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WHAT BOTHA FORGOT.

HOW HE SENT WOLVERHAMPTON THE NEWS.

POUTSMA'S MESSAGE.

The reason why General Botha tried to solve his problem by employing fixed bayonets, prison, hand-cuffs, a special train, and all the paraphernalia of force hitherto supposed to be peculiar to Russia and the blood-and-thunder drama, must have been clear to any one who studied Dr. Poutsma at the historic meeting held at the Wolverhampton Empire.

Dr. Poutsma is a force—a force to be reckoned with. He gave me the impression of being a man who knows exactly what he wants, and who goes for his objective with a calm confidence and determination. A man of that sort is a powerful man, a more powerful man than any fanatical bomb-thrower.

Poutsma has the dynamite of ideas. Hence those bayonets.

Whether the bayonets and the other incidentals represented the best method of dealing with him may well be questioned. For this is certain, that—to take Poutsma alone, for the moment—in forcibly sending him to England, Botha has furnished us with the means of learning in fifty minutes more about the condition of the country he rules than we could know by the agency of the news cables in as many years. There is a limit to the power of bayonets. They seem to be singularly impotent when they stop short of taking the breath away. Botha forgot that.

Poutsma's speech to those who heard it made South Africa a vivid reality. It brought home to the audience several little things they would never have known had Botha not forgotten.

As to the meeting, it will remain historic in the annals of the local Labour Party. Think of the features—on the platform an exile, the prospective candidate (Mr. A. G. Walkden), a Labour M.P. (Mr. F. W. Goldstone), Dr. Marion Phillips; and then in the audience a Liberal alderman, a Liberal councillor and a Conservative councillor also.

There was a tumultuous scene when Dr. Poutsma rose to speak. He did not waste his time in tearing a passion to tatters. He told his story. What a story it was!

After the War.

The first scene—South Africa after the war, which he went through attending to the wounded. South Africa is a land "almost flowing with milk and honey," and it is going to be the happy home of many a Britisher. Imperial Government is ordained, and he has to confess that the officials of the Crown do their duty and perform their work to the advantage of the country.

Then came the experiment of the Liberal Government at home. Self-government was instituted. Theoretically it was an act of justice. But the theory went wrong.

He charged the Union Government with having sold themselves completely to the foreign capitalistic element who organised the Jameson Raid and the War.

The conditions of the country are peculiar. There are two industries only—agriculture and the mines. The worker has the alternative, generally speaking, of employment in the mines or on the railways.

The railways are in the hands of the State, and the Government and the railways work in unison. For instance, a man dismissed from the railways is not taken on by the mines, and vice versa.

The railway and harbour workers are exceedingly well organised. Sixteen thousand out of 23,000 white men engaged on railways and harbours are organised. Such are the salient features of the situation out of which the dramatic climax arose.

He did not welcome the general strike, said Dr. Poutsma; he considered it general madness. But he believed that a man has an unassailable right to strike if he chose to do so.

The South African railway strike was resorted to only when all other methods had been tried and had failed.

The Government had decided to dismiss several hundred men from the railways. If they had been dismissed they would have starved. A deputation waited on the Minister for Railways.

Why They Struck.

Dr. Poutsma hardly moved his audience more than when he related how the members of the deputation "literally went on their knees," and begged that if economies were necessary the whole of the railway workers should be put on short time in order to save the others from being dismissed.

A great wave of applause greeted the narration of this offer of practical self-sacrifice.

But the offer, said Dr. Poutsma, was treated with scorn. The Labour leaders exhausted every effort to maintain peace, and when the last effort was rendered futile, there was only one thing to do. The Strike took place. On the 18th of January the railways were at a standstill.

The decision of the Government to dismiss the railway men was not justified by the need for economy. He charged the Government with an act of retaliation for what took place the previous year when the miners demonstrated their complete solidarity by abstaining one day from work, on the advice of their leaders, as a solemn protest against the bloodshed that resulted in the shooting down of 21 people in the streets of Johannesburg.

In a memorable passage Dr. Poutsma pronounced a panegyric on that bloodshed.

It was a grand day for South Africa, he declared in exulting tones, when the blood of Boer and Briton was mingled together, for on that day, as far as the workers were concerned, racialism was killed for ever.

Having explained the strike from the elements of its genesis in the particular economic conditions, Dr. Poutsma's narrative developed into the personal vein, and in what was perhaps the most striking part of a remarkable address, he described the incidents of his arrest.

He told how he was riding away from a peaceful strike meeting in a motor-car, how he was overtaken by another car, arrested on the road, without the production of a warrant or the formulation of a charge. He was told there was no charge, and that he had been arrested under a Peace Preservation Act passed by Lord Kitchener during the war!

He was kept in prison, where he had to sleep on the floor of a vermin-infested cell, for nineteen days, during which time he was allowed no communication with anyone, and his wife did not know where he was.

The description of the elaborate precautions made by the Government when the arrested Labour leaders were removed at the dead of night, made the audience laugh at the conduct of Botha in a panic. They were marched between double rows of bayonets into the prison van, again between bayonets into the train at the suburban station, and a similar exhibition of force was used to drive them on board at Durban, while in the train there were three detectives with revolvers to every two of the prisoners.

A Trial Demanded.

He emphatically declared that he had committed no offence against the laws of the country, and he claimed the right to a trial to which he would still be entitled even if he had committed any offence. He was prepared to be tried, and if anything could be proved against him that was unconstitutional he could be punished. In those circumstances he was man enough to take his punishment.

The speaker's message to the Labour Party of this country was one urging the need for the workers being represented in Parliament in sufficient numbers to make such outrages impossible.

He did not indulge in the customary peroration with which orators seek to create an effect at the close. One was hardly needed.

Mr. Walkden, the prospective Labour candidate, like a tactful chairman, did not take up much time. He warned the Labour Party that if the people of the country allowed the action of the South African Government to stand it would be quoted as a precedent. Government of the Colonies was looked upon as an interesting experiment, and if the methods of the South African Government were successful very probably they would be tried here. Soldiers were already being trained to work the railways.

The resolution was moved by Mr. Goldstone, M.P., and seconded by Dr. Marion Phillips.

Mr. Goldstone made a very effective speech, which was heartily applauded, and Dr. Phillips delivered a slashing attack on the supine home Government for having abandoned their principles in the face of an affront that would not have been tolerated at the hands of any foreign Power.

Dr. Poutsma's future career will be watched with keen anticipation by those who heard him—keen anticipation as to whether it will bear out the axiom he spoke when he had the handcuffs placed on his wrists. "Every dog has his day, and chickens come home to roost."

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PATRIOTISM AND PROFITS.

By J. T. WALTON NEWBOLD.

"The Imperial Maritime League seeks:—to secure the Safety of the Country and of the Empire; to Foster, as the essential means to that end, the growth of the self-sacrificing, the Patriotic, and the Imperial spirit; and to combat those Little England Ideas, the victory of which would spell the Ruin of our Race."

Now those are glorious sentiments. When I have read them once I read them through again, they fascinate me. They make my bosom quiver with patriotic thrills. That is the League for patriots, true patriots such as Lord Charles Beresford.

He says, "The work of the Imperial Maritime League is Quite Splendid."

You know who Lord Charles Beresford is, I suppose? He is chairman of the directorate of John Henry Andrew and Co., Ltd. (Sheffield). This firm, according to "Who's Who in Business" for 1913, specialises in

Steel for Rifles, Swords, Shot, and Shell.

He holds £5,000 of shares in this firm, which figures on the War Office list.

Never let us accuse him again of being a partisan politician. Here we have him filling nine columns of *Hansard* (volume xxxv., 1910) with a demand for the adoption of the automatic rifle. Says this self-sacrificing patriot: "Do drop this party business. What we want is to get the best rifle now."

There is an old couplet I often muse upon:

"Admirals all, for England's sake,
Honour be yours and fame!"

Admiral Lord Charles Beresford is not alone. There is Admiral Sir Edmund A. Fremantle, K.C.B., C.M.G.

He is a member of the United Empire, and the Army and Navy Club; he sits on the General Council of the National Service League as well as the Expert Advisory Committee of the Navy League, and, last but not least, he is a Patron of the All Empire Aerial Defence Campaign of the Aerial League of the British Empire. At the last annual meeting of the Navy League, he seconded a resolution demanding

"immediate provision for aerial defence under all conditions and at any cost."

A Thousand Aeroplanes.

He is chairman of the British Deperdussin Aeroplane Co., Ltd., contractors to the Admiralty and War Office.

I call this little gem from his company's prospectus:

The requirements of the British Empire should be much greater than those of other countries, owing to the large number of Colonies and Dependencies to be defended. It is estimated that within the next two years at least a thousand aeroplanes of all types will be required.

Also this:

This company may reasonably be expected to receive a considerable share of the orders.

Now we know why Britain must Rule the Air!

This company is but a branch of a foreign company, and they are selling aeroplanes to Italy, France, Russia, Turkey, and Belgium.

Some dark and foggy night, we are assured, riding through the clouds will come the aerial navies of the German War Lord.

Rear-Admiral R. S. Bacon has, therefore, joined the General Council of the Aerial League, whose object it is:

to encourage the invention, production, and use of aerial craft and to spread information showing the vital importance to the British Empire of Aerial Supremacy.

He is managing director of the Coventry Ordnance Co., which is, at present, manufacturing aeroplanes for the Government and has invented a gun for use against air-craft, for which it has, as yet, failed to secure any orders.

I have just mentioned these three instances as typical of the interesting combination of patriotism and profit-making which prevails at the present day.

This autumn we are to be treated most generously by the patriots. Both the Navy League and the National Service League are going to have vigorous campaigns throughout the country.

Armed by British Firms.

Everyone is agreed that our relations with Germany become more cordial every day. But the scaremongers are not in the least abashed thereby. The Navy League has discovered that our Mediterranean Fleet is insufficient. In 1916 Italy will have a number of new battleships ready, and so will Austria. These countries are allied to Germany, their navies lie across our sea-route to Egypt and India. They envy us. They might attack us some day. The Navy League does not tell us, however, that all the Italian ships will be armed by Vickers, Ltd., Armstrong, Whitworth and Co., Whitehead's Torpedo Works, Ltd., and subsidiary firms of these British enterprises.

It does not tell us that Italy is dependent for her naval guns and her field artillery, her armour plate and her torpedoes, her shot and shell, on two arsenals—Armstrong-Pozzuoli and

British capitalists with their up-to-date equipment.

It does not tell us that these arsenals and the great shipyards financed by Vickers and Armstrong would, in the event of war, be at the disposal of the enemies of England.

It does not tell us that these firms are urging the Italians to renewed efforts and greater building programmes.

Nor does the Navy League tell us that Vickers, Ltd., are the London agents of the great German armaments company of Deutsche Waffen und Munitionsfabrik. This was the firm that sent a false letter to a French paper endeavouring to arouse hate and jealousy and so increase its business. This was the firm that Dr. Liebknecht exposed and that the English capitalist newspapers execrated.

Where Dividends Come From.

The Navy League does not tell us that for eleven years, from 1901 to 1912, all the armour-plate makers of the world were combined together, and that some of the Navy League's most illustrious members were drawing their dividends out of German battleship building.

It does not tell us that the Canadian Navy for which it is crying so loudly, the splendid patriotism of Canada which it extols so eagerly, is going to pour money into the pockets of such men as one of its Vice-Presidents, the Earl of Denbigh, debenture trustee of the Fairfield Shipbuilding Co., which is part owner of the new Canadian Shipbuilding Co., now establishing gunshops and slipways in Cape Breton Isle. It does not draw our attention to the fact that Earl Grey, another vice-president, is a debenture trustee of Armstrong, Whitworth and Co., with its arsenals in Italy and Japan, its shipyards in Spain and Canada, its torpedo works in England and Austria.

Remember when you hear them acclaiming "the glorious, immortal memory of Nelson" that behind "the headlands where the names are the names of the victories of England," in Italy, Spain, Russia, and Canada their foundries work ceaselessly turning out guns and armour for all the nations of the world and for the most cosmopolitan gang of dividend seekers that can be traced in the stock exchanges of Europe.

Then the National Service League have sent a band of hirelings to preach the gospel of the "Nation in Arms." They want the country to adopt compulsory military training. Under their scheme we should have one million trained men in ten years, ready to fight for "King and Country."

Meanwhile they would be shouldering rifles, wearing bayonets, and firing cartridges by the hundreds of millions. For the enlarged army there would be required dozens of batteries of field guns, a great quantity of howitzers and garrison artillery, hundreds and hundreds of automatic quickfiring machine guns, aerial guns, aeroplanes, airships, and enormous stores of projectiles and explosives.

Directors and National Service League.

The wisdom of Solomon was as nothing to the cunning of the militarists. Directors of almost every armament company in the kingdom figure in the membership of the National Service League.

I give a list below of firms, directors, and the positions held in the National Service League. We do not, of course, allege that these gentlemen carry their private opinions into their business life, or that the two have any connection. Only the chain of coincidences is rather striking.

ARMAMENT DIRECTORS AND NATIONAL SERVICE LEAGUE.

The following is a list of firms, directors, and positions held in National Service League:—

FIRM.	DIRECTORS.	NATIONAL SERVICE LEAGUE.
Armstrong, Whitworth and Co. (Artillery, airships, projectiles).	Sir Andrew Noble (chairman)	Northumberland.
Vickers, Ltd. (Artillery, Maxim guns, airships, projectiles).	Henry Whitehead	Lancashire.
John Brown and Co., Ltd. (Owns half Coventry Ordnance Co.).	Sir Vincent Caillard	Wiltshire.
Thos. Firth and Sons, Ltd. (Projectiles).	W. B. Cloete	Cambridge.
Projectile Co., Ltd. (Projectiles).	B. A. Firth (deputy-chairman)	Sheffield.
Cammell, Laird and Co., Ltd. (Owns quarter Coventry Ordnance Co. and makes projectiles).	(Chairman).	
Fairfield Shipbuilding Co. (Owns quarter Coventry Ordnance Co.).	(Chairman).	
John Hy. Andrew and Co. (Steel for rifles, swords, and projectiles).	Col. W. Sidebottom (deputy-chairman)	Cheshire.
Eley Bros., Ltd. (Cartridge-makers).	Sam Roberts, M.P.	Sheffield.
Birmingham Small Arms Co. (Rifles).	Earl of Denbigh (vice-president) (Debenture trustee).	Vice-President, Warwickshire, Sheffield.
Hadfield's Foundry, Ltd. (Projectiles).	J. H. Cockledge	Sheffield.
Guncotton Powder Co. (Projectile fuses).	C. E. Eley	Suffolk.
Tharsis Sulphur and Copper Co. (Nobel Dynamite Trust) (Owns Nobel Explosive Co. and Birmingham Metal and Munitions Co.).	Sir H. Rogers (chairman)	Birmingham.
	Neville Chamberlain	Birmingham.
	General Brackenbury	Vice-President.
	General Nicholson (chairman)	St. Andrews.
	Lord Glenconner (chairman)	Executive Com- mittee, N.S.L.
	Lord Glenconner (shareholder)	
	Lord Glenconner (shareholder)	

"The manner of saying or of doing anything goes a great way in the value of the thing itself. It was well said of him that called a good office, that was done harshly, and with an ill-will, a stony piece of bread. It is necessary for him that is hungry to receive it; but it almost chokes a man in the going down."—Seneca.

"Run if you like, but try to keep your breath; Work like a man, but don't be worked to

The patriotic organisations are, we have seen, closely related to the armament companies. So are certain of the most prominent politicians.

Prior to his going to the War Office as Under-Secretary, Mr. H. J. Tennant, who is brother of Lord Glenconner and Mrs. Asquith, was a shareholder in Vickers, Ltd., Armstrong, Whitworth and Co., and the Nobel Dynamite Trust. He has since transferred his shares. He comes of a family that has made a fortune out of war material.

Meanwhile the armament firms are admirably represented in the councils of the nation by the following shareholders:

- BARON STAMFORDHAM (Hawthorne, Leslie and Co., torpedo boat builders and marine engineers to the Admiralty). Private Secretary to His Majesty the King.
- RIGHT HON. J. W. LOWTHER, M.P. (Vickers, Ltd.)—Speaker of the House of Commons.
- BARON SANDHURST (Vickers, Ltd., debenture trustee)—Lord Chamberlain.
- RIGHT HON. WALTER RUNCIMAN (Cammell, Laird and Co.)—President of Board of Agriculture.
- RIGHT HON. LEWIS HARCOURT (Vickers, Ltd.)—Colonial Secretary.
- LORD EMMOTT (John Brown and Co., Ltd.)—Under-Secretary for the Colonies.
- RIGHT HON. ALEXANDER URE (Vickers, Ltd.)—President of the Court of Session.
- LORD GLENCONNER (Nobel Dynamite Trust)—High Commissioner of the Kirk of Scotland.
- BISHOP OF CHESTER (Vickers, Ltd.).
- BISHOP OF RIPON (B.S.A.).
- LORD ABERCONWAY (Lib.)—Chairman of John Brown and Co.
- LORD RIBBLESDALE (Lib.)—(Deputy-chairman, Nobel Dynamite Trust).
- LORD PIRRIE (Lib.)—(Debenture Trustee, John Brown, Coventry Ordnance, and Thos. Firth and Sons).

Eggs Not All in One Basket.

If the electorate should weary of the representatives of "Peace, Retrenchment, and Reform" (who have enormously increased our Navy Estimates, sacked thousands of men from the Government arsenals, and sent so much work to the private contractors that their establishments are working day and night), and gave the Conservatives a period in power, the armament firms would not be left desolate. They do not believe in putting all their eggs in one basket.

Besides LORD CHARLES BERESFORD, they would have his fellow rebels, SIR J. B. LONSDALE (shareholder in Armstrong's) and J. W. CAMPBELL (Vickers, Ltd.). There would be the ex-Minister for War, LORD MIDDLETON (Armstrong's), LORD CURZON (Hadfield's), LORD BALFOUR OF BURLEIGH (Beardmore's and Coventry Ordnance Trust), EARL GREY (Armstrong's), Sir A. ACLAND HOOD (Kynoch's), RIGHT HON. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN (Kynoch's), and last but not least, LORD CLAUD HAMILTON (Hadfield's).

In fact the Church, the State, Army, Navy, Parliament, the Diplomatic Corps, the Press, and the Bankers of every land and none crowd the lists of shareholders.

The vested interests of armament are encrusted on the two Front Benches and about the whole fabric of Capitalist Politics and Government, here as everywhere else.

It is all the logical outcome of production for profit that this parasite should still suck the world to death, even when armies and navies are no more warranted by the economic changes of a civilisation where the cosmopolitan investor is supreme.

Only when the Labour and Socialist movement in every land comes to its own shall we hack through the tangle of to-day and carry the banner of the International to triumphant victory!

A.S.E. MEMBER.

TO SPEAK IN THE EMPIRE THEATRE ON APRIL 5th.

All sections of the workers in Wolverhampton will be glad to learn that Mr. G. N. Barnes, M.P. for Blackfriars, Glasgow, has been secured for the April monthly meeting in the Empire Theatre, which will take place on Sunday, the 5th.

Mr. Barnes has been for many years past a well-known and active figure in the British Labour movement. Born in Glasgow in 1859, he served his apprenticeship to an engineer at Dundee, joined the Amalgamated Society of Engineers, and was appointed Assistant Secretary to that organisation in 1892. In 1896 he



MR. G. N. BARNES, M.P.,

became General Secretary, but resigned about twelve years later on a question of principle. He unsuccessfully contested Rochdale for Parliament in 1895, but was returned for the Blackfriars Division of Glasgow in 1906, and has represented that constituency at Westminster ever since. He was one of the pioneer members of the I.L.P. and did a good deal of propaganda work for that party in its early days. He is an ardent Co-operator, and has taken a leading part in the recent negotiations to bring the Co-operative movement into closer relation with the general Labour movement. He is an authority on unemployment, did much to help forward the agitation which resulted in the legislation that established Old Age Pensions; and has a thorough knowledge of all Labour questions. He was the Chairman of the Labour Party in 1910, and is a member of the Managing Committee of Ruskin College.

Mr. Barnes is an unassuming, level-headed man, and a forcible speaker, and we hope there will be a large gathering of Trade Unionists and other sections of the local Labour movement to give him a good welcome to Wolverhampton on April 5.

BE A TERRIER.

[A circular was recently issued to Wolverhampton Territorials asking for volunteers to act as special constables in case of industrial disputes.]

Come and be a Terrier,
Be a modern Dan;
Come and be a Terrier,
Try to be a man!
You can be a soldier
Two weeks in a year,
You can also have the right
In strikes to interfere.

Come and be a Terrier,
A picket you can be;
Come and be a Terrier,
And then you'll surely see.
When your mates on strike have got
Just run and get your gun,
Through his head you put a shot,
And then the job is done.

Though the trouble may be just,
Might is Right, you cry;
Your mate can choose a bayonet thrust
Or rifle shot to die.

Your duty is, protect the scab,
Keep the wages down;
You will earn, my little man,
Just the rich man's frown.

Come and be a Terrier,
Be a blackleg to your pal;
Come and be a Terrier—
Be a traitor then you shall.
See the wives and children
Starve for daily bread,
While your fellow workman
Back in chains is led!

Drive him back to work, boys,
Drive him hard and fast!
The joiner to his bench, boys,
The cobbler to his last.
Keep him to the grindstone,
Making profit for the boss;
Safeguard the masters' interests
Against all chance of loss.

Come and be a Terrier,
A discredit to your sire,
Who, in the fight for Freedom,
Braved both flood and fire!
Come and be a Terrier,
Dirty deeds to do;
Come and be a Terrier,
I'll keep a shot for you!

Remember difficulties are not impossibilities. He who is first in calumny is generally last in merit.

The camel never sees its own hump, but that of its brother is ever before its eyes.

Some Pharisees, who have a habit of praying, "Thank God, I am not as other men," often wish they were.

The self-made man should postpone his boasting until after a searchlight has been turned on

WORDS FROM THE WEST.

PLAIN AND PITHY STATEMENTS CONCERNING CANADA.

By a CANADIAN JOURNALIST.

"What do they know of England who only England know," lamented our Empire poet. Kipling hardly has it. He credits the nation with too much. The reading should be:

"What do they know of any other blamed country who don't know even England?"

If the metre is bad the sense is sublime. One of the most amazing things that a returned Britisher finds in England is the immense number of be-fuddled people on the street who have the craziest idea of the actual conditions existing in Canada. Such it is better not to disillusionise—they are not wanted on the other side, anyhow. But I wish to give a few plain facts about Canada that even a higher grade scholar knows, or should know were the teaching at all practical.

First of all, I want to say that if a Britisher goes to Canada and remains in the Eastern provinces he might as well have stayed in England. Toronto is over populated, and the Canadians have to work as hard as the average Englishman at home. Montreal is as slummy as Wolverhampton, and Hamilton and London are the only other places that offer openings to the mechanic or artisan. But a married man in a regular job might as well be here. The provinces of Quebec, Nova Scotia, and New Brunswick are hard on Britishers, for the Britisher and American are not wanted there. In Toronto Britishers are heartily hated by the Canucks, but there is one thing to be thankful for—if they hate Britishers their dislike for the American is ten times stronger.

Tied to the Parish Pump.

This needs explaining. All the old conservative people of Ontario and Quebec are so blamed mad with themselves because they did not go West years ago, and the Britishers and Americans did, that they nearly poison themselves with their own bile. The Eastern Canadian is as much tied to the parish pump as the Britisher, who tells you he knows all about Canada because he read a letter from his next door neighbour's wife's brother (the one who was no good at all), and he told them how cold it was, etc. Both are of the opinion that the blood-thirsty red man still chases the buffalo on the western plains, and that life is divided between being held up by stage coach robbers and getting your face froze.

Manitoba is full of Englishmen, for the most part doing well, but Scotsmen got there first in bulk and appear to have cornered everything worth having. There is no land for occupancy, and the old country man working on a farm there has a real rough time, if he was not a farm hand before. If he was, he is far better off.

It is when we travel into Saskatchewan that we come to the province where the Britisher has made his mark. In this province men are making and saving money farming, but all the best land is taken up and if a man wants a farm he has to purchase it to-day. There is a strong flavouring of American farmers, too, who have big farms and work their land in the most up-to-date manner. Mixed farming is steadily increasing, and there is always in Saskatchewan a heavy demand for farm labourers. Not clerks or grocers' assistants, or any of the vast brigade of "Anything more to-day, ma'am?" Nor gentlemen farmers. Just men who can work the land themselves without any help are hailed as assets.

Sunny Alberta.

It is when you get into Sunny Alberta that you find the last Great West. In Alberta there is a greater percentage of Americans than elsewhere, more Britishers, and fewer Canadians. Britishers and Americans in five years will be running the province. The Canadians are of the best variety, for they are the young men who have left the Eastern cities and farms and gone towards the setting sun. Everybody is young, everybody is welcome, but the practical farmer is greeted with hats off. Alberta has the richest farming land in Canada, and she does not want anybody but the farmers. The head of the Mormon church, when laying the foundation stone at Cardston in Alberta of the new quarter of a million dollar temple, told the writer that five thousand young men farmers financed by the church and their families would go into the Peace River valley this Spring, and already cables are appearing in the British Press announcing train loads arriving on the Canadian side of the border. This is British territory, and Americans eagerly sell up their farms to cross the border to secure free patches of the richest land on earth.

In Alberta there is a climate that is the most invigorating on the earth's surface. It is on record that Calgary registered more sunshine per day for the month of December, 1912, than did Los Angeles in Southern California. I possess a letter from the Publicity Commissioner for the city of Calgary (which the editor has seen), dated January 24, 1914, and he remarks that he had been up town that morning in his summer clothes, he not having taken to his winter suitings then. One can pick roses outside right up to the middle of December, and out of the eighty thousand people living in Calgary, I have never heard of one of them being frozen to death, or even having a limb frozen. Hunters sometimes get caught

in storms, and are frozen, and it is on record that an Englishman in 1910 got drunk at a party and fell down going home and had to be thawed out before they could get him in the coffin. That's the only man frozen in that city in three years.

A Gigantic Fraud.

British Columbia is bad just now for new comers. Trade on the coast is overcrowded, there being so many Finns, Hungarians, and Galicians in the labour market. These people supply the rough labouring element, and a Britisher cannot compete with them. The money that has been invested in fruit farms will not be a very good dividend earner, for though magnificent fruit is produced, the railway rates for carrying it to big markets kill the profits so that scores of men are verging on bankruptcy. Immense canneries have been erected, but fruit is so plentiful that it has hardly paid for the grower to hire hands to pick the fruit. The British Columbia fruit farm is one of the biggest and most misleading frauds ever perpetrated in England. Land has been purchased for \$150 per acre that does not return five dollars actual cash.

There is one bogey that ought to be killed, but I suppose it will exist as long as people trust

THE GENERAL ELECTION

It is recognised by all who have studied the trend of political events that a General Election cannot long be delayed.

People who are most likely to know are predicting that the Appeal to the Country will take place in the latter part of May, or early June.

We would point out, therefore, to Trade Unionists that they must be getting ready for the fight.

The response to the Circular sent out by the Candidate has been very gratifying, but all available assistance is necessary to achieve success.

If you desire to put in some work, the Agent will be glad to see you at the Labour Assembly Rooms.

We can win this election—hands down.

But we cannot do it without you.

So come along—now—at once.

for their education in "Tit-Wits" and "Piffle's Weekly." The cost of living. Rent is four times what it is in England, and vegetables are three times the price here in the off-season, but everything else is as cheap, and quality for quality, cheaper. Flour is cheaper, meat, bacon, coal (and better quality), gas and electric light, while tea, coffee, and table necessaries are fifty per cent. dearer but of first-class quality. A woman with a family should be able to cook and bake, or she is lost in Canada. The standard of living is away higher in Western Canada, and the substitutes the poor people get here are unknown there. The West does not want the poor—they'll develop without importing them. People who are drowsy and can't move quick might as well stay here and die—they'll be shot there, anyhow, to keep them from encumbering the landscape. Canada wants live men and women—and especially the agriculturist. And more especially in Alberta the agriculturist.

And if you do go, take only a night shirt with you. Canada can supply you with as cheap goods as are procurable here. And you get what you need, not what you fancy you need. And be prepared to learn. Don't know all about Canada when you meet a Canadian. He was born there, and he does not know all about it yet. And what he has learnt has not been from animated pictures or a music-hall song.

FRENCH LABOUR COUNCIL.

The French Labour Council is still working to secure the "English week," or the free Saturday afternoon, with the ten hours' day for women and young persons. The "larger half" of the Council is composed of representatives of the Trade Unions.

In the coming elections the Railwaymen's Unions are strongly urging all the other trade unions to make a test question of the reinstatement of the railway workers victimised after the great strike, and there is every prospect that large bodies will vote Socialist for the first time.

VOTES FOR WOMEN IN PARIS.

The French League for Women's Rights is pressing claims for inclusion on the registers in all the 20 districts of Paris, and nine names have been inscribed in three of them. In the other wards the requests have been denied, and in several cases the women were not permitted to enter the room. The women are pleased with the measure of success, and propose to carry on active propaganda.

IMAGINARY CONVERSATIONS.

By Our TELEPHONE OPERATOR.

VIII.—ALDERMAN BANTOCK.

WOLVERHAMPTON WORKER: Hello! Exchange! Hello!

EXCHANGE: Hello!

W.W.: Alderman Bantock, please.

Ex.: Right you are.

W.W.: Hello! Is that you, Baldwin?

Ald. BANTOCK: Yes—Alderman Bantock, please Who are you?

W.W.: The Wolverhampton Worker.

Ald. B.: O-o-o-oh—

W.W.: I want to have a few words with you about the last Council Meeting.

Ald. B.: Oh, indeed.

W.W.: You know, you said Councillor Sharrocks' motion on the Fair Wages Clause was simply absurd.

Ald. B.: Well, so it was

W.W.: But didn't Sharrocks do it across you neatly?

Ald. B.: How do you mean?

W.W.: Why, he said it was only your opinion, meaning it was not worth much.

Ald. B.: Well, he's no right to insist that all workmen should be Trade Unionists.

W.W.: You forget, sir, that he is sent by Trade Unionists, paid by Trade Unionists, and he is bitterly opposed to non-unionists taking

THE WORKING WOMAN IN POLITICS.

By MARION PHILLIPS, D.Sc. (Econ.)
(General Secretary, Women's Labour League)

VII.—THE WIVES OF EXILES.

The women of the Labour movement have not been long in showing their indignation at the exile of the nine leaders from South Africa. Not only have they come in enormous numbers to welcome the men, but they have set to work to prepare a welcome equally enthusiastic and equally impressive for the women. Their hearts have been deeply moved by the thought of the desolate homes the nine men have left behind them, and whenever they have cheered Bain and Poutsma and the rest, they have remembered the wives and children left in South Africa, and the homes destroyed by a Government under the domination of a pitiless Capitalism.

So soon as it was known that three of the wives were on their way to this country, the representatives of the five great national organisations of industrial women, the Women's Trade Union League, the Women's Co-operative Guild, the Railway Women's Guild, the National Federation of Women Workers, and ourselves, met together and formed a Reception Committee. We arranged that three representatives should go to meet the wives at Southampton, and made plans to receive them in friendly style when they reached London. Then we planned to have a reception for them a little later when more of them would have arrived, and this will take place at Caxton Hall, Westminster, on March 30. There we shall have all the wives that have reached this country, the nine men, and a great gathering of Labour men and women of all organisations, and our sense of indignation will find full scope when there we welcome our sisters to Great Britain.

Wives' Terrible Plight.

The men were torn from their homes. Only two of them unmarried. Andrew Watson left a young wife only married for half a year. Some of them left little children behind them. R. B. Waterston left his four little boys, one still a baby, and the oldest only seven years. Think of his wife engaged in disposing of the home, packing up, taking the long journey down to Durban, the sea voyage, all bad enough at any time, and all the worse when there is little money, and all this following on the terrible anxiety of hearing that her husband had been arrested, and then that he had been deported.

Perhaps to know that their husbands had been arrested was something of a relief. And for this reason. These men, the whole brave nine of them, have been facing death in the streets of Johannesburg too often in this last year for the wives to have had one moment free from fear. All those days when the wanton use of the military forces against a peaceful meeting in Johannesburg last July, turned peace into the most terrible of wars, the struggle of unarmed, maddened men against armed police and soldiers; these men have led lives of peril. The Government has been frightened, and against panic-stricken cowards who have authority in their hands, life is a frail thing. In the gaols, in spite of every indignity that could be put upon them, they may have been safer than in streets overridden by soldiery. But few women in our generation have been through the misery that these sisters of ours have suffered in South Africa.

For those whose husbands have worked in the mines there has been another terrible fear, the fear, almost the certainty say some, of being the victims of miner's phthisis. This disease is sentence of death. Death may be slow or fast, but it is sure to be there within a few years' time. Two of the nine are its victims, and, most terrible of all, they know its certainty. Their wives know it too.

South Africa Little to Offer.

Truly South Africa has little to offer the men and women who have made their homes there. These nine who have impressed us all so greatly in these days with their clean, straightforward speeches, and their readiness to face the just consequences of anything they have done, their presentation of those qualities of love and justice, pluck and determination, which are supposed to be a British birthright, these are the men that South Africa turns out of their land. But even those it allows to stay risking their lives in the mines, or sweated on the railways, have little to look forward to. They can see the mineowners finding more and more work for native labour, less and less for the white man every week, and they have to face the prospect of destitution and unemployment for themselves and their sons in the future. That is how the case stands to-day in this dominion of Great Britain. It is this lot that the women see before their children in what was once a country of hope.

We cannot wonder, therefore, that our women are eager to do the exiles honour, and to receive their wives and families with open arms. We must make them feel the warmth of our sympathy and the worth of our sisterhood. We have the opportunity of proving the value of internationalism, the sincerity and strength of our common sense of sisterhood.

the benefits which Trade Unionists are perpetually fighting and paying for.

Ald. B.: H'm—Yes?

W.W.: Aren't you a Trade Unionist?

Ald. B.: What, I a Trade Unionist? Ha! ha! What a joke!

W.W.: Hold on a minute. Aren't you a member of the Chamber of Commerce?

Ald. B.: Yes; but what's that to do with it?

W.W.: You'll pardon me, but as a member of the Chamber of Commerce you believe in keeping up a standard of prices for your goods, don't you?

Ald. B.: Of course we do.

W.W.: Again, you believe in the principle of the Tradesmen's "Association"?

Ald. B.: Precisely.

W.W.: Again; you believe in getting the highest price for the commodities you sell, and getting rid of unscrupulous competitors?

Ald. B. (impatiently): Yes, yes.

W.W.: Well, call round and shake hands with me; you're a Trade Unionist.

Ald. B.: I don't understand. I—er—

W.W.: Oh, dear, you are dense. Well, it's like this, the Trade Unionist has his labour to sell. He believes in selling it at the highest price. He forms a tradesmen's association—a Trade Union—fixes a minimum rate to sell his goods (his labour) at, and debars unscrupulous competitors (blacklegs) from partaking of those benefits without standing his share of the cost. Now, then, do you see?

Ald. B.: Ah, I think I do.

W.W.: Well, what do you mean by saying it is tyranny to insist on a man being a Trade Unionist?

Ald. B.: I really don't know.

W.W.: It's no more tyranny than for your Chamber of Commerce to stop unscrupulous competition and the workmen to stop men selling their labour too cheap. And so Sharrocks was quite right.

Ald. B.: All right. Have you finished?

W.W.: Another word. The sooner you are out of the Council Chamber the better. We are absolutely sick of you adopting the rôle of Dictator of what shall and shall not be done. And, remember, we have got our eye on you, and perhaps it might be as well if you bear that in mind.

Ald. B.: P—how—

W.W.: Ring off, please.

WOLVERHAMPTON LABOUR PARTY.

MASS MEETING,

EMPIRE, Sunday April 5.

G. N. BARNES, M.P.

(A.S.E.)

CHAIRMAN: MR. G. TARRATT.

Commence 7-0 p.m.

Doors open 6-30

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HOLLINGSWORTH'S SAUSAGES AND PUDDINGS

Good Lodgings For Railwaymen.

THE Wolverhampton Worker.

APRIL, 1914.

LABOUR AND THE TRADING COMMUNITY.

There is an impression in many minds that the programme of the Labour Party is designed only for one class of people—the manual labourer. While, to a great extent, the Labour Party does mainly address itself to the worker, it is not entirely the case. The Labour movement appeals to all classes of the community, and a little reflection on the part of many of those who think they are outside the sphere of Labour interests would prove to them conclusively the truth of the contention of the Labour Party that the adoption of their ideals would benefit everyone. That the conditions of life of the working class stand most in need of improvement, however, is a fact about which there can be no argument. The innumerable charitable organisations which have for their object the amelioration of some of the squalor and wretchedness which abounds all over the country have for years pointed to the necessity for drastic remedies. With all their good intentions, charitable societies have never done anything in the way of prevention of poverty; they have never done anything to remove the cause; all that they have been able to do is to relieve a little of the distress here and there, but that little has been as a drop in the ocean. They have served the useful object, however, of emphasising the need for legislation. The capitalist parties, with their time-worn shibboleths, have made no real effort to deal with the problem. Hence the advent of the Labour Party. The Labour Party appeal, primarily, to the working class, because, holding seven-tenths of the political power, they have the remedy in their own hands. The fact that poverty exists, that low wages are paid, is entirely the fault of the workers. The power to alter all these things is vested in Parliament,

have determined that life should be made better, no power on earth can deny them. That is the lesson of the Labour Party.

While, therefore, the Labour Party must appeal to the working classes to save themselves, their efforts must necessarily benefit all classes. Just as the existence of infectious disease in one quarter of a town is a menace to the health of the whole community, so is the existence of poverty, in the slightest degree, detrimental to the prosperity of the whole. The tradesman is often heard to complain when trade is bad that he, too, has a hard struggle to keep his head above water. Has the tradesman ever thought that the root cause of that depression in trade is the existence of poverty? The shopkeeper would probably agree that trade is bad because of unemployment, but he would smile incredulously if it was suggested that unemployment is the cause of further unemployment. Yet that is exactly the case. The whole process works in a vicious circle. The fact that there is a considerable number of unemployed men after one situation has a tendency to cheapen the price of labour; low wages mean the lessening of the purchasing power of the labourer, the lessening of that purchasing power means a lesser demand on manufactories, and as our economic system is governed by the law of supply and demand, the lesser the demand the lesser the supply. The consequence is when the demand is short, the manufacturer either puts his men on short time or reduces the number of his employees, thus bringing us back again to the point we started from—unemployment and bad trade. Every shopkeeper recognises that these evils seriously affect his business, and it is hardly necessary to point out that when bad trade drives the worker to accept Poor Law relief the rest of the community have the additional burden of keeping him out of the taxes. Clearly, then, it is to the interest of the trading class to support the policy which has for its object the raising of wages and the abolition of poverty.

The Labour Party are advocating that a minimum wage of 30s. per week for all workers shall be established. This would mean a vast increase in the wages of working people. And as the working class are the largest consumers, the natural result is that there would be a bigger demand for every commodity which is necessary to life. By the increase in the demand, there would necessarily be an increase in trade. In turn the increase in trade would tend to lessen unemployment, and with less unemployment again, there would be better trade. Side by side with this, the adoption of the eight-hour day would tend still further to solve the unemployment problem by the fact that the lessening of the hours of a large section of the workers would create a demand for more labour. The whole problem can be solved without any experimenting with a protective tariff, the only effect of which would be to make the rich richer and the poor poorer. It will be seen, therefore, that the policy of the Labour Party, while it appeals first of all to the working class, would tend directly to benefit the whole of the community, inasmuch as the effect of its operations would be to abolish poverty, and to build up a more prosperous, healthier, and nobler proletariat.

POINTS FROM POUTSMA.

Two facts emerged clearly from the meeting held in the Empire Palace, Wolverhampton, on Sunday, March 15, to protest against the arrest and deportation without trial of the nine South African Trade Union leaders, and to hear the true facts of the case from the lips of one of them, Mr. H. J. Poutsma. The first was that there has been a deliberate conspiracy to keep the British people in ignorance of the real state of affairs on the part of the capitalist Press, both at home and in South Africa. The Labour leaders had been depicted as lawless brigands, as Anarchists, whose sole object was to destroy every vestige of authority, and as unscrupulous men who were leading a blind and ignorant working class to perdition. Possibly, those readers of certain sections of the London Press who were present would not have been surprised to have seen the South African rail-

in each hand. At the least they had expected to find a man with an aggressive manner, and to hear a tirade of abuse against everyone who was not of his way of thinking.

Mr. Poutsma, however, turned out to be a man entirely different from the picture which had been painted. In quiet yet deliberate voice, with just a touch of that hesitancy which is shown by those who speak in a tongue not their own, Mr. Poutsma told his story. No flowery language, no impassioned appeals embellished his speech. In simple and direct tones he traced the course of events from the South African war to the culmination of a few weeks ago, when he and his nine colleagues were torn from their families and their homes. It was a story which roused the indignation of everyone who heard it. There was no attempt to overstate facts, and the applause which Mr. Poutsma received when he sat down was evidence that it had reached the hearts of his audience, and had proved to them completely that they had been misled. Ridicule has been poured on the South African Trade Unionists' struggle, and vituperation on their leaders. Mr. Poutsma's revelations proved conclusively that if the people are to obtain accurate information they must not rely on the Press which has always done its utmost to belittle their cause, but must back those journals which have ever come to their aid. *The Daily Citizen*, Labour's daily paper, was the only paper which gave the real facts of the case, and Mr. Poutsma's advice to the audience on supporting it ought to be followed.

The second point to be gained was that something more than the mere voicing of protests must be done if this latest scheme of capitalism is to be crushed. Mr. Walkden warned the meeting that a precedent had been established which would be gladly followed in this country if allowed to go unchallenged. Mr. F. W. Goldstone described how the antediluvian procedure of the House of Commons had prevented the raising of the question, and how permission had been refused to the nine victims of the outrage to appear at the Bar of the House and plead their cause. Dr. Marion Phillips struck the right note when she said that if any other country had perpetrated this thing there would have been war, but because the people who were behind it were capitalists and had great vested interests within the Empire, it could go unchallenged. All this roused the enthusiasm of the audience to a high pitch, but we warn the workers of Wolverhampton against letting that enthusiasm flag. Though the protest registered, in conjunction with the many great protest meetings up and down the country, will be bound to have an effect, mere words will not alter the conditions which allow outbreaks of despotism such as this. So long as the capitalist class are allowed to control the Government of a State, so long will the people be liable to further tyranny. The only way in which to ensure that there will be no further destruction of the civil rights of the people is to see to it that the people's representatives have charge of the nation's affairs.

HOME RULE.

For many more years than most of us care to remember the question of Home Rule has occupied a prominent place in the political world. That it is not yet settled is perhaps the most convincing proof that could be desired of the insincerity of both the Liberal and Conservative parties. To-day we find, as was the case two generations ago, the orthodox parties still wrangling over this subject, and the probabilities are that they will go on wrangling. In the meantime, every subject that is likely to be of benefit to the great mass of the people is being crowded out, and much-needed reforms are completely ignored, while the game of party politics is carried on. The Liberal party says, "Ireland must have self-government," but though they have sufficient majority to carry it through, they play with the question. The Tories say, "If the Government go on with this measure there will be civil war." Then they start to talk about concessions. And so the game of bluff goes on. But we would point out that these people are not bluffing each other—they understand

their minds from dwelling on other matters more intimately connected with their welfare.

As far as the Labour Party are concerned, Home Rule is a measure of justice which is many years overdue. They demand that the whole question shall be dealt with during the lifetime of the present Parliament. Mr. J. Ramsay MacDonald, M.P., writing in *The Daily Citizen* a few days ago, clearly defined the attitude of the Labour Party—"We want to settle the Irish question now. We want it removed from our way. . . . We are unwillingly willing to let certain Ulster counties remain out for a few years. It will be confusing; it will not be very happy in its effect. But if it enables Sir Edward Carson and his friends to accept the decision of the House of Commons we shall face the consequences. We are willing to modify the terms to suit their convenience—always provided that there is to be no permanent exclusion, and that the question is not to remain upon the list of unsettled problems in British politics. If no acceptable settlement with that proviso is possible the Bill in its present form must go through, and the King must sign it. *Some Home Rule Bill must become an Act of Parliament this session.*"

Home Rule has been used by the Capitalist parties to block the wheels of progress in other directions, and the time has now arrived when the matter shall be dealt with once and for all. Other questions of more vital importance to the working classes are clamouring for attention. The reform of the Poor Law, the questions of Housing, Education, the Minimum Wage, the Eight Hours' Day, the Nationalisation of Mines, Railways, and Canals, are all subjects which demand the consideration of Parliament, and the Capitalist parties know that when some of the matters which have kept them occupied for so long have been cleared out of the way they will have to set to work to do something or else make room for others more anxious to further the common weal. We believe that the majority of the working classes of this country are not concerned in the least about Home Rule, except that they are sick and tired of the hypocrisy which is displayed in connection with it, and want to see it cleared out of the way. In spite of the "solemn covenants" and "oaths" of the Tory Party—and the average Tory to-day is ready to take an oath on anything under the sun—the people refuse to be alarmed by wild threats of civil war, and they realise that with the granting of self-government the Irish workers will have a chance to work out their social freedom. They also know that with the passing of the Home Rule Bill the British Parliament will have to turn its attention to the problems we have enumerated. Home Rule has ceased to be an all-important issue with the working class to-day. The problem of the empty stomach is far more insistent, and they demand that Parliament shall stop this foolery and get to business.

RIGHT ABOUT FACE.

EDUCATION COMMITTEE PERFORM A SOMERSAULT.

It was a chastened Education Committee which met on Monday, March 23rd, to adopt the scheme for the Medical Treatment of School Children.

At their ordinary February meeting several members were valiant in their determination to fight the Board of Education, and to keep the children without treatment. Of course, the Board was an indefinite something far away in London who could not hurt them, and—well, you know hard hearts are impervious to the sufferings of little children.

We uttered a strong protest in our last issue, but we confess we did not expect developments so soon.

The Education Committee were suddenly called together on the day when the Town Council should have met to consider the Education minutes, and then the Chairman, Alderman Levi Johnson apologised to the Committee for having misled them, but he had been a trifle out in his reckoning, and instead of nothing coming from the Imperial funds there would be quite a respectable sum after all. A resolution was carried asking the Town Council to allow the Education Committee's recommendation not to proceed with the matter to be withdrawn.

Another special meeting was held on March 23rd, when further apologetic statements were made by Alderman Johnson, and it was decided to go on with the scheme.

So Alderman Bantock has not been able to fight the Board of Education, after all!

LOCAL NOTES AND COMMENTS.

By "THE CHIEL."

*A chiel's amang ye takin' notes,
An', faith, he'll prent 'em.*

—BURNS.

Increasing in Popularity.

Mr. A. G. Walkden, the prospective Labour candidate for the West, has spent quite a lot of time in the constituency recently, and the series of meetings he has addressed in the various wards has been highly successful. I like those small meetings myself. At a large meeting, such as those held in the Empire Palace, the speakers seem so far away, that one loses that feeling of connection between the speaker and the audience. Of course, when so many people are anxious to hear a speaker large halls must be used. But in a room such as a school-room one seems to be more intimate with the speaker, and his influence is felt to a much greater degree. Many people who had never come in contact with Mr. Walkden before attended the ward meetings, and the impression he created has been decidedly favourable. His strong personality, his business-like manner in dealing with questions of the day, and his sympathetic interest in local questions have all gone to make him one of the most popular men in Wolverhampton. I have heard people say that the Labour Party "have the best candidate that has ever been put forward in Wolverhampton." That is also the feeling of the rank and file of the Labour movement, and they are enthusiastic about his prospects.

A Grand Reception.

I fancy that even Mr. Walkden himself was surprised at the ovation he received in the Empire on March 15th. Cheer after cheer went up, and when the applause was dying down some enthusiast would shout "Give him another!" and again the audience would delightedly join in a tumultuous outburst, in which affection was easily the top-most sentiment. "Eye-Witness" in another column says that Mr. Walkden was commendably brief. Now "Eye-Witness" is a gentleman who has been in more meetings than one, and he has seen chairmen who have had the idea that the audience had come to hear pearls of wisdom from their lips instead of the chief speaker's. Being a judge of these matters "Eye-Witness" pays Mr. Walkden a great compliment for his masterly handling of the meeting, and his acknowledgment of the fact that it was the other speakers whom the audience had assembled to hear. But I don't think the audience would have shown any impatience had Mr. Walkden gone on a little longer.

The "Red Flag."

It is a long time since I heard the "Red Flag" sung in a Wolverhampton meeting. Before the singing Mr. Walkden gave one or two details about the song, and raised enthusiasm by urging the audience "Sing this song—and mean it. Let it thrill your blood!" And they did sing it. Everyone was thrilled by the rousing chorus led by the band. The audience, not satisfied, wanted to sing it again, and the band led them in the chorus once more. They would have sung it again, but the chairman rose to introduce Mr. Poutsma and then the crowd cheered and cheered again. It was an inspiring sight. Handkerchiefs were waved and one could gauge the intense feeling which ran through the vast assembly. It is safe to say that the hymn of Labour will become popular in Wolverhampton. I cannot let the opportunity pass without referring to the band which led the singing, and which gave a really fine concert before the commencement of the meeting. The band gave their services voluntarily. They were all members of the Musicians' Union, and it is a tribute to the splendid manner in which the whole of the Trade Union movement are rallying round the standard in Wolverhampton. The concert prior to the meeting was greatly appreciated by those who assembled as soon as the doors opened; it was good music well rendered, and I hope our musical comrades will give us their assistance on future occasions.

The "Covenant."

The "solemn oath and covenant" has arrived in Wolverhampton, and strenuous efforts are being made to get it signed. The Tory Association have despatched copies to its trusted men with the request that endeavours shall be made to fill it with signatures and return to the president of the Association. But the people are not having any. Even some of the most Tory of Tories refuse to pledge themselves. I heard one say the other day: "I disagree with the Home Rule Bill, but I refuse to bind myself down to a thing like that." Many Conservatives view with grave misgiving the action of a section of their party—and it is a small section—in their threats to throw over the Constitution and to defy the law. "For," they say, "you don't know where this kind of thing will end. Once create a dangerous precedent, such as this, and you will find it being followed in other directions." I would point out that this is sound logic. The agitators in the Tory camp are making a rod with which to beat themselves. There are other and more important things which people may fight for—once set the example and there will be no preventing it being adopted in other ways.

How It Is Done.

But those zealots who are trotting out their "covenants" on every possible occasion are not

dismayed, because, as you know, it is a perfectly simple matter to fill a form—even if one has to do it oneself. A little instance I know of is distinctly amusing and also throws a great deal of light on the methods adopted to get signatures. My readers will, no doubt, recollect the great outcry the Tories made over the poor domestic servants who were being victimised under the Insurance Act—especially those with dear, kind Tory mistresses. It will also be remembered that a monster petition was organised. In course of time it came to Wolverhampton—we get them all here, you know—and a lot of charming Primrose dames went a-begging names. One of them called in a shop. "Will you sign the petition against the Insurance Bill?" she sweetly inquired of the proprietor. It so happened that he was a Liberal, and he refused. "Then may I approach the assistants?" The shopkeeper raised no objection, and the lady went round, with little success. Just as she was about to depart, in walked the errand boy—a boy of fourteen years of age, not affected by the Bill. Putting on her most charming air and smiling sweetly, she inquired would the "young man" sign the document? Quite flattered by the attention of so grandiose a lady, he immediately consented. With his chest swelling with pride the boy "vigorously protested against the iniquitous Bill," and the lady departed with one more signature. I wonder how many "covenanters" of the same age have signed up.

The Nondescript Clerk.

This seems rather discourteous to a really deserving section of the community. But I really don't know what to call them. They are certainly not millionaires; people like the Rees Roturbo see to that. They are rarely landlords; their wages will hardly pay the rent, let alone buy property. They do not come from the House of Lords, for they work for their living; if they work for their living they must be—ah, not so fast; the Town Clerk says "No, they are not workmen!" And he should know, for is he not a clerk himself? I have been trying to classify the clerks, but I am afraid I must give it up:—If a clerk works for his living he is a—No, try again! If a clerk steps out of the office, puts on overalls and takes his collar off, he is a workman. If a workman pushes a pen across a ledger at fifty miles an hour he ceases to be a workman and becomes a clerk. But what the d—l is a clerk?

The Evolution of the Clerk.

Up to the time of the present dispute the average Trade Unionist would have said that "A clerk is a man who wears a clean collar, fancy socks, and a pen—the pen generally being affixed as an extra ornament to his ear. He was generally a man who would patronise you in the works and superciliously ignore you in the street. On occasion he would do a little manual labour when the men were on strike." I am not applying this to the clerks as a class to-day. This was an accepted theory even among the clerks themselves. But someone has been opening their eyes—I strongly suspect that a man named Elvin has had something to do with it—and many of them have now, as I noticed someone picturesquely put it, "taken their tongues off the bosses' boots" and become members of the N.U.C., an organisation which has done much to raise the status of the clerks. Even Mr. Elvin himself described clerks as being at one time of the "jellyfish order." All that has gone by—I hope, never to return—and the Wolverhampton clerks have proved they are men. Ah, I have it at last! A clerk—if he is a member of the N.U.C.—is a man. I hope he will soon be a "work-man."

Trades Unionists and Clerks.

The Wolverhampton Trade Unionists are proud of the clerks—proud that in their midst the first clerks' strike in history has taken place. They have helped them by moral and financial support, and will continue to do so as long as they are fighting the battle for better things, I do not know of a single Trade Union in the town which has not assisted them in some way or other. Their collecting cards and boxes have been well received at all the works. The crowning point came at the last meeting of the Trades Council, when Mr. Elvin appeared to voice their cause. The reception he got was sufficient to prove that the whole of the Trade Unionists in the district were at the back of the clerks, and that there was no necessity to use "peaceful persuasion" with the delegates in the form of a long speech. A few words; and then a resolution backing the N.U.C. was moved, seconded, and carried with acclamation. The clerks have shown they know what they are doing—even when it means getting up early to meet blacklegs, or travelling to Stourbridge. I hear there are some good picture-houses in Stourbridge!

The Trade Union Mission Week.

It is almost twelve months since the first Trade Union Mission Week was held in Wolverhampton. May Sunday will soon be here, and, as was the case last year, the week following will be signalled by the holding of meetings in all

quarters of the town to further the Trade Union cause. While it is early yet to say much about the matter, I am in a position to be able to state that arrangements are going on satisfactorily, and that it is anticipated that the forthcoming campaign will be the most successful yet organised. Speakers are being booked, and it is expected that a prominent national speaker will give the "week" a good start. I would appeal to all Trade Unionists to assist in every way possible to get the best results, either by attending the meetings and distributing literature, or by giving a word in season to any of their non-unionist friends. Approached in the right spirit I am convinced that many men who are not inside Trade Unions would be willing to listen to reasonable argument, and I hope Trade Unionists will do their best. Over 1,000 new members were put on the books of the various unions last May. Is it possible to double it? Let the motto of the Trade Unionist for May Week be: "Get that 2,000!"

Thanks.

I must tender my thanks to those readers who write encouraging letters to me. I fully appreciate the kind sentiments expressed therein, but I really hope they will not pile it on too thick, or I shall soon be suffering from a severe attack of "swelled head." The other day I received a request that my photo should appear in THE WORKER. There is only one objection, and that is I should be sorry to destroy any illusion any friends of mine may cherish. Still, I am always glad to hear from readers of THE WORKER, and shall be only too pleased to deal with questions they would like me to take up. This week, for instance, I have received a letter from a lady reader on some methods of propaganda adopted by our opponents, and the information has conjured up some interesting reflections. But my time is up. "C. Vere," in his interesting jottings, says something about "the pen being mightier than the sword." I know something mightier than the pen, and that is the Editor's blue pencil. I can hear him sharpening it now, so for another month I say "Adieu."

WHAT IS THE LABOUR PARTY?

LETTERS TO A WORKING MAN.

BY A WORKING MAN.

II.—BEGINNING WORK.

MY DEAR FRIEND,—

You have now commenced to Labour for your living. By nature compelled to eat, obeying the Biblical law, "By the sweat of thy brow shalt thou earn thy daily bread," find yourself in a factory, a shop, at the desk, or a machine.

You will observe that you have no option of doing anything else but work. You are not allowed to idle about; you are not to beg; you must go with your brains and your hands to a master to sell your labour, and with hardly any voice as to your rate of pay.

You find yourself grouped with a lot of your fellow beings, who work just because they feel it their duty, not asking why, nor considering why they always have to do it, never wondering where it all goes to, who instruct you in your particular trade, and contribute to various trades their special consideration.

The money you receive from your master makes you feel a kind of a debt of gratitude to him, feeling that he is doing something to relieve a little of the poverty you have seen in your own home. You never realise that your mates and yourself have earned the money and more besides until you have grown into more mature years.

Later on, you are approached by your mates with a view to joining a union. In some cases there is no option but to join, you don't know why it is necessary yet, but you are told it is to keep the wages of your labour up.

Again you wonder why. The reason is easily given. With the invention of the machine it is now possible to put a boy or a youth watching a machine and turning out twice or three times the amount of work at a less labour cost, or, in other words, two or more men are thrown out of work per machine, as these figures taken from "Mind Your Own Business," by R. B. Suthers, will show:—

"In America one man can in one day produce enough bread for himself for a year.

"In well organised coal mines 100 men extract yearly enough fuel to supply warmth for 10,000 families, 40,000 people in a rough climate.

"A girl in a cotton mill can turn out enough calico in a year to clothe 12,000 people.

"Twenty-five boys, working twelve hours a day, can make 2,500 dozens of socks.

"One hundred pairs of men's fine boots can be made by a handworker in 46 weeks, with machinery they can be made in 37 days.

"It has been calculated that 1½ million men could supply all the needs of 40 million people by working eight hours a day for 300 days in a year. We have an adult male population of 10 millions."

There, I think that is sufficient proof of the effect of the introduction of machinery, and the tendency to lower wages by the installation of automatic machinery. If you want more read Prince Kropotkin's "Fields, Factories and Workshops." And now, sir, I will leave you these few facts till the next issue. W.

A BROKEN PLEDGE.

Explanation demanded from Councillor Henn.

THE FAIR WAGES CLAUSE.

It is becoming axiomatic in Wolverhampton that when anything brought forward at the Town Council is the object of a great deal of opposition there must be something good in it. This sentiment accurately sums up the character of the Wolverhampton Town Council. It would be difficult, in the whole of the British Isles, to find a body of men more completely in harmony in a stern determination, that, come what may, as far as lay in their power, they would resist to the utmost any attempt to raise the status of the people.

They talk about "the ratepayers," but when they use the term they refer to men of their own class—employers, landlords, etc., to whom the demand notes are sent. The real ratepayers, the workers and the tenants are completely ignored, except when an opportunity occurs to further exploit them, and then they do it. Working people are very useful to make money out of, only it was a great pity they were made with stomachs; they would not have worried about wages so much if they hadn't such awful appetites.

Some time ago the Typographical Association sent forward a resolution to the Trades Council asking that steps should be taken to get the Town Council to amend their Fair Wages Clause, to the effect that only Trade Unionists should be employed by firms tendering for Corporation contracts. Owing to a rush of important business this was delayed until the violation by the Town Council themselves of that clause, mild as it was, struck a further blow at the wages of the working class of the district. At the February meeting of the Trades Council, Councillor Sharrocks was requested to bring the whole question forward.

Councillor Sharrocks did bring it forward, and immediately had the whole of the Council on the top of him. They talked about "tyranny" and everything they could think of, except the subject under discussion. The whole matter was in the melting-pot, and there was at least one attempt to destroy even the little safeguard the present Fair Wages Clause offers.

Mere Wind.

The whole discussion, with the exception of the remarks of about five of the speakers was mere wind; some of the present members seem to regard the Council as a kind of amateur debating society, where they can get off their chests all the puerile platitudes which they have been thinking about since the previous meeting.

Councillor Sharrocks' resolution was intended to make impossible the recurrence of any violation of the principle of Fair Wages such as took place a month ago. Everyone admits that where a shop is recognised as thoroughly Trade Union nothing but fair wages can be paid. Trade Unionism is a guarantee of fair wages. In addition, the adoption of the resolution would have had the effect of bringing other firms into line, and therefore, if the Council were sincere in their professions, they would have carried the resolution. But the Council talked the matter out, and proved their insincerity.

Councillor Henn's Broken Pledge.

There is, moreover another and more serious aspect of the question. At the last municipal elections, the Typographical Association submitted the following question to the candidates seeking election:—

If elected, would you support a resolution to insert in the Corporation Contracts Clause a condition to the effect that all work transacted under a contract should be done entirely by Trade Union labour?

Along with the others, Councillor Henn received this question, the italicised words appearing in the printed question in order that all possibility of misunderstanding be avoided.

The reply of Councillor Henn was equally definite:—

I am pleased to answer your inquiry re the Typographical Association in the affirmative.

At the Council Meeting Councillor Henn deliberately went back on his promise in a speech, the crux of which was:—

Councillor Henn thought Councillor Sharrocks' resolution (embodying the Typographical Association's question) would introduce an element of tyranny into commercial arrangements!

What is the construction to be placed on this? Councillor Henn was pledged to support the proposal, yet when he gets on the Council he not only does not carry out his pledge, but goes out of his way to oppose the resolution. Are we to infer from this that Councillor Henn's promise was a mere vote-catching pretext?

We were glad to note that one of the delegates to the Trades Council uttered a strongly-worded protest, which had the effect of inducing that Council at its last meeting to unanimously pass a resolution asking Councillor Henn for an explanation.

It must be pointed out that Councillor Henn led the electors of Dunstall Ward—the great majority of whom are Trade Unionists—to believe that he intended to go the whole hog on Trade Union matters. The Labour Party were criticised on this account for opposing him. Councillor Henn's answer is proved to have only been intended to serve as a "red herring," drawn across the trail for the purpose of deluding the Trade Unionist voters.

THE SUNSET.

By Mildred M. Mylles.

It was at the close of a summer's day that half a dozen women lay watching a glorious sunset from their beds on the balcony of the consumption ward of a big hospital. Some of them were very young, others in what should have been the summer of their lives, but all were toil-worn and aged beyond their years. It seemed cruel irony that in almost every case not until it was too late did they gain the opportunity to breathe pure air, or the leisure to drink in the beauties of earth and sky which are meant to be heaven-sent gifts free to us all.

A young girl was talking in a shrill Cockney voice. "I've never seen anything like it in my life before," she said, "I wouldn't have believed there were such sights!"

"It's as good as a picture!" sighed a sad-faced woman who had spent many years at the wash tub.

"Of course," commented the girl, "I've never been far out of Canning Town till I came here, and you don't see much sunshine there!"

"I once went to Margate for the day!" put in another proudly—she, at least, had travelled—"but," with a sigh, "it rained—we all got drenched and then we had to catch the train early—but it was lovely for all that."

"We only see a tiny bit of the sky at home and here we see for miles. It ain't the sun's fault if the houses and smoke shut it out,"

MY DOG.

By "J.H.J."

The authorities had forwarded a reminder that my dog would shortly reach another milestone in his career, and in commemoration of the occasion I was requested to visit the Post Office and expend the usual seven-and-sixpence in order to ensure him a further lease of life. Not being flushed with money just then, I decided to test the merits of the case for and against Peter's future existence. Should I renew the license, or should I, on the other hand, commit him to the public destructor?—this alternative being a costless means of ending all responsibility concerning him.

With Peter postured, with head erect, on the mat near my chair, I began to decide the question.

"Well, Peter," I softly asked, "are you, after all, value for my generosity?" The only response I got was a look of sparkling intelligence. Peter remained silent, as though he would have me know that it was not necessary for him to speak in self-defence.

I was not in a mood to be so readily satisfied that night, and I told him, as he sharply knit his eyebrows, that I must make inquiry into his past in order to make up my mind on the question I had in hand.

I recalled that Peter was fostered in a not particularly favoured coal-place, and that he entered my custody as soon as he was just able to leave the tender care of his bearer, costing me two shillings and sixpence to effect his pur-

GET THAT VOTE.

YOU sympathise with Labour? Then have the satisfaction of helping to win.

YOU don't want it to be said that we might have won—if you had done YOUR part.

So start to work right away.

You know a man with a vote?

And HE sympathises with—Labour?

Well, that vote has to be gained for Walkden.

And YOU can get it—if you try.

THAT man knows another man—with a vote.

And HE might get that vote if YOU get HIS vote for Walkden.

That other man knows another man

And his vote might be gained—if YOU get the first one.

That's the new Catch-My-Pal Crusade—

GET THAT VOTE.

Have you heard about the Six W's?

With Work Walkden Wins West
Wolverhampton.

That's your Lesson—work—and—GET THAT VOTE.

replied the woman who had been to Margate. Was she not privileged on the strength of her wider experience to explain these matters to others less fortunate than herself?

"And what do you think of it, Mrs. Mason?" I asked of a woman who lay silent, but watching. She was the favourite of nurses and patients alike, always gentle, never fretful or complaining. Consumption, that dread disease—a poverty disease, the doctors had always described it in our lectures—had attacked her, swiftly and relentlessly, robbing her of all but the beauty of expression and character, so often seen among its victims.

"I was thinking of India!" she said softly.

"Yes" (in answer to my question), "I was there many years. My husband was a soldier, and I went with the regiment. Four of my children were born there (two of them, as you know, are in the ward downstairs). We saw some beautiful sights, but, of course, it's a rough life, going from place to place, and we used to look forward to the day when he had served his time and we could come home to England and settle down. We came home, and he tried and tramped, day after day, looking for work. He says no one wants old army men, and I tell him he mustn't get downhearted, something will be sure to come along. Then things got worse and worse and I fell ill. That knocked the spirit out of him, but I always try to be cheerful when he comes to see me, and never let him guess how I lie here and worry and wonder how the other children get on while he's away. He could not come to see me this week unless he earned a little, because of the fare; it seems hard, doesn't it, when you're fond of one another. He has been one of the best of husbands, and I wonder why things are so much against us when we've always tried to do our best? I don't understand!" She spoke musingly, without bitterness.

I did not need to answer, because I saw she was not questioning me; her eyes still dwelt on the setting sun, now almost sinking out of sight, leaving a crimson glow over everything.

It was the last sunset she saw on earth, and I wonder if she has found an answer to her

chase. Regarding his pedigree, he was supposed to be a mixture of Scotch and Irish, and was stated to be a cross between at least an Airedale and an Irish terrier.

Not a big recommendation. However, he settled at my house. We took great care of him during his first six months, and he repaid us by growing, almost without experiencing any illness at all, into a smart and plump little puppy. This rather astonished me, for none of us possessed any particular knowledge as to the rearing of the kind. But it is marvellous what care and attention will accomplish where life is concerned.

Six months old and Peter was licensed. Hereabouts he commenced to be exceedingly dignified, and since then he seems to have been determined to make a reputation for himself. He was not many months old ere he had become delighted with the weekly bath he had to undergo. After these ordeals he would seize the earliest opportunity to run into the garden where, in his pride, he would allow the sun to shine on his clean, shaggy coat, so that its sandy colour might put on a bronzed hue, which looked so splendid from the window. If cleanliness is next to godliness, then Peter is not, by this time, far from heaven—wherever the heaven dogs tribe may be situated for many days a week ever since it has been his regular custom to take long swims down the "river." It is remarkable what training will do, even where animals are concerned.

Peter is a noble creature. How thoroughly he understands us. He will climb to my knee when I am low-spirited, and act in a lovable manner, licking my hands in fond affection. When I desire his company for a stroll he is happy to oblige; when I would have him stay behind he offers no objection. How faithful he is, always awaiting my return home at certain hours of the day. It is wonderful how kindness induces faithfulness, even in the canine race.

If men were only treated as considerately as Peter, who can imagine the nobleness, the greatness, the eminence which would be consequently displayed?

Therein lies the moral. I was justified in

JOTTINGS.

Many people confuse Socialism with doing without capital. The truth is that we can do without those who CONTROL the Capital produced by the people.

The income of our nation of 44 million people is £1,710,000,000. Five million idle rich take almost half of that sum, namely, £830,000,000. 39 million people share the other half.

That explains why a few are rich and many are poor.

It is the prospect of having to work that strikes fear into their Royal Fatnesses and makes them issue such lies to the working man to keep his nose to the grindstone while they live luxuriously on his produce.

'Tis far easier to get the push than to get a pension.

Some of those clerks at the Rees Roturbo will bear that in mind.

The pen is mightier than the sword.

Perhaps so, but one is more killing.

When the pen-pusher ceases to create profits and claims the right to sell his labour at his own price, he is called a "junior" locally.

That shows splendid business ability—paying boys' wages to do men's work.

More business ability:—

The Board of Guardians advertised recently for tenders for the milk supply.

The Corporation advertised 800 gallons of milk weekly for sale.

Why can't one public body supply another public body with the things they need and do away with the profit-mongering unnecessarily created under the so-called business ability of the two bodies concerned?

Lord Willoughby de Broke has introduced a Bill which would compel all those with an income over £400 a year to undergo military training.

I agree. Those are just the people who should defend their country. The workers have nothing to defend, and could be no worse off under any other flag.

Oh, dear! Lord Windsor is at it again. Speaking recently he said "Let us return for the first time in the political history of this constituency a Unionist member to the House of Commons; a member of that party which really and honestly is working for the welfare of the country."

Imagine the Tory Party being "honest"! "It can't be done," Lord Windsor.

Once more I draw attention to Municipal Socialism,—£2,125 profit on electricity, £4,251 on water, £3,777 on Tramways—a total of £10,153.

There you are, Alderman Johnson! There's some money to build houses with, and some more in twelve months.—Try it!

I notice that the Rees Roturbo are prepared to pay a policeman to protect blacklegs, but not prepared to pay the clerks a living wage.

Alderman Bantock said recently that he did "not mind if Wolverhampton increased its debt ten times in electricity, trams, market, and so forth, providing there were satisfactory returns."

That's the modern Shylock's view—"Shent per shent"—not, "Is it of public advantage?" but "How much will it make?"

It was because of this nefarious view that the children were debarred from the benefits of the Provisions of the Meals Bill and medical treatment and is also the reason why suitable houses are not built by the Corporation.

When is a workman not a workman?
When he's a clerk.

I hear that the motor-bus to Compton is called the "Scarlet Runner," I suggest a name for the black car that runs occasionally, i.e., "The Snail," which is appropriate when compared with the other.

I also hear that forty-seven complaints have been lodged against the "Scarlet Runner" on account of its speed. Evidently the Compton residents prefer being slow.

C. VERE.

"There is no instance on record (says Buckle) of an ignorant man who, having good intentions, and supreme power to enforce them, has not done far more evil than good. And whenever the intentions have been very eager, and the power very extensive, the evil has been enormous.

"Money rules chiefly because men are for sale. . . . The first-class men of history are those who have wrought in the passion of some conception of world order. The great moments of history have been those in which a whole people have been inspired with a clear

WHAT'S THE MATTER WITH WOLVERHAMPTON?

HOUSING CONDITIONS GO FROM BAD TO WORSE.

A SUGGESTED REMEDY.

ARTICLE V.—BY OUR SPECIAL COMMISSIONER.

Wolverhampton people are still looking for some attempt to be made by the Town Council to find a solution of the housing problem in the borough.

There are more progressive towns in the neighbourhood who have long since recognised the importance of providing houses for the people, as evidenced by Stafford, who have in operation a scheme on which there will be no loss. Shrewsbury have taken the matter in hand. Walsall have a scheme to erect 250 houses. In the Cannock Chase district the matter is receiving attention, and—unkindest cut of all—even Sedgley are considering the question of a comprehensive town-planning scheme.

In Wolverhampton a member of the Council rises in the Council Chamber to congratulate the town on the fact that plans for thirty houses had been passed!

Delicious irony! Thirty houses to accommodate hundreds of people who are waiting for house room. Wolverhampton is a progressive town.

Meanwhile an empty house is such a rarity that people will walk from one end of the town to the other merely to gaze on it, as they would some freak exhibition. One empty house in Wolverhampton causes more excitement than the Home Rule Bill, and draws almost as large an audience as the latest revue at the Empire.

In one case I know of a lady who had a house to let, and who was not aware of the extent of the shortage of houses, put a card in the window bearing the magic legend, "This house to let." I am informed that in less than five minutes she had twelve people to look at it, and every subsequent tramcar brought fresh applicants for the house. She had to take out that card, she said plaintively to a friend of mine, before her front-door bell was broken and the steps worn out.

Keen Competition.

In another instance, about a fortnight ago, a house was advertised to let. One applicant called just after six p.m. on the first evening it was advertised, and on arrival found a curious state of affairs. When she was admitted she found about 18 or 20 other would-be tenants in possession of the place. Some were in the drawing-room, some in the dining-room, others in the kitchen, and some in the bedrooms.

And it was like an auction sale. Terrific bargaining was going on; six months' bargaining was going on; six months' rent down being offered by one would-be householder if only the owner would allow the applicant to take possession.

These are facts which I am putting forward. Is it to be wondered at, therefore, that the landlords prefer to rise the rent to the highest bidder rather than lay out fresh capital in building more. This kind of thing brings in a better return.

It must not be supposed that the landlords

stopped short at the wholesale increases made twelve months ago. Many tenants could tell of several successive increases.

A Serious Case.

One of the most serious cases is one which has occurred on the Lea-road during this last month. About three years ago some property was erected to let at 7s. per week. It was of that class which had hitherto been bringing in about 6s. 6d. When the increase took place the tenants had to pay 7s. 6d. Not being able to find other houses, the tenants paid up, hoping that they would then be left alone. But before very long the rent was further increased to 8s. The tenants were compelled to pay, because the congestion was becoming more acute, and there was absolutely no prospect of getting other houses if they gave notice to give up occupation. To crown all, last month the tenants received a notice that in future they must pay 9s. Still, there are no vacant houses and they must pay the imposition.

What are they to do? The tenants are of the working class, and within twelve months the difference in rent has been equivalent to a reduction of 2s. per week in their wages.

The only answer the Town Council can make is to offer to erect 50 houses at 4s. per week.

The immediate necessity is houses at rents from 6s. to 8s. The slum evil, which the Council tell you they are anxious to mitigate, will automatically cure itself if the pressure is taken off some of those for which exorbitant rents are being extorted. Many houses, not worth above 4s. 6d. are bringing in 6s.

The Remedy.

The tenants have tried peaceful persuasion with the Council, but they are obdurate. I have been asked to suggest a remedy. I can only say that if asking will not induce the Council to act, the next thing to do is to kick them into it.

I suggest to the Wolverhampton tenants that there is one way in which it can be done. That is by approaching the Local Government Board. The best way to do that is to send a requisition to the Board to hold an inquiry into housing conditions, and I predict that the result will be that the Council will then be compelled to act.

Next month I hope to give particulars of further expeditions I have made into slum-land.

I have pleasure in being able to inform my readers that the result of the publicity given to the state of the property in Barker Place has been that the houses described have been put into a thorough state of repair.

I offer my thanks to the landlord for so promptly remedying the state of affairs. It often happens that where houses are in the hands of agents the owner is not aware of the condition of his property, and if this was the case with the Barker Place property the article in THE WORKER was amply justified.

BOY SCOUTS.

A MOVEMENT WHICH TRADE UNIONISTS SHOULD BOYCOTT.

The clerks' strike and the attitude of a certain scoutmaster thereto has again brought the Boy Scout movement into prominence. We would draw the attention of Trade Unionists to the fact that one of the chief rules of the Scout movement says:—

A Scout is loyal to . . . his employers. He must stick to them through thick and thin, against anyone who is their enemy, or who even talks badly of them.

Trade Unionists know what the effect of the doctrine is likely to be. They have had many struggles, and in most of them they have been beaten by men of their own class. The black-leg and scab is a living example. The Scout movement is out to breed more of them.

The Scout movement is very popular with employers, and it is not to be wondered at. The churches are finding that it is getting too late in the day to teach children to "reverence their pastors and masters." They find that the only honest doctrine to teach is that of the straight back and to bow down to nobody.

But the Scout movement, with its attractive equipment, is stepping into the breach, and is teaching boys to be traitors to their own class. Whenever their fathers or brothers are struggling for a living wage, and against oppression, they must believe that the employer can do no wrong. Militarism is being insidiously instilled into their young minds, and no doubt it is hoped that when they grow older they will be valuable assistants to the sweating bosses.

We ask the thinking working men: Do they realise what they are doing for their boys? Do they realise what they are doing for themselves? Do they want to see in the future their own sons fighting against them in their battles for better conditions?

If Trade Unionists do not want a position of this sort to arise we advise them to keep their children away from the Boy Scout movement.

GASWORKERS' UNION.

I very much regret that a section of the carters did not stand solid with the rest on the wages question. A strike was threatened, and would probably have been successful, but for the men at one firm backing out. As it was these men ruined the prospects of the others, and the offer of the masters of 23s. was accepted. The two years' agreement was a grievous blunder. A little more cohesion and the men would have won easily. When will working men learn the lesson?

I hear among the men that the masters are not keeping to the terms of the agreement, and are not paying extra for overtime. Evidently the masters think, after the previous exhibition of weakness, they can do as they please. A meeting has been called to reconsider the agreement, and if possible secure terms on the same lines Walsall are asking for.

The Sewage Farm Committee have refused to meet a deputation of the Barnhurst men. The Committee would be well advised to extend to these men a little more consideration. Feeling is running high, and they will have no hesitation in adopting a "down tools" policy when other means have failed.

A memorial has been sent in for the night soil men. I am pleased to say that I have heard it will receive sympathetic consideration.

J. B.

ON KINGS.

I said, "I'm tired of kings,"
I suffer them no more;
Up to mine ear the morning brings
The outrage of the poor.

I will have never a noble,
Nor lineage counted great—
Fishers and choppers and ploughmen
Shall constitute a State.

—Emerson.

FATHER DARMODY.

REPLY TO STATEMENTS MADE FROM ST. PATRICK'S PULPIT.

PILLARS OF SOCIALISM.

It is all to the good that we should find our pulpits of religion being more and more used for dealing with questions that affect the humanity of man as well as his spirituality.

Therefore, when our good friend Father Darmody discusses the question of Socialism we can welcome the fact of its entrance into such a sphere, despite the conclusions the reverend gentleman arrives at. We welcome discussion, but we must also recognise the limitations that exist when a subject of everyday life is criticised from a position which is rather removed from close contact.

The Rev. Father suffers from the inevitable handicap which follows his incursion into a domain a little removed from his natural and customary sphere.

The world of economics calls for thought, study, and patient investigation, and it is obvious that our friend is not quite at home in these matters.

The sermon delivered in St. Patrick's Church dealing with Socialism was confined to the "three main pillars upon which Socialism rested."

The first pillar attacked was the statement of the Socialist that "all wealth comes from Labour." As an illustration we are referred to Arkwright and his spinning jenny. To produce wealth two other elements were required. One, the Capitalist investment of money, secondly, the manual labour to work the machines. The three forces are described as the Intellectual (Arkwright), the Moral (Capitalist), and the Physical (Labour).

The intellectual ability of Arkwright must have involved a considerable amount of manual dexterity and application. He must have produced a machine of some sort or other, he must have carried out experiments with his own hands. Hence he used labour, even in the narrow, constricted view of the reverend gentleman. Therefore we find the intellectual force is partly labour force.

The capitalist supplied "moral" force. It is strange to see the word "moral" applied to capital. The words do not seem to fit. Capital is an inert thing which will move in response to any force. It requires far more morality to refuse to use capital than it does to put it in force.

The Immorality of Capital.

Show a possibility of 20 per cent dividend on building battleships, running rubber plantations, making idols, selling drink, capital immediately responds—for the dividend.

Arkwright's capitalist friends invested their money in what they saw as a "good thing." It didn't require moral courage; it distinctly called for cunning, avarice, sordid greed. The investment of money always follows these motives, and they are the lowest, basest motives in humanity. To speak of capital moving in response to moral forces in this connection is surely absurd. It was, in fact, a purely immoral motive. They expected to receive more than they put in, i.e., profit. To receive more from the community than one has rendered in service is—robbery. All profit is robbery, is immoral, and we would have expected from this quarter a scathing denunciation of immorality, irrespective of customs and modes of thought which obscure realities.

The third force, labour, received a pittance. If the three forces are essential, viz., intellect, capital, and labour, and if, as is quite clear, all are required, neither can be dispensed with; therefore the three forces should share equally in the rewards of joint enterprise.

That is good reason, it also happens to be good morality. But labour always gets the least, is always served out with the crumbs from the feast. Why? Not because her claim is not just and logical, but because she is dispossessed, outcast. Because the other two combine to withhold from the hands of labour the materials which she requires to produce wealth. By so doing they reduce labour to miserable want, and, taking advantage of her weakness, they impose their own terms.

The second pillar was the rate wage. We are not quite clear what is meant here. It is illuminated by a statement that Socialists would not pay anything to professional men because they did not labour.

Of course, professional men work. The labour of the purely physical is one, and the labour of the mentality is another form of labour; that is all. The term includes all effort or work or labour which goes to the support and erection of the fabric of society. So pillar number two falls to the ground by reason of its lack of foundation in reason and reality.

Next we are told the third pillar on which

Socialism depends is the statement that "all misery comes from the possession of private paper."

The first thing to be mentioned is that this is a very old sample of a very old trick. Put up a dummy case, then merrily pound it.

It is not a correct statement of the Socialist position. The Socialist does not condemn private possession of *private things*. On the contrary, it stands for an extension of the possibility of greater private possession of private wealth, and in order to achieve this it unhesitatingly and persistently condemns the private possession of *any* thing of public need, and essentially required for the public good.

Thus the Socialist would quite agree—and wishes to procure—that all who desire shall have their windows decorated with growing flowers, the soil in which shall be absolutely their private possession; but he absolutely refuses the right of a nobleman's private possession of huge tracts of land, on which people must live and must use to procure the means of livelihood. We may each privately possess a motor-car, but the railways, a public requirement, a system of traction in such general use, must be publicly owned.

It is this private possession of public utilities, of natural resources, of the earth's raw materials, from which vast misery springs. The real private possessions of our people are but a grain in the mighty ocean of wealth available.

Let us settle the question of the ownership of lands, railways, canals, harbours, etc., first. We can then add immeasurably to the individual possession of individual needs and desires.

"The State can never thrust its hand into your pocket and claim the purse you have filled, etc." Then how is taxation raised?

But we quarrel not so much on what the State takes from us. We quarrel with the private possessionist, the landlord, the railway lord, the coal baron, the monopolists of all kinds, who have always their hands in our pockets, most often before our own get there.

Housing conditions in Wolverhampton. Privately owned houses. Private landlords in private possession of houses which the people must have. Result: high rents—slums.

The citizens all want houses—must have them. Very well, why should not the citizens, in their corporate capacity, through the Town Council, build houses for the townspeople. Houses would then be built because people want them. To-day the landlords build—to get rents.

No Invasion of the Home.

"The State must never invade the sanctuary of your home." Neither must the landlord, or diptheria, or consumption, or foul air. These are the real enemies. Time enough to resist the invasion of the State when we have repelled the invasion of poverty and disease.

And that brings another pillar to the ground. "God had granted the earth to mankind in general. . . . No part assigned to anyone in particular. . . . That was Catholic and Christian teaching."

In the same paragraph we read, "the limits of private possession had been left to be fixed by man's industry." Then man's law rides superior to God's.

And if "man's industry" fixes the limits of private possession, what a terribly industrious man the Duke of Sutherland must be. Quite overworked, amongst the "sweated" one would think.

"God gave the earth to mankind in general." We agree. Then whosoever and by what means soever has parcelled it out to some of the children of men—has defied and set at nought God's wish and decree.

To restore God's gift to the children of all men, to raise up the right and sanctity of human life against the might of property—this is the mission of the Socialist.

Reason, justice, logic, humanity, and—time are on our side. Too long have you said "Thou shalt not steal." To-day the Socialist thunders the reply, "Neither will we be stolen from."

A. B.

RAND MURDERS AND PROFITS.

Despite the South African strikes, followed by the murders of the Rand miners, nearly all the mines have returned handsome profits. Fifteen, seventeen, twenty, and twenty-five per cent. profits are common.

New Modderfontein pays 30 per cent., Witwatersrand Deep 35 per cent., Transvaal Estates 40 per cent., Vankyn 47½ per cent., Ferreira Deep 50 per cent., Modderfontein B. 55 per cent., New Primrose Co. 60 per cent., Meyer and Charlton 770 per cent., New Heriot 70 per cent., Crown Mines 770 per cent., and Village Main Rec 770 per cent.

When there is so much plunder about one wonders that the slaughter was on such a small scale.

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MEN, COME!

P.S.A. NOTES.

A meeting of delegates to the Wolverhampton and District P.S.A. Federation, was held on Tuesday, March 17th, in the Baptist Church, Waterloo-road, Wolverhampton. The President, Alderman Price Lewis, J.P., who was, unfortunately precluded from attending through illness, sent a message emphasising the importance of the Brotherhood Campaign, and the need for Wolverhampton to take a prominent part in this great national effort.

Mr. Frank J. Tustin (ex-president) presided over a fair attendance of delegates, including Mr. A. Fletcher, of Birmingham.

The secretary, Mr. A. P. Thacker, tendered his resignation.—This was accepted with universal expressions of regret.

A hearty vote of thanks to Mr. Thacker for his devotion to the work of the Federation during the past 12 years was proposed by the Chairman, seconded by Mr. Fletcher, supported by Messrs. Palmer, Chell, and others, and carried unanimously.—Mr. Thacker briefly responded.

Mr. Thacker has not, however, severed his connection with the Federation, but will remain as a delegate. Thus we shall continue to receive the benefit of his long and valuable experience.

His successor, Mr. Geo. Tarratt, of Bilston, is well-known to readers of THE WORKER, and therefore needs no introduction from me; yet I would like to take this opportunity of expressing the opinion that a better choice could not have been made.

Mr. Tarratt is an enthusiast in Brotherhood work, a very effective speaker, and a capable organiser, and the members of the Federation are to be congratulated upon obtaining Mr. Tarratt's services as hon. sec. I hope that they will show their appreciation by doing their utmost for the Brotherhood cause.

Mr. Frank J. Tustin was appointed as assistant hon. secretary, and I know that he intends to do all he can (in the limited time at his disposal) to help Mr. Tarratt.

A discussion took place re a more aggressive policy on the part of the Federation. Messrs. Fletcher and Tarratt gave some very interesting information respecting the Great Brotherhood Campaign now being organised; and eventually it was unanimously decided to concentrate all effort in this direction. Practical suggestions were made and adopted which should make "Brotherhood" something more than a name in this district in the near future.

There is a lot of work to be done, and we mean business.

Will you help in this glorious Campaign?
 F.J.T.

IN THE GARDEN.

Timely Hints for Lovers of the Soil.

Watch the results of last month's labours and replace immediately any decided failures. See that the seeds you have sown vegetate and the roots you have planted are doing well.

BEET.—Sow the seeds in drills twelve inches wide, and thin out plants to nine inches apart. Beet comes to greatest perfection in a light, sandy soil, and requires a fair share of manure.

BORECOLE or KALE.—Sow early in the month.

CARROTS.—Any of the main crop varieties may be sown at the end of the month.

CELERY.—Prepare beds of well-rotted manure to be in readiness for pricking out.

LETTUCE.—Make another sowing to secure a constant succession.

TURNIPS.—These require to be grown as quickly as possible, therefore moist soil and liberal manuring are necessary. Sow in drills about a foot apart, and hoe plants out to about same distance in the drills.

The Flower Garden.—Make everything smart to welcome summer. Get your paths well cleaned and beds neatly raked to show the spring flowers to the best advantage. "April showers bring May flowers," but if you don't sow and plant the flowers early enough they can't. Full-bloomed stems of hyacinths should be given support to prevent them being broken off. Plant out wallflowers, double rockets, and perennial larkspur. Attend to your dahlias and everything that is now in course of propagation. Sow succession of annuals and keep the rake and hoe busy.

C.W.H.

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ROBBING GOD!

SOME THOUGHTS ON AN ATTRACTIVE TORY LEAFLET.

By Qui Vive.

No doubt many readers of THE WORKER have during the past few weeks, received a leaflet of most attractive design, dealing with the question of Disestablishment. This particular leaflet, issued from the Tory headquarters, has on one side the picture of a "Church closed owing to The Welsh Disestablishment Bill introduced by the Radical Government."

The leaning tomb-stones in the adjoining churchyard; the moss-grown flags; the bramble-covered church-door; the abject despair, the obvious regret depicted on the faces of two would-be worshippers, pay an eloquent tribute to the art and artifice of the Tory propagandist. But, however appealing this picture may be, surely the religious susceptibilities of the most sceptical must have been wounded to read, on the reverse side the striking headline, "Crushing out Christianity." And in bold type, "Taking God's Money," "Robbing the poor of their rights," and concluding with the question, "Do you approve of this robbery, sacrilege and tyranny?"

My word! What overwhelming anxiety about the "rights" of the poor! But let there be no mistake, it does not refer to the rights of the poor to better wages, better conditions of living, the right to work, or the right to strike. No, gentle reader, it refers to the religious rights of the poor.

Vote-Catching Design.

The electors of West Wolverhampton need not fly at one another's throats over the question of Christianity being crushed out. Christianity, i.e., the religion based upon Christ's teachings has not yet been tried. There is no need to tear one's hair, or to clothe one's-self in sack-cloth and ashes at this apparently solemn warning of the approaching decadence in religion. The vote-catching design of this alluring leaflet is quite obvious.

I wonder what the Founder of Christianity, Who said: "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, etc.," would think of some of His professed followers of to-day, whose sole endeavour in life is to amass huge fortunes at the expense of their fellow-creatures, and then, as a sop to conscience, fling a little here and there to charity.

Nor is there any need for the workers to get excited about the question of Disestablishment, for the very best of reasons that this and many other questions introduced by the two great parties, may serve a very useful purpose in keeping the minds of the workers occupied, but they do not solve our social problems.

Whether or not the Welsh Church is disestablished, or Ireland is granted Home Rule, may be very engrossing subjects, but a matter of first importance to the workers at the present time is the South African question. If we, as workers, can demonstrate to Smuts and Botha and also to their admirers in this country that we very strongly disapprove of their methods of dealing with industrial disputes, we shall have done something to consolidate Trade Unionism, and hasten the emancipation of the workers.

Income 1s. 6d. a week.

I wonder what those who are so very anxious that Christianity shall not be crushed out thought when they read about the 94 people who died last year from sheer starvation. I wonder what they who talk about "taking God's money," and "robbing the poor of their rights" think when they hear the revelations of the sweating system; of how, recently, at two London inquests, it was disclosed that a woman had kept herself and two boys on 7s. 6d. a week, and of another man's income which often did not exceed 1s. 6d. a week?

Yet many a wealthy man can afford to spend a few hundred pounds in giving a banquet to his friends, or a few thousand pounds in the purchase of one or two articles of jewellery.

Talk of robbing the poor of their rights! Ask the women chairmakers of Cradley Heath! Ask the expectant mother who, in order to make both ends meet, has to drag wearily to work, whilst her wealthy prototype, under similar circumstances would be regarded as an invalid and waited upon hand and foot. Ask the guinea-a-week railway worker. Ask the workers who last year had to strike, and in some cases to starve for several weeks to extort a miserable pittance of 23s. a week. Ask the clerks who are now fighting for a decent wage (and good luck to them). Ask any of them. Ask all of them what they think about "robbing the poor of their rights."

But the remedy is with us. Let the workers show by voting solid for Labour, that above Disestablishment, Home Rule, or any other parrot cry of the two orthodox Parties, the well-being of the masses of the people must be of the first importance.

EMIGRANTS, BEWARE!

SQUALID CONDITION ON BRITISH SHIPS.

A WAR WHICH DID NOT COME OFF.

By P. S. Fitter.

With the possibility of a fight occurring among shipowners whose vessels are engaged in the North Atlantic trade there was a chance of that great body of intermittent seafarers, British emigrants, coming into their own, but all discord has been quieted, and the Atlantic combine is stronger than ever. A capitalistic war has been averted, and the injustice meted out to the poorer paying passengers travelling in British boats across the Atlantic remains hidden from publicity.

Ever since the Hamburg-Amerika line put the *Deutschland* on the Western route, British shipping circles have been pretty perturbed at the prescience and enterprise of Herr Ballin, whom *The Daily News* calls the "Napoleon of the Atlantic." Fame followed the introduction of the *Deutschland*. The cheapest paying passenger found quarters, food and deck space allotted him far ahead of anything that has been provided for the money before, and the coming of this vessel marked the period when the third-class passenger began to be viewed as a desirable transient, instead of a low white, who must be penned up on the voyage and fed with the leavings from the meals of the god-like cabin passengers.

German better than British.

It was Herr Ballin who proved that the third-class passenger paid, paid indeed for the first-class passenger who took half of the service and deck space and the best of food and attention for one-fifth of the money that went into the ship's treasury for the run. It is poor consolation to the emigrant of former days and the present time to know that the exclusive cabin passenger's trip at the price was made possible by the great profits secured on the steerage. The steerage paid for losses incurred in running the first-class.

It has been sedulously kept from the British public that the German boats are immeasurably superior to American and British lines in their catering to the third-class passenger, and greater safety on British vessels has always been put forward as an inducement to keep British trade to British boats. The Ballin boats have trained, suave stewards in the third-class section, naval trained deck hands, all hands taught to row, boats for all—and that before the Titanic disaster. Eh? Anybody say anything? And now they are equipping their passenger-carrying marine with fire brigades.

Unprofitable "Swankers."

What was the cause of Herr Ballin breaking away from the shipping ring? Because he did not get a fair share of the pooling arrangements. Mark this well—no rate was to be cut in the probable fight except the third-class rate, showing that he wanted the emigrant traffic. That section pays. There is no money in the other classes, as is being proved by the conversion of steamers into one-class carriers—third-class. There is no one-class boat for cabin passengers—the "swankers" don't pay; and the one-class now existing (medium) is to be done away with.

Ballin wanted the emigrant trade, and he was in a position to make a big bid for it. There was—and is—only one line flying the British flag that could have competed with him. Carrying emigrant thousands to the United States and Canada, making huge profits from handling the multitudes wending their way west like the course of Empire, one would have thought that some effort would have been made to ameliorate the condition of the British emigrants. To the credit of one line such an effort has taken place, and with the bringing into being of the Canadian Northern steamships—the Royals—Sir William Mackenzie saw to it that the advent marked a new era in the 'tween deck life of the traveller with the slender purse. Other boats in the Canadian service have had perforce to improve their accommodation, but still the third-class of the Royals reigns supreme among liners now in commission on the Western ocean.

Death Traps.

And the Board of Trade does not attempt to improve conditions. The out-of-date, barn-like quarters still pertain on the old boats carrying third-class. The term "steerage" has now been dropped, but the old steerage quarters exist just the same; still the dirty eating utensils made of japan-ware and horribly chipped; still are the men, women, and children herded together on a small portion of the deck for exercise; still are the approaches to the sleeping

(Continued in next column).

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(Continued from previous column.)

and dining quarters narrow and difficult to negotiate, absolutely preventing the crowds huddled below from reaching the deck quickly in case of an accident; still are the men who look after these quarters absolutely dirty and unfitted for their work.

It was a pity there was no freight war. The emigrant would have come into his own then. As it is, the worker will continue to swell the profits of the shipping companies, without getting proper accommodation and service for value received.

A LULLABY.

Rock a bye baby
 On the tree top,
 When you grow up
 You can work in a shop,
 And when you are married
 Your wife can work, too,
 So that the rich folk
 Shall have less to do.

Rock a bye baby
 On the tree top,
 When you grow old
 From work you can stop,
 And live on the wages
 You've managed to save—
 Then rock a bye, baby,
 Off to the grave.

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