



OFFICES: 24 GREAT QUEEN STREET, LONDON, W.C.

HAVE YOU NOT HEARD HOW IT HAS GONE WITH MANY A CAUSE BEFORE NOW: FIRST, FEW MEN HEED IT; NEXT, MOST MEN CONTEMN IT; LASTLY, ALL MEN ACCEPT IT—AND THE CAUSE IS WON

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ENGLAND	Buffalo—Arbeiter-Zeitung	SWITZERLAND
Justice	Chicago (Ill)—Vorbote	Arbeiterstimme
Labour Tribune	Detroit—Der Arme Teufel	ITALY
People's Press	Los Angeles—Cal. Nationalist	Milan—Cuore e Critica
Seed Time	Philadelphia—United Labour	SPAIN
Unity	San Francisco Arbeiter Zeitung	Barcelona—El Productor
Worker's Friend	Anarchist	Madrid—El Socialista
NEW SOUTH WALES	FRANCE	GERMANY
Sydney—Bulletin	Paris—La Revolte	Berlin—Volks Tribune
INDIA	La Revue Europeenne	AUSTRIA
Bankipore—Behar Herald	Charleville—L'Emancipation	Vienna—Arbeiter-Zeitung
UNITED STATES	Lille—Le Cri du Travailleur	DENMARK
New York—Freiheit	Lyon—L'Action Sociale	Social-Demokraten
United Irishman	Rouen—Le Salarial	SWEDEN
Volkszeitung	HOLLAND	Stockholm, Social-Demokraten
Workmen's Advocate	Hague—Recht voor Allen	ARGENTINE REPUBLIC
Boston—Liberty	Anarchist	Buenos Ayres—Vorwarts
Investigator	BELGIUM	
Nationalist	Antwerp—De Werker	
	Ghent—Vooruit	

NEWS FROM NOWHERE:

OR,

AN EPOCH OF REST.

BEING SOME CHAPTERS FROM A UTOPIAN ROMANCE.

CHAP. XVI. (continued).—DINNER IN THE HALL OF THE BLOOMSBURY MARKET.

WHEN we had done eating, and were sitting a little while, with a bottle of very good Bordeaux wine before us, Clara came back to the question of the subject-matter of the pictures, as though it had troubled her. She looked up at them, and said: "How is it that though we are so interested with our life for the most part, yet when people take to writing poems or painting pictures they seldom deal with our modern life, or if they do, take good care to make their poems or pictures unlike that life? Are we not good enough to paint ourselves? How is it that we find the dreadful times of the past so interesting to us—in pictures and poetry?"

Old Hammond smiled. "It always was so, and I suppose always will be," said he, "however it may be explained. It is true that in the nineteenth century, when there was so little art and so much talk

about it, there was a theory that art and imaginative literature ought to deal with contemporary life; but they never did so; for, if there was any pretence of it, the author always took care (as Clara hinted just now) to disguise, or exaggerate, or idealise, and in some way or another make it strange; so that, for all the verisimilitude there was, he might just as well have dealt with the times of the Pharaohs."

"Well," said Dick, "surely it is but natural to like these things strange; just as when we were children, as I said just now, we used to pretend to be so-and-so in such-and-such a place. That's what these pictures and poems do; and why shouldn't they?"

"Thou hast hit it, Dick," quoth old Hammond; "it is the child-like part of us that produces works of imagination. When we are children time passes so slow with us that we seem to have time for everything."

He sighed, and then smiled and said: "At least let us rejoice that we have got back our childhood again. I drink to the days that are!"

"Second childhood," said I in a low voice, and then blushed at my double rudeness, and hoped that he hadn't heard. But he had, and turned to me smiling, and said: "Yes, why not? And for my part I hope it may last long; and that the world's next period of wise and unhappy manhood, if that should happen, will speedily lead us to a third childhood: if indeed this age be not our third. Meantime, my friend, you must know that we are too happy, both individually and collectively, to trouble ourselves about what is to come hereafter."

"Well, for my part," said Clara, "I wish we were interesting enough to be written or painted about."

Dick answered her with some lover's speech, impossible to be written down, and then we sat quiet a little.

CHAP. XVII.—HOW THE CHANGE CAME.

DICK broke the silence at last, saying: "Guest, forgive us for a little after-dinner dulness. What would you like to do? Shall we have out Greylocks and trot back to Hammersmith? or will you come with us and hear some Welsh folk sing in a hall close by here? or would you like presently to come with me into the City and see some really fine building? or—what shall it be?"

"Well," said I, "as I am a stranger, I must let you choose for me."

In point of fact, I did not by any means want to be 'amused' just then; and also I rather felt as if the old man, with his knowledge of past times, and even a kind of inverted sympathy for them caused by his active hatred of them, was a kind of blanket for me against the cold of this very new world, where I was, so to say, stripped bare of every habitual thought and way of acting; and I did not want to leave him too soon. He came to my rescue at once, and said—

"Wait a bit, Dick; there is someone else to be consulted besides you and the guest here, and that is I. I am not going to lose the pleasure of his company just now, especially as I know he has something else to ask me. So go to your Welshmen, by all means; but first of all bring us another bottle of wine to this nook, and then be off as soon as you like; and come again and fetch our friend to go westward, but not too soon."

Dick nodded smilingly, and the old man and I were soon alone in the great hall, the afternoon sun gleaming on the red wine in our tall quaint-shaped glasses. Then said Hammond:

"Does anything especially puzzle you about our way of living, now you have heard a good deal and seen a little of it?"

Said I: "I think what puzzles me most is how it all came about."

"It well may," said he, "so great as the change is. It would be difficult indeed to tell you the whole story, perhaps impossible: knowledge, discontent, treachery, disappointment, ruin, misery, despair—those who worked for the change because they could see further than other people went through all these phases of suffering; and doubtless all the time the most of men looked on, not knowing what was doing, thinking it all a matter of course, like the rising and setting of the sun—and indeed it was so."

"Tell me one thing, if you can," said I. "Did the change, the 'revolution' it used to be called, come peacefully?"

"Peacefully?" said he; "what peace was there amongst those poor confused wretches of the nineteenth century? It was war from beginning to end: bitter war, till hope and pleasure put an end to it."

"Do you mean actual fighting with weapons?" said I, "or the strikes and lock-outs and starvation of which we have heard?"

"Both, both," he said. "As a matter of fact, the history of the terrible period of transition from commercial slavery to freedom may thus be summarised. When the hope of realising a communal condition of life for all men arose, quite late in the nineteenth century, the power of the middle classes, the then tyrants of society, was so enormous and crushing that to almost all men, even those who had, you may say despite themselves, despite their reason and judgment, conceived such hopes, it seemed a dream. So much was this the case that some of those more enlightened men who were then called Socialists, although they well knew, and even stated in public, that the only reasonable condition of society was that of pure Communism (such as you now see around you), yet shrunk from what seemed to them the barren task of preaching the realisation of a happy dream. Looking back now, we can see that the great motive-power of the change was a longing for freedom and equality, akin if you please to the unreasonable passion of the lover; a sickness of heart that rejected with loathing the aimless solitary life of the well-to-do educated man of that time: phrases, my dear friend, which have lost their meaning to us of the present day, so far removed we are from the dreadful facts which they represent.

"Well, these men, though conscious of this feeling, had no faith in it. Nor was that wonderful: for looking around them they saw the huge mass of the oppressed classes too much burdened with the misery of their lives, and too much overwhelmed by the selfishness of misery, to be able to form a conception of any escape from it except by the ordinary way prescribed by the system of slavery under which they lived; which was nothing more than a remote chance of climbing out of the oppressed into the oppressing classes.

"Therefore, though they knew that the only reasonable aim for those who would better the world was a condition of equality, in their impatience and despair they managed to convince themselves that if they could by hook or by crook get the machinery of production and the management of property so altered that the 'lower classes' (so the horrible word ran) might have their slavery somewhat ameliorated, they would be ready to fit into this machinery, and would use it for bettering their condition still more and still more, until at last the result would be a practical equality (they were very fond of using the word 'practical'), because 'the rich' would be forced to pay so much for keeping 'the poor' in a tolerable condition that the condition of riches would become no longer valuable and would gradually die out. Do you follow me?"

"Partly," said I. "Go on."

Said old Hammond: "Well, since you follow me, you will see that as a theory this was not altogether unreasonable; but 'practically,' it turned out a failure."

"How so?" said I.

"Well, don't you see," said he, "because it involves the making of a machinery by those who didn't know what they wanted the machines to do. So far as the masses of the oppressed class furthered this scheme of improvement, they did it to get themselves improved slave-rations—as many of them as could. And if those classes had really been incapable of being touched by that instinct which produced the passion for freedom and equality aforesaid, what would have happened, I think, would have been this: that a certain part of the working classes would have been so far improved in condition that they would have approached the condition of the middling rich men; but below them would have been a great class of most miserable slaves, whose slavery would have been far more hopeless than the older class slavery had been."

WILLIAM MORRIS.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

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

DEGREES IN CRIME.

If you should steal a million golden dollars in a lump,
The people would regard you as a genius and a trump.

If you secure but half the pile, a "shortage" that would be;
Whereas a somewhat less amount would be "insolvency."

To steal a tiny, paltry sum would give them the belief
That you were a dishonest man—a robber, and a thief.

But if you steal a loaf of bread whereby your life is saved,
They'll put you into prison with the "totally depraved."

IN FRANCE.

TERRORISM has ruled for the last three weeks in France. M. Constans, Minister of the Interior, who is certainly not a man of genius, but still is a very clever rascal, has quite well understood how to support the bourgeoisie in these difficult moments. The party indeed being composed of men, and some men having through their talent and education a certain influence over their friends and the mass of the workers, M. Constans saw that depriving the party of these men the movement would, if not fail, at least be a little softened. And so he proceeded on this plan. It is true that the agitation of the last week was remarkable, but far from the importance it was expected to be. The reactionary papers were certainly very frightened, if it is to be judged from the exaggeration they made of every little circumstance. So the best informed Tory papers, as *Le Matin*, *La France*, etc., stated that a clandestine printing office had been seized, and all printers arrested, including the manager of the Anarchist paper *La Révolte*. In fact, the printing office was not clandestine at all, and it was the printing office of the united Anarchists, which had been removed lately from the *Rue du Marais*. The head printer, Cabot, was arrested; Grave, the manager of the *Révolte*, was not. The *Révolte* starts this week with a day of delay, and will be printed in a bourgeois printing office. It is true that Malato, Martinet, Gégout, Merlino, Petraroya, Prodi, and other Anarchists were arrested, and will be sent to hard labour for having distributed pamphlets and manifestoes to students and to the soldiers. Comrade Stoianoff, a Bulgarian student, was also arrested. There was a perquisition made upon the apartment of comrade Molinari, an Italian Anarchist, and there were found some manifestoes, but the comrade was successful in escaping. It is to be feared that the foreign Socialists arrested will be handed over to their respective governments after serving their sentences. Louise Michel and Rhénavin were also arrested, and some other arrests made will be kept secret. Tramps frequenting the Halles (Market) have been put in custody, but this had begun a long time ago, in November, when the crisis and starvation were growing threatening against the possessing classes. B.

Goods are theirs who enjoy them.—*Italian*.

With sublime condescension, millionaires' daughters have been visiting the working-women's convention this week, and informing poor girls, who work for three and five dollars a-week, what wonders economy might be made to accomplish with their incomes. For pure heartlessness and cheek combined, this "takes the biscuit."—*Boston Daily Globe*, April 18.

NOTES.

THE Commission on the ill-treatment of the so-called dynamiters in Chatham prison has reported on the subject in the way that might have been expected from a Commission sitting on a very bad case; that is to say, that while practically admitting the charges, it said—"Well, it doesn't matter." The case seems to have been so plain that even the respectable *Daily News* has had its stomach turned by it, and a man of sense and humanity writing in its columns has condemned the finding of the Commission in cautious words, but very clearly. Let us say a few plain words on the subject.

The prison system of this country is, and is meant to be, a system of torture applied by Society to those whom it considers its enemies; but this fact is kept in the dark as much as possible, lest ordinary good-natured people, who do not want to torture persons unless fear drives them to it, should be shocked, and the system should be swept away—or at least altered. The ordinary middle-class man, till within the last few years, had no idea of what went on in a prison; and even now, after some light has been thrown on it by the imprisonment of "gentlemen" both in Ireland and England, he shuts his eyes to it as much as he can. Keeping things dark is the necessary rule in a prison.

Now it is clear that no one could accept the office of habitually torturing his fellow-creatures unless he were a specially callous and degraded man, and were probably also driven to it by hard need; it follows as a matter of course that the officials of a prison must be chosen from the off-scourings of the earth. Surely the evidence of such people should be taken with great reserve by men not interested in suppressing anything.

But the ruling classes are, as we have seen, deeply interested in proving that our prison-system is reasonable and humane; and any knowledge of the real facts will dispel that idea, and show that it is a system of hideous and wanton cruelty. Can we expect, therefore, that any enquiry into the treatment of men considered as the special enemies of Society will be a fair one? It is clearly impossible that it should be, as that highly respectable paper, the *Daily News*, has found out.

I appeal to all honest and generous-minded men, whatever their opinions may be, to consider what this extra torment and insult means applied to men already tortured by the mere cast-iron system up to the limits of endurance. Surely the insulting or tormenting of a prisoner so over-burdened with misery already, so helpless as he is, is such a dastardly and abominable crime, that any crime committed by the prisoners in a jail sinks by comparison into insignificance. You men of the comfortable middle-classes, so kind and unselfish in family life, so scrupulous in business—so respectable, in a word—think of what you are doing vicariously by means of the dreadful tools you have made necessary to you! Think of it—if you dare!

Amongst this Commission of Evasion we read the names of Mr. Drummond and Mr. George Shipton. These gentlemen were, no doubt, put there because our rulers thought, or pretended to think, that they represent the working-classes. I appeal, not to Socialists, but to the working-men in general to say whether it is not about time to let the said rulers understand clearly that this humbug can be stood no longer, and that these gentlemen and others like them do not represent the working-classes, or any section of them. W. M.

Hunger pierceth stone walls.

Eighty destitute men are receiving food and shelter at the old Immigration Depot, Brisbane (March 15).

Henry George says he "believes in nothing half-way." Then why, asks the *Bulletin*, is he not a land-nationalisationist or a Socialist.

The boy question is not yet (March 15) settled among the Charters Towers unions. At the mine where men were working for boy's pay, the management, out of pitiful spite, discharged all the lads employed, and a small minority of the miners, fathers of the lads, are attacking the executive and president of the union for their action, the president, who appears to a "white" man, coming in for plenty of abuse. The large majority recognise that the union only did its duty when it shut down on men receiving boy's wages.

ALL WE LIKE SHEEP.—*Tobacco*, a newspaper published in the interests of the cigar and tobacco manufacturers, gives in a recent issue the circulars sent out to manufacturers in this line of industry by a committee who are opposing the clauses in the Tariff Bill affecting tobacco imports. The circulars include a form of petition against the bill, and the recommendation to employers in the trade is as follows: "We would advise that you copy the following in duplicate, have the petition signed by every employé in your shop and forward," etc. Just notice, says the *Journal of the Knights of Labour*, the cool assumption in the passage we have italicised, that the employer, as a matter of course, controls the political action of his workmen and can dictate to them what petitions they shall sign. Unfortunately, the despotic language of the circular only reflects the actual conditions of matters in many establishments where workmen are completely subservient to the dictates of their masters in their political movements. But we cannot help thinking that the framers of this circular might at least have had the decency to pretend that the employés were to be appealed to on some other ground than the mere will of the employer. It would have looked better and been more politic. We commend this instance to those who are so terribly solicitous that the "individuality" of the citizen will be sacrificed by labour reform.