



"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.

Rejected MSS. only 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.

Periodicals received during the week ending Wednesday March 9.

ENGLAND	BELGIUM
Justice	Brussels—L'Avant-Garde
Jus	Liege—L'Avenir
Norwich—Daylight	Antwerp—De Werker
Cotton Factory Times	ITALY
Glasgow—Pioneer	Milan—Il Fascio Operaio
Worker's Friend	Naples—Humanitas
Christian Socialist	SPAIN
Londoner Arbeiter-Zeitung	Cadiz—El Socialismo
Practical Socialist	AUSTRIA
INDIA	Arbeiterstimme
Bankipore—Behar Herald	ROUMANIA
SOUTH AUSTRALIA	Jassy—Lupta
Adelaide—Our Commonwealth	DENMARK
UNITED STATES	Social-Demokraten
New York—Volkszeitung	SWEDEN
Freiheit	Stockholm—Social-Demokraten
Der Sozialist	NORWAY
John Swinton's Paper	Kristiania—Social-Democraten
	HOLLAND
	Hague—Recht voor Allen

NOTES ON NEWS.

By some accident or other the people have been granted the wonderful boon of being allowed to boat in the London parks on Sundays—those who can pay for the privilege, be it understood.

That the folk are so miserably beaten down that an hour or two's amusement on some particular day is a great thing to be thought of even by the "comfortable artisan"; this is bad enough in all conscience, but that there are so many found willing to take even this one small streak of colour out of their leaden lives is beyond endurance.

The time is past when the people could be kept quiet by the forcible application of a crude ideal of ineptitude and sanctimonious self-mutilation, or bribed into inaction by the promise of celestial delights.

They want their heaven here and now.

Would it not be well for the present-day "rulers of men" to see what they can do toward a gradual approach to social justice? Lest when we deal with the matter our dealing be characterised by a decisive promptitude eminently subversive of their dignified serenity!

By this is not meant Sunday-boating or very much more extended applications of the *panem et circenses* policy. The people may be amused and so kept quiet for awhile, but the smile presently has rather a grim under-meaning to it, not of good augury for the amusers.

Once more has the City corporation identified itself with a gigantic piece of bribery, but it is quite vain to heap obloquy upon its members as is now being done.

Allow a gang of dacoits or brigands to entrench and arm themselves and store up a mass of plundered wealth; can you then wonder that they defend their position with what weapon comes to hand?

It does no good to stand around and complain to all the gods of their unfair fighting; what must be done is to come to handblows as soon as may be; to resolve on the final extinction of monopoly, upon which rests the power of them and all like them, and then to "fight it out on that line if it takes all summer"!

Meanwhile it is funny to see how impeccable philanthropists, and other self-advertisers-from-the-purest-motives, wriggle and squirm when

the foulness is exposed that lies behind the fair show they turn toward the world.

The report of the Committee of Enquiry into the accommodation for prisoners awaiting trial has been presented and reveals a state of things fondly supposed to have died out with the "Holy Inquisition."

An article dealing with the report will appear in these columns as soon as can be arranged; meanwhile may we suggest to the Government the advisability of instituting a companion enquiry—one into the nature and origin of the causes for there being prisoners to be tried?

The *Spectator* is exceeding wroth over those who look with lenient eye upon "disorder" among an oppressed people. A defender of reaction, it cannot see that *émeutes* in Ireland, Russia, Alsace-Lorraine, etc., are healthy signs in that they show that the healthy instinct of revolt against oppression has not been dragooned or "civilised" out of existence.
H. H. S.

Our heavy contemporary *Punch* has lately had a cartoon a long way "after" Albert Durer's marvellous cut of the Knight and Death, illustrated by a "free adaptation" from Fouqué's *Sintram*, to commemorate Bismarck's victory (?) over the Socialists. Our wooden friend with a naïve stupidity quite characteristic of the professional bourgeois jester, has had the impudence to omit the not unimportant figure of Death from his cartoon, although if he had not been quite so dull or so impudently lazy he might have extracted something from Fouqué's romance which would have helped his lame allegory to totter on a step or two.

However we may leave Fouqué's gratuitous interpretation of Durer's immortal work to ask what Durer really did mean by it. For the imagination of the honest and serious craftsman of old Nuremberg, fertile as it was, and though it led him into wild and strange places, was free from any touch of the hysteria which disfigures Fouqué's elegant and even beautiful romances. Durer always meant something definite; and in this case modern historical research has found out what he did mean: his cut is a commemoration of a notable victory over a robber-knight who had long plagued the good town of Nuremberg, and implies a warning to those in high places who live by violence and robbery. The armed man on the war-horse is riding towards no victory, but a shameful death; he has come to "the net end of all his villainies"; and the awful *thing* that follows him is a tangible image of the crimes of his past life; his greed, rapine, cruelty, fraud, and reckless violence.

So that we may be well content after all to take Albert Durer's "Knight and Death" with his own meaning still cleaving to it, as a figurement of the doom of Blood and Iron of our own day; especially if we look not so much upon the man Bismarck, whom the course of circumstances has so curiously placed in his high position of infamy, but rather upon the type of the armed bourgeoisie, "the strong man keeping his house," which to-day owns all that is made and all that makes, and which after a long period of that confidence of living for ever, which is the natural gift of youth and manhood, is now entering the valley of the shadow of death, and has become conscious of its coming defeat, and of the companions it has made for itself, and so rides on warily and fearfully, Crime behind it, Death before it.

W. M.

THE TRADER'S INTERESTS v. THE PEOPLE'S INTERESTS.

MR. GEORGE HOWELL, M.P., writes in last month's *Fortnightly* on the "State of Trade," which shows how completely he has failed even to see the question, much less to grapple with it. After wading through pages of statistical calculations, he comes to the conclusion that trade is not alarmingly depressed after all. That we are only going through the usual slight depression after an unusually great expansion. Production has been continually expanding, while it is *prices* (not the volume of trade) that has fallen. Now, granting that Mr. Howell has proved what no one ever disputed, how much better are we for his investigations? Mr. Howell alleges that the merchants have suffered a large decrease of profits, and everybody else admits that the workers have suffered a large decrease of wages and suspension of work. What a magnificent system of society we live in; capitalists are getting worse off, and the people are getting worse off, yet "trade" is, on the whole, improving! Profits fall and wages fall, yet production is expanding! Then what are we producing, and what use is it in going on producing if nobody benefits by it? Who the devil cares for trade being prosperous if the people are getting worse off *in consequence of its prosperity*? For it seems, according to Mr. Howell, that it is competition only and not decline of trade that is doing all the harm. Orthodox political economy is getting into the last stages of idiocy in the process of its decline; and, like a certain poet now in his dotage, will go on babbling long after the time for silence has come. Of course, Mr. Howell cannot be regarded as an economist, but his application of orthodox notions to questions of the day forms an interesting though dismal study. The old fallacy—that the interests of commerce and the interests of the people are identical—has long since been shown up, but it still finds adherents here and there, and they are useful. By their advocacy they bring ridicule on the cause they champion, and thus ensure its complete defeat. Mr. Howell had better go on with his work of explaining the ways of the current economy, and he is certain to bring ridicule on it and himself.
J. L. M.