

has shaved himself. This man confined a soldier to barracks for some days because he had not shaved the down off his face, and the young recruit had not shaved in his life. That does not matter, the soldier has to shave himself even if there is no hair to shave off. No wonder this officer ("Shavo") had a basin thrown from the barrack-room window at him when on his rounds at night inspecting the guards. There were also several attempts made on his life, and in the time of war many an officer will be shot by his own men through his past tyranny.

The soldiers must not act as men, they must submit themselves to all their governors, teachers, spiritual pastors, and masters, and order themselves lowly and reverently to all their betters. It is the soldiers place to do his duty. When he enlists he is told the first duty of a soldier is strict obedience ("Obedience is the first duty of a soldier!" is on his account book). He has orders to proceed to some eviction scene in Ireland, or to keep some Trade Unionists or Socialists down; or he is sent to some far-off land to slaughter Ashantees, Burmese, Zulus, and others. He is told to remember the words, "England (the capitalists and landlords) expects that every man this day will do his duty!"

Let the soldier consider that he belongs to the workers, and that it is his duty to fight for those to whom he belongs, for those who are robbed by the plundering classes of the fruits of their labour. It is not his duty to fight for a class who monopolise the means of life. Remember, soldiers! when the Revolution takes place do your duty, and do it well! Do not fire a shot on the people! Do not murder your own kindred! Do not let the voices of the fatherless children curse you as hired murderers! Do your duty! J. J. CHAPMAN.

NEWS FROM NOWHERE:

OR,

AN EPOCH OF REST.

BEING SOME CHAPTERS FROM A UTOPIAN ROMANCE.

CHAP. XXX.—THE FEAST'S BEGINNING—THE END.

DICK brought me at once into the little field which, as I had seen from the garden, was covered with gaily-coloured tents arranged in orderly lanes, about which were sitting and lying on the grass some fifty or sixty men, women, and children, all of them in the height of good temper and enjoyment—with their holiday mood on, so to say.

"You are thinking that we don't make a great show as to numbers," said Dick; "but you must remember that we shall have more to-morrow; because in this haymaking work there is room for a great many people who are not over-skilled in country matters: and there are many who lead sedentary lives, whom it would be unkind to deprive of their pleasure in the hayfield—scientific men and close students generally; so that the skilled workmen, outside those who are wanted as mowers and foremen of the haymaking stand aside, and take a little downright rest, which you know is good for them, whether they like it or not: or else they go to other countrysides, as I am doing here. You see, the scientific men and historians and students generally will not be wanted till we are fairly in the midst of the tedding, which of course will not be till the day after to-morrow." With that he brought me out of the little field on to a kind of causeway above the riverside meadow, and thence turning to the left on to a path through the mowing grass, which was thick and very tall, led on till we came to the river above the weir and its mill. There we had a delightful swim in the broad piece of water above the weir, where the river looked much bigger than its natural size from its being dammed up by the weir.

"Now we are in a fit mood for dinner," said Dick, when we had dressed and were going through the grass again; "and certainly of all the cheerful meals in the year, this one of haysel is the cheerfulest; not even excepting the corn-harvest feast; for then the year is beginning to fail, and one cannot help having a feeling behind all the gaiety of the coming of the dark days and the shorn fields and empty gardens; and the spring is almost too far off to look forward to. It is, then, in the autumn when one almost believes in death."

"How strangely you talk," said I, "of such a constantly recurring and consequently commonplace matter as the sequence of the seasons." And indeed these people were like children about such things, and had what seemed to me a quite exaggerated interest in the weather, a fine day, a dark night or a brilliant one, and the like.

"Strangely?" said he. "Is it strange to sympathise with the year and its gains and losses?"

"At any rate," said I, "if you look upon the course of the year as a beautiful and interesting drama, which is what I think you do, you should be as much pleased and interested with the winter and its trouble and pain as with this wonderful summer luxury."

"And am I not?" said Dick, rather warmly; "only I can't look upon it as if I were sitting in a theatre seeing the play going on before me, myself taking no part of it. It is difficult," said he, smiling good-humouredly, "for a non-literary man like me to explain myself properly, like that dear girl Ellen would; but I mean that I am part of it all, and feel the pain as well as the pleasure in my own person. It is not done for me by somebody else, merely that I may eat and drink and sleep; but I myself do my share of it."

In his way also, as Ellen in hers, I could see that Dick had that passionate love of the earth which was common to but few people at

least, in the days I knew; in which the prevailing feeling amongst intellectual persons was a kind of sour distaste for the changing drama of the year, for the life of earth and its dealings with men. Indeed, in those days it was thought poetic and imaginative to look upon life as a thing to be borne rather than enjoyed.

So I mused till Dick's laugh brought me back into the Oxfordshire hayfields. "One thing seems strange to me," said he—"that I must needs trouble myself about the winter and its scantiness in the midst of the summer abundance. If it hadn't happened to me before, I should have thought it was your doing, guest; that you had thrown a kind of evil charm over me. Now, you know," said he, suddenly, "that's only a joke, so you mustn't take it to heart."

"All right," said I; "I don't." Yet I did feel somewhat uneasy at his words, after all.

We crossed the causeway this time, and did not turn back to the house, but went along a path beside a field of wheat now almost ready to blossom. I said: "We do not dine in the house or garden, then?—as indeed I did not expect to do. Where do we meet, then? for I can see that the houses are mostly very small."

"Yes," said Dick, "you are right, they are small in this countryside: there are so many good old houses left, that people dwell a good deal in such small detached houses. As to our dinner, we are going to have our feast in the church. I wish, for your sake, it were as big and handsome as that of the old Roman town to the west, or the forest town to the north;¹ but, however, it will hold us all; and though it is a little thing, it is beautiful in its way."

This was somewhat new to me, this dinner in a church; but I said nothing, and presently we came out into the road which ran through the village. Dick looked up and down it, and seeing only two straggling groups before us, said: "It seems as if we must be somewhat late; they are all gone on; and they will be sure to make a point of waiting for you, as the guest of guests, since you come from so far."

He hastened as he spoke, and I kept up with him, and presently we came to a little avenue of lime-trees which led us straight to the church porch, from whose open door came the sound of cheerful voices and laughter and varied merriment.

"Yes," said Dick, "it's the coolest place for one thing, this hot evening. Come along; they will be glad to see you."

Indeed, in spite of my bath, I felt the weather more sultry and oppressive than on any day of our journey yet.

We went into the church, which was a simple little building with one little aisle divided from the nave by three round arches, a chancel, and a rather roomy transept for so small a building, the windows mostly of the graceful Oxfordshire fourteenth century type. There was no modern architectural decoration in it; it looked, indeed, as if none had been attempted since the Puritans whitewashed the mediaeval saints and histories on the wall. It was, however, gaily dressed up for this latter-day festival, with festoons of flowers from arch to arch, and great pitchers of flowers standing about on the floor; while under the west window hung two cross scythes, their blades polished white, and gleaming from out of the flowers that wreathed them. But its best ornament was the crowd of handsome, happy-looking men and women that were set down to table, and who, with their bright faces and rich hair over their gay holiday raiment, looked, as the Persian poet puts it, like a bed of tulips in the sun. Though the church was a small one, there was plenty of room; for a small church makes a bigish house; and on this evening there was no need to set cross tables along the transepts; though doubtless these would be wanted next day, when the learned men of whom Dick had been speaking should be come to take their more humble part in the haymaking.

I stood on the threshold with the expectant smile on my face of a man who is going to take part in a festivity which he is really prepared to enjoy. Dick standing by me was looking round the company with something of an air of proprietorship in them, I thought. Opposite me sat Clara and Ellen, with Dick's place open between them: they were smiling, but their beautiful faces were each turned towards the neighbours on each side, who were talking to them, and they did not seem to see me. I turned to Dick, expecting him to lead me forward, and he turned his face to me; but strange to say, though it was as cheerful and smiling as ever, it made no response to my glance—nay, he seemed to take no heed at all of my presence, and I noticed that none of the company looked at me. A pang shot through me, as of some disaster long expected and suddenly realised. Dick moved on a little without a word to me. I was not three yards from the two women who, though they had been my companions for such a short time, had really, as I thought, become my friends. Clara's face was turned full upon me now, but she also did not seem to see me, though I know I was trying to catch her eye with an appealing look. I turned to Ellen, and she *did* seem to recognise me for an instant; but her bright face turned sad directly, and she shook her head with a mournful look, and the next moment all consciousness of my presence had faded from her face.

I felt lonely and sick at heart past the power of words to describe. I hung about a minute longer, and then turned and went out of the porch again and through the lime-avenue into the road, while the blackbirds sang their strongest from the bushes about me in the hot June evening.

Once more without any conscious effort of will I turned my face toward the old house by the ford, but as I turned round the corner which led to the remains of the village cross, I came upon a figure strangely contrasting with the joyous, beautiful people I had left behind in the

¹ Cirencester and Burford, he must have meant.

church. It was a man who looked old, but whom I knew from habit, now half-forgotten, was not really much more than fifty. His face was rugged, and grimed rather than dirty; his eyes dull and bleared; his body bent, his calves thin and spindly, his feet dragging and limping. His clothing was a mixture of dirt and rags long over-familiar to me. As I passed him he touched his hat with some real good-will and courtesy, and much servility.

Inexpressibly shocked, I hurried past him and hastened along the road that led to the river and the lower end of the village; but suddenly I saw as it were a black cloud rolling along to meet me, like a nightmare of my childish days; and for a while I was conscious of nothing else than being in the dark, and whether I was walking, or sitting, or lying down, I could not tell.

* * * * *

I lay in my bed in my house at dingy Hammersmith thinking about it all; and trying to consider if I was overwhelmed with despair at finding I had been dreaming a dream.

Or indeed *was* it a dream? If so, why was I so conscious all along that I was really seeing all that new life from the outside, still wrapped up in the prejudices, the anxieties, the distrust of this time of doubt and struggle?

All along, though those friends were so real to me, I had been feeling as if I had no business amongst them; as though the time would come when they would reject me, and say, as Ellen's last mournful look seemed to say, "No, it will not do; you cannot be of us; you belong so entirely to the unhappiness of the past that our happiness even would weary you. Go back again, now you have seen us, and your outward eyes have learned that in spite of all the infallible maxims of your day there is yet a time of rest in store for the world, when mastery has changed into fellowship—but not before. Go back again, then, and while you live you will see all round you people engaged in making others live lives which are not their own, while they themselves care nothing for their own real lives—men who hate life though they fear death. Go back, and be the happier for having seen us, for having added a little hope to your struggle. Go on living while you may, striving, with whatsoever pain and labour needs must be, to build up little by little the new day of fellowship, and rest, and happiness."

Yes, surely! and if others can see it as I have seen it, then it may be called a vision rather than a dream.

WILLIAM MORRIS.

THE END.

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

LITERARY NOTES.

'Igdrasil' for October,—the first number of a new volume—(Price 6d., London: Geo. Allen, 8, Bell Yard, Temple Bar, W.C.), will contain *inter alia* a powerful poem dealing with the social question, entitled, "Poor People's Christmas," by the Hon. Roden Noel; "Ruskiniana": Letters dealing with the Irish Question; and "The Last Laird of Monkbarons and his Bequest to the Nation," by W. Marwick, accompanied by illustrations. The Handbook of the Reading Guild for 1890-91 can be had from the publisher, price 3d. post free.

'New Amazonia,' by Mrs. George Corbett, is a sketch of a new state of Society wherein women enjoy the amplest rights, including the choice of finely developed and intelligent *servants* of their own sex, a Domestic Aid Agency seeming to be the great institution in this "foretaste of the future."

Our comrade P. Argyriades announces that he is about to issue a revolutionary almanack, entitled, 'Almanach de la Question Sociale.' This almanack will contain notices of all the Socialist parties in various countries, interesting statistics, articles on scientific Socialism, and various economic subjects, with poetry by Louise Michel and Eugene Pottier, also the celebrated case of the woman Soubain, who, driven by misery, has strangled her five children; finally, a catalogue of Socialist journals and reviews. Post free, 1 franc 25 cents. for France, and 1 franc 50 cents. for England and other countries. Subscriptions should be sent to P. Argyriades, 5, Bouboard, Saint Michel, Paris. All subscribers will receive with the almanack an interesting pamphlet on the Socialist poet, Eugene Pottier.

'Fabian Essays on Socialism.' Walter Scott, 24, Warwick Lane. Cheap Edition, price 1s. The 'Fabian Essays' have already been reviewed in the *Commonweal*, and it only remains for us to note that this cheap edition is really cheap. It is well printed and well written from a Fabian point of view. It is also nicely bound in a paper cover, which is decorated with a cartoon by Walter Crane, representing a capitalist up a tree and two workmen trying to pull him down. The design has more physical force about it than a judicious Fabian would appreciate, as the capitalist is provided with two revolvers, and the workers with two agricultural implements, an axe and a spade, which we fear they may put to a use very dangerous to the capitalist if he comes any of his nonsense with those revolvers. The axe will probably split his head open, and the spade will decently bury him. If the Fabians go on in this style Sir Edward Bradford will be arresting Sydney Webb as a dangerous character.

London Members' Meeting.—The next monthly meeting of members will be held on Wednesday, October 8th, at 8.30 p.m., at the Hall of the 'Commonweal' Branch, 24, Great Queen Street, Lincoln's Inn Fields, W.C. All members invited to attend.

SCOTTISH SOCIALIST FEDERATION.—EDINBURGH—Labour Hall, 50 South Bridge. Business meeting Fridays at 8 p.m. Sunday, October 5th, at 6.30, McDonald (Fabian Society), "Socialism Defined and Defended." LEITH—Henderson Street Hall, Sundays, at 6.30.—Secretary, W. D. Tait, 20 Dundee Street.

THE LABOUR WAR IN AUSTRALIA.

THE great Labour Battle which is being fought out in Australia is at once one of the most interesting and most momentous of all the struggles that have lately taken place between Labour and its oppressors. When the opposing classes are face to face all over a whole continent at once, we who are only accustomed to embroiling a town or so at a time have to look on with admiration, almost with wonder. And when it is seen that the question at issue is not in the least one of an advance or reduction in wages, or any other trumpery palliative, but is a bitter fight over the cardinal principle, the right to combine—when it is seen that the labour-class of a continent are defending desperately their very existence, there is a feeling of awe as well as of absorbing interest.

Readers of the *Weal* will remember the Jondaryan squatters, who tried their strength against that of organised labour, and were beaten before the battle had fairly begun. That defeat enraged and roused Australian monopolists; it showed them that in order to maintain and preserve their supremacy they must make a final stand against the "encroachments" of Labour.

The "pastoralists," wool-growing landlords, the squatter aristocracy of Australia, were the sorest of all. Before the Shearers' Union began its work they had been able to "do what they liked with their own" and with other people's too. But although they fought the union long and bitterly, they could not prevail against it in fair fighting. So they made up their minds to circumvent it and smash it up.

They began to pay 10 per cent. over the union rate (22s. instead of £1 per 100 sheep), and do other benevolent things to those who would swear off the union. This was done in order to demoralise and divide the union ranks, and so prepare for a smashing blow later on. But if the monopolists were far-seeing enough to think out this plan of attack, the men were awake enough to see what was meant and to meet it half-way.

The Shearer's Union insisted on the definite acceptance of its rules by the employers in all cases. Admitting fully in most cases that these rules are fair and just, the pastoralists have yet refused to accede to them, making a point of principle of their "freedom of contract" in each individual case. Here was war at once.

To support the principles of labour organisation all the various unions which had to do with the handling of wool in preparation, storage, or transit, gave notice to the warehouseman, railway, dock, and shipping companies that they would not handle non-union wool. Preparations were made for a strict boycott upon all blackleg wool, and on the other hand tremendous efforts were made by the bosses to scrape together enough blacklegs to carry on the work.

Meanwhile, the Marine Officers' Association had been coming into collision with the shipping companies over the same question—the right of combination. Following the example set them by the seamen, the officers had been organising on ordinary union lines, and were taking up their position as part of the Labour army. Alarmed at the approach to solidarity between officers and men, the owners tried to get up a bogus sort of association, apparently something like that which the Lemon-Peters gang have been trying at here, and attempted to force the officers into it. But the officers knew better than to bind themselves hand and foot in the hands of their employers, preferring to cast in their lot with the general body of organised labour. The owners would hear of nothing until the officers renounced their organisation, and the officers were equally determined to have their union recognised and get what they had asked for besides.

What between the shearers and the marine officers, and those who were backing them up, the battle spread to the Wharf-labourers, Seamen and Firemen, Carriers, Trolly and Dray Men, Cooks and Stewards, Railway-men, Coal-lumpers, General Labourers, and in fact to pretty nearly the whole strength of Australian organised labour.

The possessing classes presented an almost equally united front; and there was the position, as plainly as it ever has been in the labour struggle, with a clear definite issue, and a strong determination on either side to fight the matter out to the bitter end.

Both sides announce that they mean to make the struggle a decisive one; it will be a fierce one while it lasts, and whichever side wins will follow up the advantage with relentless vigour. On the side of the men there is much more at stake than even the principle of unionism: they openly avow that they are defending their organisations, and will do so to the death, because they intend them to be the component parts of a vast federation of labour which shall enable the working classes of Australasia to move as one man when the time comes to exert their strength. And they say, further, that the ameliorations they from time to time demand are not merely to meet the needs of the passing moment, but are preparations for a greater struggle than is even now taking place—one that will end all strikes and labour troubles for ever and inaugurate the new era.

It is hardly necessary to warn *Commonweal* readers that almost every line is a lie in the ordinary press telegrams. The letters that reach us from trusted men put quite another face on the matter from that which the venal newsmongers endeavour to present. We would say, believe only half of what you read, and have a good deal of doubt about even that. And, above all, don't forget that this is a really revolutionary struggle in the true sense of the word, and one that must command the help and sympathy of Socialists everywhere.

HOODLUM.

THE UNEMPLOYED OF 1890.

ON Monday afternoon at 3 o'clock a large meeting of the unemployed took place near the Marble Arch, Hyde Park, at which several well-known speakers spoke on behalf of the unemployed, and the following resolutions were carried unanimously:

1st. It was resolved that a meeting of the unemployed be held on Saturday, October 4th, at 2 o'clock, on the steps of the Royal Exchange, thence to the Tower; after that a series of meetings will be held in different prominent places in the East and West End of London, with the object of calling together thousands of the unemployed and to compel the various authorities to adopt measures for their employment.

2nd. That we, the unemployed, propose that a deputation of the unemployed should wait upon the Executive Council of the South Side Labour Protection League, Dockers' Union, and other large trade unions, to lay before them the question of the unemployed, and ask them to take action in forcing the local bodies to start municipal workshops and factories for the unemployed, and by that means preventing blacklegs from working against trade-unionism.