THE REWARD OF "GENIUS."

It is a very common incident at a debate on Socialism for an opponent or doubter to take up cudgels on behalf of "brain-work" as opposed to hand-work. Even before you arouse a Communist (as I have) from such a state of somnolence, the statesman will usually enter into the work of abolishing this state of masters above and slaves below, and organizing the future community of labour and equality of rights. J. L. Manzo.

September 25, 1886.

THE COMMONWEAL

seeing that so much time was wasted by people who had less interesting things to do, the Secretary to the last party in the Congress was in a smaller minority, he might not have prevented the proposer of so important an amendment from speaking in favour of it. As it was, the amendment was carried, and pointed out that the non-co-operators were making money on the back of the non-co-operators, and that if they passed this amendment all the rest of their work would go to the wind and their reputation be saved. They could see the amendment as the first step of Socialism to make it into the Congress. The rebuff is not enough to discourage it, just enough to make the Socialists a little more active in preparing for the next Congress, by which time these errors will have been corrected.

On Thursday night came the great event—greater than the Congress itself—the banquet. Not only the banquet, for the Congress had contributed money to the men who were captured in the attempt of regular honest meals a man ought to have in a week. But this is the banquet, they pay for it themselves, whereas the others are given by patronising capitalists, town councillors wheeling into popular favour, and thoughtful M.P.'s, who, no doubt, put it down in their private accounts as part of their election expenses. There is always a deal of trouble and dispute about "balancing the political condition of the country.

The people and perfect way of effecting this would be to keep them both out. This plan would also, as a matter of course, raise the tone of the company, but the trades' leaders have not yet risen above the stupid and servile idea that a cluster of M.P.'s, Speakers, Members of the Queen, the clergy, the Corporation, the Congress, the M.P.'s, the ladies, the Press, and the President. The chief speech was by Mr. Broadhurst, M.P., and a weak, wandering, water and milk affair it was. Mr. Broadhurst is a "reform" unionist, and must be, since they have only worked for their interests and nearly always been heedless of the interests of the workers "below" them. He must, he did say, have overthrown some of the remarks of employers on the president's opening address: "He was quite sure that their president had never intended a single word he had used to be unfriendly applied to the large body of employers in this country. Mr. Broadhurst told them they must consider their relations with their employers, but to turn their attention against the landlords. A pretty piece of advice. Mr. Broadhurst very strongly argued that ground rents rose without the rent of wages for the depressions of trade, and if this be so it is difficult to see why wages would not rise in the transitional stages of socialism. Though this subject has been admirably treated before in these columns, I will nevertheless venture on a few words about it. Mr. Broadhurst said that the trade unions had so far to do the less because I have some small experience of hand-work, though not of the most laborious kind, and abundance of experience of "brain-work," so-called.

A number of discussions were held on various aspects of their anxiety for the future of the fine-brain workers. Some, for instance, seem most exercised on the question of what is to become of the men of genius when Socialism is realised; but I must hasten to let this anxiety depart, for I fear I have already caused the empty honours and compliments with more profusion. The workman's aping his betters was raised to the pitch of an organised art and carried out without zeal the systematic and non-organized way. The business in hand. The delegates freely abandoned themselves to the spirit of the moment and conventional nonsense offered them by the dignitaries of the towns. They chaffed with impunity the common-place cant from patronising bigwigs and suffered without a murmur. In return they passed resolutions complimentary, congratulatory, comradely, with special praise of readiness and reclusiveness that showed little them valued. Votes of thanks were indifferently acknowledged at every person and every society that had favoured them with a nod of welcome or approval. No "conference" of promoters of middle-class fads, nor licensing committee would hand out empty honours and compliments with more profusion. The workman's aping his betters was raised to the pitch of an organised art and carried out without zeal the systematic and non-organized way. The business in hand. The delegates freely abandoned themselves to the spirit of the moment and conventional nonsense offered them by the dignitaries of the towns. They chaffed with impunity the common-place cant from patronising bigwigs and suffered without a murmur. In return they passed resolutions complimentary, congratulatory, comradely, with special praise of readiness and reclusiveness that showed little them valued. Votes of thanks were indifferently acknowledged at every person and every society that had favoured them with a nod of welcome or approval. No "conference" of promoters of middle-class fads, nor licensing committee would hand out empty honours and compliments with more profusion. The workman's aping his betters was raised to the pitch of an organised art and carried out without zeal the systematic and non-organized way.
happier himself and much less of a bore to his friends, let alone his extra usefulness to the community.

As to the comparative wear and tear of "brain-work"—the work of the man, for instance, who is occupied in the live routine of the day in that degrading theatre of the absurd where the strange ideas of the usefulness of this craft, is that he works harder—harder, they will often say, than the hand-worker. Well, if he works under bad sanitary conditions, does not have the chance, as the hand-worker has, of getting away from him, as also if he works too long or is harassed in his work by hurry and anxiety. But all these drawbacks are not special to his craft; all who are working otherwise than in the open air work under the first of these disadvantages, and find they have no time off for legalised holidays, which are supposed to be necessary to their health, and we may admit are also, as either the "non-intellectual" workers have to forego, whether they are necessary to them or not. Let us test one example. If a man has been working at literary work for, say, eight hours at a stretch, I may well feel weary of it, although I have not felt it a mere burden all along, as probably I should have done if I had been giving a hard birch only a few hours. I have knobbled off, I can find relaxation in strong physical exercise—can, for example, take a boat and row for a couple of hours or more. Now let me ask is the hodman after a similar work fit for a couple of hours or more? No, so much the contrary. Many are, however, so much but in a relaxation! We very well know he is not so fitted, but rather for beer and sleep. He is exhausted, and I am on the look out for amusement. To speak plainly, I am only changing my amusement, for I have been working in my own interest, and I have added disadvantages to my work which are not essential to it.

And again, has not the hodman's work dealt in some way with his brain? Is it not that which stimulates my brain to active working, but though he has not been using it, has been exhausting it by his hand-work done at a strain, or else he ought to be able to take the mental relaxation corresponding to my bodily relaxation. In truth, whereas at present the hours of the intellectual worker are really always shorter than those of the hand-worker, the very reverse ought to be the case, or in other words the wear and tear of the brain-labour is far greater.

The objectors have not as a rule got so far as to consider this matter from the wear and tear side of it. They think that the superior workman should have extra reward because he is superior, and that the superior workman is working and being paid in the service of this divine right. That is their superstition of divine right in this business; but also from the economical point of view they consider that it is necessary to bribe the superior man, for fear that you should lose him to the manufacturing towns. Of the great mass who are working to his genius applies to all superior workmen in greater or less degree, and dispose of the need of a bribe. You need not bribe the superior workman to be superior, for he has to work in any case (workman or manufacturer), and his superior work is plainer, and indeed easier, to him than the inferior work would be: he will do it if you allow him to. But also if you had the need you would not have to bribe a system of education and training in the same manner, slavery—i.e., tormenting some people for the pleasure of others. Can you bribe him to work by giving him immunity from work I or by giving him goods that he cannot use? But in what respects the ordinary pay and conditions of life will not stand being compelled to accept degradation for his benefit? No, you will have to depend on his aptitude for his special work forcing him into doing better work. If you may have in organising work in the earlier days of Socialism will not be with the specialists, with those who do the more ordinary work; though as regards these, setting aside the common machine-workers, there is no more of a marked line between the special workerman and the ordinary one. Every workman who is in his right place—that is, doing his work because he is fit for it—does some work in that genius stock which is working in this latter day. The "handicraftsman" is simply the man who has a stronger speciality and is allowed to develop: or, if you please, has it so strongly that it is able to break through the repressing circumstances of the situation, and put itself in his ordinary occupation. If you mistake the 50,000,000, addressed by Avelling and Liebknecht, unanimously resolved, "That this meeting at Cooper Union assembled, deemed it its solemn duty to protest against the practice of this country in being forced to accept degradation for his benefit? No, you will have to depend on his aptitude for his special work forcing him into doing better work. If you may have in organising work in the earlier days of Socialism will not be with the specialists, with those who do the more ordinary work; though as regards these, setting aside the common machine-workers, there is no more of a marked line between the special workerman and the ordinary one. Every workman who is in his right place—that is, doing his work because he is fit for it—does some work in that genius stock which is working in this latter day. The "handicraftsman" is simply the man who has a stronger speciality and is allowed to develop: or, if you please, has it so strongly that it is able to break through the repressing circumstances of the situation, and put itself in his ordinary occupation. If you mistake the