

WHIGS ASTRAY.<sup>1</sup>

A DIALOGUE BETWEEN

MR. MARK BAKOWINE JONES, an architect (unsuccessful), and—the  
 Rev. SWAIN STRIDE, a Nonconformist parson, and } advanced Radicals.  
 Mr. JEREMIAH BROWN, a business man

SCENE—A comfortable bachelor-looking room in Mr. BROWN'S house, with tobacco and pipes and grog to the fore. MR. STRIDE and MR. BROWN sitting on either side of the fire, looking important and self-satisfied. Between them MR. JONES with an occasional ill-concealed grin on his face.

(Concluded from p. 18.)

S. 'We are in favour of giving some relief by way of security of tenure to leaseholders who are exposed to enormous losses and ruin. It is true that this may only be in accordance with a contract voluntarily entered into; and it must be admitted that the evil is a difficult one to deal with.'

J. Yes, so difficult with your qualification tacked on to the remedy (as you think it) that you won't deal with it at all. It doesn't matter: a man who can have enormous losses must be rich: it is a question between two groups of capitalists. Pass on.

S. 'We are in favour of the State making some provision for employing men and women who are unable to find work. It is a matter requiring very careful treatment; but no one can believe that the State as the people's executive has exhausted its powers in this matter.'

J. Well, if it has, certainly exhaustion has come before effort; for it has never tried to give work to the rejected of the labour-market: and if it did try it could only do so at the expense of the workers generally.

S. Well, but you see, 'the work provided and the wages paid need only be sufficient to stave off hopeless poverty; but that at all events a wise and practical system of government might offer.'

J. Yes, indeed, only sufficient to stave off hopeless poverty: an easy job, isn't it? Man alive, do you know what hopeless poverty is? Live the life of it, and then you will know. And how many live such a life!—two thirds of all the workers? Nearer three thirds, I think. Your system of government need be wise and practical indeed to stave that off.

S. Let us hope it will be; for we say 'there ought not to be a single human being in the nation who can honestly stand up and say: I am willing to work, but I know not where to go to earn house-rent and daily bread.'

J. Of course there ought not, and I am glad to hear you say so; but what are you to do but cherish your sentiment as a pious opinion? Can't you see that if it were so, labour would be dear; the capitalist would have to compete for the workman, instead of the workman for the capitalist, as is now the case? The capitalist would be undone, and would cease to employ, unless by the aid of new machinery he could once more win the blessing of having a due amount of men willing and unable to work. And if the capitalist won't employ labour—i.e., workmen—how is it to be employed?

S. They must employ themselves, I suppose.

J. I suppose so. In that case, where are those non-producing classes that you are so tender of?

S. Well—gone, I suppose.

J. So do I suppose. And yet you have been speaking of them as though they and their necessary complement, the poor, were essential and eternal.

S. (after a pause). For my part, Jones, I think you are trying to confuse the simplicity of true democratic ideas with your pedantic political economy. Let us come back to the point. Now please attend. 'We are in favour of making justice easy of access to all. The path to the judge ought to be the most easy; but it is the most difficult. Justice ought to be the cheapest commodity in the nation; and it is the dearest.'

J. The path to the judge is pretty easy for some people; and it strikes me that when they find him, they pretty often find an animal which is a cross between a baboon and a tiger. But do you know that I suspect that by justice you mean law; and I more than doubt if that wouldn't be dear at any price. For doesn't all civil law mean the enforcement of private contract, with all its intricacy, by the overmastering violence of the executive, which doesn't trouble itself to consider whether the carrying out of the contract will be injurious to the private person or to the community, so long as it has been entered into legally?

S. I really don't understand you.

J. I fear not; and there are many in your case, who think that peace means the rule of law. So much the worse for all of us. I advise you to watch a civil process in a law court (if you haven't done so already), and then tell me what you think of it. If you then don't understand what I have been saying, it's no use trying to make you understand.

S. Well, listen to this! Now I think that you will agree with me: 'The Radical is in favour of a resolute reform of the Land Laws, with a view to getting the whole of the land into the hands of the com-

munity or the State. Our great towns, especially London, are getting dangerously congested simply because the countrymen who are pressing into them cannot get at the land; and they cannot get at the land because of laws and customs which were never made for tenants and labourers, but for landlords and aristocrats; and there will never be any hope for the labouring classes in the country districts until these bad old laws and customs are changed.'

J. I agree with what you say, and with what you might mean, but which I don't think you do mean, since you began by cursing those who set class against class.

S. Why! what do you mean?

J. Ain't the landlords and aristocrats a class?

S. Well—well—perhaps they are.

J. They are, when you have properly understood the meaning of the word aristocrat nowadays; to wit, a person privileged to live on the labour of others.

B. Of course he doesn't mean—

S. (interrupting). Yes, yes, Brown, you're quite right. Of course, I don't mean that the land shall be taken from the landlords without compensation; though, perhaps, not full compensation.

J. Mr. Brown, will you lend me a pound?

B. (putting his hand in his pocket). With pleasure, my dear fellow.

S. (laughing rather sulkily). Only he will require compensation.

J. Twenty shillings, eh?

B. Oh, silver will suit perfectly well.

J. Now I was thinking 15s. would do.

B. (grinning). I see; an apologue. No, Mr. Jones, I shall want the twenty shillings in full.

J. So will your landlords, friend Stride—if they can get it. Believe me, they will try for more if a Radical government should (the fancy is a wild one) try such a measure as "getting the whole of the land into the hands of the community or the State." And if they can't get more, I promise you they won't take less without fighting for their position.

S. I don't know; perhaps they will if the thing is done carefully, without frightening them. Of course they won't if you go hillooing Socialism at them.

J. Well, if you like, we will grant that they will agree to the land nationalisation which you propose to them. What are you going to do with the other capitalists?

S. The other capitalists! We shan't meddle with the capitalists at all.

J. Indeed! They will do what they like with their riches then?

S. Certainly; it would be mere slavery for them else.

J. And what are their riches?

S. Well—well—well—

J. I see you don't know, so I must tell you. So much privilege to make the producers of wealth pay for leave to live for no cause except the "interests" of the taxers. That is what you have got to take away from the landlords and aristocrats. If you leave them that, whatever measure of land nationalisation may be passed, whoever owns the land, they will monopolise the use of it. And how can you compensate people for taking away such a monopoly but by giving it back again to them?

B. (gasping). But—why—Mr. Jones, you are advocating the abolition of private property!

J. Mr. Brown, you are a clear-headed man. Shake hands!

[BROWN seems rather doubtful, but JONES seizes his hand and shakes it enthusiastically.]

S. Never mind, Brown, he doesn't mean half he says.

J. I wish I could say half I mean.

S. Now comes the really important and practical part of our platform. We 'are in favour of one man one vote . . . of equal suffrages for men and women . . . of a more democratic House of Commons . . . the candidate under certain conditions should be freed from the official conditions; and it might be good policy to offer a small annual payment to those M.P.'s who need and desire it—'

J. Hold on, your qualifications and exceptions and cautions are muddling me sadly; but it don't matter.

S. We 'are in favour of making an end of the House of Lords as a house of hereditary legislators.'

J. Yes, so that you may have the Lords in the Commons; more qualifications. Well, go on; are you nearly at an end?

S. Yes, yes! I'm just at the end. 'When Ireland has its Parliament for Irish affairs, and Scotland has its Parliament for Scotch affairs, and Wales has its Parliament for Welsh affairs, the present House of Commons might be turned into the English Parliament; the House of Lords might then be converted into a great Imperial Parliament for Imperial affairs, in which there should be representatives from every part of the Empire at home and across the seas. This is the great Radical ideal.'

J. Well, that's a new way of abolishing the House of Lords, certainly! I don't think they will grumble much at it. At any rate, you wind up with a good thumping piece of nonsense.—Well, I must be off; that lecture will be half over by now, and I promised to go.

B. (showing renewed energy after a tendency to sleep). Stop a bit, Mr. Jones; I think I ought to explain to you that the earlier part of our programme—

S. (interrupting). Yes, Brown, yes; our friend understands. You see, Jones—

B. (rather indignantly). I say, Stride, just let me have one word. Mr. Jones, all that about land nationalisation, and State works for

<sup>1</sup> The portions of this dialogue between the single "quotes" are taken from a genuine document—"A Radical's Creed," by John Page Hopps, in the *Pall Mall Gazette* Dec. 10th, 1888.

the unemployed, and the old people at the workhouse, and all that—you musn't be too severe upon it; because, I say, it is put in—(no, Stride, let me go on!)—just to make people, or some people, help us in these suffrage matters, which is the thing we advanced Liberals or Radicals really care about; and I flatter myself we know something about it too.

J. Well, I must say I think you ought to, considering the number of years you have been hemming and hawing about it. But look here, gentlemen, I must go, I bet the lecturer is just in his peroration. But, I say, isn't "Advanced Radicals" rather lengthy in spelling?

B. But, Jones, how would you spell it?

J. Try—it will save you some letters—try W-H-I-G-S A-S-T-R-A-Y—it means the same thing if it don't spell it. Well, good-bye; I shall just be in time for question-time.

WILLIAM MORRIS.

## INTERNATIONAL NOTES.

### GERMANY.

The stonemasons of Berlin have been on strike since the 9th of this month. On the 2nd of January they were asked to sign a sheet presented to them by their foreman, by which they agreed to resign from the union of their trade. This Stonemason's Union has existed for over seven years, is very well organised, and has done a lot of good to the members, especially as a relief fund for patients. The workers, of course, declined to sign their resignation, and in consequence of their refusal were at once dismissed. Our Berlin friends now request their English comrades to do for them all they possibly can, in order to enable them to win the battle. All moneys in support of the strikers are to be sent to the following address: Joseph Jeschky, stonemason, Melachton Street, 5, Hof I, Berlin, N.W.

The German police at Hamburg has suppressed the paper of the chalk and stoneworkers, *Der Grundstein*, which was a very ably edited trade organ.

### BELGIUM.

The tribunal of Mons has begun its work of vengeance against the miners who some weeks ago struck in the Centre and Borinage districts. A first series of fourteen workers have been tried and sentenced to various terms of imprisonment, ranging from one to seven months. Other series will follow, and then only the "big" trial for high treason against Defuisseaux, Laloi, Gérard, Maroille, etc., will take place. These last-named Socialists have done nothing whatever which looks "high treasonable," but the Government could not afford to spend all their dynamite for mere trifling trials with two or three months jail as ultimate result. Hence "high treason" must be got up and shall be.

Comrade Laurent Verrycken, the initiator of the open-air propaganda meetings in Belgium, is now being tried in half-a-dozen courts of justice for the flimsy offences of obstruction, rioting, unlawful assembly, and so on, and takes opportunity of making also indoor meetings before the magistrates. He is always sentenced, of course, but only in a fine of 4s., which is much cheaper than the hiring of a hall would be, and the magistrate's courts are always fully crowded with Socialists.

The Belgian *Parti ouvrier* has started a Socialist satirical paper at Brussels under the title of *La Trique* (The Cudgel).

### AUSTRIA.

At Fünfhaus, ten Socialists have been arrested, among whom are comrades Sticht, Schuhmaier, and Wiesinger. At Ottaking, seventeen more "criminals" have met with the same fate, comrades Trojan, Haubner, Vitz, and Schmidt being among their number. At Vienna, comrades Raab and Hader have been expelled. The editor of *Gleichheit*, comrade Adler, will soon have to stand his trial, and for certain will be found guilty of all sorts of mischievous deeds. And so it is that the social revolutionary ideas day after day are winning more ground in that old feudal and rotten land of the Hapsburgs.

### SWEDEN.

We told our readers, some weeks ago, that three Socialist papers had been prosecuted, and now we have two more to add to them, the *Socialdemokrat* at Stockholm, and *Arbetet* at Malmö. The editors of the three former have just now been sentenced to several months of imprisonment; Pehr Erikson, editor of *Volkstimme* (People's Voice), to twelve months for one article. At this very moment all the most known Socialists of Sweden are in prison. The government have resolved to kill the Socialist movement, and never before has the party entertained better hopes towards its rapid development. That is the curse of persecution.

### RUSSIA.

A Russian paper gives some interesting but dreadful figures on transportation, from which we take the following *résumé*:—Number of persons transported to Siberia from 1827 to 1846, 159,755; from 1867 to 1876, 156,585; from 1870 to 1877, 114,370; from 1880 to 1886, 120,000; total, 545,710. Out of that number the following were "political" criminals: from 1827 to 1846, 51,000; from 1867 to 1876, 78,500; from 1870 to 1877, 62,442; from 1880 to 1886, 64,531. Alexander II. caused even more people to be transported to Siberia than the atrocious despot Nicholas, and then we find "respectable" historians telling us that Alexander II. was a most liberal-minded ruler, and that he, at least, did not deserve his fate.

V. D.

There are, practically, two absolutely opposite kinds of labour going on among men for ever. The first, labour supported by capital, producing nothing. The second, labour unsupported by capital, producing all things. A little while since, I was paying a visit in Ireland, and chanced to hear an account of the pleasures of a picnic party, who had gone to see a waterfall. There was, of course, ample lunch, feasting on the grass, and basketsful of fragments taken up afterwards. Then the company, feeling themselves dull, gave the fragments that remained to the attendant ragged boys, on condition that they should "pull each other's hair." Here you see, in the most accurate sense, employment of food, or capital, in the support of entirely unproductive labour.—Ruskin, *'Fors'* No. 2.

## REVOLUTIONARY CALENDAR

WEEK ENDING FEBRUARY 2, 1889.

27	Sun.	1808. Trial of Gunpowder Plot conspirators. 1775. Schelling born. 1808. D. Strauss born. 1814. Fichte died. 1817. J. B. A. Godin born. 1832. Mazzini founds "Young Italy." 1835. Marseilles. 1842. Outbreak at Oporto. 1871. Capitalism of Paris.
28	Mon.	1796. William Stone tried for high treason. 1824. Bernard Becker born. 1876. Francis Deak died. 1885. Industrial Revolution Conference began.
29	Tues.	1737. Thomas Paine born. 1794. Hamilton Rowan tried for sedition. 1794. Meeting of the London Corresponding Society at the Globe Tavern. 1799. <i>Northern Star</i> , organ of the United Irishmen, suppressed. 1833. First "reformed" Parliament met. 1860. E. M. Arndt died. 1880. A secret press of the <i>People's Will</i> seized at St. Petersburg after armed resistance; compositor Lubkin shot himself.
30	Wed.	1649. Execution of Charles Stuart the Elder. 1794. Hamilton Rowan tried for seditious libel. 1871. House of Representatives (by 172 to 21) welcome Fenians to the United States. 1877. Trial for a demonstration on the Kazan Place, St. Petersburg: 21 tried, 5 sentenced to the mines, 10 to Siberia.
31	Thur.	1804. Lighting of the Beacons. 1811. Peter Finnerty imprisoned for 18 months and bound over for 5 years for "libel" on Castle-reagh. 1849. Auguste Reinsdorf born.
1	Fri.	1801. Maximilian Paul Emile Littré born. 1840. Commutation of sentence on Frost, Williams, and Jones. 1851. Mary Wollstonecroft Shelley died. 1863. Lassalle publishes his "Open Letter" to the Leipzig Central Committee on the convoking of a General German Workers' Congress. 1875. Lock-out of 50,000 South Wales miners.
2	Sat.	1808. Ledru Rollin born. 1866. Fenian (Special Commission) trials closed: convicted, 36; acquitted, 3. 1884. Wendell Phillips died.

*Bernard Becker*.—German political writer, born at Breslau 1824. After the revolutionary events of 1848, in which he took an active part, he was compelled to leave his native country and went to London, where he lived up to the year 1862. He then returned to Germany and settled at Francfort-on-the-Main. After the foundation of the "German General Workingmen's Association," Ferdinand Lassalle designated Becker as his representative for the section of that body established at Francfort. November 2, 1864, he was elected by all the branches of the country president of the Association, in lieu of Lassalle, who died on the 31st of August previous. But soon after the great agitator's death, disharmony and discord grew fast among the members of the party, Countess Hatzfeldt and Becker were unable to come to an agreement, the latter refusing to allow the Association to serve the interests of the Prussian Government and those of the reactionary-feudal party. In the month of July 1865 Becker was expelled from Prussia, and at the end of the same year he resigned the chairmanship of the Association. In the course of one year he succeeded, in spite of the intrigues of Countess Hatzfeldt, in trebling the number of the members of that once famous organisation. He then went to Vienna, where he started, with some other revolutionaries, in the month of February 1868, the first Austrian Socialist paper, *Wiener Arbeiter-Zeitung*. In 1872 the Brunswick section of the International Workingmen's Association delegated him to the General Congress of the Hague, where he always voted with the *authoritarian* fraction, represented by Karl Marx. Since that time he alternately lived in England and in Switzerland. As his writings contain valuable information for various periods of the history of the social revolutionary movement in Europe, we may as well quote here his principal productions: 'die deutsche Bewegung von 1848' (Berlin, 1864, 8vo); 'Missbrauch der Nationalitätenlehre' (Vienna, 1867, 8vo); 'die Reaction in Deutschland gegen die Revolution von 1848' (Vienna, 1868, 8vo); 'Enthüllungen über das tragische Lebensende Lassalle's' (Schleiz, 1868, 8vo); 'National-öconomische Raketen' (Sonderhausen, 1871, 8vo); 'Der alte und neue Jesuitismus' (Brunswick, 1872, 8vo); 'die Arbeiterfrage und das neue Evangelium' (Schaffhausen, 1872, 8vo); 'Karl Fourier' (Brunswick, 1874, 8vo); 'Geschichte der Pariser Commune 1789-1794' (Brunswick, 1874, 8vo); 'Briefe eines deutschen Bettelpatrioten' (Brunswick, 1875, 8vo); 'Geschichte der Arbeiter-Agitation Lassalle's' (Brunswick, 1875, 8vo); 'Geschichte der Pariser Commune 1871' (Leipzig, 1879, 8vo). This last work, full of dirty insults and of deliberate calumnies, has caused many revolutionaries in nearly all European countries to raise vehement protests against the writer, who since that time seems to have given up all Socialist writing and now devotes his literary faculties to the interests of commercialism and bourgeoisdom.—V. D.

The following note relates to Jan. 24, 1867:—

*The Unemployed sack bakers' shops*.—Hyde Park riots were not the only revolutionary symptoms of these years of Reform agitation. Bread was dear and wages were low, and riotous demonstrations were common by impudent people who declined to starve while bread could be had, by the most irregular means. If distress was bad anywhere it was bad in Deptford and Greenwich. The suspension of shipbuilding and other works had caused a great scarcity of employment in these populous suburbs, and a large number of workmen were reduced to severe distress, aggravated by the inclemency of the weather. Doubtless under these circumstances the good bourgeois were not surprised to see symptoms of a riot appearing in Greenwich and Deptford, unemployed men parading the streets and attacking some of the shops. During the afternoon some relief had been distributed at the relieving offices, but it was not sufficient for the hundreds who were clamouring for bread. They were turned away empty, and this catastrophe followed. Suddenly a simultaneous movement was made towards the shops in High Street, Deptford, and in a few minutes the crashing of glass was heard and a baker's shop was completely cleared out. They then came to the shop of another baker, who to save damage distributed his bread freely among the people. In the Broadway another attack was made upon the shop of a baker, and bread was carried off under the noses of the police, who were, we are assured, in additional force that evening, but were wholly insufficient to prevent the riot; and it was not until the arrival of large reinforcements of mounted men that "order" was restored. Next morning large numbers of men again assembled, panic-stricken tradesmen closing their shops in every direction; but there was no renewal of the rioting. Its effect as usual was seen in the effusive distribution of middle-class charity, although of course it was all put down by the ordinary press to that dreadful and malign creature the London "rough."—D. N.

Non-union carpenters are referred to in Denver as "bushwhackers," in Pittsburg as "jay-hawkers," in Texas as "Punch and Judy showmen," and in California as "travelling chips."