



HAVE YOU NOT HEARD HOW IT HAS GONE WITH MANY A CAUSE BEFORE NOW: FIRST, FEW MEN NEED 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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CONTRIBUTIONS received—Unsuitable: J. D. (Crieff); R. T. (A Worker's Dream). Will be used: T. P. (Leeds).

O. B. M.—Chas. Nordhoff, author of 'The Communistic Societies of the United States,' is, we believe, still alive, and the special Washington correspondent of the New York Herald. J. H. Noyes died in 1886.

Periodicals received during the week ending Wednesday June 20.

ENGLAND	Fort Worth (Tex)—South West	SWITZERLAND
Justice	Milwaukee (Wis.)—Volksblatt	Zurich—Sozial Demokrat
Leaflet Newspaper	National Reformer	Geneva—Przedsurt
Labour Tribune	N Haven—Workmen's Advocate	SPAIN
Norwich—Daylight	Coast Seamen's Journal	El Productor
Postal Service Gazette	FRANCE	Madrid—El Socialista
Railway Review	Paris—Cri du Peuple (daily)	Barcelona—Acracia
Worker's Friend	Le Parti Ouvrier	Barcelona—Tierra y Libertad
NEW SOUTH WALES	Lille—Le Travailleur	PORTUGAL
Hamilton—Radical	HOLLAND	Lisbon—O Protesto Operario
INDIA	Hague—Recht voor Allen	GERMANY
Madras—People's Friend	BELGIUM	Berlin—Volks Tribune
UNITED STATES	Seraing (Ougree)—Le Reveil	AUSTRIA
New York—Jewish Volkzeitung	Ghent—Vooruit	Arbeiterstimme
Der Sozialist	Liege—L'Avenir	ROMANIA
Truthseeker	ITALY	Jassy—Municipal
Chicago—Labor Enquirer	Rome—L'Emancipazione	SWEDEN
Chicago (Ill)—Vorbote	Marsala—La Nuova Eta	Stockholm, Social-Demokraten
Detroit—Der Arme Teufel	Cremona—Il Democratico	

COUNTING NOSES.

MR. CHAMBERLAIN . . . believed that the experience of the United States and their own, so far as it had gone, went to show that when people were constantly being called on to vote, the whole matter fell into the hands of caucuses and machine politicians.

Thus the reporters of the House of Commons give us the present view of the once semi-Socialist agitator, the advocate of the ransoming of the upper classes; and no one can wonder at the "ironical cheers and laughter" of the opposition that followed this expression of opinion from the once darling of the caucuses, the once supreme leader of the midland-county machine politicians. "That would lead," said this right honourable, "to a state of things which had never existed in this country, and which he for one would extremely deprecate." "Renewed laughter" followed this brilliant joke, which seems to have taken by surprise even people so used to impudence as M.P.'s are.

Perhaps, though, the laughter was not so much at what Mr. Chamberlain said as at what he meant in reference to his present position; the Devil preaching a serious sermon on sin without himself laughing at his humbug is proverbially an amusing business, and Mr. Chamberlain's contradiction of his first sentence by his second doubtless makes it more amusing; but except for that second sentence, in which he spoke of the reign of caucuses and machine politicians as a state of things which had never existed in this country, I think we may go some way in agreeing with him, even without attacking the nostrum of triennial or yearly parliaments which is so dear to Radical politicians.

It is true, indeed, that we are not very often called upon to vote for M.P.'s at least, and that the majesty of the House of Commons and its elections has overshadowed the other kinds of voting so much that only a few very eager local politicians heed such occasions for voting, unless in the case of the School Board, in which the cumulative vote is enticing to some who otherwise would see clearly that they had no chance of getting their opinions represented.

But though we don't vote often, I really do not see how we could be "machined" more than we are at present, even if we voted every day. In our centralised "society" (if one must abuse that good word by using it for the thievish muddle ruled by the government clerk and the policeman) the whole political duty of man is to vote: that is at once the healing faith, and the fruits worthy of salvation put before

us by our political church to-day, and the priests of that church are for ever engaged in bribing people to vote and intimidating them to vote, and cheating them into voting, and beseeching them to vote; and also in receiving their votes; and when the votes are received and the representative is elected by them, he then has to put his whole soul into squaring his conduct in accordance with the chances of the next election and the hopes of again obtaining votes.

Under this system how can any politician be other than mechanical? So far from his trying to abate party spirit, and try to be useful, it is his business carefully to push anything that has a tendency to become human and reasonable back into the lists where the battle of nose-counting is being fought. Administration becomes a joke, and the Metropolitan Board of Works the true image of official business. Worn-out party cries are allowed to shout down all suggestions of the true issues of political life. The leaders are obliged at any rate to profess ignorance (like Mr. Morley the other day) of a great part of the events happening under their very noses, and as to their ignorance of ideas that are beginning to move all intelligent persons, they have no need to profess ignorance of them, for their ignorance on this head is so complete that it cries out for all men to take note of. In this coarse, blind, ignorant party warfare, the issues put before us are so futile and wide of the real point, that honest and thoughtful men are compelled to spit and pass by. Here, say the politicians, vote for *this* or for *that*. Is there no third course, you say, but to vote for a piece of reaction or a piece of inaction? None, they answer; your business is to have your nose counted on one side or other of the business that we nose-counters have made for you: if you object, you are a faddist, a crank, a person ignorant of "practical politics."

This is the way that "representatives" are manufactured, that the "great representative body" is manufactured; and after all it must be said that if it does not represent us, it represents our condition. It is said often that the House of Commons does little or nothing. Well, what in the name of patience need it do? There is the vast organisation of commerce at work day by day, hour by hour, taking care that the war for riches amongst the members of the classes privileged to "employ," shall be orderly, and that the members of the classes that are employed shall gain nothing more than bare subsistence by their competition with one another; turning to their own advantage, not only the work of the workers, but their love of pleasure and longing for ease which forbids them to take up consciously the class struggle which they must carry on unconsciously; their sense of justice and aspirations for a decent life, which make them averse to violence; nay, they can even turn the struggle for wages and the trades combinations to their advantage by using them as a warning to note how far they can venture to go in the robbery of the useful class; and their political aspirations the capitalist representatives can use in much the same way; they can discover by the vote-catching process what tune must be played in order to lull the workers to sleep while their pockets are being picked—of well-being and happiness.

They need do nothing else except keep a large force of policemen and a tolerable army on foot, together with the criminal courts and the due amount of middle-class jurymen in case the victims should wake up and get restive.

I say again if the Parliament manufactured by the nose-counting which is manipulated by caucuses, Primrose Leagues, election agents, the last corruption of hero-worship, and the rest of it, does not represent us, it represents *our condition*—a privileged class robbing us, destroying, if not our lives, yet the reason for our lives; and a working class apathetic because it is used to the miserable life it leads. A class which does not know what happiness is, and therefore will not seek the means of obtaining it.

Surely the time will come when the mere struggle for bare livelihood will force on us the knowledge of the means not merely of obtaining bare livelihood but of happiness also, and then what a farce will seem to us that "representation" founded on "machine-politics" and the count of noses of unhappy people driven and cheated into voting for this or that form of the continuance of their own unhappiness.

WILLIAM MORRIS.

PIECE-WORK.

TRADES UNIONISTS are often blamed for opposing piece-work, even by some who are genuinely anxious for the welfare of the workers—notably by the late William Denny, ship-builder of Dumbarton, who looked upon piece-work as the means which would enable the workers in time to displace the capitalists and employers altogether, chiefly by increasing their intelligence and business faculty, and also by giving them higher wages and so enabling them to save money. But the workers themselves have opposed piece-work, especially the unionists, and it may be useful for us to see on what grounds such opposition can be justified.

There are several forms which piece-work assumes in various industries; first there is the piece-work pure and simple, when a worker makes things at so much each, so much a dozen, or so much a gross, he makes as many as he likes and gets paid accordingly; the man who works the hardest, the longest time, and with the greatest skill, gets the most pay (what more can the Trades Unionist want!). Making match-boxes at 2½d. a gross would come under this class, or riveting ships at so much per hundred rivets. The second class is where a whole job is sub-let to a small contractor: for instance, large works generally sublet their building to little masters, who either contract to do it at so much a cube yard, or else so much for the job; they find