

thereby only partial political enfranchisement as a part of conservative and reactionary tactics. Socially and economically speaking, the Women's Rights agitators of the Mrs. Lynn Linton stamp would "free" (*sic*!) woman by forcing her into competition with man. Such seek to intensify the economical struggle by bitter sex strife.

The non-political Socialist, and especially our women comrades, have a large field of work in counteracting the reactionary influence which makes the large mass of women—especially working women—a dead weight of opposition and hindrance to progress. Let them penetrate into the tenements with literature and argument, and show the women that the gospel-monger and his ilk are not the only ones who make women and their work their concern. By preaching the mundane gospel of making this world a brighter and happier one, causing them to look with horror and detestation upon the grimy, sordid existence they lead to-day, filled as it is with woes and petty cares, we shall lead them to higher conceptions of life, and obtain their assistance as comrades and equals for their realisation.

F. K.

## NEWS FROM NOWHERE:

OR,

### AN EPOCH OF REST.

BEING SOME CHAPTERS FROM A UTOPIAN ROMANCE.

CHAP. XXII (*continued*).—HAMPTON COURT. AND A PRAISER OF PAST TIMES.

WE went up a paved path between the roses, and straight into a very pretty room, panelled and carved, and as clean as a new pin; but the chief ornament of which was a young girl, light-haired and grey-eyed, but with her face and hands and bare feet tanned quite brown with the sun. Though she was very lightly clad, that was clearly from choice, not from poverty, though these were the first cottage-dwellers I had come across; for her gown was of silk, and on her wrists were bracelets that seemed to me of great value. She was lying on a sheepskin near the window, but jumped up as soon as we entered, and when she saw the guests behind the old man, she clapped her hands and cried out with pleasure, and when she got us into the middle of the room, fairly danced round us in delight of our company.

"What!" said the old man, "you are pleased, are you, Ellen?"

The girl danced up to him and threw her arms round him, and said: "Yes, I am, and so ought you to be grandfather."

"Well, well, I am," said he, "as much as I can be pleased. Guests, please be seated."

This seemed rather strange to us; stranger, I suspect, to my friends than to me; but Dick took the opportunity of both the host and his grand-daughter being out of the room to say to me, softly: "A grumbler: there are a few of them still. Once upon a time, I am told, they were quite a nuisance."

The old man came in as he spoke and sat down beside us with a sigh, which, indeed, seemed fetched up as if he wanted us to take notice of it; but just then the girl came in with the victuals, and the carle missed his mark, what between our hunger generally and that I was pretty busy watching the grand-daughter moving about as beautiful as a picture.

Everything to eat and drink, though it was somewhat different to what we had had in London, was better than good, but the old man eyed rather sulkily the chief dish on the table, on which lay a leash of fine perch, and said:

"H'm, perch! I am sorry we can't do better for you, guests. The time was when we might have had a good piece of salmon up from London for you; but the times have grown mean and petty."

"Yes, but you might have had it now," said the girl, giggling, "if you had known that they were coming."

"It's our fault for not bringing it with us, neighbours," said Dick, good-humouredly. "But if the times have grown petty, at any rate the perch haven't; that fellow in the middle there must have weighed a good two pounds when he was showing his dark stripes and red fins to the minnows yonder. And as to the salmon, why, neighbour, my friend here, who comes from the outlands, was quite surprised yesterday morning when I told him we had plenty of salmon at Hammer-smith. I am sure I have heard nothing of the times worsening."

He looked a little uncomfortable. And the old man, turning to me, said very courteously:

"Well, sir, I am happy to see a man from over the water; but I really must appeal to you to say whether on the whole you are not better off in your country; where I suppose, from what our guest says, you are brisker and more alive, because you have not wholly got rid of competition. You see, I have read not a few books of the past days, and certainly *they* are much more alive than those which are written now; and good sound unlimited competition was the condition under which they were written,—if we didn't know that from the record of history we should know it from the books themselves. There is a spirit of adventure in them, and signs of a capacity to extract good out of evil which our literature quite lacks now; and I cannot help thinking that our moralists and historians exaggerate hugely the unhappiness of the past days, in which such splendid works of imagination and intellect were produced."

Clara listened to him with restless eyes, as if she were excited and pleased; Dick knitted his brow and looked still more uncomfortable, but said nothing. Indeed, the old man gradually, as he warmed to

his subject, dropped his sneering manner, and both spoke and looked very seriously. But the girl broke out before I could deliver myself of the answer I was framing:

"Books, books! always books, grandfather! When will you understand that after all it is the world we live in which interests us; the world of which we are a part, and which we can never love too much? Look!" she said, throwing open the casement wider and showing us the white light sparkling between the black shadows of the moonlit garden, through which ran a little shiver of the summer night-wind, "look! these are our books in these days!—and these," she said, stepping lightly up to the two lovers and laying a hand on each of their shoulders; "and the guest there, with his oversea knowledge and experience;—yes, and even you, grandfather" (a smile ran over her face as she spoke), "with all your grumbling and wishing yourself back again in the good old days,—in which, as far as I can make out, a harmless and lazy old man like you would either have pretty nearly starved, or have had to pay soldiers and people to take the folk's victuals and clothes and houses away from them by force. Yes, these are our books; and if we want more, can we not find work to do in the beautiful buildings that we raise up all over the country (and I know there was nothing like them in past times), wherein a man can put forth whatever is in him, and make his hands set forth his mind and his soul."

She paused a little, and I for my part could not help staring at her, and thinking that if she were a book, the pictures in it were most lovely. The colour mantled in her delicate sunburnt cheeks; her grey eyes, light amidst the tan of her face, looked kindly on us all as she spoke. She paused, and said again:

"As for your books, I say flatly that in spite of all their cleverness and vigour, and capacity for story-telling, there is something loathsome about them. Some of them, indeed, do here and there show some feeling for those whom the history-books call 'poor,' and of the misery of whose lives we have some inkling; but presently they give it up, and towards the end of the story we must be contented to see the hero and heroine living happily in an island of bliss on other people's troubles; and that after a long series of sham troubles (or mostly sham) of their own making, illustrated by dreary introspective nonsense about their feelings and aspirations, and all the rest of it; while the world must even then have gone on its way, and dug and sewed and baked and built and carpentered round about these useless—animals."

"There!" said the old man, reverting to his dry sulky manner again.

"There's eloquence! I suppose you like it?"

"Yes," said I, very emphatically.

"Well," said he, "now the storm of eloquence has lulled for a little, suppose you answer my question?—that is, if you like, you know," quoth he, with a sudden access of courtesy.

"What question?" said I. For I must confess that Ellen's strange and almost wild beauty had put it out of my head.

Said he: "First of all (excuse my catechising), is there competition in life, after the old kind, in the country whence you come?"

"Yes," said I, "it is the rule there." And I wondered as I spoke what fresh complications I should get into as a result of this answer.

"Question two," said the carle: "Are you not on the whole much freer, more energetic—in a word, healthier and happier—for it?"

I smiled. "You wouldn't talk so if you had any idea of our life. To me you seem here as if you were living in heaven compared with us of the country from which I came."

"Heaven?" said he: "you like heaven, do you?"

"Yes," said I—snappishly, I am afraid; for I was beginning rather to resent his formula.

"Well, I am far from sure that I do," quoth he. "I think one may do more with one's life than sitting on a damp cloud and singing hymns."

I was rather nettled by this inconsequence, and said: "Well, neighbour, to be short, and without using metaphors, in the land whence I come, where the competition which produced those literary works which you admire so much is still the rule, most people are thoroughly unhappy; here, to me at least, most people seem thoroughly happy."

"No offence, guest—no offence," said he; but let me ask you; you like that, do you?"

His formula, put with such obstinate persistence, made us all laugh heartily; and even the old man joined in the laughter on the sly. However, he was by no means beaten, and said presently:

"From all I can hear, I should judge that a young woman so beautiful as my dear Ellen yonder would have been a lady, as they called it in the old time, and wouldn't have had to wear a few rags of silk as she does now, or to have browned herself in the sun as she has to do now. What do you say to that, eh?"

Here Clara, who had been pretty much silent hitherto, struck in, and said: "Well, really, I don't think that would have mended matters; or that they want mending. Don't you see that she is dressed deliciously for this beautiful weather? And as for the sun-burning of your hayfields, why, I hope to pick up some of that for myself when we get a little higher up the river. Look if I don't need a little sun on my pasty white skin!"

And she stripped up the sleeve from her arm and laid it beside Ellen's, who was now sitting next her. To say the truth, it was rather amusing to me to see Clara putting herself forward as a town-bred fine lady, for she was as well-knit and clean-skinned a girl as might be met with anywhere at the best. Dick stroked the beautiful arm rather shyly, and pulled down the sleeve again, while she blushed at his touch; and the old man said laughingly: "Well, I suppose you *do* like that, don't you?"

Ellen kissed her new friend, and we all sat silent for a little, till she broke out into a sweet shrill song, and held us all entranced with the wonder of her clear voice; and the old grumbler sat looking at her lovingly. The other young people sang also in due time; and then Ellen showed us to our beds in small cottage chambers, fragrant and clean as the ideal of the old pastoral poets; and the pleasure of the evening quite extinguished my fear of the last night that I should wake up in the old miserable world of worn-out pleasures, and hopes that were half fears.

WILLIAM MORRIS.

TO BE CONTINUED.]

(This Story began in No. 209, January 11, 1890. A few sets of Back Numbers can still be had.)

## THE LABOUR REVOLT.

### The Postmen's Strike.

This strike has failed, mainly through the cowardice and weakness of the leaders. It will be remembered that on Monday, July 7, a meeting was held at Holborn Town Hall, to consider what action should be taken on account of the continued suspensions of men for attending the union meetings by the Postmaster-General. Through the advice of the union officials, the men decided to accept the mediation of the London Trades Council, and postponed the strike for twelve days. But the men insisted that if there was any attempt to bring blackleg labour into any post-office, all unionists should strike at once.

On Tuesday morning the men at the General Post-Office discovered, shortly after they had started work, that there were thirty blacklegs in the place. They insisted on these being removed, and as it was evident there would be a strike in the event of a refusal, the officials were obliged to submit, and they were ordered out.

On Wednesday the blacklegs employed at the Parcels-Post Office at Mount Pleasant had to run for their lives before a furious crowd of men. Alarmed at the discontent, and the possibility of a strike, Raikes endeavoured to get the postmen to sign a paper promising that they would not strike during the crisis. This the men refused to do, according to the instructions of the union.

Then on Thursday Mr. Raikes determined on vengeance, and a hundred men were dismissed at Mount Pleasant for ill-treating the blacklegs. This was followed by suspensions and dismissals at other offices. Then the union officials gave the word to strike, and the men turned out at several offices. At Finsbury Park they shut themselves in the office and refused to budge an inch. A number of tradesmen applied for their letters, when the postmen rushed at the bags and dragged them out of their hands, crying, "No letters here unless from postmen." The men were then set upon by our gallant police and dragged from the office with brutal violence. At Leicester Square thirty-five marched out of the office, amid a scene of popular excitement. Everywhere the cowardly police, who had not sufficient pluck to strike to remedy their own grievances, did their utmost to crush the postmen. These slavish bullies seemed to take a delight in the work. Never mind; Sir Edward Bradford will avenge the postmen, as the cowardly crew are already finding out.

But although the men turned out very well at many of the district offices—particularly North Islington, where, according even to official report, 108 left their work—yet at St. Martin le Grand they did not turn out. Here the men had lost confidence through the vacillating conduct of their leaders, and moreover had been deceived by a traitor on the executive of the union, who had informed them that the secretary had ordered them not to come out. Meanwhile Mr. Mahon had mysteriously disappeared, and they could get no word from him. So they remained at work all day Thursday. On Thursday night a meeting was held at Clerkenwell Green, at which the secretary announced "that they had got practically the whole of the London men out on strike," and that all was going well. The events of the next day proved that this was an empty boast. On Friday morning only some eighty or ninety men assembled on Clerkenwell Green by half-past four. There they spent some time waiting for their invaluable secretary, who did not turn up; so they determined to march on without him. He arrived, however, soon after, and caught them up; but before they had arrived at the Post Office, he had vanished again, this time into a hansom cab, which drove off, leaving the men to march along without their "leader." When they reached the Post Office, they were met by Superintendent Foster, a kind old man, despite his position, who asked them "where their leader was"—a question which they could not answer. After they had marched up and down two or three times, the superintendent informed them that he could not allow them to continue to do so, but they must break up and leave the road clear. This they did, and established pickets; but deserted by their "leaders," they had lost all hope, and the strike had evidently gone to pieces.

On Saturday it was evidently all over. A petition was received from 83 of the 94 men who struck in the Eastern district, begging in the most humble tones that the Postmaster-General would be pleased to reinstate them. This humiliating appeal only showed how thoroughly the men were broken down.

But though these postmen may lick the dust beneath Mr. Raikes's feet, it will avail them but little. That gentleman was very amiable to a deputation of postmen that waited upon him on Friday, when there was still a chance that they might strike, yet he shows a very different temper now. On Saturday, when the possibility of a strike had vanished, eight more men were dismissed; therefore it is not likely he will listen to their petition, so they might have saved themselves the humiliation.

### The Guards.

The Guards' grievances are being "enquired into," and meanwhile the excessive duty of which the men complained has been reduced. It looks as if they were afraid to punish the men for "mutiny." No wonder, when the whole army is smouldering with discontent, only waiting a breath to blow it into a flame.

### Corruption in Parliament.

Many workmen must have often wondered why it so often happens that a man who is honest and upright while working in the popular cause outside

the House of Commons, immediately becomes tainted and corrupt soon after he gets within the walls of that edifice. The following quotation from a speech of Mr. Cremer on the Directors' Liability Bill, given in the *Railway Review*, will perhaps supply an answer to this question:

"If not the poorest member of the House, there were few poorer than he (Mr. Cremer), and there had been no want of temptation put in his way. A few months ago he was asked to become a director of a scheme which it was said had received the sanction of the hon. member for Kirkcaldy (Sir G. Campbell), but knowing the hon. member to be a cautious man, and to belong to a cautious nation, he made enquiry, and found the hon. member had nothing whatever to do with the scheme, and had never lent his name. The remuneration offered to him was £200 a-year. This was the kind of temptation placed in the way of poor members."

This will not only explain why men who were once sincere get corrupted, but will also explain why certain impudent adventurers, who are sincere alone in their self-conceit, are so eager to enter these charmed portals. They ought by rights to bear labels on their breasts, on which, in huge black letters might be inscribed, "This lot can be bought cheap." Certainly no sane man would expect anything but cowardice, treachery, and corruption from these people. They start as "Labour" candidates on money from suspicious sources, and they end by selling themselves and their dupes to the highest bidder. There is a chance that people may be deceived by these humbugs, and they had better keep a wary eye on some of these "Labour" candidates, of whom we are threatened with a perfect swarm at the next election. One consolation is that these swindlers will soon disgust people with "parliamentary action," and will teach them its uselessness. The people then will see that the destruction of the present system by their own action is the only way to salvation. N.

## POLICE BRUTALITY.

WE have received several letters concerning the police brutality on Tuesday, July 8th, at Bow Street, and surrounding neighbourhood, of which we think our readers should be informed. The crowd appeared to us to be very peaceable and quiet, and of course the police bullies seized the opportunity of displaying their valour. The big brutes of the G division were specially noted for their ruffianism, and how shamefully they behaved our readers will see from the following:

On Tuesday night, after leaving the soiree of that glorious institution the International Arbitration and Peace Association at Essex Hall, I came upon a very different scene on my way homewards, which lay through Bow Street. I was accompanied by two ladies, one of whom was most eager to see what was going on. On reaching the foot of Bow Street, about 9.30, we found the street blocked by a crowd of policemen, so we remained in Catherine Street, just facing Drury Lane Theatre. The crowd, so far, was not excessively large, and very orderly, moving up and down the street without inconvenience; but there was an air of expectancy about the people, which showed that something was expected. We had not long to wait before the cry was raised, "Here they come!" and the mounted police turned the corner and came down the street at a trot, driving the people before them, accompanied by a number of policemen, who attempted to drive everyone off the sidewalk. There was a rush now for the public-houses and the doorways, and the orderly street instantly became a scene of confusion. One of my companions was hurried into a bar, and the door locked, but the other bravely remained with me in a doorway. The police now tried to make us leave our position by bullying, but as we refused to stir, they passed on. Two or three times this performance was gone through, the crowd each time becoming more irritated and indignant, hooting them on their way down, and accompanying their return with volleys of stones from the dark side streets. On one of their return journeys a more serious outbreak seemed on the point of happening. A woman rushed from the crowd in pursuit of the retreating squad, and tried to pull the hindmost from his horse. He brutally raised his staff to strike her down, when the crowd, with a great shout, surged up and swept her out of the way.

Another incident showed that the art of the barricade is not unknown here, though at present in a very elementary stage. Just before the mounted police were expected down again, a number of men hurried up with a coster's handbarrow, which they overturned right in front of us, and placed broadside across the road; they then retired to await the result. Unfortunately for the success of their scheme, they had placed it in the light from a bar, and just as the horses began to trot down the street, and we were breathlessly awaiting the crash, about a dozen officious bobbies rushed down and carried it off—just in time.

It was now nearly half-past ten, so we made for home, having to make a large detour to reach Tottenham Court Road.

The following glaring instance of police brutality seems to show that by Tuesday night they were so thoroughly cowed by the merciless action of their superiors, that they were ready to do any dastardly act to show their zeal. Between 11 and 12 o'clock on that night I saw a respectable-looking young man standing at the corner of Great Queen Street and Drury Lane. A guardian of the law approached him, and he was told to move on. As he moved away another guardian came forward, and twisting his leg in the young man's threw him violently down on his face. The few people who were about rushed up to try and save him, when several more guardians of the peace ran up and pushed the people back, while four of them gave him what is called the "Frog's March," that is, each policeman took him by a limb and carried him face downwards. The victim, of course, was helpless, and very soon black in the face. The subsequent fate of this young man deponent knoweth not.

The press were very careful to state on the Wednesday that the preceding night's riot in Bow Street and neighbourhood was not marked by violence on the part of the police. As a matter of fact some desperate charges were made by foot and horse police. Amongst the crowd opposite the Novelty Theatre, a foot passenger was knocked down and brutally batoned until insensible. In Drury Lane and Great Wild Street, the police broke into the houses and assaulted the inmates. In the first-named thoroughfare the mounted men rode on the pavements and roadway, and here one man in the crowd was ridden down and had to be conveyed to the hospital.