THE LABOUR WAR IN WALES.

More depends upon the conflict that is now raging in South Wales than a careless observer might imagine. It is not alone a battle between the South Wales railway men and the rich railway company; it is really a fight between the railway companies and all the workers of Britain. South Wales has been chosen as the battle-field, and that is all. If the railway company is beaten, every one of these rich corporations in England, Wales, and Scotland may look forward to reduced dividends. If the men are defeated it may be the Sedan of the New Unionism, and the Norwoods and Liveseys may rejounce, for Labour will be once more a crushed slave beneath its feet. No wonder, then, that all who love the people are looking with so much interest to South Wales.

But there is another reason why Socialists should be interested in this Great Strike. If capitalists have united against labour, then on the other hand labour stands in serried ranks against capital. Sympathy is universal among the workers with the strikers. The dockers will not take coal from blackleg railway men, and the miners on their side not only will not dig coal, they threaten that they will prevent by main force the running of trains by blacklegs. What with the men on strike, and the miners and the dockers who are locked out, the strike is practically a general one. This fact has been recognised even by the editors of the capitalist press. The Weekly Dispatch, among other capitalist newspapers, has pointed out this. It says:

"Another point to be noted is this. The Welsh strike for the moment simply paralyzed the life of the community. And why? Because it was a case where labour operated not merely by one combination, but by a combination of combinations, and because it contrived to neutralize the blackleg. The strikers first shut up the seaport of the district, and then strangled its railway system. If that were done in London—and it can be done—we leave it to our readers to say what would happen within twenty-four hours. The alternative would be surrender or civil war, and the sooner this ugly fact is faced the better."

We do not think that a General Strike even in London would involve civil war, because we do not know who would do the fighting on the part of the capitalist classes. With outbreaks among the soldiers in our garrison towns, and with a fierce discontent among them, of which these revolts are only the outward symptoms, it will not do for fat railway directors and other sweater to rely too much on their army. As for the police they would simply to use a graphic American, be "chawed up" in the event of a popular outbreak. Roberts knows this, and he will if he is a sensible man take care to be out of the way when trouble comes. We fear that so great is the unpopularity of the force, that a blue uniform would be a certain passport to Paradise. Of course, we would not insult the "respectable" police by hinting that they would be sent anywhere by a revolutionary mob. Therefore, provoking general strike or smashing unions is not to be such a safe amusement as some capitalists seem to think. Let them listen to the words of wisdom of the Weekly Dispatch again:

"Moreover, do people know what the effect of 'smashing up unionism' must be? As Professor Lord Brentano, of Breslau, told the Germans in his great work on English guilds, nothing but the trade union stands between England and the social revolution."

What do you think of that, ye Norwoods and Liveseys? The Dispatch, and other papers that have said the same thing, are right, but it will not be the social revolution of legality that these people are forcing on. Do you know what you are doing, you rich respectable gentlemen of the middle classes? When unions are smashed, what will happen then? Will the workers sink into the old condition of miserable slavery? Are the "resources of civilization" exhausted when the unions are defeated? Do you know what you are doing?—you are provoking not the old, but the new English revolution. You are dissecting the social structure, tearing the inch by hands of the incendiary to fire your mansions; you are urging on the masses to use those dread forces which the science of your civilization has placed in their hands; you are whetting the sword for your own slaughter. That is what you are doing, gentlemen of the middle classes.

There is one thing which strikes us particularly in this crisis in South Wales—how much more advanced the men are than their leaders. Mr. Harford, the delegate of the men, accepts a compromise. The men, knowing their own business better than any trade-union leader, reject Mr. Harford's compromise, and stick to their original terms. But it has been reserved for William Abraham (Meirion), for instance, to treat the public to an exhibition of unexampled cowardice and treachery. He and two other gentlemen have issued a disgraceful document, in which they recommend the miners to let the company run the trains with their blacklegs, knowing well all the time but it is only the fear of having every bone in their bodies broken by the stalwart miners of Rhondda Valley that has kept shots of blacklegs out of the district. We advise the miners not to follow this cowardly and treacherous advice. All the gentlemen who signed that document—we give their names, it is right that they should be remembered: William Abraham (Meirion), M.F.; William Evans (miners' agent); T. Pascoe Jenkins (president of the Rhondda Labour and Liberal Association, Pontard)—are in the pay of the Liberal party, a party that has always sold and betrayed the people. For all we know, they may be in the employ of the railway directors. We therefore advise the miners not to let a single train pass along the line manned by blacklegs. If the miners do, the treachery of Messrs. Abraham and Co. will be successful and the railway men will be defeated.

D. J. Nicoll.

NEWS FROM NOWHERE:

AN EPOCH OF REST.

BEING SOME CHAPITERS FROM A UTOPIAN ROMANCE.

CHAP. XXV.—STILL OF THE THAMES.

As we went down to the boat next morning, Walter could not quite keep off the subject of last night, though he was more hopeful than he had been the day before, and I must add that this beautiful landscape could not be got to go over-sea, he might at any rate go and live somewhere in the neighbourhood pretty much by himself; at any rate, that was what he himself had proposed. To Dick, and I must say to me also, this was a strange novelty; and Dick said as much. "Goob ha, "Friend Walter, don't set the man brooding on the tragedy by letting him live alone. That will only strengthen his idea that he has committed a crime, and you will have him killing himself in good ease.""}

Said Clare: "I don't know. If I may say what I think of it, it is that he had better have his fill of gloom now, and, so to say, wake up presently to see how little need there has been for it. You will live happily afterwards. As for his killing himself, you need not be afraid of that; for, from all you tell me, he is really very much in love with the woman; and to speak plainly, until his love is satisfied, he will not only not think of it, but he will not think of it. Also make the most of every event of his life—will, so to say, hug himself up in it; and I think that this is the real explanation of his taking the whole matter with such an excess of tragedy."

Walter looked thoughtful, and said: "Well, you may be right; and perhaps we should have treated it all more lightly; but you see, guest" (turning to me), "such things happen so seldom, that when they do
happen we cannot help being much taken up with it. For the rest, we are all inclined to excuse our poor friend for making us so unhappy on the ground that he does it out of an exaggerated respect for human life, and I think we shall all do better if we can persuade him that we will give him a cast up stream, as I want to look after a lovely habitation for the poor fellow, since he will have it so, and I hear that there is one there which would suit us very well on the downs beyond Streatham, and before you put me ashore there I will walk up the hill and look to it.

"Is the house in question empty?" I said.

"Yes, sir," said Mrs. Wills, "and the name of the person who lives there will go out of it, of course, when he hears that we want it. You see, we think that the fresh air of the downs and the very emptiness of the landscape will do our friend good."

"Yes," said Clara, smiling, "and he will not be so far from his beloved that they cannot easily meet if they have a mind to—as they certainly will."

The fact had brought us down to the boat, and we were presently afloat on the beautiful broad stream. Dick driving the prows swiftly through the windless water of the early summer morning, for it was not yet six o'clock. We were at the lock a very little time; and as we lay rating and rising on the incoming current, I could not help wondering that my old friend the pound-lock, and that of the very simplest and most rural kind, should hold its place there; so I said:

"I have been wondering, as we have passed lock after lock, that you people, so prosperous as you are, and especially since you are so anxious for pleasant work to do, have not invented something which would get rid of this clumsy business of going up-stairs by means of these Macabre attracts.

Dick laughed. "My dear friend," he said, "as long as water has the clumsy habit of running down hill, we fear we must humour it by going up it whenever we turn around to the sea. And really I don't see why you should fall foul of Maple-durham lock, which I think a very pretty place."

There was no doubt about the latter assertion, I thought, as I looked up at the long series of green and gold-brown steps, glittering through the leaves, and listened to the sound of the summer blackbirds as it mingled with the sound of the backwater near us. So not being able to say why I wanted the locks away—which, indeed, I did not say, if I had said it—Dick continued:

"You see, guest, this is not an age of inventions. The last epoch did all that for us, and we are now content to use such of their inventions as are necessary to keep what is enough of our lives, of which we want. I believe, as a matter of fact, that some time ago (I can't give you a date) some elaborate machinery was used for the locks, though people didn't go so far as to try to make the water run up hill. How ever, we have been a conservative people, I suppose, and the simple backwater locks, which were opened with a great counterpoising beam, were found to answer every purpose, and were easily mended when wanted with material always to hand, so here they are, as you see.

"Besides," said Dick, "this kind of lock is pretty, as you can see; and I can't help thinking that your machine-lock, winding up like a watch, would have been ugly and would have spoiled the look of the river; and you will have seen enough of these locks.

"Good-by, old fellow!" I said to him, as he pushed us out through the now open gates by a vigorous stroke of the boat-hook.

"May you live as long as you like," he called to me as we went on.