



"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.

CH. BAGGIO (Carvin, Pas de Calais).—We thank you for pamphlet to hand, and shall be glad to receive following numbers as they appear.

Periodicals received during the week ending Wednesday February 23.

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| ENGLAND | John Swinton's Paper Truthseeker | Liege—L'Avenir Antwerp—De Werker |
| Justice | Boston—Woman's Journal | SWITZERLAND |
| Jus | Denver (Col.) Labor Inquirer | Zurich—Sozial Demokrat |
| Norwich—Daylight | Springfield (Ill.)—Voice of Labor | ITALY |
| Londoner Arbeiter-Zeitung | Chicago (Ill.)—Vorbote | Milan—Il Fascio Operaio |
| Cotton Factory Times | Knights of Labor | Turin—Il Muratore |
| Glasgow—Pioneer | New Haven (Conn.)—Workmen's Advocate | SPAIN |
| Worker's Friend | Philadelphia (Pa.)—Carpenter | Madrid—El Socialista |
| Croydon Echo | Cincinnati (O.) Unionist | Barcelona—Acracia |
| Financial Reformer | Milwaukee (Wis.)—Volksblatt | PORTUGAL |
| Nottingham Evening News | Detroit (Mich.)—Labor Leaf | Voz do Operario |
| INDIA | St. Louis (Mo.)—American Celt | Oporto—A Perola |
| Bankipore—Behar Herald | FRANCE | ROUMANIA |
| Allahabad—People's Budget | Paris—Cri du Peuple (daily) | Jassy—Lupta |
| Bombay—Times of India | La Revue Socialiste | DENMARK |
| Voice of India | Le Revolte | Social-Demokraten |
| Bombay Gazette | Guise—Le Devoir | SWEDEN |
| SOUTH AUSTRALIA | Lille—Le Travailleur | Stockholm—Social-Demokraten |
| Adelaide—Our Commonwealth | HOLLAND | NORWAY |
| CANADA | Hague—Recht voor Allen | Kristiania—Social-Democraten |
| Toronto—Labor Reformer | BELGIUM | GREECE |
| UNITED STATES | Brussels—L'Avant-Garde | Athens—Ardin |
| New York—Volkszeitung | | |
| Der Sozialist | | |

FIGHTING FOR PEACE.

OUR contemporary, the *Cotton Factory Times*, has an article on the Lanarkshire riots and the position of the men there which is worth noting, as showing the kind of prejudices and superstitions which will have to be removed from the minds of the workers before they can attain to that complete union and perception of the interests of labour by which alone they can meet the organization of capital on equal terms: and this is the more worth noting, as the *Cotton Factory Times* is an excellent paper, and really devoted, according to its lights, to the interests of labour.

Our contemporary does not seem to have understood the meaning of these riots, or the necessities of the men who made them. They were distinctly hunger-riots, that is to say the expression of the despair of men driven into a corner, dying by inches of starvation: and we may be sure that such events will, at the rate we are now going, become common and increase in misery and terror, unless the workers become conscious of their present position and its remedy: their position being to speak plainly that they have to pay the piper in the game of cut-throat competition played by their masters, who are themselves forced by the rules of the game to force their men to accept the very lowest wages possible. The result of this famine-test of wages (for that is what it is) must be such misery as we now see in Lanarkshire coupled from time to time with the incident of open revolt: the riots of the other day are a hint to the masters that the wages they now offer are impossible of acceptance.

Surely our contemporary if it had known all the circumstance would scarcely have blamed the miners for not making provision for a rainy day. Alas! it is always a rainy day with these poor people, unless when it is worse; a life of days like the three in the ballad:

"The first day it was wind and weat,
The nexten day it was fire and sleet;
The third day it was birley-banes,
Knocked the little birds' nebs against the stanes."

But what provision can be made against "birley-banes" when even the better days are so bitter?

Here are some questions for our contemporary: How much is it possible to save out of a (precarious) income of 12s. 6d. a week? If it be possible to save anything out of such a pittance without being

actually starved to death, why should a man be put to such torture and degradation as this saving involves, when we all know that he actually produces more than enough to keep him in comfort, unless his labour be utterly wasted? Again, can the getting of coal be carried on gainfully in Lanarkshire? If it cannot, why is it carried on? And if there is a due gain in it, why are the getters starved?

These are the kind of questions which the working-men who profess to be organised must ask and have answered if their organisation is to be of any use: they must not fight against capitalism blindly, as they mostly do now, but be conscious of the nature of the fight, and especially must have a definite aim to end it. Our contemporary is very far from this. He says, e.g.: "A fair stand-up fight between capital and labour with no striking below the belt frightens no one. The best men win, after which both sides can be as friendly as before, with no bitter memories to cherish."

Well, well, if I had but 12s. 6d. a week as the "reward" of hard and repulsive labour, I think I might be bitter without drawing on the resources of "memory." But in fact the fight between capital and labour on the Lanarkshire terms i.e., the capitalist with his money resources to stand by on, and the miner with the three choices of 12s. 6d. a week, death, and the workhouse, is about as fair (if we are to keep up the metaphor of the ring) as the champion against a London errand boy. And again, the writer speaks cheerfully of these "fair" fights; can he possibly think that a condition of industry to which they are necessary (and frequent) incidents can be a stable one? These "fair fights" are but incidents, skirmishes, or battles in the continuous war on which all industrial society is founded at present. Like all other wars it must one day come to an end by the exhaustion of one or other of the combatants: either the workman must be subjugated into a hopeless slave, receiving such housing, clothing, and rations as it may be convenient for his master to give him (and for that matter it could not be less than the "reward" of a Lanarkshire miner), or the capitalist must disappear altogether, and his privilege of usury be a thing of the past; and that whether he be the boss of a big business, or a small shareholder in a "co-operative" store.

Now I will ask our trades' union friends which of the two results of the struggle they are fighting for? They have no choice, it must be one or the other, or indeed is there a choice even between those two results? Is not the final subjugation of the workman impossible? Even now, even when the strikers are least conscious of it, their limited and local fight is really, as I have said, a part of the great labour war: but when they do become conscious of what the end of that war is, to wit, the abolition of private property in the means of production, the inequality between the two combatants will be no longer against them, but against their masters, and the war will soon be over. On the other hand, although the end must come, yet if the workers remain unconscious of what they are striving for, it will probably be long delayed through a period fertile of misery and degradation to the workman, and terror and degradation to the master, and will be brought about at last by the mere break up and ruin of our capitalistic system involving inconceivable horrors of starvation, aimless violence, repression, and revenge.

The choice of these two alternatives gives the reason why sober, thoughtful, and peaceable men, even when they themselves are not pinched by the present system, when they have once learned the economic truths of Socialism are so eager in the Revolutionist propaganda: it is for peace they are working, not war.

WILLIAM MORRIS.

SOCIALISM IN THE PROVINCES.

THE chainmakers of Walsall and Cradley Heath are about the hardest worked and the poorest paid slaves in this country. A strong man, working 10 to 12 hours a day, may average ten shillings a week, and out of this he must buy fuel for his little forge. The development of machinery has scarcely affected this trade at all. Chains are still made by hand, and it is unlikely that machinery will be introduced. When human machines are so cheap and so servile, it will not pay the capitalist to hire an inventor. The work is monotonous and disagreeable, and in a social system organised in the interests of the people, efforts would be made to design machinery, but as under the present system machines are brought out not to do away with disagreeable or degrading labour, but simply to cheapen the cost of production to the capitalists, there is no early likelihood of such attempts being made. Then women and children can help and compete in various ways, and hence the smallness of the husband and father's wage.

There was no time to call a large meeting, so a few of the leaders of the chainmakers got together and I explained Socialism to them. There was no difficulty in getting them to understand it. They were very quick-witted, and what was more surprising and satisfactory, very broad in their sympathies. They are now trying to start a co-operative productive society, which will be as near to genuine as can be under the present system. I advised them to carry out the project if it would better their position in the present society, but I also pointed out the difficulties which would crop up even after they had beaten the immediate employers. Their employers are really only agents or dealers. They furnish the iron, while the tools and coal are furnished by each worker. The employers in their case therefore are the smallest difficulty in the way. It is the innumerable rings of dealers through whose hands the wares pass before reaching the user that are the greatest burden to the chainmakers. It was very encouraging to see how readily these men (who might surely have been excused had they