eight persons living in one room, father and mother, sons and daughters who have reached their teens, all herding together. Then the respectable middle class man is shocked at the "unspeakable vice and immorality" which follows—necessarily follows; would the respectable bourgeois be much better, or even his immaculate sons and daughters? The respectable bourgeois really thinks he must send some missionaries or district visitors to these "heathens," but he goes on with his sweating and rack-renting just the same, he does not dream of removing the causes that create criminals and prostitutes.

And how can he, when he is the cause, when his existence as a rack-renting landlord or grinding capitalist makes crime and prostitution as surely as it creates hunger and misery. When a man can only earn on an average 13s. or 16s. a week by his labour, i.e., not enough to keep a wife and family on the roughest and coarsest food, and yet he has to give 4s. 6d. or 6s. out of his scanty income to the slum landlord, to enable that gentleman to roll in his carriage and fare sumptuously every day, we need not inquire why it is that the children have frequently to go without even a crust of bread that usually serves them for dinner. They "starve to pay the rent" as G. R. Sims says in one of his poems. But why should they starve? What are the benefits that the slum rack-renter bestows upon them, that they should starve any longer? An unhealthy dog-hole reeking with sewer gas and swarming with vermin. The "reduction" of a large family by diphtheria and typhus. The pleasure of being turned into the street amid pelting rain, piercing winds, or frost and snow; should the man fall out of work through trade depression, produced not by his own fault, but by the gambling greed of rich money mongers, who in their haste to get rich, have brought misery upon thousands.

Would it not be better, friends, to spend the rent in getting meat for your little ones, who surely need it more than your overfed landlord wants, rich dainties, sparkling wines, splendid carriages, and richly dressed prostitutes to serve his lordly pleasure? Why should you pay him for shortening your lives, so, as a class, your average age is only 29 years, while he and his class despite diseases produced by gluttony, drunkenness, and debauchery, live on an average to 55? Why should you pay him for shortening your lives and murdering your children?

Remember, too, that the over-crowding that demoralises your children that can live in spite of unhealthy surroundings, is not necessary. There are enough houses in London to provide a house for every eight persons. But landlord and capitalists must have their palaces with more rooms than they can use, and therefore you must live crushed and crowded in stifling hovels. There is enough wealth for all, but you must starve on 15s. or 13s. a week, that these vile scoundrels may have their thousands or hundreds of thousands yearly, and you can see in Divorce and Criminal Court reports the good use they make of the wealth they wring from you.

Surely I have said enough to convince you of the folly of paying rent any longer for the miserable dens, for which you pay three, four, or five times as much, considering your income, as what a middle class man pays for a comfortable home with every sanitary convenience. He, as the Rev. Price Hughes said in St. James's Hall, only pays 10 per cent. of his income in rent, while you pay 30, 40, and 50 per cent. of yours, and in most cases for living in horrible dog-holes in which the very pestilences which sweep the town are generated. Can you hope that legislation or legislators will help you? Have they ever done anything, but drive you out of one lot of crowded unhealthy hovels to crowd you thicker and closer into those slums that remain? Oh, yes, they have done something more, they have given £300,000 to your landlords, as a reward for their services to the State for murdering the children of the poor, whom your legislators think are getting "decidedly too numerous." Why not take a leaf out of the Irishman's book, and help yourselves? Take your own compensation for the murder of your little ones, for the death of a dearly-loved husband, the loss of a beloved wife or sister, by paying rent no longer to the assassins of the poor, these cannibals who live by devouring you, who snatch from the fingers of your starving children the very bread they are eating. "No Rent!" that is the cry that shall convince the landlord robbers and murderers that their reign is nearly over. "No Rent!" for your fever-haunted dens. "No Rent!" to those who starve, rob, and murder us.

Let the workers take up this cry, let them act upon it. Let them refuse in their thousands to pay rent any longer, and what can stand against them. When a black flag bearing these words—"No Rent,"—floats over a single slum, when streets are torn up and barricaded, when from the windows and roofs of the houses there comes a shower of hot water and storm of stones and brickbats, what can police or bailiffs do? Nothing, they must send for troops to help them, and can they trust the troops, already seething with mutiny, to do their devilish work. They know very well they cannot, the soldiers, who have wrongs of their own, will not butcher men, women, and children, who have only revolted like the Grenadiers and Coldstreams, against tyranny and robbery. Once let the war begin in a single slum and it will soon spread through the length and breadth of London. We of the No Rent League are pledged to fight out this question, we will preach these ideas till the blow struck at landlordism by our comrade John Creaghe of Sheffield is heard in every slum. Those who singly dare to imitate our comrade who refused to pay rent and hunt the bums from their homes with the kitchen poker, shall have their wives and families kept by the No Rent League while they are in prison for

"assaulting" these scoundrels. We have declared war against landlordism, it is a war to death, and we will not rest till the land is rid of all the thieves and robbers, capitalists and landlords alike, who live by the plunder of the poor. Till capitalism as well as landlordism has direct been swept away, not by Parliament or County Council, but by the revolutionary action of the people, there is no hope that the condition of the poor can be permanently improved, and it is to encourage the people to begin this warfare that we Anarchists are preaching a No Rent Campaign. Once let the revolt against the landlords spread among the people, and an unjust and tyrannous social system, crazy with age and rottenness, will soon fall crashing to the ground, and freedom and happiness will fill the lives of all.

## THE ANARCHIST TRIAL AT LEEDS.

At Leeds on July 28th, took place the celebrated trial of Dr. Creaghe. The trial was a most remarkable one, and after it was over there was a good deal of astonishment. It will be remembered that when Mr. R. Bingham was brought here on the charge of inciting to murder, it was Justice Grantham who tried the case. It was Justice Grantham too who tried the case of Dr. Creaghe. It will be remembered that the charge against Dr. Creaghe was one of having libelled a Mr. Muir Wilson, solicitor, and at the trial the legal profession was well represented.

Mr. Kershaw, barrister, conducted the prosecution, and Creaghe, as was best, defended himself, and when our comrade made his appearance in the dock, he at once became the centre of attraction. Who the defendant was supposed to be it is not easy to say, as when Mr. Kershaw referred to him as a *Surgeon* even the Judge could not help having a good look at the Doctor.

But even Mr. Kershaw was not to have it all his own way. Of course his business was to paint the defendant as black as possible, and Mr. M. Wilson as a gentleman of the highest honour. But on more than one occasion the prosecuting counsel was interrupted by the Doctor, the Judge asking the latter to allow the counsel to proceed. But Creaghe was not to be restrained. If he were in the dock he was not to be doomed to silence. The prosecution having closed, the Doctor's opportunity arrived, and all eyes were at once fixed upon him.

After combatting several of the statements made by the prosecution, the Doctor read very largely from the *Anarchist* and other papers, during which time the interest and curiosity continued to increase. He then read his defence, which he had carefully prepared. His voice was clear, and his every word distinctly heard in every part of the court. Most of the members of the bar looked serious and deeply concerned and evidently felt keenly the burning words of the Doctor as he poured forth his stream of fierce condemnation, and displayed his supreme contempt for the whole legal profession. Nevertheless, on two or three occasions several members of the Whig Fraternity were carried, like the bulk of those present, and joined in the general laughter provoked by the caustic remarks of the Doctor. But the climax was reached, and the whole legal profession looked aghast when Creaghe, addressing the jury, boldly and fearlessly exclaimed, "If you bring in a verdict of guilty against me, you place me at the mercy of a judge, who is famous, nay, infamous, for the ferocious sentences he passes upon the victims of private property." The Judge, who sat with his face partly from public view, appeared to pale before this heavy onslaught, while the members of the profession trembled with emotion. All eyes were turned to his Lordship, the general excitement was tremendous, but the Doctor went on with his words of fire, amid the wildest excitement. The authorities present were filled with the greatest fury. At one of the expressions of the Doctor, a comrade present cried, "hear, hear," when a burly policeman, without even endeavouring to find out who the offender was, seized an innocent man by the collar and forced him out of court.

Dr. Creaghe having concluded his defence, the Judge commenced his summing up, but it was a very tame affair. He uttered not a word in defence of the legal profession, and he soon brought his remarks to a close. Of course the jury at once brought in a verdict of guilty, and again the deepest silence prevailed, when to the surprise of all present, the Judge declined to punish Dr. Creaghe. Our comrade himself looked amazed, while the members of the profession looked disappointed. There was a feeling of relief among the comrades, and an expression of gladness on the countenances of many of those present.

This trial cannot but do much good. The boldness of the Doctor, his defiant attitude during the whole proceedings, and his clearly expressed contempt for the legal profession, cannot and will not be soon forgotten.

J. S.

## NOTES.

Those simple people, who perhaps imagined that the two police officers who had falsely charged Alice Millard with being a "common prostitute," would be severely punished by a middle-class judge and jury, have been undecieved. The immaculate officers have been discharged without a stain upon their spotless characters, and the only sufferer has been the poor girl who has had her character sworn away by a long list of perjured witnesses, whom these invaluable officers raked up against her out of the stews of Aldershot.

It must strike everyone as a remarkable fact, that nearly all the police witnesses in the Millard case were either prostitutes or the keepers of beer-houses frequented by these unfortunates. That is the two classes of people whose livelihood depends absolutely upon the goodwill of the police. Supposing now any prostitute in Aldershot had refused to give any evidence the police wanted, is it not very probable that she would find herself locked up on a charge of being drunk and disorderly, with perhaps the additional aggravation of using "obscene language," which shocked the moral officers' delicate ears. Not only would this have occurred, but the girl would have been literally hunted out of the town, and we know how much credit a magistrate would give to her story if she dared to complain of police brutality. As to beer-shop keepers, when licensing day comes round, cannot the police close their houses by a single word to the magistrates. It therefore must be evident to all, how much the evidence procured by the police in this case was worth.

But it may be just as well for workmen to note what has been established by the Millard case. A girl who talks to soldiers must not be surprised if she is run in and charged as a "common prostitute." She will be then graciously allowed to vindicate her "honour" by an enforced medical examination; but if she prosecutes the perjurers afterwards, she will only have her character blackened and her life embittered by perjured evidence procured by the police, who will escape all punishment on the plea that it was only a "natural mistake."

But don't complain, law abiding workmen; you who wonder what you would do without laws and policemen to protect you. This is the protection your children get from a force whose chief characteristics are corruption, brutality, and perjury. Did you ever know a policeman who would not take a bribe? Did you ever know one who was not a thorough ruffian? Did you ever know a policeman who told the truth in the witness-box, except by accident? And yet we are going to reform this wicked world by a few laws made by members of parliament, who will tell any lie in order to get these administered by lawyers, who are liars and thieves from their cradles, carried out by policemen, who are simply a gang of corrupt, brutal, and ruffianly perjurers, and put in force by magistrates and judges like Newton, Grantham, and Edlin, and by the combined exertions of these gentlemen we shall evolve the Elysium of State Socialism. Bah! for my part I should put more faith in enough dynamite to make a clean sweep of policemen, legislators, lawyers, judges, and magistrates, than in any legislation to be initiated or carried out by them.

Gottisford Snail, who made a raid on a jeweller's shop in Liverpool Street, because, as he said, he had "no money and nothing to eat, and as there was plenty in the shop, he thought he was justified in helping himself, in order to obtain the necessaries of life," has been sent to jail for two months with hard labour by humane Alderman Wilkin. This turtle-gorged alderman, who has never known the pangs of hunger, no doubt thinks this sentence will deter starving men from following this bold example. It will not, for even two months hard labour is better than wandering about the streets, starving. English "tramps" and unemployed, remember this, and help yourselves like Gottisford Snail. The capitalist gluttons won't believe there is any starvation in the land until a few of their shops are cleared out. Don't be such cowards as to starve in the midst of piles of wealth, English workers. Help yourselves. H. N.

## NEED WORK BE HARD OR LONG?

In considering this question one must bear in mind that "hard" and "long" are terms used relatively. What amount of work one man can do in a certain time, and how long he can keep it up, would of course be no standard for a man of less powerful physique. So that manifestly it would be grossly unjust to fix on so much work and so many hours as a solution to the question, for though performed with ease and possibly pleasure by the strong man, may yet be hard and long to a weaker individual. Having got a clear understanding of what the question involves, we may proceed to its solution, and we think we are justified by what we see around us in stating at once that work need not to anyone be either hard or long, but that it is possible, and therefore should become, both an ease and a pleasure. When we consider that of all the wealth created by labour, the workers obtain but one-fourth, one can at once see that if the workers choose to keep the other three-fourths for themselves they would soon find a means of diminishing their labour. And when we further consider that this three-fourths goes to a body of lazy individuals whom the workers outnumber by ten to one, we come to the conclusion that more than ever may the burden of labour be lessened. And when we moreover look round and see the enormous waste of labour that this system entails, one can easily conceive that the workers might, in an Anarchist community, supply themselves with a plentiful supply of good food, not with labour wasted on it for the purpose of poisoning it by adulteration. They might also easily supply themselves with suitable clothing, not in wasting labour to make shoddy. Would there be any difficulty in building substantial shelter, not in wasting labour in jerry-building; or in producing plenty of so-called luxuries, instead of wasting labour as we do now by making them, spoiling them, and then giving them to a class of idlers, but voracious consumers. Surely, if the workers

would organise themselves simply to produce all these good things, one can hardly conceive what a small amount of united effort would be needed to do this. And this would be Socialism. And well do our masters know this. They scruple at nothing to prevent this knowledge reaching the workers. The most powerful agent has been that of religion. How that has worked I can best illustrate by a few quotations:—

Says the clergy to the capitalist: "We'll attend to the poor for you, and do it at a hundredth part of the expense; we'll go from house to house; we'll give 'em bibles and religious tracts, and make 'em so contented and so humble, by setting their affections on things above, that you cannot think, sir, how calmly they'll submit to the dispensations of divine providence, how meekly they'll lie down like rats in ditches, and how happy they'll die. Give us the money, sir, and we'll give 'em the gospel. It's none but infidels that ever intermeddle in social affairs; let us be-gospel them enough, and then the lily-livered idiots will bear starvation patiently, and they'll die. Ah! my dear sir, you cannot think how happy they'll die."

And the rich may rejoice as they say: "Look at your be-gospelled poor, your beggarly Lazarus, faint and wounded, sick and sore, contented to have their grievances licked over by the tongues of curs of salvation; he is content to lie down and die, because it would be 'a sin to covet and desire other men's goods.' And instead of meeting their enemies in the gate, with the generous indignation, as far from malice as from fear, that would say, 'D'ye think we'll starve and die to please you, we'll see you damned first.' They put the cart before the horse and seem to say, 'O, no, we'll starve and die first, and then through God's mighty's mercy we shall see them damned afterwards.'"

This was true once, but now, thanks to the spread of revolutionary ideas, the poor are awaking from their stupor, and will soon seize upon the wealth they have created, and then work will be neither hard nor long.

## INTERNATIONAL NOTES.

### FRANCE.

Good news comes from the "free republic." Dynamite is getting *à la mode* altogether. Some capitalists in Nantes have just learned at their own expense, that once the worker shows his teeth he is very much disposed to show his power. Two explosions in one day in a country town is good work. In the two cases the buildings were shattered to atoms, three of our comrades were arrested on suspicion, and, as is always the case, the right man has got the time to clear off. As free speech is not permitted in the "free republic," and as Anarchist ideas have come to the front in spite of all obstacles, our French comrades think that dynamite has better lungs and speaks in bolder tones than any speaker. At the workers' meetings for the past time of propaganda, and dynamite explosions occur with good effect, as in Nantes, they will see that it is not so difficult after all to crush the drones and live free.

### SPAIN.

A few plucky comrades made an attempt to seize the Barracks on the 2nd of August, to arouse the people of Barcelona to revolt and break their chains. Shots were fired on both sides, and finally the law 'n' order men of the best of it as they turned out in their thousands against our fifteen comrades. We comment on this just to show that the worker is sure to find everywhere brave men to fight for the cause of humanity, to free mankind from the tyranny of their exploiters, who would soon take to their heels if they once saw that we were in earnest.

### ITALY.

Perhaps in no country in the world is Anarchism so prevalent as in Italy. Batches of twenty Anarchists passing at the Asinzes is a matter of little importance in this country, where every week practical work is done by our comrades. The sufferings of our friends are largely compensated by the result of their work among the country people who acclaim our principles with joy. The last report we have received from our comrade Consorti who is on the spot, shows that a tremendous change is taking place in the minds of the peasants. All the energies of the Italian Anarchists are now spent in the country, the towns being ripe for the Social Revolution. A. C.

### GERMANY.

On the 1st inst., the former Editor of the *Bergarbeiter Zeitung* (Miner's Gazette), Hunninghans, of Bochum, was condemned to six months imprisonment for having incited the miners to disobey the "laws of the country." Several other accusations were brought against him; these cases, however, will be tried later on. About four months ago several of the co-defendants in the case of Mrs. Reichardt for spreading the prohibited *Freiheit* in Germany have once more been arrested and thrown into prison in Leipzig, where they are awaiting their trial.

A society has been formed by the peasants in Pomerania with the object of getting rid of the "squires." "Give us bread, Emperor," is the title of a book which has just been confiscated in Germany, in spite of the author being an ultra-conservative and ardent admirer of the Emperor; to whom he appeals to relieve the present distress that prevails throughout Russia. Young Bully does not seem to be very fond of such appeals.

Starvation in Germany is now prevalent among His Majesty's Army and the "lower" classes, but such cases are daily recorded among starving artists and other intellectual proletarians. A few days ago, a prominent judge in Gotha, named Henschteck, put an end to his life. Before committing the act he forwarded the following note to a notorious usurer: "None of the many cheques in your possession will be honoured since I myself forged them." Excuse yours faithfully, HENSCHTECK.

### SWITZERLAND.

All our friends will be glad to hear that comrade Malatesta has been set at liberty. All the efforts of the Italian government on his behalf proved themselves futile. We shall soon see Malatesta among us. The International Congress for the discussion of the question of insurrection against accident will be held in Berne from September 21st to 26th. The

nations which have promised to take part in it are England, France, Germany, Holland, Austro-Hungary, Sweden, Norway, Switzerland, Spain, and the United States. It is to be hoped that the workers will not be duped by this and similar Congresses.

Another conflict has taken place between the custom house officers and smugglers in the canton of Ticino, near Podrisade. The Italian custom officers crossed the frontier in pursuit of the smugglers, and fired when within Swiss territory. One of the men was wounded.

**RUSSIA.**

With reference to the new press law for Finland, which is to come into force on October 1st next, it is announced that the Tzar himself will appoint the president of the Committee of Censors, that is to say, that henceforth the Finnish press will be muzzled entirely.

Stepniak thus describes the present address in Russia:—  
 "Thousands of peasants are living, or rather starving upon grass boiled in water. People die of hunger in the streets of the town to which they flock. People advertise their children "for sale" in order not to see them die before their eyes. Russia has the best and most arable land in Europe; her climate is peculiarly favourable for corn growing, and her population is one of the most laborious on the face of the earth. Nevertheless, famine visits the country every three or four years. "Russia is the country of famine, whilst it might be the country of plenty. If the Russian soil were cultivated as well as the average English soil, Russia could feed a population of 500 millions. This is the statement of the first geographer of our time."

More plots, more arrests, new religious and political inquisitions, are daily reported from the land of the Tsars. X. X. X.

**THE ANARCHIST CONFERENCE.**

THERE was a crowded attendance of comrades from Norwich, the London Socialist League, the Young Anarchists, Freedom and Vorwärts Groups, and the Autonomie and Berner Street Clubs. Good reports of work done by the above groups given by comrades present.

THE ANARCHIST PRESS.—Cantwell gave a statement of our position, and that this Conference should give an expression of opinion, as to whether the papers of London were too many, as being without direct local interest in the provinces, or whether the propaganda could be best maintained by a local press everywhere.

Coulon, Nicoll, Webler, Albert, and Mowbray discussed the matter at some length, and Houghton thought that local papers would for the present be a failure, as the groups were not strong enough to carry them on everywhere.

Nicoll suggested a column of local news in the 'Weal, and recommended we should carry on a more vigorous propaganda in London and the provinces by means of sensational placards and leaflets, thus imitating the methods of the old revolutionists. It would also be a good plan to burn law, rent, sweaters, and rackrenters in effigy, by way of drawing attention to our propapanda and getting us an audience.

ARMY PROPAGANDA.—Webler said it was inadvisable to propagate it from the ranks of the army, but it was best to permeate it from the outside.

General opinion was that comrades should not be dissuaded from joining the army, as all acts of daring are good, and those that undertake them, know that there is risk attached.

NO RENT.—Nicoll gave an account of our meetings and propaganda in favour of the No Rent Campaign.

Albert thought that although good propaganda, the people would not to a sufficient extent practice it.

Power formulated a plan of occupying model dwellings, and a Fr comrade gave an account of how they worked the Anti-Broker Brigade in Paris.

There, whenever a comrade or any other worker is in trouble with his landlord, six or seven Anarchists go to his house in a body and carry off his furniture. This he explained would be easy work in England, as in Paris every house has a porter, who usually tries to interfere with the departure of the household goods, and has to be knocked down before he will be quiet; in London we have no one to interfere with us. This kind of action would do more to prove to the people that Anarchists were the real "practical people" than any he knew of. He concluded by saying "Persevere with this propaganda comrades. There is none better."

EXPROPRIATION.—The late editor of the *Pere Peinard* urged that we should do our utmost to urge the people to seize upon the wealth of the capitalists on every possible occasion, and after some discussion it was agreed that the principle being good we should preach and practise it whenever possible. The Conference then closed, and a very pleasant evening was spent with songs, music, and dancing.

**"COMMONWEAL" GUARANTEE FUND.**

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**NOTICE TO SUBSCRIBERS AND EXCHANGES.**

The 'COMMONWEAL' being now the property of the newly-constituted London Socialist League, all communications should be addressed, "The Secretary, 273, Hackney Road, London, N.E.," and remittances made payable at Post Office, Hackney Road.

**NOTICES.**

**LONDON.**

- Commonweal Club.*—273, Hackney Road, N.E. Lectures every Sunday at 11 a.m. and 8 p.m. Admission free. Membership: 1s. entrance fee, and 6d. per month subscription.
- Club Autonomie.*—6, Windmill Street, Tottenham Court Road. Young Anarchists meet every Wednesday evening at 8 o'clock.
- International Club.*—40, Berner Street, Commercial Road, E. Discussion Class every Tuesday evening at 8.30.
- South London.*—Socialist Society, 149, Manor Place, S.E. All communications should be addressed to F. A. Fox, Secretary.

**PROVINCES.**

- Aberdeen.*—Revolutionary Socialist Federation. Meetings are held in Oddfellows Small Hall, Crooked Lane, on Tuesday evenings at 8.
- Dundee.*—Anarchist-Communist Group. For information apply to Wm. Reekie, 15 Ann Street.
- Edinburgh.*—Scottish Socialist Federation. Club Rooms, 333 High Street, Edinburgh. J. Pearson, Secretary.
- Glasgow.*—The Socialist League meets every alternate Friday at 20 Adelphi Street, S.S. Lectures and Discussions.
- Hull.*—Club Liberty, 1 Beets Court, Blanket Row.
- Leeds.*—Socialist League Club, 1 Clarendon Buildings and Front Row, Victoria Road. Open every evening. Business meeting Fridays at 8.—International Educational Club, near St. James's Hall, York Street. Open every evening. Lectures every Saturday at 4. All kinds of Socialist literature for sale at both clubs.
- Leicester.*—Room No. 7, Co-operative Hall, High Street. Members meet on Friday at 8 p.m. Lecture in the Spiritualist Hall, Silver Street, every Sunday at 6.30.
- Leytonstone.*—Anarchist-Communist Group meets at 1, West Street, Harrow Green, every Sunday at 7.30.
- Manchester.*—International Club, 25, Bury New Road, Strangeways. Open every evening. Weekly meeting on Tuesdays at 8.
- Newcastle.*—Anarchist-Communist Group. Open-air meetings every Sunday morning on the Quay. Discussion every Monday at 8.30 p.m. in Lockhart's Cocoa Rooms, Bigg Market.
- Nottingham.*—Socialist Club, Woodland Place, Upper Parliament Street. Club contribution, 1d. per week; Dancing every Wednesday, 8 till 10.30—fee 3d.
- Norwich.*—Members' meeting held every Tuesday at 8.30.
- Oxford.*—Temperance Hall, 254 Pembroke Street. First Friday in every month, at 8.30 p.m.
- Sheffield.*—Socialist Club, 47 Westbar Green. French Class, Tuesday at 8.30. Discussion Class, Wednesday at 8.30.
- Walsall.*—Socialist Club, 18 Goodall Street, Walsall. Meetings every night.
- Yarmouth.*—Socialist League Club, 56 Row, Market Place. Open every evening Business Meeting, Tuesday at 8. Singing Practice, Wednesday at 8.30. Discussion Class, Thursday at 8.30. Elocution Class, Friday at 8.30.

**OPEN-AIR PROPAGANDA.**

- London.*—Sunday: Regent's Park and Hackney Triangle at 11.30; Hyde Park and Victoria Park at 3.30. Saturday: Hyde Park at 7.30.
- Aberdeen.*—Sunday: Castle Street, at 6.45 p.m.
- Edinburgh.*—Sunday: Leith Links at 2; Meadows at 6.
- Glasgow.*—Sunday: Paisley Road Toll and St. George's Cross at 5 p.m.
- Leeds.*—Sunday: Market Gates, Kirkgate, at 11.30 a.m. and 7 p.m.
- Leicester.*—Sunday: Russell Square, at 10.45 a.m., Market Place at 6.15, and Humberstone Gate at 8 p.m.
- Liverpool.*—Landing Stage, Sundays at 11.30 a.m. and 3 p.m.
- Manchester.*—Sunday: Philips Park Gates, at 11.30; Stevenson Square, at 3.
- Nottingham.*—Sunday: Sneyton Market, at 11 a.m.; Great Market, at 7 p.m.
- Norwich.*—Saturday: Haymarket, at 8. Sunday: Market Place at 11, 3, and 7.30.
- Sheffield.*—Sunday: Monolith, Fargate, at 11.30; West Bar, at 11.30; Newhall Road, Attercliffe, at 11.30; Grimsthorpe, at 11.30; Rotherham, at 3; Woodhouse, at 3; West Bar, at 8; Attercliffe Road, at 8.
- Yarmouth.*—Sunday: Priory Plain, at 11; Fish Wharf, at 3; Hall Quay, at 7.

Comrades and friends in Sheffield willing to support the Sheffield Anarchist School, please communicate to Cyril Bell, at 47, West Bar Green. Adults and children of either sex admitted. Fees voluntary.

The Anti-Broker Brigade, having reached a sufficient strength, is ready to assist all comrades and friends who require its services, free of charge. Apply to W. Chapple, office of this paper.

MONOPOLY: or, How Labour is Robbed. By William Morris. 10th Thousand, Price One Penny.

USEFUL WORK v. USELESS TOIL. By William Morris. Price One Penny. To be obtained of all Anarchist Groups.

INTERNATIONAL SOCIALIST SCHOOL, 19, Fitzroy Street, Fitzroy Square, W. Conducted by Louise Michel and A. Coulon. Free Education in English, French, and German. Any friend taking an interest in the School can now obtain a portrait group of teachers and scholars on application to A. Coulon, Secretary, at above address.

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.

Remittances to the Secretary should be sent in postal orders or halfpenny stamps.

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*.