

place, the last-named cleric appealed to the infuriated and betrayed strikers to accept their fate as the will of God. So that God, it appears, is a friend of the dock companies and views strikes with disfavour (please note, my unionist friends who are so fond of hobnobbing with sky-pilots).

On Tuesday, the men could have secured possession of the dock if properly led, for two of the dock-gates are, although high, merely planks battened together. But the leaders took the courage out of the men, and after a struggle that had lasted barely four days, McCarthy made the hideous blunder and practical confession of defeat by leaving an open-air meeting in company with a cleric as a deputation to the Dock Company "to see," as he feebly put it, "what they would do," and they having seen his hand would do nothing—not even allow him in.

During his absence on this bootless errand, I took occasion to address the men on Socialism. I got an immense reception, for a great number of the men had been unable to hear McCarthy's weak voice. But he returned whilst I was speaking with the doleful message of his failure, and fearing, I suppose, that I should alienate his followers, he mounted a seat and denounced me. I had desisted from speaking upon his return. I owe it to the impression I created that I was not subjected to personal violence through his action. Mr. McCarthy has mistaken his vocation; he would no doubt be able to marshal a small Sunday-school treat, and come out of the ordeal with flying colours; but as a Labour leader he is a woeful failure.

Tom Walsh made a better show; he denounced the tactical blunder that McCarthy made in going unsolicited to the Company, and showed his contempt for the parasitical reporters by telling them he liked them at a distance.

The Sailor's Union had come out on sympathy with the dockers, and for the recognition of their union. The subsequent collapse brought about by the action of McCarthy and Co., has placed the sailors in a difficult position. They are determined to have their union recognised, and as they are strong enough to boycott the port they are to be reckoned with.

There is a class of boy labourers here known as the scurfer boys; they are a hardy and courageous set. They were prominent in all the scurrillous that took place, and they furnished nearly all the fun. They burnt handlights in the streets to fool the police and military, and were to the front when hard knocks were distributed. The union leaders, having got into a moral mood, denounced these frisky lads, although they too were out with the men strikers, and even went so far as to urge on the men to put the boys down with a strong hand. I confess that my admiration for these lads rose in proportion as they incurred the displeasure of the parson-loving leaders.

To summarise. Some £6,000 have been lost to the men in wages; several men are in prison; a great number have been stabbed or bludgeoned, and the point fought for has been lost. Of course, Labour will eventually have also to bear the cost of the movements of troops, police, etc., and the broken windows of the Mayor. I heard the epithets of "loafers" and "tramps" applied to those outside the New Unionism by the suddenly made Aristocrats of Labour. It is a fatal mistake. The propertied classes are preparing for a mighty struggle, in which the Southampton scenes are but an episode. The marching and countermarching, the proclamations in the name of our Sovereign Lady the Queen to keep the peace, etc., are but the pattering rain-spots before the storm. It is *not* the time to use harsh words in regard to paupers and tramps, who, after all, are what Society makes them; and least of all should the men in command of the forces of Labour join in the abuse of the residuum. If on no higher ground than policy, it is a tactical mistake to turn the unorganised mass into a reactionary force at the possible disposal of the enemy.

F. KITZ.

NEWS FROM NOWHERE:

OR,

AN EPOCH OF REST.

BEING SOME CHAPTERS FROM A UTOPIAN ROMANCE.

CHAP. XXVIII.—THE JOURNEY'S END.

ON we went. In spite of my new-born excitement about Ellen, and my gathering fear of where it would land me, I could not help taking abundant interest in the condition of the river and its banks; all the more as she never seemed weary of the changing picture, but looked at every yard of flowery bank and gurgling eddy with the same kind of affectionate interest which I myself once had so fully, as I used to think, and perhaps had not altogether lost even in this strangely changed society with all its wonders. Ellen seemed delighted with my pleasure at this, that, or the other piece of carefulness in dealing with the river: the nursing of pretty corners; the ingenuity in dealing with difficulties of water-engineering, so that the most obviously useful works looked beautiful and natural also. All this, I say, pleased me hugely, and she was pleased at my pleasure—but rather puzzled too.

"You seem astonished," she said, just after we had passed a mill¹ which spanned all the stream save the water-way for traffic, but which

was as beautiful in its way as a Gothic cathedral—"you seem astonished at this being so pleasant to look at."

"Yes," I said, "in a way I am; though I don't see why it shouldn't be."

"Ah!" she said, looking at me admiringly, yet with a lurking smile in her face, "you know all about the history of the past. Were they not always careful about this little stream which now adds so much pleasantness to the country-side? It would always be easy to manage this little river. Ah! I forgot, though," she said, as her eye caught mine, "in the days we are thinking of pleasure was wholly neglected in such matters. But how did they manage the river in the days that you—?" Lived in, she was going to say; but correcting herself, said—"in the days of which you have record?"

"They *mis*managed it," quoth I. Up to the first half of the nineteenth century, when it was still more or less of a highway for the country people, some care was taken of the river and its banks; and though I don't suppose anyone troubled himself about its aspect, yet it was trim and beautiful. But when the railways—of which no doubt you have heard—came into power, they would not allow the people of the country to use either the natural or artificial waterways, of which latter there were a great many. I suppose when we get higher up we shall see one of these; a very important one, which one of these railways entirely closed to the public, so that they might force people to send their goods by their private road, and so tax them as heavily as they could."

Ellen laughed heartily. "Well," she said, "that is not stated clearly enough in our history-books, and it is worth knowing. But certainly the people of those days must have been a curiously lazy set. We are not either fidgety or quarrelsome now, but if anyone tried such a piece of folly on us, we should use the said waterways, whoever gainsaid us: surely that would be simple enough. However, I remember other cases of this stupidity: when I was on the Rhine two years ago, I remember they showed us ruins of old castles, which, according to what we heard, must have been made for pretty much the same purpose as the railways were. But I am interrupting your history of the river: pray go on."

"It is both short and stupid enough," said I. "The river having lost its practical or commercial value—that is, being of no use to make money of—"

She nodded. "I understand what that queer phrase means," said she. "Go on!"

"Well, it was utterly neglected, till at last it became a nuisance—"

"Yes," quoth Ellen, "I understand: like the railways and the robber knights. Yes?"

"So then they turned the makeshift business on to it, and handed it over to a body up in London, who from time to time, in order to show that they had something to do, did some damage here and there,—cut down trees, destroying the banks thereby; dredged the river (where it was not needed always), and threw the dredgings on the fields so as to spoil them; and so forth. But for the most part they practised 'masterly inactivity,' as it was then called—that is, they drew their salaries, and let things alone."

"Drew their salaries," she said. "I know that means that they were allowed to take an extra lot of other people's goods for doing nothing. And if that had been all, it really might have been worth while to let them do so, if you couldn't find any other way of keeping them quiet; but it seems to me that being so paid, they could not help doing something, and that something was bound to be mischief,—because," said she, kindling with sudden anger, "the whole business was founded on lies and false pretensions. I don't mean only these river-guardians, but all these master-people I have read of."

"Yes," said I, "how happy you are to have got out of the parsimony of oppression!"

"Why do you sigh?" she said, kindly and somewhat anxiously. "You seem to think that it will not last?"

"It will last for you," quoth I.

"But why not for you?" said she. "Surely it is for all the world; and if your country is somewhat backward, it will come into line before long. Or," she said, quickly, "are you thinking that you must soon go back again? I was going to propose that you should live with us where we are going. I feel quite old friends with you, and should be sorry to lose you." Then she smiled on me, and said: "Do you know, I begin to suspect you of wanting to nurse a sham sorrow, like the ridiculous characters in some of those queer old novels that I have come across now and then."

I really had almost begun to suspect it myself, but I refused to admit so much; so I sighed no more, but fell to giving my delightful companion what little pieces of history I knew about the river and its border-lands; and the time passed pleasantly enough; and between the two of us (she was a better sculler than I was, and seemed quite tireless) we kept up fairly well with Dick, hot as the afternoon was, and swallowed up the way at a great rate. At last we passed under another ancient bridge; and through meadows bordered at first with huge elm-trees mingled with sweet chestnut of younger but very elegant growth; and the meadows widened out so much that it seemed felt that the trees must now be on the bents only or about the houses, except for the growth of the willows on the immediate banks, so that the wide stretch of grass was little broken here. Dick got very much excited now, and often stood up in the boat to cry out to us that this was such and such a field, and so forth; and we caught fire at his enthusiasm for the hayfield and its harvest, and pulled our best.

At last, as we were passing through a reach of the river where on the side of the towing-path was a highish bank with a thick whispering

¹ I should have said that all along the Thames there were abundance of mills used for various purposes; none of which were in any degree unsightly, and many strikingly beautiful; and the gardens about them marvels of loveliness.

bed of reeds before it, and on the other side a higher bank, clothed with willows that dipped into the stream and crowned by ancient elm-trees, we saw bright figures coming along close to the bank, as if they were looking for something; as, indeed, they were, and we—that is, Dick and his company—were what they were looking for. Dick lay on his oars, and we followed his example. He gave a joyous shout to the people on the bank, which was echoed back from it in many voices, deep and sweetly shrill; for there were above a dozen persons, both men, women, and children. A tall handsome woman, with black wavy hair and deep-set grey eyes, came forward on the bank and waved her hand gracefully to us, and said:

“Dick, my friend, we have almost had to wait for you! What excuse have you to make for your slavish punctuality? Why didn’t you take us by surprise, and come yesterday?”

“O,” said Dick, with an almost imperceptible jerk of his head toward our boat, “we didn’t want to come too quick up the water; there is so much to see for those who have not been up here before.”

“True, true,” said the stately lady, for stately is the word that must be used for her; “and we want them to get to know the wet way from the east thoroughly well, since they must often use it now. But come ashore at once, Dick, and you, dear neighbours; there is a break in the reeds and a good landing-place just round the corner. We can carry up your things, or send some of the lads after them.”

“No, no,” said Dick; “easier going by water, though it is but a step. Besides, I want to bring my friend here to the proper place. We will go on to the Ford; and you can talk to us from the bank as we paddle along.”

He pulled his sculls through the water, and on we went, turning a sharp angle and going north a little. Presently we saw before us a bank of elm-trees, which told us of a house amidst them, though I looked in vain for the grey walls that I expected to see there. As we went, the folk on the bank talked indeed, mingling their kind voices with the cuckoo’s song, the sweet strong whistle of the blackbirds, and the ceaseless note of the corn-crake as he crept through the long grass of the mowing-field; whence came waves of fragrance from the flowering clover amidst the ripe grass.

In a few minutes we had passed through a deep eddying pool into the sharp stream that ran from the ford, and beached our craft on a tiny strand of limestone-gravel, and stepped ashore into the arms of our up-river friends, our journey done.

I disentangled myself from the merry throng, and mounting on the cart road that ran along the river some feet above the water, I looked round about me. The river came down through a wide meadow on my left, which was grey now with the ripened seeding grasses; the gleaming water was lost presently by a turn of the bank, but over the meadow I could see the mingled gables of a building where I knew the lock must be, and which now seemed to combine a mill with it. A low wooded ridge bounded the river-plain to the south and south-east, whence we had come, and a few low houses lay about its feet and up its slope. I turned a little to my right, and through the hawthorn sprays and long shoots of the wild roses could see the flat country spreading out far away under the sun of the calm afternoon, till something that might be called hills with a look of sheep-pastures about them bounded it with a soft blue line. Before me, the elm-boughs still hid most of what houses there might be in this riverside dwelling of men; but to the right of the cart-road a few grey buildings of the simplest kind showed here and there.

There I stood in a dreamy mood, and rubbed my eyes as if I were not wholly awake, and half expected to see the gay-clad throng of beautiful men and women change to two or three spindly-legged back-bowed men and haggard, hollow-eyed, ill-favoured women, who once wore down the soil of this land with their heavy hopeless feet, from day to day and season to season and year to year. But no change came as yet, and my heart swelled with joy as I thought of all the beautiful grey villages, from the river to the plain and the plain to the uplands, which I could picture to myself so well, all peopled now with this happy and lovely folk, who had cast away riches and attained to wealth.

WILLIAM MORRIS.

TO BE CONTINUED.]

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

More “Fire and Slaughter.”

The following paragraphs, clipped from the *Star* in one day (Tuesday, September 9), will perhaps persuade some of our “union-smashers” that there is something in the epidemic of incendiaryism of which I spoke a week or two ago:

“Francis William Hulley, 21, a farm-labourer, was yesterday apprehended at Draylsden on the charge of setting fire to four stacks of hay, and attempting to murder Amelia Bonsall, a farmer’s daughter at Macclesfield.”

“Another outbreak of fire, the second within a week, took place last evening at Beckingham Hall, near Maldon. Two large barns with their contents and four cattle-sheds were destroyed.”

“When a charwoman named Grant was lighting a fire in a house at Deal to-day an explosion occurred, seriously injuring her face and arm and burning her hair. A tin containing 1½lb of gunpowder, used for clearing the furnace flue, had been placed in the stove and covered with loose paper.”

There is a dangerous spirit abroad, and our Norwoods, Raikes, Liveseys had better pause in their exploits. These deeds prove that there are plenty of people about whom a little more tyranny would soon goad into “outrage.”

D. N.

TRADE UNIONIST TACTICS.

HAVING spent a week as a listener to the proceedings of the Liverpool Trades’ Congress, I may perhaps report briefly thereon. Leaving to others any comment on the reactionary and pettifogging nature of much of the business done, I desire to make clear to readers of the *Commonweal* a few of the playful ways of the aristocracy of labour. First, their slavish adherence to red-tape was worthy of a vestry. A Standing Orders Committee is elected before which all resolutions must pass, and when any resolution distasteful to the “old gang” was proposed, they managed to have it referred to the committee to take its chance in the ballot. Thus a resolution that the delegates of the insurance agents should be admitted was adroitly delayed by this dodge until the last day of the Congress, when, of course, its effect was nil. On every possible pretext men with the mark of the vestry on their brow rose to “points of order,” and many resolutions were thus shelved. Then the rampant intolerance of the Congress merits notice. No representative of a minority had any chance of being heard, and this applies not only to the Socialists present, but to any representative of an unpopular cause. When a Socialist dared to rise there was an immediate howl, and many resolutions which some of them desired to oppose were summarily passed without a word of opposition being audible. For snobbery no gathering of grocers could have beaten this democratic assembly. While Macdonald (London) was shouted down, as described already in the *Commonweal*, the Congress actually cheered Fenwick, M.P., when he complained that Macdonald had not explained his resolution! On the other hand, Burns (who is influential and determined) was allowed in quiet to second the very resolution which Macdonald had not been allowed to propose. Money is as much a god here as on the Stock Exchange, and it was sickening to hear these curs laugh derisively when it was stated that John Williams represented the firewood-cutters—much too plebeian a body for these sucking capitalists. The voting papers for the election of the committee bore opposite to each name the amount which its owner’s society had subscribed to the funds—as though this was any evidence of a man’s fitness for office. When the Lairds of Birkenhead were accused of being “sweaters,” delegates positively fought for an opportunity of whitewashing that firm, while the so-called labour members were cheered to the echo over their miserable defence to the charge of being political hacks. In fact, while the delegates found Burns, Tillet, and Mann too strong to be entirely “burked,” they took it out of Quelch, Williams, and the rest of the Socialists to make things straight. “Verily there is no god but Gladstone, and Broadhurst is his prophet!”

Reviews.

‘POLITICAL ECONOMY OF SOCIALISM.’ By John Carruthers. 1d. Hammersmith Branch S.L., Kelmscott House, Hammersmith.

Comrade Carruthers has written a tract upon what used to be once called the Dismal Science, which, strange to say, is not dismal at all, but is both bright and interesting. We know how the name of “political economy” frightens a good many people, and we do not wonder at it; but even the ordinary reader can get through comrade Carruthers’ little pamphlet, and after all some knowledge of political economy—it need not be much—is necessary to every Socialist. With regard to the pamphlet, we think Carruthers’ use of the words “purchase and sale” is unfortunate. “Purchase and sale,” in the ordinary public mind, is associated with profit-making, and I am sure the author does not want the British shopkeeper to understand that he is going to make a profit under Socialism. We admit that possibly in the transition period a paper currency may be needed, but it will simply be used as a measure of value, so that each community could exchange its products for others of equal value. We think with Carruthers that perfect morality and honesty will not be attained directly after the Revolution, but that it may take some considerable time to free ourselves from the vices engendered by the present system. We recommend all friends interested in that great question of what the future society will be like to read Carruthers’ pamphlet. Although they may not agree with all his conclusions, yet it will give them some idea of how a Socialist society might manage the production, distribution, and exchange of commodities.

‘OUR SOCIAL SYSTEM; and How it Affects those who Work for their Living.’ By David Andrade. Published by David Andrade, Sydney Road, North Brunswick, Melbourne.

A most damaging criticism of our present society from the Individualist-Anarchist standpoint. The following figures, showing how the Australian worker is robbed by his rulers the capitalist and landlord, are worth quoting:

HOW THE AUSTRALIAN LABOURERS SPEND THEIR ANNUAL EARNINGS.	
Taxes	£15,000,000
Rent, at 10 per cent. on estates value (£190,000,000)	19,000,000
Interest, over 12 per cent.	10,000,000
Profits, at 75 per cent. on merchantable commodities	67,000,000
Remuneration to labour	22,000,000
	£133,000,000

The moral of the pamphlet to the English worker is, “Don’t go to Australia,” for you will find that the labourer is no better off than he is in England. Nothing but the destruction of capitalistic monopoly can ever free the workers of the world from over-work, robbery, and starvation.

Our Spanish contemporary *La Anarquía* has an enlarged cartoon upon the lines of the one published by the S.L., entitled “When will he get there?” In the Spanish copy the characters are attired in native costume, and a priest is added to those opposing the progress of the Labourer towards the fruits of his toil. The picture has an effective appearance.

F. K.