



All literary communications should be addressed to the Editors of the COMMONWEAL, 13 Farringdon Road, E.C. They must be accompanied by the name and address of the writer, not necessarily for publication.

Rejected MSS. can only be returned if a stamped directed envelope is forwarded with them.

All business communications to be addressed to the Manager of the COMMONWEAL, 13 Farringdon Road, E.C. Business communications must NOT be sent to the Editors. All remittances should be made in Postal Orders or halfpenny stamps.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

The following leaflets have been issued by the League:—No. 1. "Why be Transported?" No. 2. "Down with the Socialists!" No. 3. "To the Radicals"; No. 4. "The Cause of Prostitution"; No. 5. "The Worker's Claims and Public Opinion"; No. 6. "Tram-car Slavery: an Address to Tram-car Men and the Working Class in general." Copies sent to anyone on receipt of stamp for postage, and supplied for distribution at 2s. per 1,000.

NOTICE TO ALL SOCIALISTIC NEWSPAPERS.—The *Commonweal* will be regularly sent to all Socialistic Contemporaries throughout the world, and it is hoped that they on their side will regularly provide the Socialist League with their papers as they may appear.

LIVERPOOL.—Anyone willing to form a Labour Emancipation League here is asked to communicate with Fred Willis, 49 Wood Street.

BEKANNTMACHUNG!—Genosse Theodor hält jeden Donnerstagabend einen Cursus für Elementar Unterricht in der englischen Sprache, woran alle Genossen welche derselben noch nicht mächtig sind, theil zunehmen eingeladen werden. Näheres beim Secretär, 13 Farringdon Road, E. C.

RECEIVED—*England*: Anarchist—Worker's Friend—Daylight (Norwich)—Christian Socialist—Church Reformer—National Review—Republican—Journal of Vigilance Association—Justice—To-Day—Der Rebell—Freethinker. *Belgium*: Ni Dieu ni Maître—L'Insurgé. *France*: Cri du Peuple (daily)—La Revue Socialiste—La Bataille—Le Bévolté—La Question Sociale (Paris)—Le Socialiste (Paris). *Greece*: Harden (Athens). *Germany*: Neue Zeit (Stuttgart). *Holland*: Recht voor Allen. *Hungary*: Arbeiter-Wochen-Chronik (Budapest). *Italy*: La Question Sociale (Turin)—Il Paria (Ancona). *Morocco*: Almoghreb Al-aksa (Tangiers). *New Zealand*: Watchman. *Portugal*: O Campino—Voz do Operario—O Protesto Operario (Lisbon). *Roumania*: Drepturile Omului (daily, Bucharest). *Serbia*: Tchas (Belgrade). *Spain*: El Angel del Hogar—Revista Social (Barcelona)—Bandera Social (Madrid). *Switzerland*: Sozial Demokrat. *U. S. A.*: (New York): N. Y. Volkszeitung—Der Sozialist—Freiheit—Progress—John Swinton's Paper—Spread the Light. (Boston): Liberty—Woman's Journal—Index. Denver (Col.) Labor Inquirer—Chicago (Ill.) Alarm—Detroit (Mich.) Labor Leaf—Princeton (Mass.) Word—Cleveland (O.) Carpenter—Brattleboro (Vt.) Woman's Magazine; National Bulletin—San Francisco (Cal.) Chronicle—Stockton (Cal.) Mail—Petersburg (Ill.) Voice of Labor—New Haven (Conn.) Workmen's Advocate—St. Louis (Mo.) Die Parole—Kansas (Mo.) Sun—Pittsburg (Pa.) Labor Herald—Paterson (N. J.) Labor Standard—Baltimore (Md.) Labor Free Press—Valley Falls (Kan.) Lucifer—Atlanta (Ga.) Working World—Newfoundland (Pa.) La Torpille.

SINCE last acknowledgment books for the library have been received from Sparling.

Notice to Members.

Library and Reading Room.—All papers received by the Secretary have been sorted and filed and are at the disposal of members. The librarians, W. Chambers and May Morris, attend on Mondays and Fridays from 7 to 9 p.m. for the purpose of exchanging books.

Choir.—The choir meets for practice every Friday evening at 8 o'clock. All members and friends who can do so are urgently requested to attend and help. No previous knowledge of music is necessary, as a class for elementary instruction is carried on in connexion with the choir.

Standing Committees.—Meet on Wednesdays at 7.30 p.m.

General Meeting.—On Monday 25th Jan. at 8.30 p.m. Council meets at 7.30.

NOTES.

MR. GLADSTONE has got the difficult task before him of propounding a scheme of Home Rule which the Parnellites can accept and which the Whigs will accept; but perhaps, after all it is not so difficult as it looks; for at present the Whigs seem prepared to swallow anything, absolutely anything, if they can only get into office and keep there. They have made their wry faces over the Home Rule pill; that is a thing of the past now; memory has no sorrows for them. Of course the Tories would have done the same thing if they had had the chance; nor can we hide the fact that the Radicals have cried out just as loudly against the dose. It is a good thing that they do not see where this Irish affair is leading. They think it a mere matter of party politics; fortunately it means—revolution.

There is Arab war again in Egypt, and there are plenty of signs that it will not be the fault of those whose business it is to fish in troubled waters if we do not have another Soudan affair. In spite of all disclaimers, we seem to be in danger of getting into the stream let loose by the exploiters and of drifting in it once more. In excited articles the *Pall Mall Gazette* cries out against the folly of conquering Dongola—meaning clearly Dongola only without all the rest. This has a suspicious resemblance to the "Don't drag him through the horse-pond!" of the old election candidate. Mr. Wilfrid Blunt did not get into Parliament, which is scarcely to be regretted, as he would have been an honest and intelligent man thrown away there; but it is to be hoped he will remember that there are extra-parliamentary means of agitation.

W. M.

THE PILGRIMS OF HOPE.

VIII.—THE HALF OF LIFE GONE.

THE days have slain the days, and the seasons have gone by
And brought me the summer again; and here on the grass I lie
As erst I lay and was glad ere I meddled with right and with wrong.
Wide lies the mead as of old, and the river is creeping along
By the side of the elm-clad bank that turns its weedy stream,
And grey o'er its hither lip the quivering rushes gleam.
There is work in the mead as of old; they are eager at winning the hay,
While every sun sets bright and begets a fairer day.
The forks shine white in the sun round the yellow red-wheeled wain,
Where the mountain of hay grows fast; and now from out of the lane
Comes the ox-team drawing another, comes the bailiff and the beer,
And thump, thump, goes the farmer's nag o'er the narrow bridge of the weir.

High up and light are the clouds, and though the swallows flit
So high o'er the sunlit earth, they are well a part of it,
And so, though high over them, are the wings of the wandering herne;
In measureless depths above him doth the fair sky quiver and burn;
The dear sun floods the land as the morning falls toward noon,
And a little wind is awake in the best of the latter June.

They are busy winning the hay, and the life and the picture they make,
If I were as once I was, I should deem it made for my sake;
For here if one need not work is a place for happy rest,
While one's thought wends over the world north, south, and east and west.

There are the men and the maids, and the wives and the gaffers grey
Of the fields I know so well, and but little changed are they
Since I was a lad amongst them; and yet how great is the change!
Strange are they grown unto me; yea I to myself am strange.
Their talk and their laughter mingling with the music of the meads
Has now no meaning to me to help or to hinder my needs,
So far from them have I drifted. And yet amidst them goes
A part of myself, my boy, and of pleasure and pain he knows,
And deems it something strange when he is other than glad.
Lo now! the woman that stoops and kisses the face of the lad,
And puts a rake in his hand and laughs in his laughing face—
Whose is the voice that laughs in the old familiar face?
Whose should it be but my love's, if my love were yet on the earth?
Could she refrain from the fields where my joy and her joy had birth,
When I was there and her child, on the grass that knew her feet
Mid the flowers that led her on when the summer eve was sweet?

No, no, it is she no longer; never again can she come
And behold the hay-wains creeping o'er the meadows of her home;
No more can she kiss her son or put the rake in his hand
That she handled a while ago in the midst of the haymaking band.
Her laughter is gone and her life; there is no such thing on the earth,
No share for me then in the stir, no share in the hurry and mirth.

Nay, let me look and believe that all these will vanish away,
At least when the night has fallen, and that she will be there 'mid the hay,
Happy and weary with work, waiting and longing for love.
There will she be, as of old, when the great moon hung above,
And lightless and dead was the village, and nought but the weir was awake;
There will she rise to meet me, and my hands will she hasten to take,
And thence shall we wander away, and over the ancient bridge
By many a rose-hung hedgerow, till we reach the sun-burnt ridge
And the great trench digged by the Romans: there then awhile shall we stand,

To watch the dawn come creeping o'er the fragrant lovely land,
Till all the world awaketh, and draws us down, we twain,
To the deeds of the field and the fold and the merry summer's gain.

Ah thus, only thus shall I see her, in dreams of the day or the night,
When my soul is beguiled of its sorrow to remember past delight.
She is gone. She was and she is not; there is no such thing on the earth
But e'en as a picture painted, and for me there is void and dearth
That I cannot name or measure.

Yet for me and all these she died,
E'en as she lived for awhile, that the better day might betide.
Therefore I live, and I shall live till the last day's work shall fail.
Have patience now but a little and I will tell you the tale
Of how and why she died, and why I am weak and worn,
And have wandered away to the meadows and the place where I was born;
But here and to-day I cannot; for ever my thought will stray
To that hope fulfilled for a little and the bliss of the earlier day.
Of the great world's hope and anguish to-day I scarce can think;
Like a ghost from the lives of the living and their earthly deeds I shrink.
I will go adown by the water and over the ancient bridge,
And wend in our footsteps of old till I come to the sun-burnt ridge,
And the great trench digged by the Romans; and thence awhile will I gaze,
And see three teeming counties stretch out till they fade in the haze;
And in all the dwellings of man that thence mine eyes shall see,
What man as hapless as I am beneath the sun shall be?

O fool, what words are these? Thou hast a sorrow to nurse,
And thou hast been bold and happy; but these if they utter a curse,
No sting it has and no meaning—it is empty sound on the air.
Thy life is full of mourning, and theirs so empty and bare,
That they have no words of complaining; nor so happy have they been
That they may measure sorrow or tell what grief may mean.
And thou, thou hast deeds to do, and toil to meet thee soon;
Depart and ponder on these through the sun-worn afternoon.

WILLIAM MORRIS.

EVERY man who builds a house, or plants an orchard, or invents a machine, or discovers a law of nature, or does anything which tends to promote human comfort or happiness, is a public benefactor; but any man who stands between industry and the natural elements, to levy a tribute upon labour or to keep a foot of land out of use, is a curse to his country and a despoiler to his fellowmen.—Francis Volney.