

THE
FABIAN PARLIAMENTARY
LEAGUE,

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FABIAN TRACTS, No. 6.

THE
True Radical Programme.

LONDON:
GEO. STANDRING, 7 & 9, FINSBURY STREET, E.C.

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FABIAN PARLIAMENTARY
LEAGUE

FABIAN SOCIETY, 150, N.



Radical party (United Kingdom).

LONDON:
GEO. STANBROOK & SONS, FINSBURY STREET, N.O.

Price One Penny.

The Official Liberal-Radical Programme.

(NOTTINGHAM. OCTOBER, 1887.)

ONE MAN ONE VOTE.

Is that a truly Radical measure? No. Why? Because, since it does not mean ONE ADULT ONE VOTE, it does not widen the Suffrage. Because women, and workmen who have been compelled to move from place to place, or who through no fault of their own have been compelled by want of employment to accept public charity, are left outlawed, like felons, by it. It is just a little better than faggot-voting, and so good enough for a middle-class Liberal, but not for a true Radical workman.

FREE LAND.

Is that a truly Radical measure? No. Why? Because it means Free Landlords and not Free Land. Therefore it is a lie upon the face of it. It enables the worker freely to sell landed estates, if he can get them. But he cannot get them: therefore it is a mockery upon the face of it. Only the propertied classes can avail themselves of it: therefore it is a class measure upon the face of it. The restraints which it repudiates are the last remaining tokens that the land was never given to the landlords to do what they liked with, but only to hold as stewards and trustees for the benefit of the nation: therefore it is unconstitutional upon the face of it. It is nevertheless just a little better than the present system of entail and real property, since, though it will not allow the land to pass in true Radical fashion into the hands of the nation, it will at least allow it to be used by men who require it for more useful ends than the maintenance of the grandeur of County Families. So it is good enough for Whig capitalists in search of a good cry to catch votes, but not for true Radical workmen bent on getting the Land for the People.

DISESTABLISHMENT OF THE CHURCH IN SCOTLAND AND WALES.

Is that a truly Radical measure? Not a bit of it; because it does not mean that the revenues of the Church shall be restored to the people. The revenues of the Church are derived partly from landed estates, partly from taxation on land, paid directly or in-

directly by the propertied class. To disestablish the Church whilst leaving it in possession of its estates, would only relieve the Church of all responsibility to the nation for its employment of those estates, whilst the abolition of the tithe would not permanently relieve the tenant farmer, who would find his rent increased on him to the full amount of the tithe at the first opportunity after the clergyman's claim was done away with. If the landlords and capitalists pleased, they might, after Disestablishment, use their increased rent and interest to build churches, pay parsons, and, in short, to re-establish the Church as a private concern. If you doubt this, look at Ireland. You disestablished the Irish Church; and how much the better is your Irish fellow-worker for it? Why, the very statesman who did it for you is now, twenty years later, telling you to "remember Mitchelstown." If Disestablishment was as important to the worker as its advocates pretend, could there have been any Mitchelstown to remember? No: Disestablishment at present is good enough for wealthy Non-conformist manufacturers, but not for true Radical workmen.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT.

Is this a truly Radical measure? That depends on the character of the local government. Under the present system it can only mean oppression and corruption nearer home. It is true that your representative at Westminster neglects your interests and looks after his own. But if you place your interests in the hands of your wealthy fellow townsman—your own employer, perhaps, or the landlord of the tenement-house in which you live—will he prefer your interest to his own in the local governing body? He will not; and the gain in efficiency by decentralization will only mean greater efficiency of the governmental machinery for keeping down the worker. How do you like such local government as you now have from your vestries? Why, locally self-governed London is now clamouring for centralization, in spite of the fact that its great centralized police force is a standing menace to the right of free speech, and is openly used to break the heads of the citizens when they venture to complain publicly that they are starving. So long as the government is not government by the people, of the people, for the people, it can matter little to the people whether its seat be at the capital or at the local centres. Such local government as they were thinking of at Nottingham is a good Liberal measure for comfortable middle-class people: the true Radical workman requires a measure of another sort.

What else is there in the official Liberal-Radical programme? NOTHING ELSE! Unemployed men starving in all our towns; capital leaving the country; whole industries succumbing to foreign competition; land going out of cultivation; not the shadow of a reason given for hoping that things will mend; and yet absolutely nothing else from the great Liberal party of progress, except loud-

mouthed denunciation of Coercion in Ireland and silent approval of Coercion in England. And perhaps you, who call yourself a true Radical, have just been cheering yourself hoarse with enthusiasm for these gentlemen !

Lord Randolph Churchill's Programme.

But maybe you are a Tory Democrat, and believe in Lord Randolph Churchill's programme, which is the Liberal programme and SOMETHING ELSE. What else? Here you are :—

1. Departmental Economy.
2. Free Schools.
3. Compulsory Employers' Liability.

Lord Randolph is going to cut down the salaries of the sinecurists and bureaucrats. Very good : if they are excessive by all means let them be cut down ; but do you think that the saving will be added to your wages? Not a farthing of it. It will only enable the Chancellor of the Exchequer to please the proprietary class by reducing their Income Tax, leaving wages either as they were, or LOWER, if the supply of labor increases in the meantime relatively to the demand, as the introduction of machinery and the increase of population constantly tend to make it do.

Lord Randolph is going to give us Free Schools. Why do politicians call schools paid for out of public money "Free Schools"? Only to persuade the people that such schools are *a gift from the kind government to the poor people*. The phrase "Free Schools" is a lie, like most political catchwords : schools are built and furnished, teachers fed and clothed, not "Free," but by Labor, and by Labor alone. Now it is right that since we all benefit by the education of the people, we should all contribute to its cost. But do all benefit *equally* by it? Before you answer that, answer this. Why is uneducated labor so dirt-cheap at present that the unemployed are offering it for bare subsistence wages, and offering it in vain? Simply because it is plentiful. Educate everybody, and educated labor will be as dirt-cheap as uneducated labor is now : the whole increase in its produce will be added to that part that goes to the idle rich as rent and interest, and not to what is returned to the workers as wages. Remember, Education is none the worse for that ; for Education is itself wealth, whether it brings increased wages or not. But Education alone will not directly solve the social question. What we want, then, and what we intend to get without being obliged to Lord Randolph for it, is not only so-called freedom of education, but real freedom for the person educated—the only real freedom—freedom of access to the natural resources of the country, so that we may by our labor produce wealth for ourselves in fair co-operation with our mates and political equals.

Lord Randolph is going to give us Compulsory Employers' Liability. What is an Employer? One who borrows land and capital from the proprietary class on the chance of getting more out of the workers than the bare wages, interest, and rent, and so having something over for himself as profit. Why should he be liable for an accident to a worker any more than the landlord and capitalist whose sweater and slave-driver he is? Why should the employer, who at any rate sometimes directs the work and looks after the business, and is so far a useful and necessary worker—why should he have to pay the whole cost of accident insurance and life insurance, whilst the idle, useless landlord and capitalist go scot free? When Lord Randolph begins to talk about Compulsory Landlords' and Capitalists' Liability, we shall begin to think that he knows what he is talking about. But indeed it matters nothing whether he knows or not; for if he really believes that his Tory voters in the Lords and Commons will allow him to cut down the sinecures of their younger sons and nephews and cousins and uncles, or to educate the worker out of the submission that ignorance alone made possible in the past, or to force them to recognize the claims of the killed and wounded in their service, then Lord Randolph believes more than any true Radical workman believes or ever will believe.

The True Radical Programme.

WE WANT

ADULT SUFFRAGE, PARLIAMENTARY AND MUNICIPAL.

Why? If you don't know why, you are no true Radical. The Women must have a voice in the making of the laws because the women work under the laws; pay for the laws; and have to submit to the laws. And the paupers must vote because, since if the laws were just there need be no paupers, the paupers have the first right to a voice in altering the unjust laws by which they are the greatest sufferers. As to the incorrigible idlers, they are mostly rich people who have not one but several votes apiece already. Remember that in the language of politics, people who have no votes are roughs, scum, dregs, mob, riff-raff, and residuum; but people who have got votes are "Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen," "Independent Electors," "Men of England," or "Friends and Fellow Citizens." We want all Adults to be "Fellow Citizens." As for One-Man-one-Vote, registration reform, polling on the same day throughout the kingdom at general elections, and payment of the returning officer by the constituencies, though they make up the total of the proposed Liberal measure, they will be only minor business details in the true Radical Franchise Bill.

PAYMENT OF MEMBERS AND ANNUAL PARLIAMENTS.

Why pay Members? Simply because there must be genuine workers inside Parliament to uphold the interests of the workers outside; and they cannot live on air whilst they are doing this. Working-class members cannot afford to go into Parliament because their constituents cannot afford to keep them there, having barely enough to live on themselves. The House of Commons is consequently full of men who live upon Rent, Interest, and Profits. The less of the national produce goes in Wages, the more is left for Rent, Interest, and Profits. That means that the House of Commons is full of men with a direct pecuniary interest in keeping wages as low and workmen as submissive as possible. In future, we must fill Parliament and the Local Governing Bodies with men who know what it is to work for wages; and they must have something to live upon. But in order that they may be called to account for their work at short intervals, there must be no seven year sinecures. No Payment of Members without Annual Parliaments.

TAXATION OF UNEARNED INCOMES.

Besides Perpetual Pensions, which the Radicals are making an end of, *four hundred and fifty million pounds sterling*, or more than a third of the annual income of the nation, is consumed by landlords and shareholders who do not, as such, perform a single stroke of work for the nation in return. Two hundred millions of this is rent: the other two hundred and fifty is called interest. This is the estimate made in the interest of the idle classes themselves; and therefore it is well under the mark. It does not include employers' profits, or the large incomes derived by educated or "highly connected" men from employments which are practically closed to the working class. We want this taxed by a progressive income-tax. How high do we want to tax it? Twenty shillings in the pound—*i.e.* Complete Land Nationalization—will satisfy us. But we will take an instalment to begin.

MUNICIPALIZATION OF LAND AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT.

It is useless to tax unearned incomes or nationalize rent as long as you have no place to put the money except the treasury of a central government that can do little with it except spend it in gunpowder and international mischief. The Imperial Parliament cannot deal with local industrial difficulties or with the pressing question of **THE UNEMPLOYED**. At present, no municipal authority can engage in the organization of industry, even for the supply of gas and water, without a special Act of Parliament. We want the municipal authority, elected annually by adult suffrage, to be empowered to engage in all branches of industry in the fullest competition with private industrial enterprise, backed with the resources

derived from the taxation of unearned incomes, and with compulsory powers of acquiring land for their purposes upon payment of a reasonable consideration to the present holders. We want to overthrow that infamous system of Protection to Private Enterprise by Prohibition of Public Enterprise, which has hitherto prevented the people from using their political organizations as industrial organizations, and thereby escaping in the only possible peaceful way from the slavery of private employment to the freedom of democratic co-operation. We want to substitute free and honorable municipal employment for charity, and to put a stop to the national wickedness of deliberately making our workhouses prisons and our prisons hells, lest the wretched laborer should try to get into them as being preferable to the sweater's den, the dock wharf, or the nail and chain forge. And we want to RESTORE the land and industrial capital of the country to the workers of the country, and so realize the dream of the Socialist on sound economic principles, by gradual, peaceful, and constitutional means.

PROVISION OF EDUCATION AT PUBLIC COST.

It is not enough to provide "free" schools, and "free" books, and "free" teachers for the children of our present population. We must fill their stomachs before their brains will work properly. We want, to begin with, one good meal a day for all children at Board Schools; and, if that is not sufficient, as much more as they need and we can afford. The future welfare of the State depends on the health and education of its future citizens; and since our system leaves the parents individually too poor to look after them properly, the parents collectively, *i.e.*, THE STATE, must.

NATIONALIZATION OF RAILWAYS.

Whatever hampers the traffic of the Nation hampers its Commerce and so diminishes its prosperity. Nothing hampers traffic more than a system of railways broken up in separate sections in the hands of separate bodies of shareholders, caring for nothing but the bigness of their dividends. They consider that the nation was made for the shareholders. We consider that the railways were made for the nation, particularly as they were made originally, and are daily renewed as they wear out, not by the shareholders, but by wage workers and salaried engineers, such wages and salaries being produced by other wage workers, and *intercepted* by the shareholders as rent or interest before being passed on—less what the interceptors consume themselves—as wages paid out of capital. We want these interceptors paid off, and the railway system assimilated to the postal system.

EIGHT HOURS DAY.

We want the working day for wage workers in all government and municipal offices and places of employment, and in all monopolies

granted by the State, to be limited to Eight Hours by statute. We want a similar law to be passed for all mines and factories, and as soon as possible for all shops. Experience shews that whilst the present competitive-individualist system lasts, such Acts are necessary to prevent employers from inhumanly abusing their powers, and workers from working overtime with no permanent benefit to themselves. As soon as the people are free enough to feel them as a restriction of their own liberty, they will be free enough to repeal them without opposition as obsolete statutes. But at present the hours of labor imposed on the more helpless classes of wage workers are literally murderous, and *must* be restricted by law.

The above programme is sufficient for the present to fill the hands of the True Radical Party—the New Labor Party—in a word, the Practical Socialist Party. It consists of measures bearing directly and immediately on the health and prosperity of the mass of the nation. It goes in true Radical fashion to the Root of that great evil of Class Monopoly of Land and Capital of which the House of Lords, the Sinecurists, the Pensioners, the corruption of the Church, the Class Bias of our Courts of Justice, the neglect and cruelty in our Workhouses and Prisons, the Sloth, Selfishness, and Evil Example of the Idle Rich, and the Drunkenness and Degradation of the Ignorant and Overworked Laborer, are all merely the branches. Old-fashioned politicians may continue issuing programmes as if these things did not exist or did not matter; but the test of the True Radical is his determination to place them first in the list of evils to be eradicated.

THE FABIAN SOCIETY.

Executive (1887-1888) :

ANNIE BESANT
HUBERT BLAND
SYDNEY OLIVIER

W. L. PHILLIPS
FRANK PODMORE

G. BERNARD SHAW
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ALICE M. HOATSON (*Assistant*), 8, Dorville Road, Lee, S.E.

THE FABIAN SOCIETY consists of Socialists.

It therefore aims at the reorganization of Society by the emancipation of Land and industrial Capital from individual and class ownership, and the vesting of them in the community for the general benefit. In this way only can the natural and acquired advantages of the country be equitably shared by the whole people.

The Society accordingly works for the extinction of private property in land, and of the consequent individual appropriation, in the form of Rent, of the price paid for permission to use the earth, as well as for the advantages of superior soils and sites.

The Society, further, works for the transfer to the community of the administration of such industrial Capital as can conveniently be managed socially. For, owing to the monopoly of the means of production in the past, industrial inventions and the transformation of surplus income into Capital have mainly enriched the proprietary class, the worker being now dependent on that class for leave to earn a living.

If these measures be carried out, without compensation (though not without such relief to expropriated individuals as may seem fit to the community), Rent and Interest will be added to the reward of labor, the idle class now living on the labor of others will necessarily disappear, and practical equality of opportunity will be maintained by the spontaneous action of economic forces with much less interference with personal liberty than the present system entails.

For the attainment of these ends the Fabian Society looks to the spread of Socialist opinions, and the social and political changes consequent thereon. It seeks to promote these by the general dissemination of knowledge as to the relation between the individual and Society in its economic, ethical, and political aspects.

The Fabian Parliamentary League, which consists of members of the Society who desire to bring Socialism to bear on current politics, works for the organization of the Socialist vote, the running of Socialist candidates at School Board, Municipal and other elections, and the publication and circulation of the Socialist criticism of Bills before Parliament. Now that the doctrine of *laissez faire* has fallen into disrepute, and the right of the State to compete with private enterprise is admitted and acted upon, the Fabian Parliamentary League sees a peaceful and expeditious path to Socialism, through such measures as Nationalisation of Railways, the Municipalisation of Ground Rents, and of the industries connected with local transit, and with the supply of light and water in towns.

The work of the Fabian Society takes, at present, the following forms:—

1. Meetings for the discussion of questions connected with Socialism.
2. Meetings of a more public character, for the promulgation of Socialist opinions.
3. The further investigation of economic problems, and the collection of facts contributing to their elucidation.

4. The publication of pamphlets containing information on social questions, or arguments relating to Socialism.
5. The promotion of Socialist lectures and debates in other Societies.
6. The representation of the Society in public conferences and discussions on social questions.
7. The organization of conferences of Social reformers, with a view to common action.

The members are divided into local groups, and are pledged to take part according to their abilities and opportunities in the general work of the Society, especially as regards their own localities.

The Society seeks recruits from all ranks, believing that not only those who suffer from the present system, but also many who are themselves enriched by it, recognize its evils and would welcome a remedy.

The meetings of the Society are held on the first and third Fridays in the month.

LECTURES.—A list of Lectures which are given by members of the Society, and other particulars, can be obtained on application to the Secretary.

PUBLICATIONS.—The Fabian Tracts can be obtained on application to the Secretary. No. 1 : "Why are the Many Poor?" No. 2 : "A Manifesto." No. 3 : "To provident Landlords and Capitalists." No. 4 : "What Socialism is." No. 5 : "Facts for Socialists" (price one penny). Also, a Report made by a Committee of the Society, on "The Government Organization of Unemployed Labor."

The meetings of the Society are reported in "Our Corner" (Freethought Publishing Co., 63, Fleet Street; monthly, 6d).

THOSE INTERESTED in SOCIALISM might usefully read the following introductory Works:—

"FACTS FOR SOCIALISTS FROM THE POLITICAL ECONOMISTS AND STATISTICIANS."—Fabian Tract No. 5, a concise summary of the facts as to the production and distribution of wealth in England. Price one penny. (London: 180, Portsdown Road, W.; or 63, Fleet Street, E.C.)

"THE GOVERNMENT ORGANIZATION OF UNEMPLOYED LABOR."—Report by a Committee of the Fabian Society on the prevailing distress, with recommendations. Price one penny. (London: 180, Portsdown Road, W.)

MANIFESTO OF THE FABIAN PARLIAMENTARY LEAGUE.

Declaration as to the political means of advancing Socialism.
(Free on application to the Secretary of the League, 34, Bouverie Street, E.C.)

- "AN APPEAL TO THE YOUNG," translated from the French of PRINCE KROPOTKIN. A stirring explanation of the need for action. Price 1d. (London: Modern Press, 13, Paternoster Row, E.C.; or W. Reeves, 185, Fleet Street, E.C.)
- "MODERN SOCIALISM," by ANNIE BESANT: a historical and explanatory sketch of the foundation and aims of the present Socialist movement. Price 6d. (London: 63, Fleet St., E.C.)
- "WAGE-LABOR AND CAPITAL," from the German of KARL MARX, by J. L. JOYNES. A clear account of the economic forces and their result on wages and profits. Price 1d. (London: Modern Press, 13, Paternoster Row, E.C.)
- "THE SOCIAL RECONSTRUCTION OF ENGLAND," by H. M. HYNDMAN. An account of England as it might be. Price 6d. (London: W. Reeves, 185, Fleet Street, E.C.)
- "THE COMING REVOLUTION IN ENGLAND," by H. M. HYNDMAN. A historical sketch of the political situation. Price 6d. (London: W. Reeves, 185, Fleet Street, E.C.)
- "USEFUL WORK *versus* USELESS TOIL," by WILLIAM MORRIS. An analysis of modern industry. Price 1d. (London: Socialist League Office, 13, Farringdon Street, E.C.)
- "SOCIALISM IN THEORY AND PRACTICE," by Prof. KARL PEARSON. An economic and historical exposition. Price 2d. (London: W. Reeves, 185, Fleet Street, E.C.)
- "THE ETHICAL BASIS OF SOCIALISM," by Professor KARL PEARSON. An ethical justification of Socialism. Price 2d. (London: W. Reeves, 185, Fleet Street, E.C.)
- "ENGLAND'S IDEAL," by EDWARD CARPENTER. A collection of essays addressed specially to the rich and middle classes. Price 1/- (London: Swan Sonnenschein, Lowrey & Co., Paternoster Square, E.C.)