

for his efforts to meet with much success. Mr. Threlfall goes very near to the root of the matter, and sees, although somewhat dimly perhaps, that the present basis of Society must be changed: "The noble duke who owned a million acres of land and the Capitalist who made a million pounds, were equally great monopolists." "From first to last Parliament had always taken the standpoint of the Capitalist in all industrial questions." He sees, too, that neither Free Trade, nor Fair Trade, nor the struggle for foreign markets, will solve the labour problem. "Practical steps should be taken to reorganise our home market . . .

Trade might well be depressed when a million of acres of land had gone out of wheat cultivation in ten years, and the agricultural population had decreased fifteen per cent." Very pertinent, too, is his observation that "the most critical period in the history of English trade unions was at that moment. They must either lead or follow." The sooner the Unions recognise this the better. There are several points I should like to comment on, including the references to the Nine Hours' movement, the Education Acts, etc.; but I must utilise my space to criticise the one great drawback to an otherwise admirable discourse. With all or nearly all of the aims of Mr. Threlfall I agree; but oh, "most lame and impotent conclusion!" we are to organise the masses, not to take our affairs into our own hands, but to ask the politicians to pass certain Acts of Parliament! To use Mr. Threlfall's own words: "If Capitalists had given so much accumulating misery, let them for Humanity's sake leave their future Parliaments with toilers."

Now, no legislation can force production to be carried on unless it pays. If the monopolists of the means of life—the raw material and instruments of labour—cannot make profit, or in other words, rob the worker, their occupation is gone, for the sole reason of their existence as employers ceases. The effect of political action, then, be it ever so Radical, can only be to put off the day of settlement. The workers must ultimately face the same problem which confronts them to-day, and they can only solve that problem by the very means which we Socialists point out—viz., by taking the means of production into their own hands, and working them by all and for all. The monopolists, be they Tory, Whig or Radical, Christian, Jew or Atheist, will strive to defer the inevitable surrender of their unjust class-privilege to "rob and rule" as long as they can; and so they try to delude us with sophisticated clap-trap about gradual reform and the danger of revolution. Dangerous to whom?—the workers? No. To the exploiters? Yea, verily, and that is the real reason of their hypocritical horror. It is surely obvious that this revolution or change being necessary for the welfare of the people, the present generation may as well take the matter in hand as leave it to their children. Are we to go on year after year with this same miserable struggle for existence, pretending to find consolation in some contemptible political sop in the shape of an additional working-man M.P. or J.P., whilst thousands of our fellows are doomed to laborious work for long hours, or to idleness and beggary or starvation?

The resolutions passed by the Congress, when not reactionary, were for the most part of such a feeble, flabby nature, as to be not only useless but mischievous. The illogical bigots led by Messrs. Broadhurst and Battersby were again successful in defeating a resolution in favour of opening the national museums and picture-galleries on the "Saw-bath." The latter delegate, in opposing a rider moved by Mr. Trow, cleverly framed to show the absurdity of the amendment, "deprecatd the Congress being made use of for jocularly." To my mind the greatest joke is the posing of Mr. Battersby as a Scottish Solon. The same gentleman who appears to be very proud of being commended for his "moderation" in the columns of the Whig press, (e.g., the Scotsman, that friend of labour in general and of unionists in particular), opposed a declaration in favour of Land Nationalisation, urging the Congress to be "practical," and straightway the meeting proceeded to vote that "a reform of our landed system is imperatively necessary."

It is ludicrous yet saddening to see representative working-men advocating a paltry tinkering reform of the land-laws as a solution of the labour question or as even a partial remedy for the evils we are suffering. It puts me in mind of the old trick in the pantomime, where clown having stolen a goose, sends the bamboozled shopman in chase of pantaloons hobbling away with two or three small fishes. For clown read Capitalist; let the goose stand for Labor-power, origin of surplus-value (the true golden eggs of the fable); whilst the Landlord and his share of the plunder of the bamboozled worker are fitly symbolised by pantaloons and the fishes, and, I contend, it is a fair representation of the political game at this minute. It is astonishing how long the Free Trade and Fair Trade swindles have served and still serve to dupe the people. Fellow-workers can you not see that mere cheapening of the cost of production will never benefit us. Whether wages be high or low, 6d. or 6s. per day, the result under the present system is to allow the workers on an average only so much of the wealth they create as will enable them to subsist. Land Nationalisation, even, by itself could not permanently raise the condition of the wage-workers. Its ultimate effect would be to cheapen production, glut the markets, reduce prices all round, and so bring about a crisis similar to that we are now experiencing.

In conclusion, let me urge upon my fellow-unionists that it is not by sending delegates once a year to a congress such as that now closed; nor by voting a few working-men to Parliament to sanction by their presence the very cause of our slavery, i.e., the existing order of Society; neither is it by spending 6 per cent of our union funds to fight the Capitalists and 94 per cent in aid of the poor-rates, to relieve the necessities of their victims, that we can achieve any solid advantage for ourselves, much less champion the cause of the people. There is more pith in the following words spoken by Mr. Bolland the other day at Bir-

mingham to a meeting of the unemployed, than in all the resolutions passed by the Trades Congress: "They had to demand that they should live and must be determined. If they could not get it by love they must by fear." Fellow-unionists our proper place is shoulder to shoulder with those who are educating, agitating and organising, not to obtain some trifling concession from the monopolists, but to utterly destroy the Capitalistic vampire, the sole cause of the poverty, degradation and misery of the workers in every so-called civilized country to-day.

T. BINNING.

IRELAND AND ITALY.

A WARNING.

MR. PARNELL has been celebrating his triumphs in the past Parliament, and it may be said also those that are to come in the future one; he and his supporters also fully believe in the complete organisation of the party, which will be strong enough not only to return 85 members this autumn, but also to compel every accepted candidate to sign a solemn pledge to submit to party discipline. Doubtless Mr. Parnell is strong, and he and his are quite justified in their cries of victory. The English Parties cannot conceal their terror: Tory is calling to Whig, Whig to Liberal, to stand firm at last, since now the enemy is really upon them; but all the time they are, like the troopers in 'Old Mortality,' "looking over their shoulders as if they liked the road behind them better than the road before." In all probability Mr. Parnell will have his way, and, as he says, this coming Parliament will be the last in which the Irish representatives will sit at Westminster.

Well, this is revolutionary, and we revolutionists rejoice in it on those grounds, and in the blow which it will deal at the great Bourgeois Power—the British Empire: also it may well be that Ireland must become national before she can be international. Yet we must ask ourselves what is to come next; will Ireland ruling herself be progressive, revolutionary that is, or reactionary? Will Socialists find their work easier in the Parnellite Ireland than now? Will Michael Davitt be a dangerous rebel then as he is now? There is no doubt as to the answer to those questions if we are to go no further than Mr. Parnell would have us; the fullest realisation of his programme would bring Ireland to pretty much the state of things which Liberal reformers want to realise in England as a bar to the march of Socialism which they have at last heard of, and are beginning to fear. An improved landlordism founded on a wider basis and therefore consolidated; that would lead, it seems to me, to founding a nation fanatically attached to the rights of private property (so called), narrow-minded, retrogressive, contentious, and—unhappy.

I ask Irishmen to consider a somewhat parallel case, that of Italy. Italy as well as Ireland had an unconquerable yearning for national independence, which swallowed up all other aspirations; in the teeth of all difficulty she conquered her independence amidst the best wishes of generous-minded men of all parties. How our hearts burned within us as we heard of the exploits of her patriots; surely revolution for the world was drawing near, thought some of us who did not know what the new revolution was to be, as we followed the heroism of Garibaldi and the lofty morality of Mazzini.

Italy triumphed and became "free" and united; those noble deeds accomplished that at least. What, then, has been the gain? I will not say nothing, but I will say something very small compared with all the energy, enthusiasm, and self-sacrifice that brought it about, very small compared with the high-wrought hopes that went before it. For whatever the gain was, it was confined to the bourgeoisie, and the proletariat did not share it, has not shared it.

In the midst of the richest gifts of nature and art, cradled by the history of the world, exists a population of which the following words can be said without contradiction: "According to some the average pay (of the labourers) "runs from 3d. to 4d. a day, according to others to 7d., without making any allowance for loss of time either through bad weather or ill-health. For this pittance they have to work like galley-slaves, and out of it such of them as have families must provide food for their children and keep a roof of some sort over their heads. The utmost that a labourer can earn with the help of his family, says Signor Arcozzi Manio, a large landowner, is equal to little more than 10d. a day. Their food"—but one need not go into that; it is obvious that their food must be the food of beasts in quality and less than theirs in quantity. "The population engaged in agriculture is estimated at eight and a quarter millions, of whom a million and a half at the most" (one can guess what that qualification means) "are landed proprietors, the remainder being farmers, metayers, and labourers." It is added that the lot of the proprietors and farmers if not brilliant, is at least tolerable; the said proprietors being mostly small ones it must be understood, peasants for the most part.

Such then are the free workmen of Italy while as a nation under her Constitutional King and Liberal Parliament, she ambitiously strives to snatch here and there some rag of stolen territory which may help her to get a share of the world-market from the older European firms, and keeps on foot a goodly army of warlike idlers to that end. Italy is free and united, and is almost a "great power," while the mass of her population is living, to speak bluntly, in abject slavery.

Here then is a warning to Irishmen if they will take it; they can see what the barrenness of the programme of driving out the Teutons has led to in Italy; can they think that a similarly barren programme of driving out the Saxon will lead to anything better in Ireland?

If the sword of Garibaldi could have led the workers of Italy to a

condition of things under which what they produced would have been their own to live upon, the Austrians and their kingly and grand-ducal deputies would have been suppressed as they are now, and no "foreigner" could govern them against their will; but the places of the Austrian tyrants would not have been taken by the great collective tyrant Capital, who prevents poor people from eating, and murders them with "pellagra" or famine-fever as it has been called in Ireland, a tyrant who has no heart to be softened, no soul to be moralised, in spite of Mazzini and the Positivists.

If only the Irish could take this lesson to heart, and make up their minds that even if they have to wait for it, their revolution shall be part of the great international movement; they will then be rid of all the foreigners that they want to be rid of. For my part I do not believe in the race-hatred of the Irish against the English: they hate their English masters, and well they may; and their English masters are now trying hard to stimulate the race-hatred among their English brethren, the workers, by all this loud talk of the integrity of the Empire and so forth. But when once the Irish people have got rid of their masters, Irish and English both, there will, I repeat, be no foreigners to hate in Ireland, and she will look back at the present struggle for mere nationality as a nightmare of the charmed sleep in which Landlordism and Capitalism have held her so long, as they have other nations. To the Irish, therefore, as to all other nations, whatever their name and race, we Socialists say, Your revolutionary struggles will be abortive or lead to mere disappointment unless you accept as your watchword, WAGE-WORKERS OF ALL COUNTRIES UNITE!

WILLIAM MORRIS.

AUSTRALIAN EXPERIENCES.

THE American and Canadian emigration season is now over, and, thanks to the outspoken protests of *United Ireland* and of certain semi-Socialistic and independent papers on both sides of the Atlantic—thanks also to the ease with which disappointed adventurers are now able to return—that gigantic bubble of fraud and misrepresentation is likely, in the near future, to collapse entirely. But, as the inflation of the American bladder lessens, that of the Australasian will probably increase. The season is now on—this, remember, is the second spring month at the Antipodes—and during the autumn and winter will be in full blaze. The usual farrago of mischievous advice and lying humbug will be disseminated by interested agents and mistaken philanthropists, and will be recorded by their subservient chroniclers in the capitalistic press. The voice of blessing alone—not that of cursing—will be tolerated, and find public expression, and many deluded creatures, of both sexes, will have in after years to regret that they ever listened to the voice of the emigration siren.

The ignorance that prevails of the true nature of life at the Antipodes, and of the prospects awaiting the latter-day emigrant upon his arrival, is perfectly appalling, and, from the means—or rather want of means—at command of those who know the true state of the case, most difficult to dispel. As from the "Bight of Benin, where few come out though many go in," it is seldom anyone returns from Australasia either willing, or, if willing, qualified, to relate a tale of disastrous failure. Even if one wishes to do so, it is difficult to find a medium for the publication of testimony opposed to the interests of agents, and distasteful to capitalists and philanthropic societies.

I am only aware of one book, out of the mass of matter written upon Australia, that depicts in true colours the shameless frauds practised upon the unwary by the emigration agents, and the fate awaiting their victims. This book related to Queensland, and was published some fifteen years ago, when there was a great "boom" in that direction. I think it was entitled "Colonial Adventures," and written by Mr. St. John; but I only met with it in the Melbourne Library, and have no doubt that its circulation was studiously suppressed, and that it is out of print. I refer to it not only because I believe every word there written to be in accordance with the truth, but as my precedent for obtruding personal, and to some extent private, matters on my readers.

I believe it to be quite impossible in any other way than by recordal of individual sufferings and experiences to convey a true impression of colonial existence—life is a misnomer. As a rule, those who write about the colonies are either emigration agents and touts interested in puffing their potentialities and resources; or else your *grands seigneurs*—your Manchesters, Roseberrys, Dilkes and Brasseys, whose visits have been all honey, silk and roses. Such men have been feasted, toasted, shown about, and admitted to a full view of the smooth and shining surface, while the hideous sores of sorrow, want and misery, festering underneath, have been carefully concealed from their notice. I, on the contrary, am what in colonial parlance would be termed a "broken down swell"—in that of my quondam aristocratic and middle-class associates, a "black sheep" or "ne'er-do-weel."

In one sense I am a *phenomenon*, for I am here; whereas transportation for life to the Antipodes, whether by the family, the philanthropist, or the emigration agent, has generally proved as effective as that of the law ever was. Others of my class in Australia calmly die, or commit suicide, go to gaol or a lunatic asylum; but, as I have before hinted, I do not think anyone has hitherto been known to get back to England and write to a newspaper. After a subjection off and on, for three years, to such trouble, hardship, and misery, as I should think no human being, accustomed to better things, has hitherto endured and lived to tell the tale, I have barely escaped from that place of torment with my life and reason.

I now propose to use both, if I may be permitted to do so, in giving some facts relating to the inner life, or social prospects, of the labouring emigrant in Australia, and in criticising some of the utterances and articles on the subject which are certain to appear in the public prints during the autumn and winter. Personal narrative, interspersed with comments upon men and things is, as I have before stated, the only form consistent with brevity, in which I feel myself competent to deal with the facts I wish to place before my readers. I must leave it to them to judge whether I am a likely person to know anything about the matters upon which I propose to treat, or qualified to criticise the tenets and theories of those whom I must now, I suppose, describe as, and admit to be, my "betters."

From certain causes, I found myself, in the summer of 1880, *stone broke*. I was powerless to recover a large value in land and money, out of which I had been swindled, unless—such is the nature of the law in this country—I

had a hundred or so to commence an action. The Melbourne Exhibition was on the *taps*, and, having a good knowledge of the jewellery and diamond trade, I thought I saw an opening to realise the specified sum, or a greater amount, in a short space of time, and that I might return to commence my legal assault after the long vacation. Those to whom my presence in this country was most obnoxious, readily agreed to provide me with the necessary means for procuring my passage and outfit, and to place a sum sufficient for my business needs at my disposal upon arrival.

One stipulation was, that I took my wife, a delicate young woman then 23 years of age, with me. I was delighted. I knew the voyage would do her good. I was to embark at Gravesend, and my lawyer was to get money matters settled up, and to bring her down to Plymouth—in order to avoid fatigue—as well as the draft for the sum payable to me in Melbourne. She arrived at Plymouth alone, her escort having excused himself from accompanying her on the ground of illness, and with an intimation that he had written to me on board the vessel. It was a rough, stormy day. We had been delayed on the voyage from Gravesend, and there was not a moment to be lost, as the vessel was going to start almost immediately. I hurried on board to get the letter and expected enclosure, and, to my horror, found the steward to whom it had been entrusted drunk and speechless, and quite unable to remember what he had done with it!

My wife had never been on the sea before. The brandy I kept administering to her in hopes, in this desperate emergency, of keeping off the sickness, was fast reducing her to the level of the steward, and she declined to move from her berth. The anchor was up and we were off, and it was not until we were outside the breakwater that I fully realised that I was "trapped." Of course, on getting the letter the following day there was no draft enclosed, and from its tenour I judged, as turned out to be the fact, that my own lawyer had been "squared" to "sell" me. I still hoped that I should find a remittance at Melbourne, but I hoped in vain. We arrived there almost penniless, and had to part with our clothes and valuables.

It was now out of the question to think of procuring a situation in the exhibition, and I was compelled to disclose my poverty and antecedents by applying to a charitable society for a loan on the strength of the promised remittance, and the assurance that those to whom I directed the secretary to write would repay all. The money thus borrowed, and a clerkship which the society procured me, enabled us to get on pretty well for three months until the answer arrived. Its purport was, coupled with a refusal to repay the loan, that the "hulking pauper," meaning me, "might work or starve!"

I at once saw, and so did the secretary of the society—a lawyer whose want of "acumen" in being duped by me was sneered at in the same letter, and who was proportionately irate at being dubbed a fool—the cogency of the alternative suggested by the writer. From that moment we became absolute outcasts. The only question was, could I work? I knew size and a comparatively youthful appearance went a long way towards securing a trial at manual labour in the colonies. I stand six feet two inches in height, and at twenty-one years of age, before I went into training for the Oxford University Boat, weighed over sixteen stone. Neither was I altogether unaccustomed to manual labour, as I had some years previously worked as a digger on the South African diamond fields. Clean shaved and close-cropped, I passed very well for thirty-five, though in reality nearly fifty years of age. An old, or even middle-aged man, has little "show" for work in Australia if placed alongside of younger men. I knew my constitution was all right, as apart from bodily suffering brought on by my own indiscretion, I can hardly tell what illness means. I therefore determined to try and work and not to starve, to tackle the pick and shovel, the axe and the spade, the bow-saw and the lumper's hook. A preliminary course of training at very low wages—only 2s. 6d. a day and my "tucker"—at digging, trenching and levelling ground, fitted me to present myself among the other applicants for employment, to the contractors, gangers and stevedores; and, whether it was at "navvying" on the roads and streets, or "lumping" on the wharves or in the railway sheds, I generally got a "show." Before the required number of hands was selected, "You long chap there, let's see how you shape," usually greeted my ear, and when selected I seldom failed in performing the work required of me.

In fact in manual labour, as in all other vocations in life, the difficulty of obtaining employment is far greater than the difficulty of being fit for it, and if you surmount the greater difficulty there is no reason why you should not surmount the smaller. Still, work was by no means constant, and on two occasions I was injured, and had to knock off for a time. As I had no club, and a helpless wife to support, semi-starvation then faced us. Eventually, I enlisted the sympathy of a well-known Melbourne physician and philanthropist, who got my wife, quite broken down in body and mind by the hardships we had undergone, into an institution, where she was well cared for, and where I could visit her at pleasure; and myself into State employ. But government work and the State Socialism of Victoria—for there it reaches its highest possible development—must form the subject of my next article.

LUCIFER.

(To be continued.)

REVIEW.

Le Socialiste. A new French Socialist journal has just appeared. Four numbers (it is a weekly) will be out before this issue of the *Commonweal* appears. I am writing of the first and second numbers. The editors are Deville, Fréjac, Guesde, Lafargue, Taillieur. Its first issue tells the aim and the method of its work. Its aim is: "Expropriation of the capitalist class and the socialisation of the means of production. It is to the hastening on of this collectivist or communist revolution that the *Socialiste* will devote all its efforts. A theoretical organ, the *Socialiste* will prepare the minds of workers for the social transformation that is incumbent upon them, by the study of the economic phenomena which, out of the dismemberment of the present order will bring forth the new. An organ of action, it will urge on to the struggle in all its forms, and on all grounds, the struggle into which it will enter thoroughly, not in order to divide, but to unite the proletarian forces still divided, unfortunately, by misunderstandings which the common combat will suffice to do away with. An organ of international combination, it will suppress frontiers by giving a prominent place in its pages to the Socialist parties of both worlds, who themselves will tell us their work, their progress, and their hopes—which can thus be shared by their French brethren." One paragraph *re* England needs some modification. There is no likelihood of many Socialist candidates running for Parliament at the next Election. The second number prints the resolution of the Socialist League in the matter of Olivier Pain, Rochefort and the English generals.—E. A.

REVOLUTIONS are terrible affairs, but they are as necessary as amputations when mortification sets in.—*Heinrich Heine*.