

The Wolverhampton Worker

The Organ of the Wolverhampton Trades and Labour Council.

L. 1. No. 3. JULY, 1913.

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AN INDUSTRIAL HELL!

CONDITIONS IN THE BLACK COUNTRY DESCRIBED.

BRITONS WHO ARE SLAVES.

PROTEST OF "THE BOTTOM DOG."

"Britons never, NEVER, NEVER, shall be slaves!" How often have the workers of the Black Country vociferously chorused the lines of the Jingo song at the great meetings held under the auspices of the Capitalist Parties. It is not long since the Wednesbury electors were trying hard to burst their lungs on the top note of the "nevers" at "Empire Jack's" meetings on behalf of the Jingo Party.

But this month the miserable hoax has been revealed in all its ghastly reality. It would be an extremely difficult task to-day for the most intelligent worker in the Black Country to demonstrate when he has never been a slave and in what peculiar form his freedom from slavery has expressed itself. For years the Capitalist Parties have blinded the workers with gaudy flags and deafened them with the blare of the trumpet and the roll of the drum. And having with oily tongues and unctuous phrases worked them into a condition of insensibility to the things that really mattered, these political jingoes and speculators calmly proceeded to play the part of "Sinbad the Sailor," by planting themselves on the backs of the workers, and not only living on the fruits of their labours but appropriating to themselves the greater part of the wealth produced by the workers. This kind of thing has gone on from time immemorial, and the greatest wonder is that it has never been realised before.

But the workers of the Black Country have at last discovered that they are slaves, and they have taken the first step towards their own emancipation. They themselves, call it the "fight of the bottom dog." That, at any rate, is something different to singing out a lot of arrant nonsense about not being slaves; it is an effort to demonstrate that they will no longer be content to exist in that worst form of slavery—wage slavery.

"Wage slavery" it has been. Whole families have had to eke out a miserable existence on beggarly pittances ranging from 16s. to 20s. per week. Think of the awful squalor and misery which must have prevailed. Think of the struggles to maintain even a semblance of respectability, and think of the hundreds of children who through lack of the necessary food have died off like flies every year—murdered by a brutal system of commercialism that has crushed the souls of the people and blighted the face of what once could rank among the fairest spots of God's earth. It is indeed the Black Country.

"G.R.S.T.," writing in the *Daily Herald*, says:—

Hell!

"It is quite a mistake to encourage men and women in the Black Country to strike for higher wages and shorter hours. That is simply playing about with the question. The only sane thing to do with the Black Country is to get up and go away from it and leave it severely alone for ever more. That part of the earth has been mutilated beyond mending; just as hopelessly as a piece of Sevres china is beyond recall after it has been under the wheels of a railway engine. The only thing that will deal successfully with its dirt and dismal ugliness will be one of those geological revolutions which will put it under the sea and bring it up again fresh and clean, with a hundred feet of sweet soil on the

top to start a new earthly career in another epoch.

"To the decently sensitive mind the Black Country is a Hell. No sensible man would try to reform Hell. Wise men would leave it to its fate and start somewhere else. The other day the Labour Party were debating in the House of Commons with Mr. Asquith as to the percentage of taxation paid by the rich and the poor. They should flatly refuse to debate any such thing. They should have told Mr. Asquith to go down to this Black Country and not try to fool them with crafty statistics. Statistics are silly things when there are hard facts. The Labour Party might just as well have debated as to the percentage of sulphur and brimstone in Satan's realm. Sane reformers would refuse to live there on any terms whatsoever. We decline Hell absolutely, however plausible the statistics and percentages may sound.

"It is a custom for coroners' juries to visit the corpse, and sometimes the scene of the crime. It would be a splendid plan if the members of the Houses of Parliament gave up their idiotic proceedings at Westminster, with their Blue Books and amateur economics, and came down here to face facts. All Mr. Lloyd George's heroics about the glories of Liberalism would sound just silly in the midst of the Black Country. He has given us Land Budgets and Old Age Pensions and Insurance Acts, and what have they done? The Black Country is still here, with its misery and starvation and squalor. When he has finished his gaseous eloquence on the Land Crusade and turned the gas into a Bill, and the Bill into an Act—then we know perfectly well that the Black Country will still be there. Whatever his arguments, the people will be fools to trust him again. How many more times are we going to be bitten before we are shy? Let us turn to some more original statesmen.

The Industrial Position.

"Fifteen years ago, Tom Mann started the Workers' Union. Like many great fires, it began by smouldering a long time. To-day it has almost 400 branches, with almost 50,000 members. It is not like the ordinary Union, strictly confined to the workers of one special trade, or even a small department of a trade. All sorts of people belong to the Workers' Union. It accepts as members any kind of worker. It even has members who do no manual work. But there is one very good rule. If a man or woman belongs to a skilled trade, then he and she must also join the Union of that trade before they are allowed to join the Workers' Union. So that there is no want of harmony between the rival institutions. The present general secretary is Mr. Charles Duncan, M.P., and the Midland district organisers directly in charge of these strikes are Councillor John Beard and A. E. Ellery, and Miss Julia Varley, the women's organiser—and splendid fighters they are.

"It is this Workers' Union, drawn from all branches of industry, though mainly from the unskilled workers, that is the centre of this present marvellous outburst of industrial fighting in the Birmingham district. The war began before last Christmas with strikes in some of the great firms. There was a remarkable and rapid success. Now the whole district is in a raging fire of strikes of all sorts and sizes. At last the bottom dog has turned. There are

(Continued on page 2.)

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ARE YOU SATISFIED

that you share in all that is provided for you?

HAVE YOU THE BEST

of food, clothing, and all other necessaries?

DO YOU CONTROL

the Business that supplies you with these commodities, and share in all its advantages, or

DO YOU MAKE CERTAIN

that all the Goods you purchase are produced and distributed under conditions which you yourself are fighting for?

These are pointed questions, but consistency demands an answer to them. If it is in the negative, your remedy is to join the

Co-operative Society, At STAFFORD STREET,

or any of its BRANCHES,

where every facility is offered to all workers for the supply of their wants.

The Society's Goods are the best, purest, full weight, and cheapest, and every purchaser has the full assurance that he is faithfully supporting an institution that gives the full

TRADE UNION CONDITIONS.

Members can

Buy or Build THEIR OWN HOUSES

through the Society with the rent they are paying; this obviates the necessity for

Tenants' Defence Leagues.

Anyone over 16 can join by paying 4d. down.

Go to

J. W. EVANS, 15, Queen St.,

for your

Pipes, Tobacco, and Cigarettes.

NATIONAL

FEDERATION OF HAIRDRESSERS,

Wolverhampton and District Branch.

Trade Unionists are requested to look out for

HAIRDRESSER'S FAIR LIST,

which will be published shortly.

WOMEN'S LABOUR LEAGUE.

SEWING MEETINGS

Every Wednesday afternoon from 3 o'clock. Tea at 5 o'clock, followed by Branch Meeting at 7-30 same evening.

Labour Assembly Rooms, 35, Queen Square.

TAKE A NOTE OF OUR
ADVERTISERS.

AN INDUSTRIAL HELL!

(Continued from Page One.)

many skilled workers in these disputes directly or indirectly. But the main note of the present outburst is a minimum wage of 23s. a week for the unskilled labourer. The workers are beginning to see that he is the weak spot of the whole system.

The most attractive thing about these present strikes is the thrilling outburst of solidarity. Men who are living only on 10s. a week strike pay are subscribing to the support of men who haven't even that scrap of support. One had begun to think that the word "Solidarity" had no actual existence in the world of experience. It seemed almost a myth—a superstition. During these last few weeks it shows signs of living. This is the new keynote of industrial warfare; it alone can bring victory. That is why the strikes of the Birmingham Black Country and its neighbourhood should draw the eyes of every serious reformer in Great Britain. The trades are no longer fighting one by one. At last they have begun to see that they cannot win alone. Watch the Workers' Union if you want to learn the way to success. It has aroused a spirit that has even got beyond Trade Union ranks. These strikes have won the support of Boards of Guardians, Education Committees, individual tradesmen. They have to a definite extent won the ear of the decent public. "Solidarity" has been a shadowy word. Perhaps it is becoming a fact. But even this is only a small beginning."

Twenty-three Shillings!

Twenty-three shillings per week! And it has necessitated a colossal strike to get it. Liberalism has done nothing in the matter; Toryism has helped the Liberals to perform that feat. That is the extent of their much-vaunted sympathy for the workers. They can see the serf escaping from his thralldom.

Twenty-three shillings per week! We are surprised at the moderation of the demands! Yet these Tory and Liberal masters have called in their ghastly ally, Starvation, and are attempting to starve the workers into submission. A good combination truly—Capitalism and Starvation; Landlordism, Slumdom, and Disease! Yet the worker, by solidarity, will beat the lot.

Industrial unrest, they call it. Well, there will never be industrial peace again in the sense the bosses of the Black Country have known it. Industrial peace will come again when the workers come into their own. They will never again submit to this wage slavery.

Twenty-three shillings per week! It is not by any means the end of all things. The time will come when they will want still more, and it will behave the capitalist to meet them in this matter. The worker will not always rest content with a mere peaceful cessation of work. The handwriting is on the wall. If the capitalists wish to save their own positions they will give heed to the warning. X.

GASWORKERS' UNION.

At the branch meeting held on March 2, 1912, a resolution passed to ask the Corporation for a minimum wage of 25s. weekly for their employees has just wrung from the Council a 24s. minimum, after 15 months. We are getting on.

On June 1 the Organising Committee went to Essington. Good business done, 20 joined. On June 15, visit paid to Field House. Large influx new members, 22 and several promises.

Friday, June 13, result of ballot made known by Secretary, J. Bellis, as to advisability of strike for Corporation employees. Result over 90 per cent. in favour, and the sooner the better. Several visitors gave inspiring addresses, including Councillor Hickin, who gave full report of his and his Labour colleagues' efforts to obtain minimum wage. Hearty vote of thanks given him for his efforts.

The Honourable Tim Sullivan, of Tammany fame, tells of a young philosopher he encountered not long ago on the street. This lad was of diminutive size, and carried under his arm such a load of newspapers that the Honourable Tim was moved to pity. "Son," asked the Tammanyite, "don't all those papers make you

A WARNING.

RAMSAY MACDONALD AND "A GREAT CONSPIRACY."

THE TRADE UNION ACT.

Friday, June 6, was a momentous day in the history of the local Trade Union movement. The occasion was the holding of a conference in the Co-operative Hall to consider the model rules for the taking of ballots on the question of the political action of Trade Unions under the Trade Union Act, 1913.

Mr. Walkden was in the chair, and in his opening remarks dealt in an interesting manner with the history of Trade Unionism from its inception to the present day. He detailed the events which led up to the Osborne judgment, and incidentally mentioned the personal part he had played in endeavouring to get modified the position created by that judgment. He did not regard the new Act as being anything like what they ought to have, but it did place them in a rather better position, and they had to consider how best they could utilise the Act for Labour in the political field. It was not only the Parliamentary aspect of political action with which they were concerned, but there was the equally important side of local self-government. In Wolverhampton quite recently they had

The Clearest Possible Proof

of the imperative need of the workers having greater powers upon Town Councils, Education Committees, Boards of Guardians, and so forth. In this respect, just as in the Parliamentary field, Labour had been handicapped by lack of funds through the Osborne judgment. He looked forward full and proper place in the sun, not only in the national Parliament, but in every local authority, from the County Council right down to the Parish Council. Whatever legislation was passed at Westminster was, to a great extent, a dead letter unless there were in the several local authorities strong and live Labour men to see it carried into effect.

Mr. Ramsay MacDonald, M.P., who was received with loud and prolonged applause, prefaced his speech with the observation that if the workers of Wolverhampton only did their duty he would be with Mr. Walkden, not only on that platform, but on the floor of the House of Commons. He said what they as Trade Unionists had to face was the fact that there was on foot a conspiracy against them. The other side would not say so, but there it was all the same, and it showed itself while the Trade Union Bill was in Committee. The constitutional cornerstone of Trade Unionism had been that the Unions were self-governed organisations, which could not sue nor be sued except in respect of certain narrow specific and well defined things. If there was a grievance it had to go to some form of arbitration provided by the rules. But this did not suit the opponents of Trade Unionism. Efforts were made to introduce into the Bill new principles, and if amendments moved by these new-found friends of Trade Unionism had been carried every man who had an alleged grievance could have dragged his Union into the High Court, and placed it

At the Mercy of a Judiciary

which gave them the Taff Vale decision and the Osborne judgment.

It was, proceeded Mr. MacDonald, more essential now than ever that the Trade Union movement should have its active representatives in the House of Commons to guard its interests and privileges. The Act was one of the examples of the bias of the governing class, whether Liberal or Tory. Not only so, but they had in the rules issued by the Registrar that which in some respects went beyond the Registrar's powers. As a matter of fact he was not at all sure if the rules were read by a lawyer not in sympathy with Trade Unionism it would be discovered that methods had been introduced which were really the methods they had successfully knocked out of the Bill. The prejudiced classes were stronger against them to-day than ever.

ism. They said they were in favour of Trade Unionism, but were opposed to certain things Trade Unionists did; and were going to introduce legislation making it impossible for these things to be done. Further, when legislation had been introduced, they would draft rules, by-laws, and standing orders which would tie the hands of Trade Unionists behind their backs and make it impossible for them to take free action. As in the past, it was

The Working Classes Themselves

who had to fight the battles of Trade Unionism. There were those who talked about going on the old lines of Trade Unionism. They were going on the old lines. Trade Unionism had never existed without a political side. He admitted that the political side was getting more emphasised, but it was not new. It simply meant that the life in the movement from the beginning was being developed and strengthened. In future, with all the great federations of capital and labour, the public would turn in the case of great strikes to the House of Commons and ask why wages and arbitration boards were not established, and why representatives of the Board of Trade were not sent to bring the parties together? If Trade Unionists allowed the Labour movement to develop through Liberalism or Toryism or an Independent Labour Party not in alliance with the Labour movement, they would suffer, and it would be impossible for them to use their political power in the way Trade Unionists hoped to use it. Concluding, Mr. MacDonald said the new Act was bad enough, but super-imposed on it were the rules, and the purpose of the conference was to see how they could best adapt them to the new chapter in the representation of labour in the House of Commons.

A Resolution Adopted.

At the close of the Conference the following resolution was adopted on the motion of Mr. T. Jones, seconded by Councillor Hickin:—

This meeting declares that the success and efficiency of Trade Unionism depends upon the exercise of its political as well as its industrial powers; and so, whilst urging the workers to strengthen their industrial organisation, calls upon them to maintain the political activities of their Unions, because:

- (1) The rights of trade combination were first won by political action, and recent experiences have shown that unless that action is continued the destruction of these rights will follow;
- (2) The vigorous entrance of the Unions into politics in 1906 regained for them the right to strike without their funds becoming attachable as they had been under judge-made law;
- (3) During the late unrest it was proved by the action of the Government that in future no great industrial dispute can be conducted without the interference of Parliament; and
- (4) It is essential to the interests of the industrial classes that labour representation should be continued and increased, as it is only by industrial and political action that poverty and all its evils can be abolished and the permanent welfare of the nation achieved.

MOST POWERFUL WEAPON.

SOME MEN HAVE 20 VOTES:
HAVE YOU GOT ONE?

It is estimated that there are over half-a-million men who have more than one vote—some have as many as twenty or more. Few, if any of them, ever vote for Labour candidates, and they not only make sure of getting their names on the roll, but at by-elections and General Elections they go to considerable trouble and expense to get their votes cast for their Party. Thanks to motor-cars, some of them manage to vote as many times as they have votes.

When working men take the same trouble to get the vote, and are as anxious to exercise it when it has been won, they will make a change in British politics; they will get more attention paid to their political wishes, and will find that they will count between elections as well as on election day.

should follow the admirable example of the plural voter, and take some little trouble to see that he appears on the Voters' List.

A little attention now may save a big disappointment later on; it will be no good regretting your inaction when you find, on election day, that you have been left off the roll.

Go to the Post Office on August 1st.

See if your name is on the printed List that you will find there. Other copies of the List are hung outside churches and chapels and other public buildings. If there is any mistake, if you are incorrectly described, or if your name does not appear at all, you should see the officer whose name appears on the Register, or call at the address given below, where the necessary claim forms and advice will be supplied free.

You Must Claim Before August 20th.

You will have nearly three weeks in which to attend to this. Voting and paying taxes are the two privileges of citizenship. You have to help the Exchequer whether you like it or not, so you might as well take your place with the other voters and share the responsibility of electing a representative. Don't delay about it—remember, it takes twenty workmen's votes to even up the twenty votes of a single pluralist. Get your own vote, and tell your workmate or your neighbour to do the same.

If you are a woman your name will not figure on the Parliamentary Voters' List—except by accident. When we get as democratic in our electoral franchise as the Britishers who run the Colonies, wives and daughters of adult age will be able to take an active interest in politics, in tea taxation, child-feeding, healthy conditions of factory life, shorter hours, and other matters that are as vital to women as they are to men. That won't be this year, however; and in the meantime women must make the most of the Municipal franchise.

If you have lived in the same town from July 15th, 1912, to July 15th, 1913, you are entitled to a vote on the Occupiers' List. If you have removed since July 15th last year, you should carefully note whether your name is on the List. If it is not, make your claim. Many hundreds of votes are lost by workmen at election times because they remove from one house to another and no record is made of it.

It is not necessary for the occupation to have been in one house for all the twelve months; if two or more houses were occupied in direct succession in the same constituency, the occupier is entitled to be placed upon the Register.

The amount of Rent you pay does not affect your title to the Vote.

If you are a lodger and have occupied rooms in the same house for twelve months preceding July 15th, paying 5s. (sometimes 6s.) per week for furnished lodgings, or 4s. per week for unfurnished lodgings, you should call at the address given below and sign a form which will be supplied to you. Sons residing with parents may also be eligible under this franchise.

Lodgers must claim every year, and all claims must be lodged with the overseers on or before August 20th.

If you are a caretaker or other worker living upon business premises without paying rent, you are entitled to a vote under the service franchise, provided your employer does not also live on the premises.

The Labour Party wants every man who is entitled to a vote to see that he gets it, and then to use it so as to enfranchise his fellow-workers—to realise the common interest he has with every other worker, man or woman; to make use of his political power so that the people who do the work of the country may have a better life and greater security; and to win for the children a healthier and brighter chance than ever children had before.

The vote is the most powerful weapon the worker has. Get your vote and vote for Labour.

If you think you are entitled to a vote, if you want advice, or want to make a claim, or have been objected to, apply to Mr. J. Whittaker, J.P., Registration Agent, Labour Assembly Rooms, Queen

EDUCATION ECHOES.

A new Education Bill promised! What will it contain? How far will it settle the religious difficulty? Will the Bill deal with education instead of bigotry and sectarianism? Will education be put on the same plane as "national service," and made largely, if not wholly, a national charge? Only a Bill conceived on big, broad lines such as these can hope to meet the country's need.

The Medical Inspection of School Children, which is compulsory on all educational authorities must be followed up by compulsory treatment. To tabulate and record by the hundred thousand defects and ailments which could be remedied is almost—not quite, but almost—an entire waste of public money. It is not a farce; it is a tragedy.

The feeding of necessitous school children clause in the Act will have to be changed from the words "may be fed" to "shall be fed."

The half-time system must be abolished; the school age should be raised, and to meet this maintenance scholarships should be established.

The size of classes in the elementary schools need to be considerably reduced.

The free places in the higher elementary and secondary schools and universities ought to be raised from 25 to 100 per cent.

A true Education Act will develop brains and not privilege.

Art education, technical education, and evening continuation schools are all doing well in the borough under existing circumstances, but they would take a tremendous leap forward if it were not for the niggardly manner in which they are financed.

Elementary education is starved at the expense of secondary education, and the latter is not getting the best of chances.

The inequality of the burden of the education rate needs to be adjusted. This in itself would be a big relief to Wolverhampton ratepayers.

Education ought to be above party squabbles and sectarian differences. The nation's children should be the nation's first care, physically, mentally, and morally! Will our legislators rise to a duty that calls—a duty that is pressing and a call that is urgent—on behalf of the happiness of the people and the commercial life of the nation?

G. LAWLEY.

THE FLORAL FÊTE.

Final Arrangements for Wolverhampton's Great Annual Event.

But a fortnight has now to elapse ere an event of the year in Wolverhampton will take place. All the arrangements for the 25th Annual Floral Fête have now been completed, and we are informed that exhibitors in the horticultural section are this year coming from different parts all over England and Scotland. Nothing like the promised show of flowers has ever before been exhibited in Wolverhampton, and the secretary of the fête, who has been at the Royal Show in London and the big Carnival at York, has on all sides received assurances from principal exhibitors in the country of their intention to give Wolverhampton a visit on this 25th anniversary. The "side shows" too have been planned on a scale which has never before been attempted. There will be three or four turns of celebrated performers direct from London who have not previously visited the town.

The programme of the Coldstream Guards and Scots Guards Bands has now been arranged, and a great musical treat is in store for visitors to the show. An additional attraction also will be the visit of the Seaforth Highlanders with their pipers and drummers. It should be noted that the Scots Guards' pipers and drummers were advertised in the first place, but, owing to the demands of Royalty, the Seaforth Highlanders are taking their place. They will give selections twice a day in the ring, preceding the horse jumping and the military display.

A record is being attempted, and it only remains now for fine weather to ensure a record attendance.

NEWSAGENTS AND STATIONERS' ASSOCIATION.

We welcome to the ranks of Trade Unionism this new organisation in the shape of the Newsagents and Stationers' Association.

The immediate objects of this new Trade Union, which is comprised largely of small shopkeepers in the town, is to resist encroachments by wholesale dealers and large publishing houses, and to secure better terms for small retailers.

Trade Unionists purchasing stationery or ordering newspapers and periodicals are advised to deal only with those shopkeepers who are members of this Association.

ALICE IN WONDERLAND.

Cartoon from *The Daily Citizen*.



[With acknowledgments to "Through the Looking Glass."]

(The Liberal Government has again resisted a proposal to remove the "breakfast table" taxes.)

"I know what you're thinking about," said Tweedledee; "but it isn't so, nohow."
 "Contrariwise," continued Tweedledum, "if it was so, it might be; and if it were so, it would be; but as it isn't, it ain't. That's logic."
 "I was thinking," Alice said very politely, "that you might tell me how you propose to give the people a free breakfast table."
 But the fat little men only looked at each other and grinned.
 "Nohow!" Tweedledee cried.
 "Contrariwise!" shouted Tweedledum.
 And the two brothers took to their heels and were out of sight in a moment.

ANOTHER MISERABLE RECORD.

TORY PARTY WEIGHED IN THE BALANCE AND FOUND WANTING.

THE PARTY OF NEGATION AND DESTRUCTION.

What have the Tories done for Wolverhampton? What have they done for the country? We were asked these two questions over and over again by many people after the publication of the articles on the white-robed and white washed party in the last issue.

To which we replied that we intended to deal with them at the first opportunity, but we, of course, had to deal with the greatest danger first.

By that we mean that a party which professes sympathy and does little, and makes a mess of that which it essays to do, is a greater danger to the working classes than a party which does nothing, and does not even profess sympathy.

This latter position is exactly where the Tory Party stands. It is the party of negation. When the Tories do anything of their own initiative it generally is in a retrograde direction; or, when compelled to move by public opinion their measures usually express themselves in such a manner as to give the minimum of satisfaction to the great mass of public opinion and the maximum of advantage to their own class.

At present they are an opposition party. They shriek out at their highest note the iniquities of the present Government, but at the same time they have no constructive policy to offer the people in return for their suffrages.

By a constructive policy we of course mean a progressive policy which, when carried out, would result in improved conditions for the people and one which would help to bring about a healthier and happier England.

Tariff Reform? Dead! We hear very little of it to-day. They have killed it themselves. After much internal squabbling which nearly resulted in the utter disintegration of this already bankrupt party, it was decided to drop the food taxes, which are the very essence of Tariff "Reform." Without food taxes this idea of Protection is as a bone without meat.

The institution of restrictive duties on Imports would be destructive towards our most important industries, such as engineering, shipbuilding, the textile trades, boot and shoe manufacturing, printing, etc., which need to draw on all the world for one or other of their supplies—iron, and other metals, timber, yarn, leather, paper, etc. This little country (unlike America or Germany) is

an island having no unlimited natural resources except coal. We must import the bulk of our supplies, including our food, or we could not possibly keep our industries going. Tariff Reform would destroy the "most favoured nation" clause which we now enjoy in our international agreements as the result of our own Free Trade policy. Without this our Export trade would undoubtedly decline. Disraeli said: "Protection is not only dead but damned." Apparently the Tories are again recognising that he was a good judge of such things.

National Service? This cannot be called by any means progressive. It is just about as retrograde a movement as going back to the days of the press gang would be. Besides, there are not many Tories who would openly say that this is a plank in their platform, much as they would like to bring it about. No, this is one of the things they will try to thrust on the people when they get into power, but they will be very careful to say nothing about it at election time. True, Colonel Hickman has frankly asserted he is in favour of this un-English scheme, but he is more outspoken on the matter than are most of his fellow-Tories.

They have said a lot about the Insurance Act, but has anyone ever heard them offer a remedy? The Act, everyone admits, is unsound, it requires drastic alteration, but notwithstanding this, underlying it there is a great principle. The Tories can shout, but when it comes to doing something that is another matter. If they were pressed for their remedy probably they would say "Repeal the Act." That is destruction, not construction. And what about the money of the workers already sunk in it. Very likely they will build a dreadnought with it, or something in that way. Again destruction, this time of human life, instead of amending an Act which has possibilities of being a lever to build up lives and to make a stronger and healthier race.

Their's is a policy of destruction we repeat. The Irish people have fought for a century to be allowed to govern themselves, and by that means stop the dry rot which has set in in that country. At last they have again compelled a British Government to do something in this direction. Yet this party of negation step in. They cannot offer a constructive policy. Ireland will never forget the last ten years of Tory repression. Their policy is destruction—civil war, and

we understand that Colonel Hickman has expressed a willingness to take a personal part in such action!

On no question of the day can they say what they will do, or how they will do it. But while they have been in opposition they have done something. During the time of Labour unrest they ably seconded the Liberal Government in their acts of repression. As far as the exploitation of the working class is concerned there is no difference between them.

They will range their forces up against one another to fight as Liberals or Tories on things that don't matter.

When things that do matter come along they cease to fight each other. There are no Liberals or Tories then. If it is a question of a minimum wage, or anything that affects the workers they forget the party politics and vote solid against Labour. When the workers find out there are no real politics but Labour, then they will be able to get what they want.

What have the Tories done for Wolverhampton?

We are informed Lord Windsor has given a bowling green, but that will scarcely help the sweated workers, or their wives and children.

We also learn that Mr. Bird is devoting a great deal of his valuable time and attention to an Admiralty Arch in London, and to the revival of an old scheme for making a tunnel under the English Channel. Such activities will help his friends to write up a nice little biographical sketch of him whenever his grateful Party requires his unobtrusive but handsome services to them by giving him a handsome title. But these things are not particularly helpful to the thousands of "bottom dogs" who are now crying aloud for justice and fair treatment at the hands of their employers.

There has been much distress on account of the strikes. Men, women, and children, after existing for years in a state of semi-starvation, have struck for better conditions. They are having to undergo complete starvation to get justice. What have the Tories and Liberals done to encourage them in their hard struggle to secure a minimum wage? Have they manfully ranged themselves on the side of the strikers, or have they deferred to their powerful friends on the other side who are against all strikers all the time?

As a matter of fact the Tories are plotting with Masters' Federations to secure legislation to stultify our hard-won Trades Disputes Act and to make strikes practically impossible. Lord Robert Cecil (who has been specially trained as a Barrister) has drafted a Bill for them with that object, and is being strongly encouraged to push it through, especially by their most rank anti-democrats and anti-workers like Lord Claud Hamilton and Sir Frederick Banbury. For of such is the Tory Party, and the dearest desire of their hearts is to maintain their own monopolies and class privileges, and to keep the workers in perpetual subjection.

R.M.

THE NEW TRADE UNION ACT.

Any trade union officials or members who are in want of information respecting the working of the new Act of Parliament legalising political action by trade unions should communicate with the secretary of the Trades Council, who will gladly supply leaflets and particulars provided by the National Joint Board. A deputation from the Council will visit any branch meeting, if desired, for the purpose of explaining the requirements of the Act and the best methods of carrying them out. Mr. Walkden, who has personally gone into all the details of the new scheme with the Trade Union Congress Secretary, and whose own Association has already obtained preliminary approval from the Registrar of new rules for taking the necessary ballot and for regulating the new political fund, is also willing to visit any branch to discuss this subject and lend a hand in dealing with any difficulties. Unions desiring a visit from Mr. Walkden should communicate with Mr. Whittaker at the Labour Assembly Rooms, suggesting suitable dates.

We are publishing an important article on the whole question in our next issue, but meantime we commend to the notice of our readers the advice of Mr. Ramsay MacDonald appearing on page 2.

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Inquiries as to advertisements should be addressed to the Advertising Manager, at the office of this paper.

A SUBSCRIPTION OF ONE SHILLING per annum will ensure delivery (by post) of a copy of THE WOLVERHAMPTON WORKER for twelve months.

JULY, 1913.

EDITORIAL.

Immediately our last issue appeared we found that we had under-estimated the growing popularity of *The Wolverhampton Worker* and were consequently compelled to telegraph for a further supply of two thousand copies—making nineteen thousand in all—to meet the clamant demands of our increasing army of distributors. Equally gratifying are the innumerable evidences of the keen interest taken in the contents of our journal by readers of every description. In all parts of the town we find that each column has been eagerly scanned by friends and foes alike, and "what the *Worker* says" furnishes a topic for thoughtful discussion in all circles of life in Wolverhampton. Our paper is fast achieving its leading aim—it is becoming "the voice of the people." What other voices in press and pulpit dare not say the *Worker* is prepared to proclaim in outspoken terms, and the people are welcoming it as their herald and champion. It has effectively aided the tenants in their opposition to rent-raising landlords, and in their endeavour to make the Town Council do its duty upon the housing question. It has helped the sweated toilers (in both private and public employment) in their heroic and persistent struggles to secure a minimum wage. It has assisted the Trade Unions to increase their membership and solidify their organisation, both internally and through the Trades Council. It is helping them to regain direct representation in Parliament and to add to the number of their

bodies. It has fought against Conscription and other retrograde movements, and stimulated all the progressive workers and organisations in the town. It has thrown a searchlight upon the deeds and omissions of both Liberals and Tories and revealed their Tweedledum and Tweedledee characteristics. It has exposed the shameful conditions under which thousands of the people are dragging out their existence, and has stirred up the City Fathers to some sense of their responsibilities. It has asserted the common popular rights of protest, of demonstration, and of agitation, and has helped to renew in the people the old spirit of freedom and the lofty passion for justice and social righteousness which historians claim as having been typical of English public life. Too long have these ideals been forgotten or dragged in the slimy mud of self-interest. Too long have other teachers and preachers and writers been silent on these great subjects. *The Wolverhampton Worker* means to go on with the mission to which it is consecrated, to be true to the vision with which it is inspired, and to raise our town to a leading position amongst the progressive centres of the Twentieth Century. All who wish to lend a hand in that gigantic but inspiring task should link themselves up with the Labour movement and take an active part in its work. In particular we would appeal to all who have the priceless advantages of leisure and education to give them freely and fearlessly in the service of the people, and to detach themselves from the moribund Parties in which they have hitherto been stagnating—politically, mentally, and spiritually.

The surprising disclosures resulting from the Marconi Inquiry have aroused considerable discussion as to the financial morality of public men, but unfortunately most of the moralisers have been beating the air and missing the essentials of the case. It is frequently the same when young men are preached at upon the evils of gambling. "Shocking examples" of the ruination of unsuccessful individuals are pointed to, but the successful gamblers of all kinds are not exposed and condemned, and the viciousness of *desiring* to obtain money in any way without earning it is quite overlooked. Indeed, many doubtful means of "getting on"—that is, getting rich—are condoned, and many a clean young soul is corrupted through being taught to worship with others at the shrine of Mammon, although advised not to burn racecourse and card-table incense, on account of the risk.

The public are being asked to overlook the fact that certain eminent Cabinet Ministers have, after a most laborious, costly, and protracted Inquiry, been found to have had a four-figure "flutter" in some highly-speculative shares that were closely related to other shares in a company with which the Cabinet had fixed up a very advantageous Government contract. The Tories, who instigated the Inquiry, are bitterly disappointed to find that the gentlemen in question had not actually handled shares in the contracting company. And the Liberals are assuring themselves that all's well, although they are having to do an awful lot of explaining and excusing, and they admit having sailed rather too near the wind. Most of them avoid discussion on the point that their own Party funds were partly deposited in these highly-speculative shares, that their Chief Whip was the only man who knew this had been done, and that he kept it dark until forced to admit it. Liberals and Tories alike shrink from suggesting any such self-denying ordinance as that public men should not dabble at all in speculative share transactions; in fact, it was admitted during the course of the Marconi Inquiry that it was quite a common matter for Ministers to give their time and attention to that sort of thing. We consider such practices reprehensible on their part, and we cannot agree with Mr. Lloyd George's flimsy excuse about so-called "investments" of this character. Of course, he would be justified in properly investing his margin of income, but there are hundreds of first-class trustee securities available for that purpose, and statesmen should not be distract their minds (to put it mildly) by getting involved in transactions that may bring fortune or failure according to the

JOTTINGS.

Charity commences at home, and so ought politics. Is Welsh Disestablishment going to clothe you, or Home Rule feed you? Do you not begin to dimly realise that during the past 30 years you electors have been so many pawns in the political game over these and kindred academic subjects.

Three hundred and eighty soldiers commit suicide to every 110 civilians. Now's your chance. Adopt Lord Roberts' conscription plan and help to solve the surplus population problems.

An increase in the cost of living is equivalent to a drop in wages.

Do not forget this, that Liberal and Tory social legislation *always* involves an increase in the cost of living.

In many cases it amounts to this. What is given you by one hand, is doubly taken from you with the other.

Both Tory and Liberal politicians know this and also know that the game could be kept up for ever, if electors are foolish enough to allow them.

Mr. Asquith and that superman, Lloyd George, do not believe in a free breakfast table.

Any of my readers got an idea they were fooled over the "dear food" cry? It is true the Tories wish to tax food more, but the Liberals are about as bad from an increased cost of living point of view. They are perpetuating the Tory sugar tax.

Your wages do not go up in proportion to the increased cost of living, without a struggle in which actual starvation plays a big part.

When will you working men, both strikers and others, understand that if you will use your votes properly, you can get a minimum wage established without having to resort to strikes and their attendant evils and misery?

Neither Tory nor Liberal party will establish it however; they are almost entirely composed of the employers' class. The latter always pay the election expenses of any *poor* Liberal M.P.'s., and, of course, call the tune all the time.

In the West End of London, the infant death rate is 11 per cent. In the East End, it is 38 per cent.

Dukes, company promoters, and other "deadheads" do not reside in the East End.

Another funny story. Alderman Price Lewis told an audience a short time ago a Corporation employee always had breakfast on Sunday with him.

I wonder what that Corporation employee's feelings were when he read the exposure in our last issue.

I see, judging by anonymous pitiful murmurings in the *Express* and *Star*, that our last issue "touched" some of the stalwarts up.

Is it not marvellous how some people will let prejudice, particularly political, act as a drawback to their own interests.

I do not think I am far wrong when I say nine out of every ten supposed Liberal and Tory working men, in their hearts, know that a Labour candidate is the candidate for them, but, mainly from prejudice, will not come out on the side of Labour.

I hear there is going to be another tea fight at Solihull shortly.

If true, I sincerely hope as many Liberals will go, as did to the last one.

Is it a fact the wirepullers have been complaining at Mr. Bird decreasing his expenditure in the constituency?

It has been computed that three-fourths of the taxation of this country is borne by the working class, either directly or indirectly.

Yet, in view of this, they have only 40 representatives in Parliament to specially

PARTY FUNDS.

In a leading article commenting on the Marconi revelations *The Daily Citizen* remarks:—We do not pretend to understand the mystery of these share transactions. We do not know why the Master of Elibank, before quitting his office, did not make a full statement of his dealings and losses to his chief and his successor. We do not know whether Mr. Fenner or Lord Murray is owing money to the Liberal Party. What is known and what is not known is equally astounding. We do say that in all the circumstances it was foolish and ill-advised on the part of Ministers and party officials to invest their personal money in American Marconis, and it was recklessly foolish to invest party funds. We think that the ratification of a contract between the English company and the Government would have raised the standing and probably enhanced the shares of the American company. We think the rejection of the contract with the English company by Parliament would probably have affected adversely the American shares, since it would have been a reflection on the quality of the Marconi patents. The slightest thought should have warned Ministers to keep clear of Marconi entanglements in any shape or form.

We have written with a good deal of restraint, but before final judgment is passed it is only right and fair that Lord Murray should himself be heard. For the moment our contempt is divided in equal proportions between the Liberal journals which pretend that all is well and that they are really enjoying these revelations and those Tory journals which pretend to be morally shocked at incidents for which they would find more than a parallel in their own party.

Incidentally, but most usefully, the Marconi investigation throws a searching light on secret party funds. These secret funds place enormous and baneful power in the hands of a single man, and how complete his power is has now been made apparent. Picture a party shedding tears over housing conditions, with, perhaps, thousands of pounds secretly invested—unknown even to the members themselves—in slum property. Picture a party granting facilities to railway companies to increase their charges, with, perhaps, thousands of pounds secretly invested in railway shares. Picture a party fighting tooth and nail to ratify a contract with a company, with, perhaps, thousands of pounds invested in the concern or in a sister concern!

The secret "war chest" is one of the worst evils of the party system. Rich men pay, and are made peers; poor men are bought, and kept under the thumb of the Chief Whip. No member of the Liberal or Tory parties ever saw a party balance-sheet. He does not know from whom the party money comes, or for what purpose it comes; he does not know to whom it goes, or for what purpose it goes. If the full facts were known both parties would have fewer supporters than they now have. Hundreds of thousands of pounds are at the unfettered disposal of one man, and we can think of no circumstance more likely to react hurtfully against independence and freedom of judgment and high personal service in the public interest.

A party fund is necessary, but it should be, like the Labour Party fund, open and above board. Secret money can readily become a source of corruption, and apart from the character of the men who may handle it, the system is vicious and wrong.

A QUESTION FOR LORD ROBERTS.

For a solid hour the captain had been lecturing his men on "The Duties of a Soldier," and he thought that now the time had come for him to test the results of his discourse. Casting his eye around the room he fixed on Private Murphy as his first victim.

"Private Murphy," he asked, "why should a soldier be ready to die for his country?"

The Irishman scratched his head for a while; then an ingratiating and enlightening smile flitted across his face.

"Sure, captain," he said pleasantly, "you're quite right. Why should he?"

—*Boston Transcript.*

LOCAL NOTES AND COMMENTS.

By "THE CHIEF."

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

—BURNS.

"The Worker."

I feel that I cannot proceed with my monthly notes without some reference to *THE WORKER* itself. That it has caused a stir in the town there is no doubt whatever. The demand for the last issue was remarkable. The 15,000 originally estimated for had to be increased to 17,000, and on the last issue there was an increase of a further 2,000, making 19,000 in all. That alone is proof that it is creating interest in the doings of the Labour Party. Some people have been hit, no doubt; we intend to hit, and hit hard, but we shall endeavour to hit fairly. We (the Editorial staff) are out to create a wider interest in the affairs of the town; and to put the views of Labour before the people in a manner that was not possible before the advent of *THE WORKER*. That this has been accomplished to some extent has been freely admitted by political friends and foes alike. To all those who have sent congratulatory messages on behalf of the Editorial Committee I return sincere thanks.

One Result—

Our exposure in the last issue of the action of some members of the Town Council on the Minimum Wage question had its effect. The public, unfortunately, have such short memories that the fantastic story that "if it had not been for the Labour men the employees would have had the 24s. minimum long ago" would very likely have been swallowed, especially as it was backed by the local Press. But *THE WORKER* was able to give the real facts, and it is safe to say that the public now realise that if it had not been for the Labour men the Corporation employees would not have been getting any increase at all.

—And an Effect.

The effect of this has already made itself apparent. Quite a change was manifested in the attitude of the majority of the Council to the Labour representatives at the last meeting. Notwithstanding that there was no resolution on the agenda, when friend Hickin rose to ask a question on the matter he was allowed to discuss it, and it was agreed that whatever increase was granted should date from that day. Not only so, but when it was pointed out there was no Labour member on the General Purposes Committee, it was immediately moved that one of them be added. But no, their new-found love could not be satisfied with this; nothing would satisfy them but that all three go on. And so they were all co-opted on the committee. The difference which a little light on a subject will make is remarkable.

The Sincerest Form of Flattery.

Colleague "R.M." has been feeling rather sore lately. The other week he came to me with a leaflet which proved to be an extract from his article on the Liberal Party. Now it had not been issued by the Labour Party, and there is of course only one other party who would have issued it, attacking as it does the Liberals and criticising one of their members. "R.M." grumbled a bit about it. "Never mind, old chap," said I, "it is often the case with people who suffer from lack of ideas to use the ideas of others." But I agree with "R.M.": that these people might have had the courtesy to ask permission. Still, imitation is the sincerest form of flattery, and we do not altogether object to other people helping to do our work.

A "Live" Trade Union.

A few days ago I dropped in at a meeting of the Gasworkers' Union and I must say that I was very favourably impressed with the spirit which manifested itself among the members. While one would hardly describe it as anything resembling a Sunday school, still the men there are all earnest stalwarts, and have grasped the principles underlying Trade Unionism. Hickin, Lawley, and the writer had something to say to the meeting, and

it was an indication of the progress made to hear these Gasworkers' members vociferously applauding sentiments which a short time ago would have been coldly received, if not altogether with strong disapproval. There is no doubt that the sympathy expressed by Labour and the help it has given them during their recent agitation has demonstrated that after all there is a strong link binding the industrial activity of Trades Unionism to Labour politics. That is the lesson the Gasworkers have learned, and there is no doubt that Walkden will feel the benefit of it when the time comes.

The Churches and Labour.

It is not so very long ago that the very word "Socialist" would have sent a thrill of horror through any respectable congregation, much less to hear the opinions of Socialists quoted from the pulpit. Yet a change has gradually taken place, and now great attention is paid to what our Labour M.P.s say, and anyone who essays to quote them can be sure of interested attention. The opinions of the Rev. J. A. Shaw are well known. We in the Labour movement are glad to recognise in him a comrade in the best sense of the term. But during the last few weeks I have been much interested in a course of sermons by a well-known pastor in the town. The other Sunday I had the pleasure of hearing Snowden quoted by him. I do not think I shall be saying anything wrong when I say that this minister is very sympathetic towards Labour ideals. I would not go so far as to say the gentleman concerned is entirely with us, for on one or two occasions I have listened to one or two homethrusts which I must say I have enjoyed quite as much as anything he has said to our encouragement. At the same time, if any reader wishes to hear Christianity expounded in a manner which accords more with our idea of the meaning of the message of the Great Teacher, he or she will not be disappointed with the pastor of Queen Street Congregational Church.

Another Sympathetic Clergyman.

Since writing the above I have had handed to me the following letter, sent to Mr. Ellery by a local clergyman:—

St. George's Vicarage, Wolverhampton.
Saturday, June 21st, 1913.

Dear Mr. Ellery,—I enclose subscription (£1), which I wish could be larger, towards your strikers' fund.

I should just like to say that it has been hastily, and it seems to me unfairly, assumed, to judge from the newspapers, that because some of us do not rush into print and advertise ourselves on every suitable occasion that, therefore, we are not sympathetic towards the movement to better the wages for the workers.

As far as I am concerned that is quite wrong.

My opinion is that 23s. per week is all too small, considering the high price of everything nowadays.

I intend to go on (as I have been doing for some time past), quietly working away to educate the consciences of people to the iniquity of the starvation wages which have, up to now, been paid in many trades (and are still being paid).—Yours faithfully,

(Rev.) H. DICKENSON.

The rev. gentleman is a curate at St. George's Church, Wolverhampton. His letter needs no comment. It is further proof that all sections of the Church are realising that Christianity is in need of a wider interpretation.

A Public Hall for Wolverhampton?

If there is one thing needed more than another it is a Municipal Hall in which public meetings could be held. I am reminded of this more forcibly at the moment by the fact that the Agricultural Hall is offered for sale. By the time these notes appear its fate will be known. But as there has been no action on the part of the Corporation it is safe to say it will not become the property of the town. What would be the position if the Agricultural Hall was converted into a place of amusement by its purchasers and the Drill Hall not available? There is no other hall available, and I submit that the Council might do worse than consider the position.

Animals v. Children.

An amazing illustration of the degeneracy of the so-called higher classes occurred in Darlington-street the other Saturday. The occasion was the annual street collection in aid of Dr. Barnardo's Homes, and I have it on good authority that one of the zealous lasses approached a standing motor car and asked the occupant (a "lady") for a subscription. "What are you collecting for?" she was asked. "For the Children—Dr. Barnardo's Homes," was the reply. "Oh," said the fortunate one in the car, "I can't subscribe for the children, if it had been for animals I would have been glad to help." The collector very spiritedly made the comment, "So you think more of animals than of children?" This true story goes to prove that even Wolverhampton possesses its specimens of that class of unnatural people who shirk the duties of motherhood, and whose perverted instincts impel them to bestow what little affection they have upon the pampered lap-dog rather than upon children.

Labour's Principal Printery.

I notice that a carping critic, writing to the local Liberal newspaper, says he is sorry to find that *THE WORKER* is printed in Manchester, and goes on to make suggestions intended for Mr. Walkden's edification. He is plainly sorry that *THE WORKER* is ever printed at all, allies himself with the bogus "Trade Unionist" who glories in the existence of our squalid slums, objects to Mr. Walkden's work in the town and wants to see him "off the earth" to make room for the greedy Liberal caucus which seeks to monopolise all three of the Parliamentary seats in Wolverhampton. This is very amusing to those who know things. Such obviously inspired letters will certainly never shift our Walkden half-an-inch. He has come to stay and to fight as long as his health and strength remain. All and sundry can put that in their pipe and smoke it. Our paper is printed by the National Labour Press because it belongs to the Labour Movement, produces *The Daily Citizen* and the *Labour Leader*, and is consequently able to help us in many ways that would be impossible for any local firms. But the latter enjoy a good many orders for other printing on Mr. Walkden's account. And are not millions of Liberal and Tory pamphlets printed at their headquarters?

The Municipal Scrap-Heap.

Apropos our article in the last issue regarding our munificent Town Council's attitude towards the bottom dogs in their employ, it has just come to my notice how their scrapped men are treated. Here is an illustration.

There is an old-age pensioner who used to be in the Team Department. He entered the Corporation service at the age of 23 at the magnificent wage of 10s. per week. Of course, it was impossible for him to marry, never having the good fortune to meet with a woman who could and would keep herself and assist in keeping him also on the sum before-mentioned. He spent 51 years in their service, and the largest amount he was ever paid in one week during that time was 21s.

A resolution was passed by the Gasworkers and General Labourers' Union recently, passed on to the Town Clerk, and acknowledged by him, asking if the Council could see their way clear to allow him and three others in a like predicament to do any work which would enable them to earn 8s. per week, which, with the old-age pension of 5s., would make a total of 13s. weekly.

Just fancy, dear reader, a resolution of this kind being at all necessary. It would not occur with the top dogs. If they were near their superannuation, the probability is, a thumping big increase would be given, so as to enable a larger pension to be granted.

These matters are just on a par with the granting of increases. The bottom dogs have to threaten to strike to get a 2s. or 3s. increase, but the councillors, Liberal and Tory, almost tumble over each other in their eagerness when it is a question of giving £50 or £100 increases.

It is as true to-day as it was 1900 years ago: "To him that hath shall be given, but from him that hath not, even that which he hath shall be taken away."

But Trade Unionism will modify that in this twentieth century, for verily, "the old order changeth."

TOWN COUNCIL MATTERS.

A TRIUMPH FOR MUNICIPAL TRADING.

THE MINIMUM WAGE.

At the last meeting of the Council the members were asked to consider the reports of several committees, and it is exceedingly satisfactory to the burgesses, and perhaps more particularly to that section which has strongly advocated municipal trading, to find such splendid results as are recorded in the year's working of the Tramways' Committee and the Markets' Committee.

The Tramways Committee, after making substantial additions to the renewals and reserve fund, were able to hand over the handsome sum of £3,777 to the relief of the rates of the borough.

The Markets' Committee were able to go even one better than this, their quota to the assistance of the ratepayer amounting to no less than £4,146 11s. 5d.

Following so closely on the splendid results of the Water, Electricity, and Sewerage Departments these reports are highly gratifying, and provide real good object lessons for those who argue against the Corporation acquiring other undertakings, such as the Gas and the Cemetery, for instance.

One very pleasing feature in connection with the working of the two Committees referred to is that the profits were not made altogether at the expense of underpaid labour, as neither of these committees will be affected by the forthcoming Minimum Wage.

I am not suggesting that no improvements should be made in the wages and conditions of those workmen who have helped the departments to show such results, but simply desire to point out that it is not necessary to resort to sweating in order to make profit.

The Minimum Wage.

A remarkable feature of the Council meeting was that the most interesting discussion centred round a question not placed on the agenda. I refer to the Minimum Wage question. As I dealt with this subject at some length in the last issue of the WORKER, I will not weary my readers by entering into any lengthy statement on the matter.

However, I believe that the question is of sufficient public interest to warrant an explanation of what has been done. In reply to a question by Councillor Hickin, the Mayor expressed regret that no resolution appeared on the agenda, but explained that the General Purposes Committee had not been able to agree on a definite resolution. It was pointed out that the men were getting restive, and were preparing to strike unless something was done. Eventually it was agreed that whatever increase in wages was granted should be paid as from the date of the meeting, June 9. It was also agreed to vary the previous resolution, so that the men working outside the borough at the Barnhurst Farm might be considered.

The Council appointed the three Labour representatives, Councillors Sharrocks, Hickin, and Frost to the General Purposes Committee, for the purpose of discussing this question.

Since then the committee has met and agreed to a 24s. per week minimum for efficient workmen inside the borough, and a 21s. minimum without a cottage, or 18s. with a cottage, for the men employed on the farm at Barnhurst. This may not seem an extravagant wage, but when I point out that as low as 16s. per week, without any cottage, was being paid, it will be seen what a substantial increase this will mean for some of the men. It is only fair, also, to state that these men receive extras, such as £3 as harvest money and also potato land, straw, etc., which probably makes their wages equivalent to those paid to other classes of workmen.

An Abomination Removed.

Every one has been glad to hear that at last that anachronism known as the pan system has received its congé. For something like eighty years this abomination has been accepted with a complacency that has been something of a sur-

night," with their unpleasant smells, was an experience so frequent that it was accepted as inevitable and the system had almost come to be regarded as part of the divine order of things. Now, although somewhat belated, I take this opportunity to place on record my satisfaction to know that at last we are to see a change, especially so when it is considered that this has been essentially a Labour proposition. While recognising the efforts and work of other gentlemen on the Council, there is no doubt that the public opinion created by the Labour Party in the town has done much towards securing the reform. Some twelve months ago Councillor Sharrocks moved a resolution that the pan system be abolished and a water carriage system substituted. This was defeated and an amendment appointing a committee to consider the whole matter was carried. Eventually the committee presented a most exhaustive report in favour of the institution of the water carriage system, and the pan system will soon be a thing of the past. I must point out that if this improvement had been carried out some years ago it is estimated that a large sum of money would have been saved the ratepayers, not only in renewals, but in the cost of upkeep (as the water system is undoubtedly cheaper), and its continuance must have had an adverse effect on the health of the borough. But it is being done at last, for which we are truly thankful. T.C.

THE TRADES COUNCIL.

MEMBERS AND THE MOTOR MENACE.

SUNDAY MUSIC.

The recent meeting of the Council was fraught with much interest to the Trade Union movement. The undemocratic method of election on the local Insurance Committees was certainly a revelation to the delegates, and the possibility of securing a direct Trade Union representative without a proper understanding is indeed very remote.

However, all societies have been circulated by the Secretary asking for the votes in this area to be cast in the order decided upon at the special meeting. The nominees are tried men and true, and if the headquarters of the Unions return their votes as desired, three may be returned.

Nevertheless, it cannot be too strongly stated that not only in the matter of election of Committees, but with regard to other injustices, action should be taken by all Trades Councils. A conference should be called in the Midlands to discuss the whole thing—to advocate amendments to the Act, and especially to the administration of the Medical Benefit clauses.

An appeal has been made by the Council to societies for the benefit of the strikers in the district, and the Executive hope that the response will be as magnificent as was the case recently.

A note of condolence has been passed to Mr. G. Foxhall, of the Gasworkers' Union, in his recent loss of both wife and only brother.

The Modern Juggernaut.

The following resolution, which was passed unanimously, will explain itself:

The Wolverhampton Trades Council, having regard to the increasing number of fatalities caused by motor cars and such vehicles, respectfully desire to call the attention of the Watch Committee to the following clause from the Motor Car Act, 1913:

"If any person drives a motor car on a public highway recklessly or negligently, or at a speed or in a manner which is dangerous to the public, having regard to all the circumstances of the case, including the nature, condition, and use of the highway, and to the amount of the traffic which actually is at the time or which might reasonably be expected to be at the time, he shall be liable to be proceeded against and punished as if he were guilty of the offence of dangerous driving."

respectfully asks that instructions be given that the Act shall be stringently enforced.

In proposing the resolution Mr. Weaver (of the Railway Clerks' Association) said that Wolverhampton being a town where motor cars were manufactured extensively the whole tendency was to encourage a high speed of driving. The town authorities, therefore, should endeavour to make the motorists responsible for their actions when anyone was hurt or killed. The motor industry was one of the most flourishing trades, and although they paid very little rates they used the public thoroughfares for the testing of their cars. In his opinion they should provide their own testing tracks.

Mr. Bagley (secretary) seconded, and said that they might be told that that matter was outside their province, but the obvious reply was that those who were hurt owing to reckless driving generally came from the working classes. They had waited too long for an alderman to be run down, or for a policeman to be killed on point duty, and he hoped the Watch Committee would do their best to check too speedy driving.

Sunday Music in the Parks.

The Secretary read the following letter received in reply to the request to provide Sunday music in the parks of the borough:—

Town Hall, Wolverhampton,
29th May, 1913.

Dear Sir,

Your letter of the 15th inst., addressed to His Worship the Mayor, was duly laid before the Parks and Baths Committee at their last meeting. In reply thereto, I am desired to state that having regard to the fact that the arrangements for the present season have already been made, my Committee are unable to consider the question of providing music in the parks on Sundays during that period. The matter shall, however, receive consideration when the programme for next year is being made up.

Yours faithfully,
HORATIO BREVITT,
Town Clerk.

Mr. Harry Bagley,
Secretary,
Wolverhampton Trades Council.

The Trades Council are of opinion that some arrangement should be made to provide music for the people who have no opportunity of enjoying it except Sundays, and there are certainly many of them in Wolverhampton. In addition, they consider two evening concerts a week very inadequate in comparison with the arrangements in other towns. These suggested Sunday concerts, together with additional evening concerts, would bring infinite enjoyment to the people, and in the opinion of the Trades Council, would be of great advantage to the Borough.

Thanks!

The assistance rendered by the Trades Council to the workers at Messrs. Bayliss, Jones, and Bayliss during the recent strike at Monmore Green, has been handsomely recognised by the Workers' Union. A letter was read from the Monmore Green Branch in the following terms:—

Workers' Union,
Monmore Green Branch.

DEAR SIR,

I am glad to have the pleasure of writing to you, to inform you that the above branch of the Workers' Union have decided to become affiliated to your Council. The members desire me to send their best thanks to your Council for the practical support and sympathy in our recent struggle with Messrs. Bayliss, Jones, and Bayliss. We feel that had it not been for your co-operation and support we should not have been able to gain the splendid victory which we did. The members regard it as a good victory, although it fell short of our Union terms. Still, the men and women are organising, and when the time comes for us to ask the firm again for our Union rates, we shall be in a position to fight to complete victory. Again thanking you for your able assistance.

Yours fraternally,
A. FLAVELL, Secretary.

The Council are gratified at this very practical expression of thanks. That strike has certainly proved to the Union the benefits derivable from the existence of the Council, and it is to be hoped that the few other Unions still outside will follow the example so splendidly set by the Workers' Union.

The Labour councillors were congratulated upon the securing of the 24s. minimum for Corporation employees, and the hope was expressed that the time would soon come when that minimum would be increased. Thanks for the help given by the Trades Council in the matter was

"THE WORKER."

Message from J. Ramsay MacDonald, M.P.

NEED FOR LABOUR PAPERS.

We have received the following message from Mr. J. Ramsay MacDonald, M.P., chairman of the Labour Party in the House of Commons:—

I was very pleased when I was in Wolverhampton the other day to see that the Labour Movement had started an organ of its own.

The only criticism that I have to make is that Wolverhampton should do better than a monthly.

Working men will never find their interests advocated and fought for by newspapers which they do not own. They can see that in their experience with *The Daily Citizen*.

For the first time in the Labour history of the country the wage earner has felt morning after morning that there was something proclaiming his views and explaining his mind. He was like a man who had passed out of a hostile country into friendly one.

The result has been those magnificent risings of down-trodden labour in the Midlands. The Liberal and Tory, Free Trade and Protectionist employers, through their goodness of heart or their sound business instincts, never laid their heads together to make the lives of the working men and the working women, from whom they made their fortunes, either decent or tolerable, but one fine day a Labour newspaper appeared, and then the worker awoke and moved onwards—not very far, perhaps, but just enough to make a start.

The national Press must be supplemented by a local one. There are special Wolverhampton interests which cannot be catered for in a paper circulating from John o' Groats to Land's End, and above all, there is a special Wolverhampton organisation to be perfected in view of elections, both local and national.

There is a Wolverhampton seat to be won back again, and a Wolverhampton movement to be kept going.

That all means a Wolverhampton paper; so I was very glad to see *The Worker*, and it is a great pleasure to send it hearty greeting and good wishes.—Yours, etc.,

J. RAMSAY MACDONALD.

3, Lincoln's Inn Fields,
London, W.C.
June 10, 1913.

A RURAL AWAKENING.

One most notable and encouraging sign of the times is the awakening of the agricultural labourer. "Bowed by centuries of toil," and kept tamely submissive by low feeding and by the seemingly unbendable power of the wealthy landed gentry who live on his labour, the rural worker has almost been regarded as a hopeless proposition by trade unionists, especially those conversant with the deplorable collapse of the fine work performed by Joseph Arch. But now the message of combination is again being received and acted upon even in remote villages, and the Agricultural Labourers' Union is at last making real headway.

We feel that the whole Labour Movement should do everything possible to assist this Union in its enormously difficult task. The wages of the man on the land form the basis from which all other wages are judged by arbitrators and other superior persons, and it is obviously in the interests of all workers that the agricultural labourer's pay should be raised and his conditions of life levelled up to a standard of decency and comfort.

NOTICE TO OUR READERS.

Every effort is made to secure the effective distribution of "The Worker," but occasionally we hear that one or two friends have been overlooked.

The Publisher would be glad to remedy this, and will endeavour to secure a copy being delivered on word being sent to the

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TENANTS' DEFENCE LEAGUE.

DEPUTATION TO HEALTH COMMITTEE MEETS WITH SUCCESS.

HOUSING COMMITTEE TO BE FORMED.

The ultimate object of the League was to get the Town Council to put into operation the Housing Act with a view to providing houses of a kind and at a price suitable to the requirements of the working classes.

Early in our campaign against increased rents we sent a letter to the town authorities drawing attention to the shortage of houses and the consequent overcrowding.

The Blakenhall residents sent a resolution dealing with this matter to their senior councillor asking him to move it in the Council Chamber, but this has never been done.

The Tenants' Defence League then made application to the Health Committee to receive a deputation. This request was granted and the Rev. J. A. Shaw, Mrs. Wilkes, Mrs. Sproson, and Messrs. S. Belcher (hon. sec.), J. Whitaker, J.P. (president), and G. Lawley, met the Health Committee at the beginning of the month.

The deputation were able to state that there was a shortage of houses, there being only 200 void houses in the town, clean and unclean, fit and unfit for habitation. They pointed out that it had been stated by the Mayor that there were 500 houses within a mile of the Town Hall which ought to be pulled down, and that if that was the case there must be at least 300 houses now occupied which ought not to be occupied. This question was a health question and the deputation thought this was a question which ought to be immediately considered by the Health Committee. It was pointed out, further, that 9,000 notices had been sent out for increased rent, the alternative being to give up possession, and that it was obvious that 9,000 tenants could not remove to 200 vacant places. This could only lead up to overcrowding, which, as a matter of fact, was now taking place.

From the Town Hall, including Penn-road, Blakenhall, Dudley-road, Parkfield-road, and down to Cleveland-road, with 30,000 inhabitants, not more than one dozen houses were vacant at a rent of from 5s. to 8s.; on the other side of the town, Whitmore Reans, Dunstall, Merri-dale, Graiseley, up to the Penn-road, there were not more than ten void houses; and on the Springfield side of the town only two were vacant.

The area of the biggest number of void houses was slumland, the place of the highest death rate—Horsely Fields and Monmore Green. One hundred out of the 200 void houses lay in this district, so that if the people of Blakenhall, Graiseley, Whitmore Reans, and Springfield, were to move at all it must be to this area, and with a greater number on it the death rate would be higher still.

The deputation also drew attention to the fact that Wolverhampton was about

the only town of its size in the county without a Housing Committee, and we requested that one should be appointed with a view to bringing forward a scheme for municipal housing.

The members of the deputation were given a very courteous hearing by the Health Committee, who expressed themselves, through their chairman, Alderman Berrington, as being favourable to anything that could be done in the interests of the health of the community.

As a matter of fact, so well put was the case for the tenants that the Health Committee deemed it advisable to hold a special meeting to consider the matters raised by the deputation.

The result of that meeting (we are informed on good authority) was a decision to request the Town Council, at their next meeting to proceed with the formation of a Housing Committee. In the meantime, deputations, we believe, are being sent to the various adjacent towns where housing schemes are in operation, and all details as to the necessity for this step will be drawn up.

Of course, this does not mean that the thing will be taken in hand immediately. We have good reasons to remember that it takes many months for the Council to take any step, as instanced by the time it has taken to come to a decision to abolish the pan system. The committee elected to consider that question sat something like twelve months.

But the Tenants' Defence League have gained a great point, and it now remains for them to watch events and see how the suggested committee is formed, and what kind of scheme they bring forward.

More essentially they must keep a watchful eye on the forthcoming November election and vote only for candidates who give a definite promise that they will do all in their power to push forward the housing scheme.

The action of the Tenants' Defence League has resulted in many landlords withdrawing their notices of increased rents; it has prevented other landlords attempting it, it has drawn the attention of the health authorities to insanitary dwellings, and in many instances they have had them remedied. It has caused a census to be taken of the houses of the town, and has now enlisted the help of the Health Committee, and soon we hope to get the Town Council to move forward on the lines we suggest.

Much still remains to be done. The Tenants' League was formed not only to resist higher rents, but to help the tenants to get their houses attended to properly, and any defects remedied. If the form on this page is filled in and sent to the Labour Assembly Rooms, the League will do their best to see that the requirements of the tenants are met by the sanitary or other officials of the town.

Fill in this form yourself and get your neighbour to do likewise, and forward to the Tenants' Defence League, Labour Assembly Rooms, Queen Square, Wolverhampton:—

I wish to draw attention to overcrowding at

Particulars of overcrowding.....

The house I occupy is defective in this respect.....

Name.....

Address.....

ODDS AGAINST.

By PHLOS.

The day had been warm, so John Tindal found that a seat on the window-sill outside and an evening newspaper were quite refreshing after his hard day's work.

John—or Jack, as he was called by his mates—was a labourer on the railway, and his wages something less than a pound a week, hence the necessity for his living in a house and locality more calculated to breed and develop disease than healthy and happy families. Time had somewhat lessened the repugnance Jack and his wife had felt when they first moved into this neighbourhood from one which, if not ideal, had at least the hallmark of respectability about it. But a small wage and an increasing family made the move inevitable, and the pain of it was only temporised by the hope that something would turn up which would enable them to speedily return to their former prestige. Alas, for such a hope. Nothing did "turn up" to make things better or prospects brighter, but illness amongst the children rendered every hope almost helpless to meet the struggling spirits.

Never having learnt a trade, and having no capital or promise of any, Jack had long since recognised that the probability of him ever being anything more than a labourer was not to be thought of. It would simply have meant building castles in the air, and Jack didn't care much for this pastime nowadays.

But let us get back to the window-sill and Jack and the newspaper, and we shall see that this castle building in the air was not quite dead, at any rate.

A current issue of a newspaper was a luxury to Jack, and it may therefore be mentioned at once that the reason for the indulgence on this occasion was twofold. First, he wanted to see if a certain horse he had backed had won; and secondly, he wanted to know the fate of certain amendments to a Railway Bill then passing through the House of Commons.

Now Jack was not in the habit of backing horses; in fact, this was the first occasion for several years, and it had come about this way. One of his mates had assured him that this horse was a certainty at big odds against, and when he offered the loan of a shilling to bet with, the temptation proved too much. So Jack all day long had been picturing to himself what a lot of little luxuries he would purchase with his winnings for his little daughter who lay so ill at home.

He had just scanned the racing news, and found his horse amongst the "also rans."

Ready to kick himself for his folly, and wondering how he could repay the borrowed shilling, he was interrupted by the kindly inquiry of a neighbour—

"How's Nellie to-night, Mr. Tindal?"

"She isn't any better. The doctor says she will have hard work to pull through. He says if we could get her into the country she would stand a much better chance. I wish we could carry out his advice."

"I wish you could; I always say that it was this damp place that killed my little boy."

The neighbour passed on, leaving Jack to his own sorrowful reflections.

Taking up the paper again, he began a search for the Parliamentary news. One of his co-Trade Unionists had told him that the Government had brought in a Bill to give railway companies power to increase their charges, and that an amendment had been moved stipulating that the companies should agree to pay their men not less than 25s. per week wages. If only this were carried, what

a difference it would make. Nellie would be able to go into the country, and the family would be able to move to a better house and locality.

With these thoughts hurrying through his mind and gaining every instant as he scanned column after column for the desired news, he at length alighted upon a very meagre report, which barely informed him that the 25s. minimum and also a 21s. minimum had been defeated.

He could hardly believe it. Then the Government—a Liberal Government, above all—refused to stipulate even 21s. a week. Jack's heart sank; his air castles had been rudely exploded once more.

He could have understood it better if it had been a Tory Government; from them he would have expected no help. But being a Liberal himself, and remembering the speeches of the candidate he voted for, and who was now M.P. for the division, and the many "Limehouse" speeches of the Chancellor, it was indeed a shock to find these men not only not supporting a paltry 21s., but actually voting against it.

It was a surpriser, too, that his Liberal paper provided such a scanty report. He had looked for big headlines, but all these seemed to have been used up by "Marconi Scandal."

Jack felt indignant; half a paper of stuff that would not make him a farthing better off, and only about a dozen lines of matter which virtually meant life or death to his family; they would have to go on living in a slum.

The Government had assistance for the companies, but nothing, nothing but words for him.

Little Nellie could die; the only country for her was the one from which there is no return.

He must go on working for his miserable wage, so that the shareholders could send their sons to high schools and colleges; in order that they might live in the country all the time and drive to town at their leisure in their motors and phaetons.

Jack was wild. A few more millions for the shareholders who do nothing, and not even a few more shillings for those who do the hard work. He tore the paper in two. He had backed another loser.

But no more would he be tempted by the big odds of the bookmaker or the specious fables of even Liberal candidates. In future, he would back his own fancy—Labour, who might be depended upon to reverse the order of the saying: "To him that hath shall be given. And from him that hath not shall be taken away."

ANOTHER TRADE UNION WEEK.

The Trades Council and the affiliated Unions are so well pleased with the splendid results of the Trade Union Mission Week held in May last that it has been decided to organise another for the second week in September—following the great Trade Union Congress at Manchester. Arrangements are already well forward and there is every prospect of still greater success attending the second effort, as all workers—both organised and unorganised—have experienced many sharp, practical lessons recently upon the need for strengthening the Trade Union ranks in Wolverhampton. The tremendous upheaval throughout the Black Country has inspired and invigorated all the forces of Labour, and even the most pessimistic individuals amongst us are beginning to believe that a new era is rapidly arriving. "There is a tide in the affairs of men," and the leaders of Labour in this district mean to take it at the flood and carry their cause forward from victory to victory.

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Wolverhampton Tenants' Defence League.

Chairman: J. WHITTAKER, J.P., 39, Owen Road.
Hon. Treasurer: Coun. J. WALSH, 135, Dudley Road.
Hon. Secretary: S. BELCHER, 88, Oak Street.

IMMEDIATE OBJECTS.

1. To resist the unjust raising of rents by the Property Owners' Association.
2. To organise protection for such Tenants who are victimised through resisting.
3. To give legal advice and assistance as between Tenant and Landlord.
4. To press upon the Town Council the necessity for immediately putting into operation the Housing of the Working Classes Acts.

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RANDLE EVANS,
67, Merridale St. West.

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An important feature at our Annual Show is the display of Ladies' Hats. This year will witness many improvements in this direction, and ladies desirous of appearing in

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On DRAUGHT
and

THE WORKERS.

**What the Various People's
Movements are Doing.**

I.L.P. NOTES.

Following upon the Trade Union week, organised by the Labour Party in the town, the I.L.P., with characteristic energy, decided to emulate their brethren in the Labour forces, and to have what was known as an I.L.P. week.

With this end in view, Comrade H. Catlin, of Leicester, visited the town, and meetings were held at the various centres.

Much interest was aroused in the aims and objects of the I.L.P., and, as a consequence, a goodly number of new members have been added to the roll. About the same time Comrade J. H. Jackson, who has lately undertaken the work of Visiting Secretary, commenced his duties, and up to the present he has met with singular success, being able (with the help of a band of valiant workers) to look up many old members. Further, he secured promises for renewed connection with the branch, and has been able to hand over to the Treasurer a goodly amount in arrears of subscriptions which he has collected from those who, unfortunately, had been unable to attend.

The principal topic at the monthly meeting was the annual picnic, which has been fixed for the Tuesday in holiday week (see advertisement).

The venue is Stretton, and arrangements are in hand for conveying about 100 by motor-launch, starting from Tettenhall about 10.30 a.m.

There is sure to be a very enjoyable outing, and affords an opportunity for members to fraternise with other workers and friends in "the Cause." Application for tickets should be made to the Secretary. E.F.

L.R.C. NOTES.

At the monthly meeting the Agent gave his report, which showed that good progress is being made in the work of organisation in the West Division.

A financial statement was presented, which (all things considered) was very satisfactory.

The question of Registration was considered, and arrangements are being made to carry out this work in a thorough manner. All Trade Unionists and other workers are asked to see their names are on the register, and to endeavour to get all who are sympathetic towards us to send particulars along.

We shall welcome any who can come and assist us in this work, and the Agent will be pleased to receive names and addresses.

We call attention to *The Citizen* week, which is to be held, commencing July 14, with a view to extending the circulation of *The Daily Citizen*, which, although a paper exclusively devoted to Labour and Trade Union movements, is not at present receiving that support to which it is entitled. The workers, through apathy and indifference, continue to support the Capitalist Press, and it is hoped the "week" will do much to educate them in the necessity of supporting their own paper, run by their own Union funds. C.W.H.

FRIENDLY SOCIETY TOPICS.

The Friendly Societies of Wolverhampton and district have now fully realised the importance of combining. This does not mean to say they have not been organised—far from it—but, so far, they have been organised in sections, hence the differences in method. At the same time all societies work on similar lines for the purpose of providing funds for the benefit of members in time of sickness and death.

Readers will note with interest that a United Council of all sections of Friendly Societies is now an established fact; not only so, but the Friendly Societies of Wolverhampton are now linked up with the National Federation of Councils, which has given a strength undreamed of from the fact that we could never act nationally before the Councils came into existence.

Members of Friendly Societies in England number roughly 20,000,000 and possess funds amounting to £100,000,000, this money having been got together by weekly pence. Friendly Societies, however, do not exist merely for profit, but for the mutual benefit of each and all.

To give some idea of the amount of work done by them at the present time, weekly sick pay is paid every week to 500,000 persons, which each may claim as their independent right. One wonders what the condition of the workers would be without the Friendly Societies.

The conditions under which thousands exist, and have existed, is awful to contemplate, and without the aid of the Friendly Societies during

the past 100 years, it would have been infinitely worse.

This, by way of introducing Friendly Society topics to our readers. The Friendly Society movement gives the finest illustration of what can be accomplished by organisation, and, surely, this applies to all workers. Your duty is to organise, and like the Friendly Society man, help yourselves.

J.H.B.

ADULT SCHOOL NOTES.

All Adult School members will join in expressing sympathy with Mr. Thomas, of Wombourn, in the sad death of his wife, which occurred suddenly a week ago.

The deceased lady was an ardent worker in all good movements, and rendered valuable assistance to her husband in his ministrations at Wombourn and other churches.

Mr. Thomas himself was for a considerable period superintendent of Stafford Street Adult School (which position he now holds at Wombourn, as well as having charge of the Congregational Church there), and Stafford Street looks back with affection at that time, which was one of the most prosperous periods in its history.

The Social Service Committee have received permission to visit the Sanatorium at Moxley. This will help them considerably in their studies of the tuberculosis question.

Appropos of the question of the outing, I hear that many members favour a picnic to Fallings Park Garden Suburb, rather than a visit to "Uffculme," and no doubt an enjoyable ramble could be arranged.

Will school secretaries send me monthly notes of their doings. These would be an interesting criterion to other schools as to what is being done, and in some cases might prove invaluable to other schools. J.

P.S.A. NOTES.

The annual meeting of the Wolverhampton and District P.S.A. Federation was held on Friday evening, June 6, in Snow Hill Congregational Church. In the absence of the President (Ald. Price Lewis), the chair was occupied by the ex-President (Mr. Frank J. Tustin). There was a fair attendance of delegates.

Limitation of space preclude me from giving full details of this meeting. A short review of the past twelve months disclosed a successful year's work—financially and otherwise; whilst the ensuing year promises to be even more successful, as several organisations have indicated their intention to become affiliated with the Federation.

The Organising Secretary is making an effort to compile a list of speakers engaged in P.S.A. or Brotherhood work, and with this object in view, issued an appeal to the secretaries of the various classes and brotherhoods to supply him with any information at their disposal. As the co-operation of every secretary is necessary, he desires to remind them through this column, and ask if they will kindly send the information required to his address as soon as possible.

It was announced that the annual mass meeting of the Federation will, this year, be held on Sunday, September 21, in the Agricultural Hall (if available, to be addressed by the Rev. Silvester Horne, M.A., M.P. (president-elect of the National Brotherhood Council).

In connection with the National Conference to be held at Birmingham from September 20 to 24—when it is anticipated that nearly 1,000 delegates will be present—the question of arranging hospitality is a big one, and an appeal from Birmingham for Wolverhampton friends to take their share of the responsibility in this respect was responded to by the appointment of Mr. J. H. Badger, as the local hospitality secretary.

The following officers were elected:—President, Ald. Price Lewis, J.P.; Secretary, Mr. A. Percy Thacker, 22, Drummond-street; Treasurer, Mr. R. J. Sutton, 39, Riches-street; Organising Secretary, Mr. Frank J. Tustin, 49, Crowther-road; Auditors, Messrs. S. Reed, and A. A. Humphreys; Delegate to National Executive, Ald. Price Lewis, J.P.; Delegates to Birmingham Executive, Messrs. Lewis, Thacker, Tustin, Carter, and Arrow; Delegates to Free Church Council, Messrs. Badger, Bushell, and Chell.

I am glad to learn that my notes in last month's issue re the need of a Brotherhood have created some interest locally, and am pleased to record that it is the intention of several gentlemen connected with Waterloo Road Baptist Church to open a Brotherhood on strictly unsectarian lines about the latter end of August. The idea is being taken up in a thoroughly practical manner, and the Secretary of the Church, Mr. Arthur Barnett, who is an enthusiast in the work there, assures me that in addition to the strenuous efforts that will be made, no expense will be spared to make the new organisation a great success.

From another source I am informed "that a Brotherhood will be started, on strict unsectarian lines, on the first Sunday in September"; but, as my correspondent does not give any further particulars respecting this, I am unable to make any comments thereon, or give the help, through the medium of these notes, I should like to.

There is also a rumour that a Brotherhood is in process of formation at the Y.M.C.A., Darlington-street, but as I have not heard this from an official source, I cannot say whether it is correct or not. The only room suitable for a small Brotherhood in that building is at present tenanted by "The People's Class"—one of the oldest P.S.A. classes in the town—and nowhere is the social gospel more effectively preached, or more heartily welcomed, than at this class, which is endeavouring to fulfil the combined duties of a

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Brotherhood and a Sisterhood. The President, Mr. B. S. Brown, and the Secretary, Mr. A. A. Humphreys, would be pleased to welcome to the meetings on Sunday afternoons all interested in the work.

I hope, now that the spirit of Brotherhood is abroad, it will develop to such an extent that a real Town Brotherhood will be initiated similar to the one I mentioned in last month's "Notes." By a Town Brotherhood, I mean one held in a public hall or municipal building. The Stourbridge movement is held in the Town Hall, and I hear that at a recent meeting over 1,000 men were present—surely a grand record for the summer months. It is obvious, then, that however great the emphasis as to the unsectarian aspect of any organisation, it does not appeal so strongly to the "man in the street" when the meetings are held in a church, or even a building of an inter-denominational character.

There are other things, of course, besides the building that are essential to the success of the movement. Not only is enthusiasm necessary, but the officers should be men of experience in this kind of work. There must also be a social message for the people.

Finally, if you want to reach the workers—advertise from now onwards in *The Daily Citizen* and *THE WOLVERHAMPTON WORKER*, as well as in the local press; thus preparing the way for a good opening meeting.

As I announced in my last notes, I shall be glad to answer any queries relating to the work of the P.S.A.s or Brotherhoods. And I am always glad to hear from any friends in the movement. Correspondence should be addressed to me, c/o the Editor.

F.J.T.

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