



HAVE YOU NOT HEARD HOW IT HAS GONE WITH MANY A CAUSE BEFORE NOW: FIRST, FEW MEN HEARD 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. Subscriptions.—For Europe and United States, including postage, per year, 6s. six months, 3s.; three months, 1s. 6d.

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CONTENTS.

		PAGE.
Notes on News .. .. .	MORRIS and NICOLL	209
A Chat with a Burglar .. .. .	By PERPETUAL MOTION	210
Against Vain Pleasure .. .. .	C. W. BECKETT	211
Revolutionary Calendar .. .. .		211
Correspondence:—International Congress—Anarchy and Communism .. .. .		211
Under an Elm-tree .. .. .	WILLIAM MORRIS	212
International Socialist Working-Men's Congress .. .. .		213
The Labour Struggle:—Tram Slaves—Seamen's Strike— Dunham Miners—Walsall Bit-makers .. .. .		214
International Notes .. .. .	VICTOR DAVE	214
Executive Announcements, Reports, Lecture Diary, and Notices of Meetings .. .. .		215
Advertisements, New Publications, etc., etc. .. .. .		216

Periodicals received during the week ending Wednesday July 3.

<b>ENGLAND</b> Brotherhood Church Reformer Justice Labour Elector Labour Tribune London—Freie Presse Norwich—Daylight Railway Review Sozial Demokrat Telegraph Service Gazette Worker's Friend	Boston—Woman's Journal Investigator Chicago (Ill)—Vorbote Baeker Zeitung Detroit—Der Arme Teufel Fort Worth (Tex)—South West Milwaukee—National Reformer San Francisco Arbeiter-Zeitung San Jose—Pacific Union St. Louis (Mo.)—Die Parole	<b>SWITZERLAND</b> Arbeiterstimm <b>ITALY</b> Milan—Il Fascio Operaio <b>SPAIN</b> Barcelona—El Productor Seville—La Solidaridad <b>PORTUGAL</b> Lisbon—O Protesto Operario Porto—A Revolta <b>GERMANY</b> Berlin—Volks Tribune <b>AUSTRIA</b> Brunn—Volksfreund <b>HUNGARY</b> Arbeiter-Weekend-Chronik <b>DENMARK</b> Social-Demokraten <b>SWEDEN</b> Malmo—Arbetet <b>ARGENTINE REPUBLIC</b> Buenos Ayres—Vorwarts
<b>INDIA</b> Bankipore—Behar Herald Madras—People's Friend <b>UNITED STATES</b> New York—Der Sozialist Freiheit Herald Jewish Volkszeitung Workmen's Advocate United Irishman Znamia	<b>FRANCE</b> Paris—Le Parti Ouvrier (daily) Le Proletariat L'Attaque Lille—Le Cri du Travailleur Commeny—Le Socialiste <b>HOLLAND</b> Hague—Recht voor Allen <b>BELGIUM</b> Brussels—Le Drapeau Noir Ghent—Vooruit Antwerp—De Werker Liege—L'Avenir	

UNDER AN ELM-TREE;

OR,

THOUGHTS IN THE COUNTRY-SIDE.

MIDSUMMER in the country—here you may walk between the fields and hedges that are as it were one huge nosegay for you, redolent of bean-flowers and clover and sweet hay and elder-blossom. The cottage gardens are bright with flowers, the cottages themselves mostly models of architecture in their way. Above them towers here and there the architecture proper of days bygone, when every craftsman was an artist and brought definite intelligence to bear upon his work. Man in the past, nature in the present, seem to be bent on pleasing you and making all things delightful to your senses; even the burning dusty road has a look of luxury as you lie on the strip of roadside green, and listen to the blackbirds singing, surely for your benefit, and, I was going to say as if they were paid to do it, but I was wrong, for as it is they seem to be doing their best.

And all, or let us say most things, are brilliantly alive. The shadowy bleak in the river down yonder, which is—ignorant of the fate that Barking Reach is preparing for its waters—sapphire blue under this ruffling wind and cloudless sky, and barred across here and there with the pearly white-flowered water-weeds, every yard of its banks a treasure of delicate design, meadowsweet and dewberry and comfrey and bed-straw—from the bleak in the river, amongst the labyrinth of grasses, to the starlings busy in the new shorn fields, or about the grey ridges of the hay, all is eager, and I think all is happy that is not anxious.

What is that thought that has come into one's head as one turns round in the shadow of the roadside elm? A country-side worth fighting for if that were necessary, worth taking trouble to defend its peace. I raise my head, and betwixt the elm-boughs I see far off a grey buttressed down rising over the sea of green and blue-green

meadows and fields, and dim on the flank of it over its buttresses can see a quaint figure made by cutting the short turf away from the chalk of the hill-side; a figure which represents a White Horse according to the heraldry of the period, eleven hundred years ago. Hard by that hill-side the country people of the day did verily fight for the peace and loveliness of this very country where I lie, and coming back from their victory scored the image of the White Horse as a token of their valour, and, who knows? perhaps as an example for their descendants to follow.

For a little time it makes the blood stir in me as I think of that, but as I watch the swallows flitting past me betwixt hedge and hedge, or mounting over the hedge in an easy sweep and hawking over the bean-field beyond, another thought comes over me. These live things I have been speaking of, bleak and swallows and starlings and black-birds, are all after their kind beautiful and graceful, not one of them is lacking in its due grace and beauty; but yesterday as I was passing by a hay-field there was an old red-roan cart-horse looking seriously but good-humouredly at me from a gap in the hedge, and I stopped to make his acquaintance; and I am sorry to say that in spite of his obvious merits he was ugly, Roman-nosed, shambling, ungainly: yet how useful had he been—for others. Also the same day (but not in the same field) I saw some other animals, male and female, with whom also I made acquaintance, for the male ones at least were thirsty. And these animals, both male and female, were ungraceful, unbeautiful, as ungainly as the roan cart-horse; yet they were obviously useful, for they were making hay before my eyes. Then I bethought me that as I had seen starlings in Hertfordshire that were of the same race as the Thames side starlings, so I had seen or heard of featherless two-legged animals of the same race as the thirsty creatures in the hay-field; they had been sculptured in the frieze of the Parthenon, painted on the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel, imagined in literature as the heroes and heroines of romance; nay, when people had created in their minds a god of the universe, creator of all that was, is, or shall be, they were driven to represent him as one of that same race to which the thirsty haymakers belonged; as though supreme intelligence and the greatest measure of gracefulness and beauty and majesty were at their highest in the race of those ungainly animals.

Under the elm-tree these things puzzle me, and again my thoughts return to the bold men of that very country-side, who, coming back from Ashdown field, scored that White Horse to look down for ever on the valley of the Thames; and I thought it likely that they had this much in common with the starlings and the bleak, that there was more equality amongst them than we are used to now, and that there would have been more models available amongst them for Woden than one would be like to find in the Thames-side meadows.

Under the elm-tree I don't ask myself whether that is owing to the greater average intelligence of men at the present day, and to the progress of humanity made since the time of the only decent official that England ever had, Alfred the Great, to wit; for indeed the place and time are not favourable to such questions, which seem sheer nonsense amidst of all that waste of superabundant beauty and pleasure held out to men who cannot take it or use it, unless some chance rich idler may happen to stray that way. My thoughts turn back to the haymakers and their hopes, and I remember that yesterday morning I said to a bystander, "Mr. So-and-so (the farmer) is late in sending his men into the hay-field."

Quoth he, "You see, sir, Mr. So-and-so is short-handed."

"How's that?" said I, pricking up my Socialist ears.

"Well, sir," said he, "these men are the old men and women bred in the village, and pretty much past work; and the young men with more work in them, they do think that they ought to have more wages than them, and Mr. So-and-so, he won't pay it. So you see, he be short-handed."

As I turned away, thinking over all the untold, untellable details of misery that lay within this shabby, sordid story, another one met my ears. A labourer of the village comes to a farmer and says to him that he really can't work for 9s. a week any more, but must have 10s. Says the farmer, "Get your 10s. somewhere else then." The man turns away to two month's lack of employment, and then comes back begging for his 9s. slavery.

Commonplace stories of unsupported strikes, you will say. Indeed they are, if not they would be easily remedied; the casual tragedy cut short; the casual wrongdoer branded as a person out of humanity. But since they are so commonplace—

What will happen, say my gloomy thoughts to me under the elm tree, with all this country beauty so tragically incongruous in its richness with the country misery which cannot feel its existence? Well, if we must still be slaves and slaveholders, it will not last long; the Battle of Ashdown will be forgotten for the last commercial crisis; Alfred's heraldry will yield to the lions on the half-crown. The architecture of the crafts-gildsmen will tumble down, or be "restored" for the benefit of the hunters of picturesque, who, hopeless themselves, are incapable of understanding the hopes of past days, or the expression of them. The beauty of the landscape will be exploited and artificialised for the sake of the villa-dweller's purses where it is striking enough to touch their jaded appetites; but in quiet places like this it will vanish year by year (as indeed it is now doing) under the attacks of the most grovelling commercialism.

Yet think I to myself under the elm-tree, whatever England, once so beautiful, may become, it will be good enough for us if we set no hope before us but the continuance of a population of slaves and slave-holders for the country which we pretend to love, while we use it and our sham love for it as a stalking-horse for robbery of the poor at

home and abroad. The worst outward ugliness and vulgarity will be good enough for such sneaks and cowards.

Let me turn the leaf and find a new picture, or my holiday is spoilt; and don't let some of my Socialist friends with whom I have wrangled about the horrors of London, say, "This is all that can come of your country life." For as the round of the seasons under our system of landlord farmer and labourer produces in the country pinching parsimony and dulness, so does the "excitement of intellectual life" in the cities produce the slum under the capitalist system of turning out and selling market wares not for use but for waste. Turn the page I say. The hayfield is a pretty sight this month seen under the elm, as the work goes forward on the other side of the way opposite to the bean-field, till you look at the haymakers closely. Suppose the haymakers were friends working for friends on land which was theirs, as many as were needed, with leisure and hope ahead of them instead of hopeless toil and anxiety, need their useful labour for themselves and their neighbours cripple and disfigure them and knock them out of the shape of men fit to represent the Gods and Heroes? And if under such conditions a new Ashdown had to be fought (against capitalist robbers this time), the new White Horse would look down on the home of men as wise as the starlings in their equality, and so perhaps as happy.

WILLIAM MORRIS.

## INTERNATIONAL SOCIALIST WORKING-MEN'S CONGRESS.

PARIS, 14TH TO 21ST JULY, 1889.

### REPORT OF THE ORGANISING COMMISSION.

THE Socialists of France could not let the anniversary of the bourgeois revolution pass without affirming the imminence of a working-class revolution, that on the ruins of a capitalistic society shall proclaim, alike for men and women, equal conditions of labour and equal means of existence and enjoyment.

Wherefore the trades' unions and Socialist organisations of France resolved at the Bordeaux and Troyes congresses to convene an international congress during the Exhibition. The solidarity of the workers, which the bourgeois reactionaries had thought to drown in blood, would thus have a glorious opportunity of proving that it had not been affected by the crushing of the Commune and the proscription of the International Working-Men's Association, inasmuch as, born of capitalistic production and exchange, it defied persecution and outlived defeat.

To organise this Congress, the Bordeaux National Council of Trades' Unions and the Troyes Executive Committee of the Socialist Federation appointed a Commission constituted by the different workmen's and Socialist organisations. With a view to emphasizing the work of union with which it was charged, the Commission, at its first meeting, invited the Syndical Chambers and Socialist groups of Paris to nominate delegates to participate in its labours. Thus open to all, our Commission may be considered as truly representative of the Socialist proletariat of France, bound, in spite of difference of opinion, by one common purpose, the international union of the workers.

On the other hand, an international corporative congress, held in London shortly after the Bordeaux Congress, resolved to call an International Congress in 1889, and notwithstanding the presence of Farjat, delegated by upwards of 250 non-Possibilist trades' unions, the Possibilists alone were charged with the organisation of the Congress, in total disregard of the fact that this was wrongfully taking sides in the French differences and defrauding all non-Possibilists of an indisputable right.

Rightly concerned by the calling of two international congresses simultaneously and in the same city, the foreign Socialists were bound to do their utmost to avert such a scandal by an attempt to fuse the two congresses. On the initiative of the German Socialists, a private international conference was called for the Hague on the 28th February of this year. Were present: Bebel and Liebnicht, delegated by the Social-Democrats of Germany; Scherer and Reichel, delegated by the Socialist party of Switzerland; Ansele and Volders, delegated by the Socialist party of Belgium; Croll and Domela Nieuwenhuis, delegated by the Socialist party of Holland; Paul Lafargue, delegated by the National Council of the Syndical Chambers of France and the Executive Committee of the Socialist Federation of France. The delegates of the Socialist party of Denmark and William Morris excused themselves for not attending the conference, but intimated their adhesion to resolutions for the convening of a united International Socialist Congress. The Federation of Socialist Workmen, or the Possibilist party, invited on the same terms, and at the same time, as the workmen and Socialists of France, declined to send a delegate to the Hague conference, declaring that they would not allow the mandate given them by the London Congress, and which they intended appropriating to themselves, to be discussed. This was converting the duty to convene an International Congress into a right that should supersede the will of the Socialist parties of Europe. Now the London Congress was not qualified to pass resolutions binding on Socialist parties, because, though attended by Socialists, the Congress was not a Socialist but a corporative Congress, in the hands of the parliamentarians of the trades' unions, who went to the length of threatening the foreign delegates with eviction from the hall that they had hired: they had, indeed, taken measures to exclude from their congress the Socialist parties of Germany and Austria, as well as all other than manual labourers.

The Socialists would have been justified in disregarding a mandate conferred by such a congress; as to the Socialist organisations of France, they were resolved to abstain from sending representatives to an International Congress convened by the Possibilists. This resolution was motivated by the capital fact that the Possibilists, by openly acting as the bond-servants of the bourgeois parties and the electoral agents of successive ministries, had forfeited all claim to that independence which a Socialist party cannot renounce without abdicating.

Notwithstanding these considerations, the Hague conference, having international concord at heart, forbore to contest the validity of the mandate conferred on the Possibilists, and confined itself to specifying the conditions on which the Socialist parties represented at the Hague should participate in the International Congress. In a first circular, the Possibilists, treating

the Congress as their property, had arrogated to themselves the right of fixing the date and order of the day of the Congress, and of imposing a mode of verification of credentials that made the admission of French delegates a matter of their good pleasure.

These impudent pretensions were unanimously set aside by the delegates to the conference, who passed the following resolution: "The undersigned invite the Federation of the Socialist Workmen of France, in virtue of the mandate conferred by the London Congress in 1888, to call the International Congress for Paris, in accord with the working-men's Socialist organisations of France and other countries."

This convocation, signed by the representatives of the working-men's and Socialist organisations, to be brought to the knowledge, with the least delay possible, of the working-classes and Socialists of Europe and America, read as follows:

The Conference of the Hague resolved:

- (1) That the Paris International Congress be held from the 14th to 21st of July, 1889.
- (2) That the Congress be open to the workmen and Socialists of all countries on conditions compatible with the political laws in force there.
- (3) That the Congress be sovereign with respect to the verification of credentials and the fixing of the order of the day.

The Conference resolved, provisionally, that the following questions be treated:

- (a) International labour legislation; Regulation, by law, of the working-day (day-work, night-work, holidays, work of adult males, women, and children).
- (b) Inspection of factories and workshops, as well as of domestic industries.
- (c) Ways and means to obtain these demands.

The Belgian delegates were charged with officially communicating to the Possibilist party the resolutions of the Hague Conference.

Citizen Volders, having accomplished his mission to the Possibilist Council, came to our committee. He informed us that the Possibilists refused to allow the French workers and Socialists to sign the international circular of convocation, as also to recognise the right of the Congress to directly verify the credentials.

The National Council of the trades' unions, the executive committee of the Socialist Federation, and the Congress organising commission unanimously resolved to conform to the Hague resolutions.

So great was the desire to effect a union that the foreign Socialists endeavoured to persuade the Possibilists to reconsider their refusal. They addressed themselves to the Social Democratic Federation of England, which is in friendly relationship with the Possibilists, and urged the same to use its influence in deciding the Possibilists to acquiesce in the reasonable demands of the Hague Conference.

The Social Democratic Federation was as unsuccessful as had been the delegate to the International Conference. The Possibilists, on the contrary, took advantage of the forced inaction to which these efforts at conciliation had condemned the executive committee; they intrigued right and left, communicated perfidious attacks on our Congress to the bourgeois press, calumniated our organising commission, and despatched delegates to Belgium, Spain, and Portugal with a commission to win over adherents to the Possibilist Congress at any price.

In presence of this insuperable determination of the Possibilists and their party to divide the French proletariat, the Socialist parties of Europe resolved to act; leaving to the Possibilists the responsibility of a counter-Congress, that we had done all in our power to prevent, they, jointly with us, issued the convocation already published in *Commonweal*.

Before the publication of our first circular, a Congress of the Belgian Workmen's Party had been held at Jolimont; the Possibilists lost no time in sending delegates to the same, in the hope of burking the Hague resolutions, but, despite their efforts, the Jolimont Congress resolved by 39 votes against 33 that a delegate be sent to the Possibilist Congress, and by 55 votes against 22 that it be represented at our International Congress.

The Democratic Socialist Party of Denmark, at a meeting held on the 23rd of May, passed the following resolution:—"This meeting profoundly deplores the calling of two Workmen's Congresses for Paris, and resolves that the Danish Democratic Socialist Party adhere to neither of the two so long as two Congresses are maintained, but urges the council of the party to bring its influence to bear on the parties in dispute, so as to amalgamate the two Congresses."

The Social Democratic Federation of England alone, setting itself against all existing Socialist organisations of Europe and America, has espoused the Possibilist cause, without, it may be presumed, pretending, by its solitary presence, to impress an international character on a Possibilist Congress so innocent of all international socialist elements.

The workers of both hemispheres thus find themselves in presence of a unique Congress having a claim to act as their representative and interpreter, for it alone has been convened by the Socialist parties at large, and it alone will count in its body delegates of that fraction of the world's proletariat which is conscious of its aim, and resolved to rear, on the ground of common property, the emancipation of labour and humanity.

It is with a view to obviating all misunderstanding, and frustrating all manoeuvres of the eleventh hour, that the organising commission has decided, for the benefit of International Socialists, to publish an account of the efforts at conciliation and union that have been made prior to the meeting of the Congress.

For the Organising Commission and by order,

DAUMAS, *Chairman of the Sitting*.  
BESSET, JACLARD, VAILLANT, and LAFARGUE, *Secretaries*.

THE LABOUR STRUGGLE IN LEEDS.—The labourers in the Leeds building trade are waking out of their Rip van Winkle sleep, and an organisation is in progress which bids fair to make a sensation among their masters. Last Sunday a meeting of about 3,000 men was held in Vicars Croft—Paylor, Hill, Sweeney, and Maguire encouraging the men to form a labourers' union, inclusive of bricklayers, plasterers, slate-layers, and joiners' labourers, with the result that at the end of the meeting 200 names were given in and 25s. collected. In the afternoon a crowded meeting was held at the club rooms, Clarendon Buildings, and a provisional committee was elected with a view to taking immediate steps to organise the labourers of the town. Meantime an aggressive front is being shown. The men are demanding an advance of a halfpenny per hour. They contend that during the past ten years wages have gone down 25 per cent. They will continue to meet at the branch rooms of the Socialist League until further developments.