



Communications are invited from all concerned with social questions. They should be written on one side of the paper only and 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.

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TO CORRESPONDENTS.

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.

QUESTIONS bearing upon the principles propounded and the objects had in view by the *Commonweal*, will be welcomed by the Editors.

WORKINGMEN and women in factories, workshops, stores or mills, are requested to go around among their comrades and get up a list of subscribers for the *Commonweal*, and lend a helping hand in the struggle for labour's freedom.

RECEIVED—*England*: Anarchist—Worker's Friend—Daylight (Norwich)—Christian Socialist—Church Reformer—National Review—Republican—Journal of Vigilance Association—Justice—To-Day—Freethinker—Practical Socialist—Leicester Co-operative Record. *Belgium*: La Guerre Social (Brussels). *Canada*: L'Union Ouvrière (Montreal). *France*: Paris: Cri du Peuple (daily)—La Revue Socialiste—Le Révolté—Le Socialiste—La Tribune des Peuples—Revue du Mouvement Social, Le Devoir (Guise)—Le Forçat du Travail (Bordeaux). *Germany*: Neue Zeit (Stuttgart). *Holland*: Recht voor Allen. *Hungary*: Arbeiter-Wochen-Chronik (Budapest). *India*: Voice of India (Bombay)—Hindu Patriot (Calcutta)—People's Friend (Madras). *Italy*: La Question Sociale (Turin)—Il Fascio Operaio (Milan). *Morocco*: Almoghreb Al-aksa (Tangiers). *New Zealand*: Watchman. *Portugal*: O Campino—Voz do Operario—O Protesto Operario (Lisbon). *Spain*: El Angel del Hogar—Revista Social—Acracia (Barcelona)—Bandera Social (Madrid)—El Socialista (Madrid)—El Socialismo (Cadiz). *Switzerland*: Sozial Demokrat (Zürich). *U. S. A.*: (New York): Volkszeitung—Der Sozialist—Freiheit—Progress—John Swinton's Paper—Spread the Light—Our Country—Amerikanische Arbeiter-zeitung. (Boston): Liberty—Woman's Journal—Index. Denver (Col.) Labor Inquirer—Little Socialist—Chicago (Ill.) Alarm—Detroit (Mich.) Labor Leaf—Princeton (Mass.) Word—Cleveland (O.) Carpenter—Chronicle. Cincinnati (O.) Unionist—San Francisco (Cal.) Chronicle—Stockton (Cal.) Mail—Petersburg (Ill.) Voice of Labor—New Haven (Conn.) Workmen's Advocate—St. Louis (Mo.): Die Parole—Altruist. Kansas (Mo.) Sun—Pittsburg (Pa.) Labor Herald—Paterson (N. J.) Labor Standard—Baltimore (Md.) Labor Free Press—Valley Falls (Kan.) Lucifer—Atlanta (Ga.) New Working World—Newfoundland (Pa.) La Torpille—Litchfield (Minn.) Radical—Manchester (N. H.) Weekly Budget—Portland (Oregon) Alarm.

INDEPENDENT IRELAND.

MR. GLADSTONE'S measure has at last seen light, and it must at least be said of it that under the circumstances it has been accepted joyfully by the people whom it was chiefly meant to serve: the Irish at least are pleased. This is an improvement on the character of most measures of reform, which usually rather err in defect than in excess of that ancient vice and modern virtue, cowardice; and which consequently discourage friends while they fail in conciliating enemies. To find the irreducible minimum has been Mr. Gladstone's aim, and according to the verdict of both friends and foes he has succeeded. A simple-minded man might have expected the Radicals, at any rate, to be pleased at this, but he will by this time be disillusioned. Some of them do indeed eat the leek thus presented to them by the Celtic champion with a tolerably good grace, but a great many insist on being thrashed before eating, which grace before meat they are, I think, not likely to lack.

The fact is these worthies were quite prepared to give Ireland Home Rule so long as Humbug accompanied it, so long as the grant of it did not enable the Irish to manage their own affairs; and they seem to have hoped (not perhaps without some reason) that Mr. Gladstone would contrive this trap for their benefit. It would indeed have been a triumph for modern bourgeois legislation to have been able to say, "We have done what you wanted, we offer you Home Rule, and now you won't take it." And that would have been quite in its manner too. But they have been disappointed and are forced to face a measure which the Irish believe will make them practically independent, and whether the bill passes or not, there is no doubt that they will not now

accept anything less than it. This is grievous enough for our Federation-of-the-Empire friends, but if they are Radicals to boot, what are they to do? Mr. Chamberlain sees that he cannot, as yet, join the Tory-Whig coalition, and consequently, in spite of the almost unanimous agreement of the London Liberal press, including the once anti-Jingo *Echo*, which now sees the error of its ways, he will probably have to content himself with looking on at a Gladstone triumph and a Whig protest, without sharing in either. The bill will pass the Commons either now or after a coalition muddle, or else the Irish will in some way or other rebel.

Under these circumstances it is not worth while to look into the details of Mr. Gladstone's bill, even if such matters could concern Socialists at all. It means the Independence of Ireland and not the sham Federation which the greater part of the Liberal Party intended it to mean. This is clearly shown by the fact that while Radicals cry out on injustice to the Irish in excluding them from the Westminster Parliament, these themselves will by no means accept the honour if they can help it, as they perceive it to tend towards Federation. One remedy at least they might have, of the kind known to the unthirsty horse when brought to water; they need not drink of the stream of honour and consideration flowing from Westminster; in other words they may stay at home and mind their own business, which they will sorely need to do. For the rest, the bill is a specimen of the usual Constitution-building, and is full of safeguards against dangers which, when they come near will send the said safeguards flying into space. We need not heed all that; the Irish people accept it, the Whigs reject it: that is enough.

But what is this new parliament to us Revolutionary Socialists who see no panacea in parliaments of any kind? Well, first the Irish (as I have some reason to know) will not listen to anything except the hope of independence as long as they are governed by England; no, not even to the most elementary propositions about the land, which concern them most and nearest—they can see nothing else than an Ireland freed from that government. They are, as it were, demoralised by a long war, and will likely enough confirm the prophecies of their enemies by floundering woefully amidst their difficulties, when they have their own affairs to manage. But it is only by finding out what a parliament is like that they can know what a worthless instrument it is towards helping the community to a decent life; and they will have to meet those difficulties themselves and be responsible for their manner of dealing with them, instead of letting their responsibilities lapse into the willing hands of England. They will then surely begin to find out that English rule was so disastrous to them, not because of the difference of race between the governors and the governed, but because a crude form of arbitrary authority was practised on the "inferior race"; because England represented landlord and capitalist oppression, which, to say the truth, would not have lacked a representative even if she had not been paramount in Ireland.

Home Rule for Ireland is not of itself necessarily a revolutionary measure, but it will clear the ground for sowing the seed of Revolution; and that all the more as the problem in Ireland is simpler than elsewhere, owing to its being chiefly an agricultural country. The patience and good humour of the people may help its new rulers to stave off the great change which shall make Ireland free by freeing all its inhabitants; and their terrible apprenticeship in misery may help in restraining them from claiming that decent and happy life which it will be easier for them to get for the claiming than it is to most peoples; but the claim will certainly be made, and can only be crushed by a bourgeois England triumphant over its enemy—THE PEOPLE.

WILLIAM MORRIS.

AN EXPLANATION.

The change of the *Commonweal* from a monthly to a weekly prevents my retaining the responsible position of one of its editors, as the necessary demands of a weekly on an editor's time can only be met by those in relatively more fortunate positions. The amount of time and work given by me to the paper in its new form will be not less than have been given heretofore.

EDWARD AVELING.

THE Government were badly beaten in the Socialist trial, and in fact it is difficult to understand why they persisted in it after their breakdown in Bow Street. Some attempt there was in the bourgeois press to make as little as possible of the defeat, but most people with memories will connect it with the police defeat of Dod Street last summer. The result shows that the general public are not prepared as yet to attack mere opinion, however dangerous it may seem, and should encourage all Socialists to speak plainly to the people; though it must be admitted that those who are fairly enlisted in the cause do not want much encouragement on that side. On the other hand, if our bourgeois have not the heart to resist such very plain attacks it shows how bad their conscience must be.

W. M.