

must naturally be desirous of leaving a *similar* fortune to *each* of his offspring, in order to give them a start of the beggarly pack around them and to secure to them an existence of luxury and idleness. His sons and daughters are taught to marry for love of money and social position rather than for love of their partners, maintaining and increasing thereby their influence and power over the poor toilers, whose families are broken up and scattered to the winds by the insecurity of their labour, by the competition for bread among their own members, and by the constant change of domicile, forced upon them through search for work all over those parts of the globe, which have been taken possession of by man-abusing commercialism.

Organise! For it is only through organisation that the present state of things can be put a stop to and a new order begun. I know there are among us friends who look at the absolute and unrestricted liberty in all his actions of the individual as their ideal of human freedom; who consider, therefore, the subordination of their own "free" will even under that of a number of brotherly co-workers as "submitting to tyranny;" who dread the degrading consequences of officialism, and who, in view of all that, do nothing to further (if they do nothing to prevent) the establishment and growth of party-organisation. Yet: *Organise!* For the work we have set our minds to *can not be done without!* Organisation is the only means whereby to utilise *every* individual capacity to the best possible purpose, by making it work most effectively along with others towards one great common end. If we were able to be most useful and most effective, each one for himself, why have we combined? And since we have combined for strife, why should we not make our combination as powerful as we can?

Organise! Even though from organisation there seem to be inseparable the notions of leadership and command, of office and subordination. Let us modify those notions and thus limit the mischief they may do when left unguarded. Our *leader be our cause*, and our *commander the necessity of the moment*. If we delegate the power of command to any one person among ourselves, it must only be for a spell of time, for a distinct purpose and out of necessity. But if it *be* necessary, then let it work its purpose to the full and set aside all ideal notions of "personal liberty," of which we have, *out of our own resolve*, divested ourselves for the time being. Let us guard only the limit of this handing over of ourselves to the discretion of any one comrade: let it be *the perception of his failing to fulfil his trust*. Then must we be ready—every one of us—to take in hand the task he has shown himself unfit to perform. No "dignity" or "distinction" among us, save that which we confer upon ourselves by the sincerity of our actions.

Organise! Learn and teach to organise, for the ground-work of the Social Revolution will be the *organisation of labour*, and of the *production and distribution of wealth*. To create the necessities and comforts of life with the least possible exertion, and to secure a fair share of enjoyment to everyone who has been useful in the creation of our stock of wealth; to obtain from each according to his capacities and to provide for everyone according to his needs—this great ideal of Revolutionary Socialism can never be achieved without organisation, without combining in an effective, punctually and easily-working way all the manifold good, beautiful and willing forces, which will form the human elements of the future commonwealths.

Organise! For it is not the much-vaunted, and still more misunderstood, "independence," that "absolute" liberty of action or inaction, in every respect of the individual, we are striving for. The goal of the Social Revolution is *that* ease and well-being, *that* mental and physical culture, *that* social economical power—in short, *that complete freedom* from the care and worry, which now make the life of man well-nigh unbearable. Such freedom can be attained *for all* only by unreserved co-operation of *all* the members of the human family. The "absolute liberty" of the idealist is impossible among human beings. The liberty of "laissez faire, laissez aller," is the liberty of barbarism, which, when fully carried through, entails the charmlessness and destitution of barbarism for the greater part of mankind. To attempt (for whatever imaginary ends) to isolate human beings in their work, their aims, their efforts and their enjoyments, is to misconceive the relationship between man and nature, which latter yields her most bountiful blessings to those who best understand and most readily comply with, that necessity which governs her causes and effects.

Organise! It is *necessary* for the undoing of what there is, and for the doing of what there has not yet been: the founding and keeping alive of a society in which there is harmony between work and enjoyment, between freedom and restraint, between word and action—a society, which knows neither slaves nor commanders; a federation of communities, in which *everyone serves because everyone loves and understands!*

Agitate! Arouse the indifferent, spur the sluggish, and fire the luke-warm!

Educate! Show the causes and effects of tyranny and serfdom, of riches and poverty, of power and helplessness; discourage that which is bad, and culture that which is good in us; make ourselves and others fit for the tremendous task before us!

Organise! Recruit and hold together in the form best fitting the ends of intellectual, social and political warfare, all those elements of society which are destined by necessity to carry to a triumphant issue the throes and onsets of the labouring Social Revolution.

That is what is to be done:

Agitate! Educate! Organise!

ANDREAS SCHEU.

MEETING ON THE RECENT EXPOSURES.

ON Wednesday evening, August 5, a crowded meeting was held at Farringdon Hall, under the auspices of the Socialist League.

The chair was taken by Thomas Binning.

The CHAIRMAN: We, as Socialists, intend to do our best to prevent the question raised by the recent disclosures from being a mere sensation. Others may be content with the temporary regaining of a waning popularity. It is for us to go to the root of the matter, and to try to assign a real cause and a real remedy for these evils. This will be evident from the one resolution that will be presented to the meeting. That resolution reads as follows:—"That this meeting, recognising the hideous sexual corruption of the capitalistic classes, and the iniquities practised by them on the children of the working class, is of opinion that these evils are inevitable under the capitalistic system, and will never be removed, or even remedied, until that system is at an end."

WILLIAM MORRIS: Two things are to be noticed. First, that the children of the poor are always the victims. Second, the terrible and miserable unhappiness of the whole affair. There is much talk of immorality. Whatever is unhappy is immoral. It is unhappiness that must be got rid of. We have nothing to do with the mere immorality. We have to do with the causes that have compelled this unhappy way of living; the causes that drive girls and women into the streets, to sell their love, not to give it. These causes are the same that make a man degrade himself by over-hours and competition. There is the closest of relations between the prostitution of the body in the streets and of the body in the workshops. Women's wages are not even subsistence wages. They are intended to cheapen labour for the manufacturers. The first thing that is necessary, is that all women should be freed from the compulsion of living in this degraded way. We aim at the real liberty of every human creature, not the liberty to starve or to sell oneself or one's child. Society to-day is like a wrecked ship where people eat one another. The real Minotaur is Capital—not one man, but the whole system is guilty. To get rid of this system is our serious business. We desire that all should be free to earn their livelihood—with that freedom will come an end of these monstrosities, and true love between man and woman throughout society.

J. L. MAHON: Our legislators are of course dealing with this question in the gingerly manner that is usual when the interests of the working classes are affected. The working classes must be determined to put a stop to these evils. The debates in Parliament have been an insult to the manhood of every working man. These things must go on as long as there is a poor and a rich class, and the daughters of the latter are compelled to sell their bodies. What is our duty? To teach our fellows not the immorality of the women, or even of the men, but the conditions that make this necessary. The useless, dangerous existence of the two classes must be ended. The responsibility is especially upon us workers, who are most injured. I beseech my fellow workmen to take up this question of Socialism. The work of teaching and spreading its principles is the holiest and best to which a man can devote his life.

LEWIS LYONS: Money will buy women to-day. We want to put an end to the possibility of anybody being able to buy, in any form, another human being. We must make the working classes see that they are giving these men the money to outrage their own daughters.

C. W. MOWBRAY: I have tried twice to get the opportunity of speaking at the Social Purity Alliance meetings. I wrote and made oral applications to move a rider at their readings in the sense of our resolution. Of the written applications no notice was taken. Three attempts to speak ended in my being "chucked out" of the meeting. This is another proof that the middle-class people want to gloss over the question, and are afraid really to tackle it. Can women pay 4s. a week for lodgings, get food and clothing, out of 2½d. per gross of match-boxes and find their own cardboard and paste. Take the case of the tailoring. For making a coat 6d., a waistcoat 3d., a pair of trousers 4d. A girl may make seven or eight pair of trousers per day of 14 hours. To get the poorest of living, she must work 18 or 19 hours. Certain philanthropists are paying 2s. 9d. a week for 16 to 18 hours a day. It is useless to talk about the Factory Acts. The inspectors are dodged in the most shameless fashion. Once again we say, remove the cause, cut out the cancer whose symptoms are pinched faces in the streets, whose effects are prostitution, suicides, an increasingly dangerous mass of men. And let those who object to force remember we are ruled by force. We are forced to work, forced to

obey the laws in the making of which we have no voice. Our sisters and daughters are forced to become prostitutes. It is certain that the changes we desire will not be brought about without tremendous struggle, sacrifice and suffering, but surely anything is better than keeping this monstrous class out of your hard earnings.

The CHAIRMAN then asked if there were any amendment.

Mr. WEDDELL rose to propose as an amendment "That individual responsibility for personal purity is the only remedy for this evil." I deny that the evil depends upon the capitalistic class, or any other. I deny that any but the individual man is responsible. If you got your way the end would be destruction. Your principles are unworkable. Individual responsibility is everything.

H. H. CLARK seconded: I am a Socialist. As I understand the supporters of this resolution, the condition of society is responsible for everything, even for the wrongs of individuals. I dissent from this latter conclusion. Even if the social condition were attained that I long for, am working for, and would die for, yet I think that individuality will have very free play. With the most perfect system I think there could be criminal vice in individuals.

ELEANOR MARX AVELING: A word or two on the amendment. It speaks of individual responsibility. But you must put the individual into such a position that he can be responsible. How are children of ten to thirteen to be "responsible?" Yet they form the largest number of the victims. But I go further. The men themselves, horrible as are their actions, are not responsible. As the inevitable outcome of social conditions, they are no more responsible than are the children. We do not make the class struggle. We only point out that it exists; and because we want to do away with it we are attacked. We do want to do away with all classes. This evil cannot be remedied. It must be wiped out, and the only chance to do that is to put everyone in the position that makes individual responsibility possible. As to legislation, it is of course well that the same penalties in certain matters should apply equally to men and women; but these laws will not really help the workers. We all know that laws are not applied equally, and it will be so with these. There has been some talk of the "exaggeration" that has been introduced. If the facts are true, the language cannot be exaggerated—and it is admitted that the facts are true. The fact is, women are driven to prostitution; not only women of the working class, but many of the middle class. Governesses are often supposed to be able to teach two or three languages and "accomplishments," and must dress respectably, on 6s. a week. Nearly all women obliged to earn a living have to choose between starvation and prostitution, and this must go on so long as one class can buy the bodies of another class, whether in the form of labour-power or sexual embraces. Enthusiasm alone is of no use. That is why we want men and women to join with us at once in bringing about those changed conditions that will make responsibility to oneself possible.

A. K. DONALD: The individual responsibility that the mover and seconder of the amendment spoke of generally leads to the putting of hands in the pockets. We must be strongly on our guard against this. Under the republics of which mention was made, prostitution of course existed, and this seems to be taken by non-Socialists as a reason for tolerating prostitution to-day. Not only the daughters, but the sons of the working classes, are prostitutes. To take an example not yet mentioned to-night, those who are made soldiers and policemen to guard the property stolen from the workers are prostitutes. Yet, in a certain sense individual responsibility is necessary, for unless we exert ourselves we must sink deeper in the mire. The fact that Blue Books containing full accounts of these horrors were published years ago, shows us that the legislators who live on your plunder are anxious to retain a fair field for the vices of themselves and their friends. Let us redouble our exertions to end this state of affairs.

EDWARD AVELING: We have a mixed audience here. Many of us are Socialists, and the causes and the only remedy for these evils are familiar to us. We are most anxious that those who are not Socialists should understand these. And we are anxious they should be reminded how worthless has been the action of the Press and of Parliament since these matters have come before the public. Even the so-called papers of the people have shown how completely they are the papers of the capitalist. As proof, take the disgraceful utterances of the *Weekly Dispatch*; and as further evidence of the wide spread of literary immorality, notice how such a man as Mr. G. R. Sims, who has in his way written at times on behalf of the poor, speaks of this matter in the *Referee*. As to Parliament, the conduct of such men as Warton, Hopwood and Harcourt, is typical. And let the worshippers of Messrs. Gladstone and Bright notice that upon this tremendous question one of these gentlemen has given no utterance whatever, and the other has practically said nothing. A word as to the effect of the publication of these facts. Judging from my own case, I am certain that they have opened the eyes of many people. I do not profess to be better than the other men of my own class, and I can only tell those present that the facts now disclosed were to me absolutely new. From that we may fairly argue that many hundreds of men, and probably thousands of women, have been made acquainted with them for the first time within these last few weeks. I, like one of the previous speakers, wonder at times how you working men can restrain yourselves from seizing the representatives of the capitalistic class, and breaking their necks across the nearest curbstone. Mind, that is not what I or any Socialist advises you to do, but we do advise you to break the neck of the damnable system that makes these things necessary.

The CHAIRMAN then put the amendment, for which only seven voted, and the original resolution was carried.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

The education of the working classes is, to the average middle-class man, merely a means to the end of fitting both more completely for the station of life into which it has pleased Providence to call them. The former are to become more speedy and docile producers; the latter more extensive recipients of surplus-value.

As proof, let us study the instructive history of Dundee and Mr. Frank Henderson, M.P. By the sixth section of the Education (Scotland) Act, no child was to be employed as a half-timer who had not passed Standard III. Dundee masters dreaded that many half-timers would be shut out and the masters lose some of their profits.

Mr. Frank Henderson therefore made special efforts in the House that he adorns to obtain a modification of the regulation. He thought Standard III. too high, and induced the House of Commons to postpone the enforcement of the new rules for a year.

Since the passing of the Education Act, we learn on authority that the factory children are "quicker to learn, more amenable to discipline and much less mischievous." This, being translated, means that they are more ready to become machines, less likely to rebel against their unhappy lot, and less childlike.

"It became the duty of the commissioners to ascertain how far the private holding of land . . . has worked to public disadvantage." This is a part of a report of certain commissioners in the United States. What do you think are the three words I have left out? "About Niagara falls." Does it not read minus these, like a manifesto from a Socialist or at least a Land Nationalisation Society?

There is a sort of germ of hope in the idea. If the commissioners are anxious about the defacement of scenery that results from private property in land, one of these days, perhaps, there may be some anxiety about the defacing of man that results from private property in the means of production.

Then one of these days a measure like that just passed in America as to its wording may come to pass. "That the lands be purchased by the State in order that every part of them shall be for ever free of access to all mankind." Only there will be no "purchasing" and the lands will be not those round Niagara but those over the whole area of the globe.

Railway dividends are likely to be low. The meaning of this to all who have not any dividends to draw is that (1) the passenger receipts have decreased, and this means increased poverty among the workers; (2) the goods traffic has decreased, and this means diminished trade, especially in the iron and coal districts.

The new class of capitalists are the tradesmen, represented by Maple, Shoolbred, Whitely, who has had "another fire." Maple is going to stand for St. Pancras.

There is no more significant sign of the times than the mushroom growth of these pests of civilisation. Like the industrial capitalist, they have but one idea—surplus-value. They live entirely upon the results of the unpaid labour of others; they are a distinct injury to the community. The exploitation that goes on in their colossal establishments is as bad as that in any factory.

REPORT OF THE PROPAGANDIST COMMITTEE.

(Adopted by the Council, and inserted in the "COMMONWEAL" by order of the Council).

- (1) It was decided that lectures should be started (in the Hall, Farringdon Road) in the first week in September, and given on Wednesdays and Sundays.
- (2) That a Children's Sunday School be held at 10.30 on Sunday mornings as soon as a sufficient number of pupils' names have been given in. Intending pupils can apply to 13 Farringdon Road for further information.
- (3) That a catalogue of the Library books (to be kept in the Secretary's office) be written and hung in the Hall.
- (4) That all standing Committees shall meet on Wednesday nights at 7.30 p.m.
- (5) That the Reading Room be open daily from 10 a.m. to 9 p.m., and on Sundays and Wednesdays from 10 a.m. till the lecture commences. Members as far as possible to volunteer to take charge during the day.
- (6) That Friday nights be set aside for choir-practice.
- (7) That Social Evenings (admission free) shall be held (if possible) every fourth Saturday evening; August 1 and 29, Sept. 26.

Lastly the Propagandist Committee earnestly ask all friends to give or lend them pictures and decorations for the Hall.

THE Hall of the League has been let to Edward Aveling on Tuesday nights during the months of October (starting the 6th) to April for the purpose of giving lessons in science. These lessons to be entirely under his own control and for his own benefit, and not under the auspices of the League. The classes will be connected with South Kensington, will deal with Animal Chemistry, Physiology and Geology. Intending students can communicate, as to fees, etc., with Dr. Aveling at 55 Great Russell Street, W.C.