



HAVE YOU NOT HEARD HOW IT HAS GONE WITH MANY A CAUSE BEFORE NOW: FIRST, FEW MEN REED 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.

J. A.—Walter Crane's lecture on "Importance of the applied Arts and their relation to common life" was printed in the *Journal of the Society of Arts* for June 3 (Bell and Sons, 6d.). It was of course written from the Socialist point of view, and plainly worded.

Periodicals received during the week ending Wednesday November 23.

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| ENGLAND | Denver (Col.) Labor Enquirer | ITALY | Gazetta Operaia |
| Croydon Echo | Hammonton (NJ) Credit Foncier | SPAIN | El Productor |
| Die Autonomie | Milwaukee (Wis.)—Volksblatt | Madrid—El Socialista | |
| Jus | St. Louis (Mo.)—Die Parole | PORTUGAL | Lisbon—O Protesto Operario |
| Justice | Fort Worth (Tex.)—South West | GERMANY | Berlin—Volks Tribune |
| Labour Tribune | N. Haven—Workmen's Advocate | AUSTRIA | Arbeiterstimme |
| Norwich—Daylight | Albina (Oreg.)—Weekly Courier | HUNGARY | Arbeiter-Weekon-Chronik |
| Railway Review | FRANCE | ROUMANIA | Jassy—Lupta |
| NEW SOUTH WALES | Paris—Cri du Peuple (daily) | SWEDEN | Stockholm—Social-Demokraten |
| Hamilton—Radical | La Revolté | | |
| INDIA | Lille—Le Travailleur | | |
| Bankipore—Behar Herald | HOLLAND | | |
| UNITED STATES | Hague—Recht voor Allen | | |
| New York—Der Sozialist | Amsterdam—Voorwaarts | | |
| Truthseeker | BELGIUM | | |
| Backer Zeitung | Seraing (Ougrec)—Le Reveil | | |
| Volkszeitung | Ghent—Vooruit | | |
| Boston—Woman's Journal | Brussels—L'Avant Gardé | | |
| Chicago (Ill.)—Vorbote | SWITZERLAND | | |
| Labor Enquirer | Zurich—Sozial Demokrat | | |

THE LIBERAL PARTY DIGGING ITS OWN GRAVE.

For months past the Gladstonian Liberals have been protesting loudly against Coercion in Ireland, and the speeches of the "distinguished" amongst them have been filling columns on columns of the papers. They have just had a splendid opportunity of striking a great blow against Coercion in Ireland by coming forward to protest against Coercion in London. We need not ask how they have used that opportunity, that would be a joke; but it may be profitable to point out some possible consequences of their gross stupidity in throwing it away. It is their business as political Liberals to get the working-classes to believe that if they come in again some benefit will result to the workers above what the Tories have to offer them. They have, in fact, to win the vote of the ordinary working-men, not only those who professedly take interest in politics, but especially those who stand aloof from them, and that in Britain rather than in Ireland (since Ireland through its native leaders is theirs already), and especially in London, where there is so much to win. Now as long as the meeting in Trafalgar Square was "a genuinely political meeting," that is a mere home rule affair, their presence and support was of little importance, since their good-will towards it might have been taken for granted. But when it became, as it did some days before the meeting, a protest against the repression of free speech, and was, whatever may be said to the contrary, a protest also on the part of the "respectable" working-men of London against the maltreatment of their unemployed brethren, their support became of very great importance, at any rate to the future of the Liberal Party. It would have been accepted as a token of their sympathy with the popular cause, and would have gained them many thousands of votes which will now either be cast in favour of some Conservative of the "dishing" kind, or will never be cast at all. In short, they would have won whatever of London could be won by them under any circumstances, and they would have lost nothing at all; for they may be quite sure that they have no chance of the votes of the shopocracy big or little; they have done enough to lose that, while they have done nothing to win what was to be won.

Their conduct gives a good measure of the utter political incapacity of the Liberal Party. It is quite likely that they may plead that their "great and noble leader" is hard to move, that is, quite devoid of any perception of a dramatic situation; that at every crisis he has done all he could to discourage his friends and encourage his foes, but that is no excuse worth putting forward. The oracle of the Great

Panjandrum was not needed to speak; even the next greatest panjandrums might have been dispensed with, i.e., Morley and Harcourt, and such like. If some dozen of Liberal M.P.'s of the more respectable kind had given by some means their open support to the business, it would have been enough, and the assent of the "leaders" would have been inferred, and the trick would have been done.

All this is now a thing of the past, and as a first consequence all people who can think at all must clearly see that the political Liberals look upon the Irish question simply as a mechanical matter to get them into office again. It is equally clear that freedom of speech for the people in general is no concern of theirs, except so far as they are afraid of the consequences of it if they were in power. No less clear that they do not care a button for the unemployed so long as they can be kept quiet; and finally, that they have no foresight or plan for the future and determined to shut their eyes resolutely to it. The result of all which will probably be, unless some blessed accident turns up to help them, that they will be exposed at the next election as the mere dregs of a beaten political party, a set of men afraid to proclaim themselves either Radicals or Reactionists; afraid of revolution, and (perhaps) ashamed of open reaction.

"Well, but what does all this matter to us?" a Socialist may say. Well, it is a matter of importance that the people should learn to know their friends from their foes; the people whom we still have to win over to our side—nay, whom to a great extent we still have to get to listen to us. Those Liberal members who have been crying out so loud about the wrongs of the Irish peasants and are so wholly blind to those of the London workmen, which are no less than those of their Irish brethren, have been teaching the lesson in question to the people sharply this time. They will understand that these champions of liberty are really saying, "There is no political capital to be made of you, so we don't heed you: nay, since you are at our very doors, and are beginning to look dangerous, we are at heart glad that the muzzle is being clapped on to you."

This is the meaning of the Liberal members standing aloof from the struggle for free speech in London; and used as people are to official poltroonery, they must see something of this meaning in it, and a heavy blow will be struck at the hope which some simple people still have in a change of ministry—it is called a change of parties, but it hardly amounts even to that. The people will in consequence begin to cry out for a party which does at least aim at being a popular one; which, however partially and ignorantly, does admit that the welfare and progress of the workers is the one necessary thing to be aimed at. In short, the orthodox Liberal party will visibly melt into the great reactionary party, and that very soon now in all probability; and though there will scarcely be a solid democratic party, yet at least there will be a great mass of ever-growing discontent. Both that of people who are increasingly suffering in their own persons from the progress of economical events and also of people of honest democratic instincts to whom all oppression is hateful when they see it, under whatever name it goes. This body of discontent it will not be difficult to penetrate with Socialist ideas, since it will no longer be able to hope anything from the vague bundle of makeshifts and evasions that passes under the name of a Liberal policy.

The gain, therefore, of the renunciation of the defence of freedom of speech by the Liberal leaders and their henchmen is all ours and the loss is theirs. The only possible reason for wanting a Liberal ministry in again is that the Irish question might be settled for the time. Against that possible gain is to be put the certainty that the longer the question is delayed the more revolutionary the change will be. Nor is it so sure either that the Liberals would do much to settle it if they were in office, on the one hand, or on the other that the Tories may not dish them at last by doing pretty much the same as their opponents would do.

Anyhow the education of the Radicals ought to go on pretty fast, now that a strong Liberal minority pledged up to the eyes to resistance to coercion, and looking forward, rightly or wrongly, to winning at the next election, has stood by and looked on with half-approving eyes while the Tories were taking away from the people the right of meeting in open spaces in London with a high-handed violence worthy of the times of Castlereagh.

WILLIAM MORRIS.

The efforts of the people to overthrow the system, doomed and cursed as it is, of wage-slavery are called "anarchy" by the powers that be, and they foolishly, blindly seek to strangle those efforts by dropping from a scaffold the bodies of seven preachers of an idea. Vain hope! stupendous delusion! The shock of the descending bodies of our seven martyrs will jar the world and shake the props from under wage-slavery in every land.—Denver *Labour Enquirer*.

It is as well to be frank, and those of our friends who are attempting, with great display of ingenuity, to draw many elaborate distinctions between Mitchelstown and Trafalgar Square are wasting their time. Of course no one pretends that the circumstances are identical. The *Daily News* points out, for instance, that at Mitchelstown the police tried to thrust their reporter through a public meeting, whereas in Trafalgar Square they merely bludgeoned every man who tried to make his way through the Square. Our sapient cotemporary might also have pointed out that the people shot at Mitchelstown spoke with a brogue, whereas those ridden down in Northumberland Avenue had a cockney accent. But notwithstanding all these minor details, the fact remains that in approving as "admirable" the bludgeoning of the people who came to meet in Trafalgar Square as has been their wont ever since the Square existed, and after the Home Secretary expressly declared political meetings would be permitted, our leaders have spiked their most effective Irish artillery. We regret this as much as any one. But the fact is there, and there is no blinking it.—*Pall Mall Gazette*.