



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

The COMMONWEAL is the official organ of the Socialist League; but, unless definitely so announced by the Editors, no article is to be taken as expressing in more than a general way the views of the League as a body. In accordance with the Manifesto and Statement of Principles of the League, the COMMONWEAL is an exponent of International Revolutionary Socialism. On minor differences of opinion the widest freedom of discussion is maintained. As all articles are signed, no special significance attaches to their position in the paper.

Articles and letters dealing with any phase of the social problem are invited and will meet with earnest consideration. They must be written on one side of the paper only, and accompanied by the name and address of the writer, not necessarily for publication. MSS. can only be returned if a stamped directed envelope accompanies them.

Advertisements can only be inserted if unobjectionable in all particulars. Scale of charges and special quotations may be obtained from the Manager.

SUBSCRIPTIONS, including postage:—For British Islands, Europe, United States, and Canada, a year, 6s.; six months, 3s.; three months, 1s. 6d. For Australia, New Zealand, Cape of Good Hope, Natal, Transvaal, and the Argentine Republic, a year, 8s.; six months, 4s.; three months, 2s. For India, Ceylon, China, Hong Kong, and the Straits Settlements, a year, 10s.; six months, 5s.; three months, 2s. 6d.

Subscribers who receive a RED WRAPPER are thereby reminded that their subscriptions have expired and must be renewed immediately if they wish to continue to receive COMMONWEAL.

All P. O. orders should be made payable to Post-office, 42 Drury Lane, W.C.

Remittances from abroad must be made by International Money Order.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

CORRESPONDENTS who order literature should prepay postage, or state if they wish their parcels to be sent per rail or carrier, "carriage forward."

WILL Branch Secretaries please write Reports and Orders for Literature on separate pieces of paper.

BOOKS RECEIVED:—'Fabian Essays,' cheap edition (Walter Scott). 'Mines and the Mining Industries,' 'South Australia.'

Periodicals received during the week ending Wednesday September 10.

ENGLAND Belfast Weekly Star Democrat Freedom Labour Tribune People's Press Railway Review Sozial Demokrat Seafaring Worker's Friend	Philadel.—Knights of Labour Paterson Labour Standard San Francisco Arbeiterzeitung Pacific Union S.F.—Coast Seamen's Journal	BELGIUM Antwerp—De Werker Ghent—Vooruit
UNITED STATES New York—Truthseeker New York—Freiheit New York—Der Sozialist Freie Arbeiter Stimme Twentieth Century Volkszeitung Bakers' Journal Workmen's Advocate Boston—Woman's Journal Buffalo—Arbeiter-Zeitung Chicago—Rights of Labour Vorbote Detroit—Der Arme Teufel Los Angeles—Cal. Nationalist	FRANCE Paris—Bourse du Travail Paris—La Revoltue Le Parti ouvrier La Revue Europeenne La Societe Nouvelle Le Proletariat Nancy—Le Tire-Pied Charleville—L'Emancipation Lyon—L'Action Sociale Lille—Le Cri du Travailleur Rouen—Le Salarial	SPAIN Madrid—El Socialista Barcelona—El Productor Madrid—La Anarquia
	HOLLAND Hague—Recht voor Allen	PORTUGAL Lisbon—O Protesto Operario
	SWITZERLAND Arbeiterstimme	GERMANY Berlin—Volks Tribune
	ITALY Milan—Il Fascio Operaio Milan—Cuore e Critica Palermo—Avanti	AUSTRIA Vienna—Arbeiter-Zeitung Brunn—Arbeiterstimme
		HUNGARY Arbeiter-Wochen-Chronik
		SWEDEN Stockholm, Social-Demokraten Malmö—Arbetet
		WEST INDIES Cuba—El Productor
		CAPE COLONY Cape Times ARGENTINE REPUBLIC Weekly Herald

NEWS FROM NOWHERE:

OR,

AN EPOCH OF REST.

BEING SOME CHAPTERS FROM A UTOPIAN ROMANCE.

CHAP. XXVII.—A RESTING-PLACE ON THE UPPER THAMES.

At a place where the river flowed round a headland of the meadows, we stopped a while for rest and victuals on a beautiful bank which almost reached the dignity of a hill-side: the wide meadows spread before us, and already the scythe was busy amidst the hay. One change I noticed amidst the quiet beauty of the fields—to wit, that they were planted with trees here and there, often fruit-trees, and that there was none of the niggardly begrudging of space to a handsome tree which I remembered too well; and though the willows were often polled (or shrowded, as they call it in that country-side), this was done with some regard to beauty: I mean that there was no polling of rows on rows so as to destroy the pleasantness of half a mile of country, but a thoughtful sequence in the cutting that prevented a sudden bareness anywhere. To be short, the fields were everywhere treated as a garden made for the pleasure as well as the livelihood of all, as old Hammond told me was the case.

On this bank or bent of the hill, then, we had our mid-day meal; somewhat early for dinner, if that mattered, but we had been stirring early: the slender stream of the Thames winding below us between the garden of a country I have been telling of; a furlong from us was

a beautiful little islet begrown with graceful trees; on the slopes westward of us was a wood of varied growth overhanging the narrow meadow on the south side of the river; while to the north was a wide stretch of mead rising very gradually from the river's edge. A delicate spire of an ancient building rose up from out of the trees in the middle distance, with a few grey houses clustered about it; while nearer to us, in fact not half a furlong from the water, was a quite modern house—a wide quadrangle of one story, the buildings that made it being quite low. There was no garden between it and the river, nothing but a row of pear-trees still quite young and slender; and though there did not seem to be much ornament about it, it had a sort of natural elegance, like that of the trees themselves.

As we sat looking down on all this in the sweet June day, rather happy than merry, Ellen, who sat next me, her hand clasped about one knee, leaned sideways to me, and said in a low voice which Dick and Clara might have noted if they had not been busy in happy wordless love-making: "Friend, in your country were the houses of your field-labourers anything like that?"

I said: "Well, at any rate the houses of our rich men were not; they were mere blots upon the face of the land."

"I find that hard to understand," she said. "I can see why the workmen, who were so oppressed, should not have been able to live in beautiful houses; for it takes time and leisure, and minds not overburdened with cares, to make beautiful dwellings; and I quite understand that these poor people were not allowed to live in such a way as to have these (to us) necessary good things. But why the rich men, who had the time and the leisure and the materials for building, as it would be in this case, should not have housed themselves well, I do not understand, as yet. Of course, I know," she said, looking me full in the eyes and blushing, "that you mean to say that their houses and all belonging to them were generally ugly and base, unless they chanced to be ancient like yonder remnant of our forefathers' work" (pointing to the spire); "that they were—let me see; what is the word?"

"Vulgar," said I. "We used to say," said I, "that the ugliness and vulgarity of the rich men's dwellings was a necessary reflection from the sordidness and bareness of life which they forced upon the poor people."

She knit her brows as in thought; then turned a brightened face on me, as if she had caught the idea, and said: "Yes, friend, I see what you mean. We have sometimes—those of us who look into these things—talked this very matter over; because, to say the truth, we have plenty of record of the so-called arts of the time before Equality of Life: and there are not wanting people who say that the state of that society was not the cause of all that ugliness; that they were ugly in their life because they liked to be, and could have had beautiful things about them if they had chosen; just as a man or body of men now may, if they please, make things more or less beautiful—"

"Stop! I know what you are going to say."

"Do you?" said I, smiling, yet with a beating heart.

"Yes," she said; "you are answering me, teaching me, in some way or another, although you have not spoken the words aloud. You were going to say that in times of inequality it was an essential condition of the life of these rich men that they should not themselves make what they wanted for the adornment of their lives, but should force those to make them whom they forced to live pinched and sordid lives; and that as a necessary consequence the sordidness and pinching, the ugly barrenness of those ruined lives, were worked up even into the adornment of the lives of the rich, and art died out amongst men? Was that what you would say, my friend?"

"Yes, yes," I said, looking at her eagerly; for she had risen and was standing on the edge of the bent, the light wind stirring her dainty raiment, one hand laid on her bosom, the other arm stretched downward and clenched in her earnestness.

"It is true," she said, "it is true! We have proved it true."

I think amidst my—something more than interest in her, and admiration for her, I was beginning to wonder how it would all end. I had a glimmering of fear of what might follow, of anxiety as to the remedy of that age for the missing of something one might set one's heart on, when Dick rose to his feet and cried out in his hearty manner: "Neighbour Ellen, are you quarrelling with the guest, or are you worrying him to tell you things which he cannot properly explain to our ignorance?"

"Neither, dear neighbour," she said. "I was so far from quarrelling with him that I think I have been making him good friends both with himself and me. Is it so, dear guest?" she said, looking down at me with a delightful smile of confidence in being understood.

"Indeed it is," said I.

"Well, moreover," she said, "I must say for him that he has explained himself to me very well indeed, so that I quite understand him."

"All right," quoth Dick. "When I first set eyes on you at Runnymede I knew that there was something wonderful in your keenness of wits. I don't say that as a mere pretty speech to please you," said he quickly, but because it is true; and it made me want to see more of you. But, come, we ought to be going; for we are not half way, and we ought to be in well before sunset."

And therewith he took Clara's hand, and led her down the bent. But Ellen stood thoughtfully looking down for a little, and as I took her hand to follow Dick, she turned round to me and said:

"You might tell me a great deal and make many things clear to me, if you would."

"Yes," said I, "I am pretty well fit for that,—and for nothing else—an old man like me."

She did not notice the bitterness that, whether I liked it or not

was in my voice as I spoke, but went on. "It is not so much for myself; I should be quite content to dream about past times, and if I could not idealise them, idealise some of the people who lived in them. But I think sometimes people are too careless of the history of the past—too apt to leave it in the hands of old learned men like Hammond. Who knows? happy as we are, times may change; we may be bitten with some impulse towards change, and many things may seem too wonderful for us to resist, too exciting not to catch at, if we do not know that they are but phases of what has been before; and withal ruinous, deceitful, and sordid."

As we went slowly down toward the boats she said again: "Not for myself alone, dear friend; I shall have children; perhaps before the end a good many—I hope so. And though of course I cannot force any special kind of knowledge upon them, yet, my friend, I cannot help thinking that just as they might be like me in body, so I might impress upon them some part of my ways of thinking; that is, indeed, some of the essential part of myself; that part which was not mere moods, created by the matters and events round about me. What do you think?"

Of one thing I was sure, that her beauty and kindness and eagerness combined forced me to think as she did, when she was not earnestly laying herself open to receive my thoughts. I said, what at the time was true, that I thought it most important; and presently stood entranced by the wonder of her grace as she stepped into the light boat, and held out her hand to me. And so on we went up the Thames still—or whither?

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 GREAT LAND THIEVES.

LETTER III.—CYMRU FYYD.

"The proud throne shall crumble,
The diadem shall wane,
The tribes of earth shall humble
The pride of those who reign;
And War shall lay his pomp away,
The fame that heroes cherish
The glory earned in deadly fray
Shall fade, decay, and perish;
(But) Honour waits o'er all the earth,
Through endless generations,
The art that calls her harvests forth
And feeds the expectant nations."

In turning one's attention to Wales as a scene of landlord domination and capitalist exploitation, one is struck by the present passiveness of a once brave and hardy race in the hands of their despoilers. To see the descendants of the wild and daring Celtic tribes imprisoned in mine and factory, slaving for a pittance, and to traverse their once beautiful hills and vales, but now disfigured by blast-furnaces and prodigious accumulations of filth; to see (and smell) what were once pure gushing mountain streams turned into faecal disgusting sewers,—then truly can we say with Marx that commercialism shapes the world after its own image.

As a writer in a local Glamorgan journal has remarked, the once lonely vales have been converted into teeming hives, resonant with the clash and whirr of great industries, increasing its resources and population at an amazing rate. It is enlarging everything except its sanitation. Beauty and purity have fled the scene, but commerce and typhus reign in their stead.

Hiring capitalist scribes and political economists wax ecstatic over the impetus given to trade by the utilisation of the vast mineral resources of Wales, but the other side of the shield is carefully kept out of view. The hideous disfigurement of the country, the waste of life and limb, the overwork and scanty pay, are glozed over, if not ignored. Moreover, the same sage writers carefully keep silent upon the monstrous pretensions of landlordism, which claims the minerals beneath the soil. It is computed that the landlords of these islands receive £36,000,000 per annum from mining rents and royalties, and of this enormous tribute paid to idle thieves who have never mined a shovelful of coal or an ounce of ore Wales pays a large proportion. My Lord Marquis of Bute, owner of 116,683 acres of land, claims eightpence per ton royalty upon coal raised in Glamorganshire Valley. His lordly castle at Cardiff stands out in strange contrast to the wretched cottages of the miners in the Rhondda Vawr.

The swarms of men and boys who daily descend the mines and pursue their deadly calling, to emerge again only at nightfall, must first earn this tribute to an idler and his fellows. Nor is this the whole of the tax levied upon their labour by the land thieves. Before a mine can be sunk an enormous bonus must be paid the landowner. The mining lease is frequently so high, and bristles with so many pitfalls, that by a delightful arrangement peculiar to landlordism, the mines, after having been opened by the labour of others, lapses into the landlord's hands. My Lord Dunraven demands £40 per acre for land upon which it was necessary to build cottages; the pasture value was 5s. per acre, and he in common with the landlords of North and South Wales claim the cottages built by others upon the expiry of the leases. And thus a society which punishes the theft of a loaf with imprisonment erects into lawgivers and legislators those who thieve legally the results of other men's labour.

The question of Way Leaves, *i.e.*, the tax or fine paid to the landowner before the soil can be touched for mining, also the rents and royalties, is a sore one with the mine-owners; but both mine-owner and landowner are an incubus upon the bent shoulders of the miner. At present he pins his hopes on Mabon, and other House of Common debaters. Some day he will divest himself of Parliamentary hallucinations, and take a sharp and decisive method of ridding himself of both.

If we leave the underpaid miners and quarrymen, and turn to agricultural Wales, we find Landlordism pressing like a blight upon the land. Lord Cranbrook has insisted upon the need of greater attention being paid to agriculture in Wales. The class to which his lordship belongs are responsible in Wales, as elsewhere, for the neglected state of agriculture. Of the 4,700,431 acres of common lands, once completely wild, the greater portion has been seized by the land thieves. 270 odd persons claim 4,000,000 acres of the soil. One wonders at the ancient and dilapidated cottages that are to be seen about the country, and the explanation is Landlordism. By the most unscrupulous use of their power to grant or withhold leases, except upon their own terms, they have confiscated the cottages built by the tenantry; and in this way some of the best portions of Holyhead, Cardiff, and other towns are OWNED by patrician robbers.

The thrifty quarrymen and labourers have, by self-denial and tremendous exertion, brought great tracts of barren hill-side into cultivation, and built cottages worth £110,000, with the result that the land thieves have increased their rents fourfold, and charged them for "improvements." In Carnarvonshire and Merionethshire, half a million worth of property thus created lies at the mercy of peers and patricians.

A few samples of landlord tyranny are sufficient to illustrate the question. B grants a lease to A, A must keep a dog for the behoof of his landlord; he may not, however, keep one for his own sheep. He must agree to allow a suit to be instituted in his name, but by the landlord, against anyone whom it may please the landowner to prosecute. In this way a tenant may be compelled to prosecute his own kith and kin. The landlord may shoot or hunt over his tenant's land, but the tenant must not kill or snare the game which destroys his crops. For each and all the things which the tenant may not do there are fines varying from £20 to £100.

Superadded to landlord and capitalist is the parson of the Established Church. He exacts tithes from a people who neither desire nor receive his ministrations. Bodies of police and troops, with emergency men, are being moved about the country, valiantly seizing upon the chattels and stock in satisfaction of the claims of a State parson. Truly the spectacle is a strange one to see the followers of the lowly Nazarene enforcing their claims with the aid of truncheon and sabre, and enlisting in their service hired bullies in the shape of scoundrelly emergency men!

Religious and political Nonconformity is punished in the most arbitrary manner. Wholesale evictions, ending frequently in the death of the victims, are the penalty for disobedience to landlord mandates. Legislation is supposed to have given the tenantry some protection in respect to game and holdings, but they dare not avail themselves of the provisions of the Acts without incurring the risk of eviction. So a tenant may have his garden produce eaten in a night by hares and rabbits, and yet must not harm one; in short, the fish of the rivers, the birds of the air, the land above and the minerals below are mine, saith the lord of the soil.

The pettifogging politicians who crawl at the heels of the Great Liberal Party, delude the Welsh people with the hope that with their advent to power, the evils under which they groan will disappear. Yet, singular to relate, the list of the great landowners of the country show Liberals and Tories in nearly equal proportions, and the most exacting and tyrannical are the "Liberals."

Socialism has found a foothold in Wales. As it grows in strength the old political and religious fetishes will lose their worshippers, and Wales will truly advance towards the Social Revolution.

F. KITZ.

FREE SPEECH MEETING AT SHORT STREET.

LAST Sunday morning, a demonstration was held by the Socialist League in Short Street, New Cut, to protest against Miss Lupton's arrest at that place on the previous Thursday. Our comrades brought a van and banners, but though costermonger's barrows habitually stand in the street, and though a teetotaler on a hansom cab occupies every Sunday the next opening, the Socialists were not allowed to use their van. Comrade Buckeridge took the chair, and was ably supported by Parker, Kitz, Mrs. Lahr, and Miss Lupton. A large and enthusiastic crowd assembled, who encouraged the speakers, and showed every sympathy with the meeting. A resolution condemning not only Miss Lupton's arrest, but also the attack on Free Speech, was passed with acclamation.

ABERDEEN.—On Sunday night, 31st August, Leatham lectured to an unusually large audience on "Is Marriage a Failure?" A lively discussion followed. Duncan and Leatham addressed an open-air meeting on Castle Street on Thursday night. On Saturday night W. Cooper, Rennie, and Leatham spoke in the same place to a large audience. Our new red flag apparently added to the enthusiasm both of the speakers and the audience. The literature sold well.

LEEDS.—On Sunday last we held three splendid meetings—morning Hunslet Moor, afternoon Woodhouse Moor, evening Vicars Croft—when Mowbray was the principal speaker. We were unable to get any opposition, although we had been threatened seriously. We sold 133 *Commonweal* and some copies of *Freedom* and pamphlets, and we collected 19s. Comrade Bland, from Bradford, visited us on Saturday night, and J. Burgoyne, of Glasgow, was with us on Sunday; he hopes to find employment here. And the Cause goes marching on.

YARMOUTH.—Good meeting addressed by Leggatt for an hour and a half. Good sale of *Commonweal* and *Freedom*; 1s. 6d. collected. Comrade Burnie announced for next Sunday.