



"HAVE YOU NOT HEARD HOW IT HAS GONE WITH MANY A CAUSE BEFORE NOW: FIRST, FEW MEN HEED IT; NEXT, MOST MEN CONTEMN IT; LASTLY, ALL MEN ACCEPT IT—AND THE CAUSE IS WON!"

**Communications invited on Social Questions.** They should be written on one side of the paper, addressed to the Editors, 13 Farringdon Rd., E.C., and accompanied by the name and address of the writer, not necessarily for publication.

**As all articles are signed, no special significance attaches to them because of their position in these pages.** None to be taken as more than in a general manner expressing the views of the League as a body, except it be so explicitly declared by the Editors.

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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.

*Periodicals received during the week ending Wednesday November 24.*

<b>ENGLAND</b>	Cleveland (O.)—Carpenter	<b>SWITZERLAND</b>
Justice	New Haven (Conn.)—Workmen's Advocate	Zurich—Sozial Demokrat
Norwich—Daylight	Paterson (N.J.)—Labor Standard	Geneva—Bulletin Continental
Club and Institute Journal	Springfield (Ill.)—Voice of Labor	<b>ITALY</b>
Freedom	Chicago (Ill.)—Vorbote	Milan—Il Fascio Operaio
Freethinker	Salem (Oreg.)—Advance-Thought	<b>SPAIN</b>
<b>INDIA</b>	Portland (Oreg.)—Avant-Courier	Madrid—El Socialista
Calcutta Statesman	Milwaukee (Wis.)—Volsblatt	Cadiz—El Socialismo
Madras—People's Friend	Princeton (Mass.)—Word	Barcelona—El Grito del Pueblo
Allahabad—People's Budget	Detroit (Mich.)—Labor Leaf	El Angel del Hogar
Bombay—Times of India	Newfoundland (Pa.)—La Torpille	La Justicia Humana
Bombay Gazette	<b>FRANCE</b>	<b>PORTUGAL</b>
Indian Spectator	Paris—Cri du Peuple (daily)	Lisbon—O Protesto Operario
Voice of India	Le Socialiste	Voz do Operario
<b>CANADA</b>	Le Revolte	Villafranca de Xira—O Campino
Toronto—Labor Reformer	La Revue Socialiste	<b>AUSTRIA</b>
Montreal—L'Union Ouvriere	Guise—Le Devoir	Brunn—Volksfreund
<b>UNITED STATES</b>	Lille—Le Travailleur	<b>HUNGARY</b>
New York—Volkszeitung	<b>HOLLAND</b>	Arbeiter-Wochen-Chronik
Freiheit	Hague—Recht voor Allen	<b>ROMANIA</b>
Truthseeker	<b>BELGIUM</b>	Bucharest—Pruncul Roman
Der Sozialist	Brussels—Le Chante-Clair	Jassy—Lupta
John Swinton's Paper	En Avant	Revista Sociala
Boston—Woman's Journal	Liege—L'Avenir	<b>DENMARK</b>
Denver (Col.)—Labor Inquirer	Antwerp—De Werker	Social-Demokraten
Cincinnati (O.)—Unionist		
Toledo (O.)—Industrial News		

## SPIRITUAL CONSOLATION AND MATERIAL SATISFACTION.

To compensate the worker for the wrongs and hardships he has undergone during life, the generosity of society has decreed that he shall, ere departing for that "undiscovered country from whose bourne no traveller returns," receive spiritual consolation. Though the satisfaction of his material needs have been lacking in this world below, in that above, there being no wants to satisfy, no thought of food, clothing or anything essential to his well-being here will occupy his mind. For his sake let us hope that this is true. But that he may participate of the joys "in the realm beyond the skies," it is necessary for him to prepare himself, or be prepared, that he may fitly dwell therein. This preparatory process is usually accomplished by a particular order of men, and while men are as they are, this dark order will have busy work to do.

Why so much time should be devoted to the consideration of the affairs of the next world, the theologians just alluded to can perhaps best explain. But whatever explanation may be given, it is here maintained that every description of next-worldism should, where it detrimentally affects the welfare of the worker in this life, be most determinedly warred against. Man's material needs, and their satisfaction, are his prime consideration. But despite the truth of this statement, supernaturalists have to much too great an extent distracted his attention from it. Puzzled with the subtle mystery of nature, in his perplexity man has lent ready ear to the crafty sophistry of delusionists. It is not alleged that there is not much in religion that is good and beautiful, but that mud hovels, rotten potatoes, and a promise of better things to come, fail and ought to fail to satisfy the mind and body of man. The self-righteous but most worldly-minded religionist argues in the most interesting manner that it has been so ordained, and is therefore right and moral. It is with this plea, that social inequality is divinely ordained, the privileged class and their hirelings have glossed over their lying thievery. This divine (?) sanctification-of-robbery move on the part of Privilege has completely outwitted the worker.

Hear some poor religious starveling vigorously defending the rights

of monopoly, i.e., the rights of wrong, and talk of his having got "the bread of life"—not the material article, the real and tangible, but the unseen and spiritual. Thus says Privilege to the worker, "You must eat the spiritual bread of life, and I will eat the material." There is nothing, all things considered, extraordinary in Privilege thus attempting to gull the worker; the extraordinary thing is his being gulled and extolling the guller. The guller is a rascal, or something worse perhaps, but what is the gulled? His gullibility says little for his intelligence, much for his ignorance.

That a small section of society, and that non-producing, should exercise such great power over that section which comprises the majority as to compel it to toil almost from the cradle to the grave that it may satisfy the inordinate appetites of the indolent few, and gain for itself but a bare subsistence, is astounding, and can only be accounted for by its slumbering ignorance. But from that sleep there are signs of awakening to-day, and they are to be seen in the interest the worker is beginning to take in his own welfare. As yet, he is timid and mistrustful of his strength, and this is only natural after the generations of mental darkness which have enshrouded him. At last it is dawning upon him that he can never have full and free possession of his natural rights so long as Privilege is permitted to exist, and that its death means his salvation. Privileged indolence can only exist in a society of cowards and slaves, and society will remain as it is just so long as they exist and no longer.

The secret of the success of the privileged class is and has been its concentrated attention to the affairs of this life. It finds its spiritual consolation in the grog-glass, and in the savoury products of the kitchen its material satisfaction. It eats, drinks, and is merry at the worker's expense. Go, ye workers, and do likewise. Cease your slavery to the few; work for yourselves; look to things of this life, the one certainty; satisfy your material needs first, and if you have any spiritual ones, other than liquory, satisfy them afterwards. But don't let words take the place of bread. Be men, and raise yourselves from out of the ignoble position into which you have fallen. Freedom, not slavery, is alone consistent with the rightful dignity of man, and freedom will only be possible when the present system of social inequality has given place to that of equality, wherein privilege, poverty and priestcraft have no existence.

H. A. BARKER.

## THE TEN COMMANDMENTS.

AMONGST the articles in the *Pall Mall Gazette* occur some that express sad trouble about the ten commandments. These are always of a peculiar character, so that it is safe to assume that they are written by one person; and that person's function seems to be to repress the excesses of those contributors to the journal who are Socialistic in tendency. It is not the business of the *Commonweal* to criticise literature, so we may leave the style of the above-said contributor alone; but his anxiety as to the fate of the ten commandments in a future state of society, which is shared, doubtless, by many well-to-do people, is a little curious, considering the life they live in the present one; and therefore we may be allowed to ask which of the ten commandments it is he is so anxious about, since it may be assumed that it is not one or more of the theological ones. Should we be hazarding too much if we were to guess that it is the sixth, which is likely to be not much heeded when Imperial Federation is well on foot, and the lives of various niggers stand in the way of its success? Or, indeed, is it ever heeded, seeing how short the life of the workers is, compared with that of the idlers, and considering how manufacturers have to be compelled by fear of fire rather than by fear of ignominy, to take the most ordinary precautions against the accidental death of their men? Or is it the tenth? It is true that coveting a man's goods is only a small part of the process of taking them away from him; and it is so inbred in us under our "Society" of Artificial Famine, that we don't heed that our bourgeois morality is specially constructed to justify us, or a few of us, in keeping our neighbours poorer than they should be in order that we may grow rich through their poverty. Still the commandment is an important one, and worth anxiety. But commercial morality, that of to-day, is an organised system of coveting our neighbour's goods; therefore the writer in question may let his anxiety go by the board on that score, since the commandment is already broken as much as it can be. Nor, surely, need anxiety for the future of the eighth keep him awake at nights; 'tis quite done with now, since not only are many poor devils compelled to steal for a livelihood (and I doubt if the Jewish lawgiver had that in his mind), but that which compels them to do so is the unceasing robbery of the poor by the rich, which is so habitual that it has not only become legal, but is the very bond of our Authoritative sham-Society, the basis of "law and order." It may be said that this is the commonplace of Socialism, and so it is; but if the writer in the *Pall Mall* can give any other explanation of the miseries of our society of rich and poor let him do so, and not shelter himself behind a superstitious regard for an ancient rule of life, which he and his have long ago ceased to practice, but the words of which they use to evade the problems of civilisation, by throwing them in the faces of people even more ignorant than themselves—people who suffer from the misfortune of superstition rather than the crime of cant. To these, who are unhappily ignorant, we Socialists say that in the true society which we are striving to realise, honesty and mutual respect will become so habitual that the very meaning of these commandments will have grown dim to us.

W. M.