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MELBOURNE:
ANDRADE & CO., 213 RUSSELL STREET.
1892.
THE present time is a most hazardous one. Good men and women, of all stations in society, recognize that the existing social conditions are most unjust and likely to suffer a serious crash in the not far distant future. Naturally enough the thinkers of the age are trying, through the channels of pleasing fiction, to present a solution of the knotty social problem which confronts us; but, in the present writer's opinion, although their efforts have been an incalculable boon to humanity, they have all, with perhaps one exception, fallen short of the desired goal.

"Looking Backward" is too impracticable, and too authoritarian to be desirable even if it were practicable, as the clever writer of "Looking Further Forward" has well shown: "Cesar's Column," although a masterpiece of destructive reasoning, is unsatisfactory to those who would see society build itself anew; "News from Nowhere" is too exclusively sentimental; while the hosts of minor works are not characterized by any ideas of special value in the solution of the problem. Even "Freeland," the able work of Dr. Hecthecy which towers above all the others in profundity of thought and correct economic insight, is based upon a scheme of such colossal magnitudes as to somewhat detract from its immediate utility, and furthermore it relies for its execution upon the means of the wealthy. In the present work the writer endeavors to show how the oppressed classes can work out their own emancipation without reliance upon the uncertain assistance of the wealthy.

The author gladly acknowledges the valuable assistance rendered by Mr. Philip Kleinman and Mr. David A. Critchlow (late Government Agricultural Lecturer), who have supplied valuable information used in working out some of the details; and also several other gentlemen and ladies, who have kindly furnished some useful particulars.

If the present work should be the means of stimulating the workers to strive to emancipate themselves by rational methods, the author's labors will not have been in vain.

D. A. A.

MELBOURNE, November, 1892.
THE MELBOURNE RIOTS;
And How Harry Holdfast and His Friends Emancipated the Workers.

I.

"Harry, if you take my advice you'll not go to that meeting."

"But I don't intend to take your advice, John. I know what I'm about. And I know that my presence will have an important effect in deciding the fate of those unfortunate wretches, who are almost driven mad with hunger and oppression. What with these crafty capitalistic wire-pullers aggravating them to deeds of rashness and riot on the one side, and the equally unprincipled tactics and dangerous utterances of those favour-seeking demagogues on the other, they are in the greatest danger that they could possibly be. They might as well be at the mercy of wild beasts in a jungle. I have strong misgivings that some serious calamity will befall them to-night."

"A very good reason why you should stay at home, instead of getting into trouble over other people."

But Harry Holdfast was determined. No argument or appeal could possibly affect him—unless, indeed, to intensify his determination—and without taking any notice of his brother's retort, he immediately left the house, and made his way to town where the "monster indignation labor meeting" was advertised to be held.

Harry was a popular character amongst the working people of Melbourne, because he was not only an eloquent labor agitator, but he had a happy method of putting himself on friendly terms with his hearers by appealing to the better natures of friend and foe alike. Of course, he had his enemies, as every one has had who has tried to make the world better than he found it; but they were not many, and he gave them little opportunity of pointing the finger of slander against him, the worst that they could say of him being that he was an "agitator." But as he was proud of the title, that did not trouble him.

But there were other things that did trouble Harry, and troubled him deeply.

There was a terrible state of destitution amongst thousands of the working classes, not only in Melbourne, but throughout the whole colony of Victoria; in fact, the "depression," as it was called, had become common throughout the whole civilized world. Men were out of employment in all directions. Work had ceased to be scarce, and had become totally unobtainable for great numbers of them. The ranks of the
unemployed were growing greater and greater from week to week. Charitable societies were organizing in every big centre of population, but they were powerless to effect any material change in the state of affairs; all the wealth they dispensed in six months could not keep those already cut out of employment supplied with the necessaries of life for a single day. The Government had been compelled to start various relief works, but they only employed a very few, and only succeeded in swelling the already heavy burden of taxation. Economy was sought by retrenchment in the civil service, hundreds of public servants being dismissed with, but this only helped to throw more men into the growing ranks of the unemployed, and left the solution of the difficulty as far off as ever. The labor party, who after many years of untiring struggle had got a very numerous representation in the legislature, were powerless to tear down the strong vested interests arrayed against them as they had hoped to do, and were an ignorant of the ultimate causes of the terrible depression which was threatening to break up society as they were divided in opinion as to the wiser expedients to tide over the present difficulties; as to a medical and permanent cure, they did not dare to entertain the thought of it.

The streets of Melbourne were thronged with men in vain search of employment; there were a few of the genuine some "loafer" amongst them, but the great mass were strong, steady, worthy fellows, anxious and willing to work, but with no work that they might put their hands to. It was estimated that they numbered at least 50,000 persons. And yet it was pointed out that, by the statistics of Hayter's "Year Book," the Colony was wealthier than it ever had been before; in fact, it had become, in proportion to its size, one of the wealthiest countries in the world. But despite this fact, the very employers themselves were beginning to share the fate of the wretched workers; bankruptcies were increasing daily, shop after shop was closing its shutters, merchants were reducing their imports, and farmers coming to send their products to market for want of buyers. Some of the largest firms in the city, which had always been felt to be as stable as the Government itself, found themselves compelled to suspend operations, and in many cases to give up their entire estate, thus throwing thousands out to starve.

The climax was reached, when, on the day before our story opens, the gigantic firm of Goldschmidt, Beare and Co. had dismissed their entire staff at the shortest notice, and men, women and children were rendered workless, homeless and without prospect of food before them.

II.

It was not long before Harry reached the spot where the Monster Indignation Labor Meeting was being held. There were already a large number present, and fresh visitors continued to arrive until the meeting had assumed larger dimensions than any other that had ever been held in Melbourne, and it yet wanted several minutes to the time when the proceedings were to commence. It was with some difficulty that Harry managed to elbow his way through the crowd to the lorry which was in readiness for the speakers of the evening to "orate" from; but at last, amidst loud cheering, he mounted the "platform" along with the others. The sight was one calculated to cheer the heart of any enthusiast who longed to see the workers strive for a higher social level than the one they now occupied. The lorry stood some fifty yards from the footpath, in the centre of a large block of land where several immense stores had stood only a few months before. On both sides and behind were thousands of working men, many of whom had their wives and children with them; and away in front, stretching right across Flinders Street, until traffic was well-nigh impeded, the immense ocean of proletaires stretched forth in its rugged grandeur. Harry felt a strange sensation pass over him as he beheld this extraordinary sight. Here and there were policemen mixing up in the crowd and preserving "order," while down the street were a few dozen mounted troopers. But these were such a mere handful, compared with the great mass of working people present, that they attracted little attention. On the lorry were about twenty other men besides Harry, and a remarkable assortment of physiognomies they presented. One big fellow, with firm set limbs, rather dark complexion and heavy frowning brow, was perhaps the most noticeable of all; but alongside him was a remarkable little fellow, fussing about and gesticulating to those about him, and acting as though he fancied himself the host of those present. This strange personage caught one's eye at a glance—his peculiar attire, somewhat resembling that of the French peasantry, his small limbs, his big bullet head out of all proportion to the rest of the body, and his bull-like neck, all showed him to be a man of unusual characteristics, and did not favorably impress a spectator upon first seeing him; but when one looked closer into his face, and saw the cunning, piercing little eyes, the big, sharply-cut and thin-lipped mouth, and the strained effort at a permanent smile, which, like Harris's Heathen Chinaman, was "child-like and bland" to a degree, the interest in this little individual became intense, and made one almost forget the presence of the Heroic agitator beside him. On the precise moment that the Post Office clock in Elizabeth Street chimed seven o'clock, the big man arose to his feet to address the meeting. Loud applause and ringing hurras greeted him from thousands of throats. When the deafening noise had subsided he addressed them as follows:—"Comrades, in the war of labor against the tyranny of capital (loud applause), it is with pleasure that I can't express that I open this mighty meeting, a meeting which I hope and believe will never be forgotten in the history of human progress (hear, hear, and brave), a meeting that is not summoned like its predecessors to talk, and talk, and never do more than talking, but a meeting that is resolved to strike the final blow at the monster of capitalism which is devouring us (vociferous applause). We are here to-night, friends, not to ask our rights—we have done that too long already—we are here to take our stand as men and women, and to enter into a fight to the death for a world which has been stolen from us and which awaits us under our very feet" (tremendous cheering and hooraying interrupted the speaker, who
oppression, but we can wait no longer; the blight of capital is fast crushing us out of existence, our wives and children are dying in front of us because we cannot, we dare not win the bread with which to sustain their lives.

We have not courted the quarrel; we are in the thick of the fight; capital has its knee upon our throat, and is fast strangling the breath from our bodies. Shall we longer endure it? (loud cries of “No!”) No, friends, let us hear our quarrel, and let us bear it like true men and women, that those who oppose may admire our courage and determination, and fear our strength. Our numbers, and our undying resolve, must be free (enthusiastic applause).

But how are we to be free? Shall we wait for freedom with our arms folded? Shall we follow the advice of尊者 Sharples, and ask our wealthy oppressors to tax themselves instead of us? (cries of “No!”) Shall we ask them to free the land when they all act by keeping it from us, and making us work upon it for their profit because they call it theirs? No, comrades, we are truly told that ‘God helps those who help themselves,’ and we need never hope to be free while we wait for others to set us free; see must free ourselves (applause). The action of Goldschmidt, Beare & Co (loud groans) I was about to say that the action of that firm in dismissing their hands, cruel as it is in its effects upon us, was inevitable under the conditions in which we all live. They dared not do otherwise. Your or I in their place must have done the same (cries of “No,” and interruption). You believe in my friends, but I can assure you it is as I say. Had they not closed yesterday, in a few weeks at most their contracts would have compelled them to close, for their stores are glutted with the goods which we have made, and we, the workers, who should be their principal customers, as we embrace the greater part of the population, have no money to purchase our requirements of them and thus to provide them the revenue with which they pay their own debts (hear, hear). No, friends, we have entered on the labor war, and let us fight to win. Let us get the tools with which we work into the hands of us who use them, instead of letting them bring the revenue to those who work not to create it—I refer to the capitalists. We must learn—and learn immediately—how to co-operate together so as to secure the products of our labor for ourselves, to peacefully acquire possession of the lands which legal robbery has despoiled us of, and to become independent of the speculative individuals who under pretext of lending us the requisite machinery with which to work for our own benefit, dips his hand deep into our pockets, depriving us of nearly all we have produced, and makes us the wretched slave of his accrued gold.

The chairman next called upon Felix Slymer, the remarkable little bald-headed agitator who sat next to him, and whom we have already briefly described. The applause that greeted this intimation was simply astounding. If the other speakers were popular, Slymer was more than popular—he was their very idol.

Gently rising to his feet, he softly stroked together his delicate and shabby little hands, apparent strangers to their appearance, and slowly bowing before them he delivered himself deliberately and in a markedly simulating manner of the following:—“Mr. Chairman, fellow
after considerable delay and difficulty. No sooner had he reached Russell Street than he turned up to escape the crowd; but they followed him. The scene now became one of wild confusion, and it was with difficulty that the powerful horses managed to draw their burdens up the steep hill owing to the surging mass pressing and swaying so heavily against it, many being thrown down and trampled to death by one another, and numbers falling under the wheels of the lorry. Upon arriving at the corner of Collins Street further progress became absolutely impossible. The crowd had now increased by thousands, and rumours were all over the city bringing fresh throngs to the scene. No horse, or no body of horses, could possibly force its way through the immense wall of humanity that came surging up from Bourke Street. One would think that all Victoria had come to witness the indescribable scene.

Seeing that they could make no further retreat the occupants of the lorry held council together as to what they should do under the extraordinary circumstances. The general feeling was to quietly leave the waggon, one at a time, and silently disperse to their homes; but Felix Slymer would not hear of such a thing. He charged them with cowardice, and said that those who were so anxious to flight capital were trying to flee at the first sight of danger. This rebelled too much, and they decided to remain.

Taking in the state of affairs, and noticing the perplexity of the labor leaders, Slymer instantly brought himself “in evidence” before the crowd. Hastily rising to his legs, he once more addressed the masses of people who thronged the streets, urging them to resist this “unwarranted breach of discipline on the part of the officials” as he called it, and inviting them to deeds of violence to redress this wrong; he called, in the name of justice, upon those who had been “spoliated” by the capitalists to take their revenge and “loot the shops of the Collins Street aristocracy.” Instantly a rush was made down the street, shutters were torn down, windows smashed with the broken shutters, and the jewelers’ and other shops were burst open. A cry was raised “To the banks!” and large numbers rushed for these time-honored representatives of vested interests, but they were too firmly constructed to be burst open, and the crowds returned to the shops of the “small fry” capitalists. The police and the troopers were powerless to stop the furious onslaught of the people, although they mercilessly bent them with their batons and their swords until wounded and dying rioters were lying about in all directions.

While all this was going on, the lorry remained in its old place, and the great mass of the crowd stayed around it, and hopefully hemmed it in, while Slymer continued his oration calling on the people to resist force with force. Suddenly Slymer disappeared, and it was thought he had been violently kidnapped by an agent of the capitalists. Harry, noticing his disappearance, hastened to fill his place, and stepping forward on the lorry he cried out “Friends, be calm. There is some treachery here. Let us disperse.” But he spoke too late.

All at once, the mayor of the city appeared, armed with a sheet of paper which turned out to be the Riot Act, and he appeared to read from
it, although no one, not even himself, could hear a word of it, and no sooner had he done than a general rush was made by the police and a number of civilians upon the occupants of the lorry. Men were fighting each other indiscriminately. Women and children were screaming and fainting, and the horses plunging about wildly and trampling many poor wretches to death. All of a sudden a series of terrific explosions occurred, shaking the earth like an earthquake and causing the steeple of one of the neighbouring churches to fall on the heads of a number of unfortunate victims beneath. Instantly there was a stoppage of the firing and fighting. All seemed to think that the world had come to its long-expected end, and gazed awe-stricken at each other in the sickly glare of the few torches that still continued to be held aloft. Recovering their presence of mind, and taking advantage of the temporary astonishment of the crowd, the police rushed for the occupants of the lorry, and after serious fighting, with the assistance of the soldiers, they captured eleven of them and, with considerable difficulty, marched them off in custody to the watchhouse where they were securely lodged.

The effect was marvellous. All the fighting ceased instantly. The crowd, having lost their leaders, seemed to have lost their hopes. Their frantic fury gave place to anxious fear. Slowly the streets commenced to assume their former appearance, the throng dispersed, the torches ceased to lend their ghastly glare to the ghastly scene; and although thousands continued to hang about the streets during the whole of the night, the greater part wended their way to their homes to brood in silence over the terrible drama they had been the unexpected witnesses of.

"It's late now, and Harry not yet home, I fear my worst suspicions are realized, mother," said John Holdfast that night.

"Oh, don't fear," said the old lady, "Harry is certainly a rash young fellow, and a foolish chap to bother about other people's troubles when he always gets constant work himself, but he's not likely to get into any serious trouble. He's too temperate and cool-headed for that."

But Harry lay in the cell along with his comrades, waiting to be tried on a charge of murder.

III.

It was a beautiful spring morning that followed the events depicted in the last chapter. The sky was clear, the air fresh and bracing, the sun delightfully warm without being oppressive. In fact, everything seemed cheerful and contented, except man. Even he, poor wretched mortal, was more or less influenced by the invigorating weather, and was in a better mood than he might otherwise have been. For the worst man amongst us is not wholly insensible to good surrounding influences, whatever theorists may say to the contrary.

It was on this cheerful morning that a young man might be seen walking, or rather slinking along some of the smaller streets of the city, availing himself of the many little rights-of-way and semi-private thorough-

fairs, as though to escape observation, until he reached a certain little cottage in the western end of Little Lonsdale Street, where he suddenly halted, and anxiously looked round him, as though fearful of being observed. Evidently seeing no one about, he pulled a little note book from his pocket, looked at the number on the door, as though to make sure that it tallied with the one in the book, and then gently stepped forward and knocked at the door. Presently a somewhat elderly man opened it, and without a word passing between them the visitor entered and the door was instantly closed behind him.

"Well, Slymer," said the host, as soon as his visitor was seated, "did you do as I instructed you?"

"Yes," was the curt reply.

Felix Slymer, without further ceremony, pulled out some papers from his pocket and handed them to his friend, who very carefully perused them, while the little eyes of his visitor were busily employed in taking in a very exhaustive view of the apartment in which he was waiting. Presently the elderly man folded up the papers, placed them carefully in his pocket, and turning to Slymer, said:

"That will do, Slymer; you have faithfully performed your mission, and here is your reward."

Slymer's eyes glistened, as his flabby hands clutched the ten bright sovereigns that were handed to him; but there was not that expression of glee that one would expect to see exhibited by one of so humble an appearance upon receipt of such a relatively large sum. Having carefully deposited the money in a secret pocket in the inner lining of his vest—he considered it unbecoming or inexpeditious for one in his position to be seen using a purse—he was about to withdraw, when the other suddenly called him over to him.

"Felix," said he, "I wish to ask you something before you go."

"What's the matter now, Grindall," was the reply, "I am not going to open my mouth for nothing."

"Oh, don't trouble yourself on that score, my friend, I am not going to ask you for 'professional' information just now. But I am a little uneasy about a paragraph I read in The Daily Weathercock this morning, and I thought you might enlighten me a little on the matter. Here, read it for yourself." Taking up the newspaper as directed, Slymer instantly read the following:

TERRIFIC RIOT IN THE CITY.

SUSPICIOUS AGENTS AT WORK.

In another part of this issue we give full and startling particulars of the extraordinary tumult which occurred in the city last evening. The labor party, intoxicated with recent legislative victories and eager for the plunder which they have so long threatened in dark and mysterious hints, burst out in full fury last night, upon the occasion of a "monster indignation meeting" as they called it, which was held in Flinders Street and subsequently shifted to the corner of Collins Street and Russell Street where the tragic events narrated elsewhere took place. It appears that several of the discontented loafers, who scorn to live except upon
agitation" and charity, convened a meeting of similarly-disposed "me'er-do-wells, presumably to "consider" the present grave depression, which is solely taxing the minds of our wisest philanthropists and statesmen, though really to carry out the nefarious designs which they had brutally conceived and prearranged at a secret meeting held for the purpose some weeks before. Sharples, Holdfast, and a number of other rogues, who are well known to the police, are mainly instrumental for the disturbances and the terrible loss of life which has accompanied them, but the public will be glad to hear that they are all, or nearly all, in safe custody, and ready to take their quietus at the proper moment. It will not be prudent, at this present moment, to say too much on the subject, as the police have the matter in hand and are diligently working to forge such a chain of evidence as shall rid society of this terrible pest that has so long been allowed to destroy all public confidence, to frighten capital out of the colony, to absolutely stop all commercial enterprise, and to drive tens of thousands of deserving men and women to poverty and destitution. It is sufficient, for the present, to say, that one of the miserable cowardly wretches has shown the white feather already, and has exposed the whole of their nefarious designs, their operations for the past four years, the names and whereabouts of the ringleaders, and several other facts that we dare not mention. We cannot disclose the names of the miserable traitor, as he is still allowed to move among his old confederates in order to report their further proceedings, he still being one of the most trusted among them; and we are not to name him they would set upon him and ferociously murder him, as they murdered those poor innocent men, women and children last night. We may, however, mention that our old anti-social fellow-countryman, Gregory Grindall, our late and much-respected mayor of Melbourne, has magnificently offered a reward of $25 to anyone who will give such information as will lead to the conviction of the thief or thieves, who during the riot carried off $20,000 worth of jewellery from his magnificent warehouses in Collins Street, and $25 to anyone who will expose the secrets of the labor organizations.

When Slymer had finished reading the paragraph, Grindall looked steadfastly at him, as though waiting some expression of feeling from him.

"Do you know anything of this matter?" he asked at length.

"Why do you ask?" responded Slymer.

"Do you not see? You know what I mean."

"Yes, I know; but you underestimate the risk."

"You think $25 too little. Of course; I understand. What would you have me make it?"

"One thousand."

"Great heavens! man, you seem to think I am made of money."

"I don't know what else you're made of."

"Slymer, you know I can't afford to resist your cruel insinuation, now that I have reposed such confidence in you. But really, the depression is so serious just now that one needs to look at every $25 note to keep out of the Insolvency Court."

"My price is a thousand. If it doesn't suit you, don't bargain. I know very well you won't get anyone else to do your dirty work for fifty times that sum; and you know it too."

"Agreed, then," said Grindall. "but give me time."

"I will wait one month, provided you give me $100 now."

"Right, then. But before you go, one word more. Were you present at this meeting last night?"

"I was. Don't you see my name amongst the speakers?"

"Yes; but how is it you were not incarcerated with the others?"

"In the melee, I managed to shoot, and was able to crawl under the cart unobserved, where I waited until the disturbances were over, and then escaped unnoticed."

"That will do. Good-bye. I wish you success."

"Yes, but only for the sake of your own banking account, you old miser," muttered Felix as the door closed behind him and he was once again in the street.

IV.

Gregory Grindall was unhappy. Not that that was anything unusual with him because he was never a happy individual at the best of times. He had money certainly—abundance of it, in fact—but what pleasure could he derive from it when he was in constant danger of losing it? He had hosts of friends, too, amongst the higher, as well as the lower, classes of society, but what did all their friendship benefit him when he mistrusted everyone of them and believed that most of them mistrusted him? True, he had the press extolling his innumerable virtues (real or imaginary) and the principal daily organ, of which he was part proprietor, landed him to the skies; but as others in his own position understood the worth of the eulogies lavished upon him by the press, and as the steady reports were beginning to mistrust everything and everyone recommended by the "bourgeoisie press," they turned to him, and to no one, moreover the other papers had now and then a few hardy interloper supporting his rivals, what good, after all, would the press be to him in time of adversity, and with all the anxieties it brought upon him did it assist in his happiness? Certainly not. There is no happiness in life, where one is in constant anxiety. Although money rendered miserable all those poor wretches without money, there was no concealing the fact that it didn't succeed very well either in bringing happiness to those who had lots of it. At least, so Grindall thought. He believed himself to be worth considerably over a million pounds, but then his liabilities were something enormous. As to his assets, he could not possibly estimate them, because half his investments appeared to be unsound now that the terrible depression was settling on everything—mines were failing, banks bursting, creditors failing without paying a shilling in the pound; and worse than all, he could not immediately convert his assets into cash as he desired to do, and the banks were so panic-stricken they feared to make advances to anyone except upon the most ruinous terms.

Gregory Grindall had lived a life full of varied business experience. Starting humbly, as many successful men have done before him, he had terrible odds to fight against. Often would he look back at the happy time when as a little errand boy he honestly worked for the few shillings which every week he took home to his anxious parents. Then he showed such intelligence and diligence that he got a situation as clerk in a position of trust; but owing to the dishonesty of a fellow-worker, he was dismissed in disgrace on a false charge of embezzlement. Then he skipped
from one thing to another until he chanced to form the acquaintance of an
informal local councillor, who got him a job working for the corporation,
and he gradually ingratiated himself into the favors of the councillors by
his willing ways and his honest manner. Then he saw the petty
scheming, the selfish intrigues and the unscrupulous overreaching that
appear to constitute about three-fourths of the rocco d'etre of municipal
governing bodies; and he was at first disgusted. Then he got so accus-
ted to taking privileged intrigue-trampling down meritorious effort that
he became quite used to it, and he began to look upon it as the right thing
after all—the right of might—as he used to ease his conscience by
labelling it. Then he watched his opportunity until he got in a few little
swindles himself. "made money" as the saying is; got a little property
somehow or other; began to be known publicly; got elected to the council,
and proceeded step by step until he became mayor of the city of Melbourne,
proprietor of one of the largest jewellery establishments in the colony,
novelist, newspaper proprietor, mining share-broker, and a large shareholder in
several of the largest banking syndicates in Australia. But still he
wasn't happy.

Gregory paced up and down the room like a caged lion, and it was very
evident some terrible weight was upon his mind. "I wish the damned
thing was all over," he muttered to himself; "what's the good of a fellow
worrying and worrying his short life out if its all going to come to this?
What's the good of wealth when you can't realize upon it, and honors
when only a lot of avaricious bounds respect for them—and even their
respect is only envy after all. It's all very fine for Parson Wilkins to talk
about "the duty of the rich towards the poor"—bah! why doesn't the
fat old beast, with his twenty pounds a week rolling in for doing nothing,
why doesn't he practice those duties to the poor that he talks about? The
misable old wretch, he growled at me the other day because the interest
on his shares in the International Chartered Bank had fallen two-and-a-
half per cent., and only the month before I had cautioned him against
leaving his tea thousand deposit in the Perpetual Prosperity Bank just in
time for him to withdraw it without seash. And that Slymer I the
ungrateful little wretch! tut-tutting about my not being able to get any-
thing else to do my 'dirty work.' Dirty work, indeed, the insolent wretch!
but I'll be even with him yet. If I don't get that thousand pounds back
some day, ay, and with interest added, my name's no. Grindall, by
heavens it isn't!" The prospect of revenge seemed greatly to please the
irate old millionaire, and to banish the prospects of his downfall from his
mind; for he hastily put on his hat and gloves, and marched out into the
street, slamming the door after him, with the air of one who had accom-
plished a decisive victory.

V.

It was a red-letter day in the history of Victorian labor, when Holdfast
and his confederates were arraigned before the magistrates on the charge of
murdering their fellow citizens. Never had the walls of the court held a
more eager and expectant throng of men and women. The excitement a
few years before over the fiendish murderer, Deeming, was nothing in com-
parison with it. And no wonder, for all seemed to realize that the case
before the bench meant nothing less than the first decisive blow in the
great struggle for supremacy between the classes and the masses. Eager
speculations were indulged in as to the ultimate outcome of the impending
trial. Would the authorities be severe with the prisoners, and if so what
frightful revenge would they take upon their adversaries? Would the poor man have justice for the first time in civilization's history, or had money already decided the fatal verdict? Such
were the questions troubling the brains of the amazed spectators, and
forming the topic of conversation amongst the thousands who thronged the
streets for miles around. After the usual batch of drunkards, larcenists,
and petty misdeemers had been rapidly disposed of, the great case of the
Melbourne Rioters came on for hearing. After the usual preliminaries, the
Crown Prosecutor stated the case, which was briefly as follows:—For a
considerable time past, the police had been diligently watching a secret
society, which had its headquarters in Melbourne, and had branches ram-
ifying throughout all the industrial centres of the colonies. This society
bore the ominous title of "The Knights of Revenge." For a long time
their purpose was unknown, and for a considerable time even their very
existence was unsuspected. But thanks to the vigilance of the police and
their practical agents the nefarious operations of the villains had all been
ascertained and their base designs thwarted. The president of the society
was one Thomas Treadway who he was glad to say was in safe custody
amongst the accused. This monster had a scheme on hand to destroy
every public building in Melbourne, to take the life of every man whose
wealth was excessive and who attempted to resist his murderous onslaught.
Harry Holdfast, the secretary to the gang, had written letters which were
now in possession of the authorities and which he was certain would send
every one of them to the gallows. It was the Knights of Revenge who had convened the fatal meeting held on the First day of May, a day
celebrated everywhere as the festival of labor, and it was at their instiga-
tion, and through their organization, that the atrocious deeds of that day
were committed, when six hundred and five men, women and children
were cruelly and remorselessly massacred and many thousands seriously
wounded, in most cases beyond hopes of recovery. Many wealthy men
had been "marked" for destruction by the Society among whom was their
most worthy and respected citizen, Gregory Grindall; all the banks were
to be plundered; the establishments of certain tradesmen, who had not
supported the return of the labor party to parliamentary power, were to be
looted; and every special constable, or any other person who endeavoured
in any way to oppose their designs was to be "removed." The official
prosecutor said he would not occupy the time of the court with full details
of the ghastly plots, but would produce witnesses who would furnish the
fuller and most reliable particulars.

Jonah Johnson, the first witness called, said he had known the
accused for several years past. He had been a member of the Knights of
Revenge for four years, having joined it when Treadway was president, a few months after its formation, when a friend of his in a state of semi-intoxication had divulged its existence. Treadway, one of the defendants, had then told witness that he meant to "destroy every wealthy loafers and every loafers' mansion before another five years were over their heads," and he believed the present riot was the first organized attempt to carry the threat into execution. He could show them copies of a newspaper called Vengeance [paper produced] in which the plans of destruction were depicted exactly as Treadway had described them to his sanguinary confederates.

Ralph Washington, the next witness called, said he knew several of the defendants personally, being himself a member of the Knights of Revenge, having joined it when in poverty and despair. He had long since ceased to be an actual member, having been for two years established in business as a hair-pin manufacturer through the charitable assistance of a wealthy gentleman, but he dared not hitherto leave it formally under penalty of death. Now that the miscarriage were brought to justice and out of harm's way, he did not fear to proclaim his succession from the secret body, although he had long made known his true position to the police. He had known Treadway very intimately, having come out with him in the Royal Rover, from England, nearly three years ago, when he first broached his wicked scheme to organize the society now known as the Knights of Revenge. He had now at his factory in Elizabeth Street, a large quantity of gases and other explosives, which he had allowed another member of the gang, Sharpless, to deposit there immediately upon their being manufactured, the whereabouts of the "plant" being well known to the police who had arranged with witness to allow the diabolical fiends to deposit all their dangerous products there without official detection. Besides the bombs, there were a large number of rifles belonging to the members of the gang; but which were fortunately called into requisition by the authorities in suppressing the great riot.

A great number of other witnesses were called, all of whom agreed in denouncing the accused as members of a secret gang of assassins whose machinations had caused the wholesale human slaughter on May Day. They also swore that Holfast and the others had used inflammatory language inciting the mob to use violence.

Upon the prisoners being asked if they had any witnesses to bring forward or anything they wished to say in their defence, unless they wished to reserve it for their trial,

Tom Treadway boldly asserted his innocence of the crime laid to his charge. He had not taken any life during the so-called riots, for he had come there unarmed and had solely relied on his muscles to help him fight his way out of the dreadful fray. He had even taken his wife with him, so little had he anticipated the sad events. He firmly believed the whole thing was a vile concoction of the police or the capitalists. [Here the witness was sternly reminded that he must confine himself to his own defence, instead of casting slurs on reputable citizens if he desired to be heard]. He would say, then, that the charges were a tissue of lies. The Knights of Revenge was a myth, as far as he knew, for he had never heard of such an organization. He had only been in the colony two years, and yet two of the witnesses had perjured themselves, and furthermore perjured each other, one saying that he (Treadway) had been president of the asserted society in Melbourne over four years ago, and another pretendent member of the pretended society had stated that witness came out in the same ship with him two years later. The paper called Vengeance witness had never seen before its production in court, and he firmly believed some capitalists had printed it to make certain of the legal murder of the defendants. [The magistrates were required to delete the defendant's speech, and threatened that the next one who dared to make such scandalous imputations would be committed for contempt of court and deprived of further opportunity to speak].

Holfast stoutly denied he had used language inciting to violence, and declared that the language put into his mouth by some of the witnesses for the prosecution had actually been used by one Felix Slumner, who had not been arrested for some reason but had mysteriously disappeared. Although he himself believed that a people suffering wrong at the hands of the authorities were fully justified in resorting to force to resist that wrong, still he did not think those violent measures would produce the desirable results that the labor party anticipated, and therefore he had not advised them. The witnesses were a crowd of unblushing perjurers; and the documents produced in court and said to be written by him were all deliberate forgeries and a very bad imitation of his own handwriting as he would show by some letters he had sent to his friends on several occasions. [Letters produced.]

The other seventeen prisoners asserted their innocence, and supported the statements of Treadway; one of the number, Sharpless, almost foaming with rage when he contradicted the assertion that he had manufactured, and secreted bombs and other explosives with Washington, whom he denied ever having seen before any more than he had ever seen a bomb until one had been introduced in court during the examination of witnesses.

After the defendants had finished speaking, the magistrates held consultation together for a few moments, when they ordered the prisoners to be committed for trial. The nineteen miserable wretches were hurried off to their cells, and the court cleared for the day.

VI.

"Ah, yes, that is the question of all questions, after all. Whatever will become of the poor working men and women if things go on as they are doing? I sometimes think I am the most unfortunate being in the world, lying here in this cold, dark cell, with no face to cheer me—not even that of my worst enemy, much less of my friends. And I am remanded for trial, eh? Oh, yes, of course, the same old mockery to be repeated, lying perjurers to concoct falsehoods and predetermined judges..."
to pass unjust judgment upon me. I suppose I'll be hanged. But what of that. 'Good men must not obey the laws too well,' said Emerson, which of course means that good men must pay the penalty of their disobedience to those unjust laws. But what's the penalty after all? The worst they can do is take one's life. And what is the life of a proletarian? Only a life of drudgery, anxiety, poverty, and anguish; a life of death, for all life's noblest pleasures are denied us, and what we call our life is but one ceaseless round of toiling bondage to our fellow who whip and starve us to a welcome grave. Hallo! who's this?'

It was the turnkey who entered and announced that a visitor was waiting for the prisoner. Holdfast was removed to the visiting place, a sort of bird-cage, with strong iron bars between the prisoner and the visitor, and wire work all round it to prevent friends from passing anything through to the unfortunate occupants. Looking through the bars, Harry instantly recognised who it was, and a sort of painful joy flitted across his troubled, though sanguine, features. He was a pale young woman, trembling with emotion, and striving hard to thrust back the bitter tears that come to solace woman in despair.

"Hyptias," said Harry, "is it you?"

"Yes, my poor friend, it is. What can I do for you?"

"Nothing, Hyptias, nothing."

There was a silence—a painful silence such as one almost fancies one can hear. These two brave spirits, male and female, stood looking in each other's face. Oh! that the foes of humanity could have seen that look. Oh! that the cold heart of a Shylock might have been there to have withered under the burning intellectual gleams.

"Harry, I must do something for you," said Hyptias at last. "I cannot, dare not, stand idly by, and see these human tigers take your life. I cannot part with you. To know and understand each other as you and I have done for these long years is to be united in a bond whose strength no earthly priest or lawyer could conceive. I would not die for you, as lovers do in lachrymose tales. For one to live without the other would be death to that one that remained. No, Harry, rather than die to save your life. I'll kill the fiend who took that life and kill off all his kind."

Here the turnkey rudely interrupted the conversation and said it must be confined to family matters.

"Harry," continued Hyptias, "listen while I tell you something. Since your committal, I have had a proposal of salvation offered out to me. Ugh! how it infuriates me to think of it! That fiend, that human and licentious monster, Grimaldi, has dared to promise me your perfect freedom if I will save his lust with holy matrimony. As though Love's passion could be bought and sold! As though a woman could become a prostitute in marriage even though it save her lover's life. No, Harry, I resisted the insult. I struck him. He called the servants and ordered my arrest. But I was a match for the tyrant, and we both knew it. I told him that if he laid a hand upon me, the injury would cost him his life. I told him, too, that scores, nay hundreds of the victims of his past wrong-doing were waiting at his gate to help me should I call upon them.

And I reminded him that not one single servant could be depend upon when once I told them his unholy motives. It was enough. It struck the cur, and smote his wretched semblance of a conscience. Dismissing the servants, he ordered my departure before further trouble ensued. But calling me aside, he guaranteed your freedom if I would sojourn with him one brief day. Again I struck him; and he fell. He glared at me just like some wretched quadruped defeated in its carnal lust—a tyrant and a cur! I left, and have not seen him since."

"Hyptias, noble girl, you have suffered more than I. Oh, that we could brave the world together! But no, I must wait my captors' pleasure. I cannot help you yet, Hyptias, nor can you help me. But let us wait our time. For years have I waited for a home that I could take you to, there to call you wife and know you worthy to accept that name; for years have I struggled against wrong and injustice to get a little hold upon this poor begaud-captured earth that you and I may dwell together on a spot that ever greedy tyrants would not drive us from. But our time has not yet come. We can only wait and nerve ourselves to endure the blows of our oppressors. So we may strike the blow."

"And we shall. And now I must be gone; the turnkey objects to our conversation. Good-bye, Harry."

"Good-bye."

VII.

At last the day for the hearing of the contingent trial arrived. Throes of people were assembled about the junction of Lonsdale and William Streets long before the appointed hour, anxious to be among the fortunate few to get into the court house or to learn the latest scraps of information concerning the unfortunate prisoners. Many numbers of troopers and militiamen were stationed amongst the crowd to preserve order and to prevent any serious breach of the peace, for a strong feeling had grown up amongst the people that the prisoners were the victims of a vile persecution and that the almost certain sentence of death would be an unearned martyrdom that should be resisted at all hazards. No one had dared to openly express sympathy with the accused, for the press had already significantly hinted at the fate of any who should be so daring. All labor meetings had been strictly forbidden; red flags were confiscated wherever they could be found; revolutionary literature was being seized in all directions; and open air meetings of any kind absolutely forbidden. In fact, the Legislature had taken special measures to meet the emergency, and a special Act of Parliament was passed making it a penal offence for anyone at any meeting whatever to advocate any unlawful course to accomplish a lawful object; and it furthermore decreed that if anyone did so suspect, by speech or print, any unlawful course to accomplish any lawful or unlawful object, that he should be held guilty of conspiracy, and that if any life were lost he should be guilty of murder, even if he had not heard the speech or read the print; and it furthermore decreed that anyone pro-
sent at such meeting, or assisting in the compilation, printing, or distributing of such print, should be held equally responsible with the speaker or writer thereof. And this astounding outrage on the boasted liberty of the subject was allowed to become law practically without protest or delay. The works had waited many scores of years for legislation to ensure them steady employment—and the fruits of their labor; and they had witnessed governments go in and out, but the legislative measure that was to bring justice to them had never come. And yet this hastily contrived measure to gag and destroy them was passed through both houses of the legislature and had become law in three brief hours! It was rumoured that the labor representatives, and others who would in all probability have opposed the passage of the Bill, were bribed by large grants of land in an estate through which a proposed railway service was to be carried, and for which an enormous sum of money was voted just after the infamous “Seditious Conspiracy Bill” became law, and which promised enormous fortunes to its lucky promoters.

It was during the excitement consequent upon these remarkable legislative measures that the trial of the Melbourne Rioters took place. The evidence at the Criminal Court was alike to that in the lower court, and very little fresh matter was introduced, the witnesses for the prosecution repeating their former evidence, and forging a complete network of seditious evidence around the prisoners, who on their part repeated their innocence, refused to bring witnesses to what they asserted to be hatched up conspiracies that never existed—and which could therefore have no witnesses, and asked the jury to honorably acquit them. The whole affair did not take long, for none were anxious to prolong it. And then came the judicial address to the bench. There was a fearful silence for a few moments. Then the judges solemnly and quietly delivered their charges. After the usual preliminary instructions regarding the nature of the charges, the duties of the jury, and the heavy responsibility that rested upon their shoulders, he proceeded as follows:

“Gentlemen of the jury—It is now your solemn duty, after considering the evidence and hearing the instructions I have given you, to decide whether the prisoners are guilty or guileless of the charges laid against them. The charge is the worst that can possibly be laid against any human being, for it is that of violently and maliciously depriving another human being of that, which is dearer than all else to him, his life. Do not be guided by the sentiments that the learned counsel for both sides have conjured before you; for it is not your place to be swayed by fine sentiments or any appeal to the sympathies; but it is your place to now finally decide, from the evidence placed before you, whether those unfortunate men now standing in the dock are guilty, or not guilty, of the charges laid against them. Their lives hang by a thread, and that thread is in your hands with all its grave responsibilities. If you cut that thread, you take those human lives. Hence you must be discreet, you must be certain, you must be true in your convictions, and courageous in your verdict. Society now reposes its confidence for security in yourselves. If those men are guilty of the ferocious deeds assigned to them, it looks to you to preserve it from the ravages of them and others like them; by deciding the one small word that shall launch them into eternity. Do not be swayed by considerations concerning your own personal security, or the threats of vengeance held out by the friends of the accused, nor do you allow friendships or other ties of sympathy to turn you from the strict enunciation of justice. But if on the evidence you are satisfied they are deserving of the extreme penalty of the law, find them ‘Guilty.’ On the other hand, if you do not think the evidence conclusive against them; if there is doubt of guilt in your minds; if you believe from the evidence they have not committed the crimes laid to their charge, but that the guilt rests with others; or if you think they were justified in such actions as they took, according to the laws of the land, then hesitate are you seal their doom—acquit them. But whatever you decide, do not decide rashly, but let justice and the law sway your deliberations and determine your conclusions. Turning to the evidence, we find it asserted the accused are members of a gang of conspirators, belonging to an organization known as the Knights of Revenge. The prisoners are unanimous in denying this, though unfortunately they do not bring evidence to attempt to disprove it, and they have the sworn evidence against them of different witnesses who assert that such a body does exist and that the accused are members of it. This society, according to the witnesses for the prosecution, publishes, or publishes, and unlawful and seductions papers called Fragments, wherein the cruel massacre of May 1st was planned and the lives and properties of certain persons were threatened with destruction. Explosives were secured by one or more of the prisoners, similar to those used during the riot and produced in court. The accused used violent and seditious language at the meeting in question and called on the populace to resort to the violence that subsequently took place, when six hundred and five men, women and children were massacred, the accused having caused and assisted in that murder, according to the evidence of the prosecution. For the defence, there was unfortunately no sworn evidence forthcoming, the accused doggedly refusing to bring forward witnesses, or to give sworn evidence themselves, declaring the verdict to be a predetermined conspiracy against them. All they had done had been to protect their innocence—a thing nearly all criminal, as well as guiltless persons had done before them; and therefore their protest had no value in the eyes of the law. The manufacture and storage of the explosives had been proven, and although the accused had denied complicity they had failed to bring forward any evidence in support of their denial. The letters from the secretary of the organization had had their authenticity denied by the reputed writer of them, who had produced other letters asserted to have been written by him and which certainly did not appear to be from the same pen. He had, however, failed to bring it: reputed recipients of the letters into the witness box, and it was for the jury to determine whether they were genuine and of any value as evidence. They had also attempted to show that the witnesses had contradicted each other, thus destroying the reliability of the evidence, one of the witnesses having stated that a member of the accused had come out to the colony with him two years after.
the time that another witness had asserted his presence in Melbourne in
complicity with the secret society.

Such is the
nature of the evidence before you, Gentlemen of the Jury, and I charge
you to consider it well, that you may deal justly with the accused, not
convicting them if you think any uncertainty exists concerning the guilt
alleged against them, but, giving them an impartial and honorable
trial by a verdict of 'Not Guilty'; and, on the other hand, if the
evidence seems to you conclusive of their guilt, that you bring in the
verdict possible under the circumstances—the verdict which shall
cause these wretched men to suffer the extreme penalty of the law—the
verdict of 'Guilty'!

The jury retired for a few minutes, and a painful suspense was felt all
court while the verdict was awaited. After about fifteen minutes the jury
reappeared; and the Foreman, his voice trembling with emotion, reported their decision as follows:—We find the prisoners,
Thomas Treadway, Harry Holdfast, Samuel Sharples, Thomas Smith,
Frederick Thompson, Thomas Harrison, William Spencer, James Grace,
Alfred Jackson, Michael O'Halloran, Philip Williams, Joseph Marks,
William Wilson, Adolph Norter, Henry White, Rupert Blackham,
Edwin Christopherson, Patrick Murphy, and Phelim O'Dowell guilty of
wilful murder; but we recommend Thomas Treadway and Harry Hold-
fast to mercy on account of the inconclusive nature of some of the evidence
brought against them.

The Judge was not long in passing the fatal sentences. With a few
well chosen words, warning them of the awful fate that awaited them, he
condemned Tom Treadway and Harry Holdfast to imprisonment for life;
the others he sentenced to death.

There was a sigh of relief and all eyes were turned towards the
prisoners, some of whom broke down with grief at the awful sentence, though
most of them retained their composure and prepared to meet their doom
as only martyrs in a glorious cause can do. There was, however, a feeling of
dissatisfaction on the brow of Treadway and Holdfast, who begged to
be "murdered" along with their comrades rather than to death in a
prison cell. But their request was unheeded. All the prisoners were
hastily removed, and the court cleared. Immediately on the sentence
being made known outside the court, loud groans were heard: the faces of
the multitude were sullen and angered. It was threatened that if the
men's lives were to be forfeited an attempt would be made to free them
and to destroy the judge and every juryman and witness who had gone
against them. And now the terrible hour had arrived. Now the fatal
blow was to be struck, and Melbourne was to reek with blood, and a
"Caesar's Column" to be played in grim reality!

VIII.

In the front room of a small brick cottage in Carlton, a number of men
and women were gathered together, talking earnestly over the great trial
of the Melbourne Rioters, with an earnestness and an intimacy with the
facts that showed them to be active participants in the struggle just
described. One of the men present had in his hand a copy of the Evening
Alden. from which he was reading the latest particulars of the trial to his
attentive listeners.

"There," said he at length, placing the paper on the table, "you see
what has come to. I told you these villains would have their blood,
as they had already taken the blood of the noble martyrs of Chicago;
and if we don't look out, mark my words, they'll have the lives of everyone
else of us too."

"That wouldn't much matter, Strythers; it's not worth much to us
when we can't earn a pound a week, and it costs us more than that to pay
our rent and purchase our food and clothing," said one of the younger
members of the party.

"More fool you to pay your rent, Wilberforce, when the money you
earn belongs to your starving family and not to an overfed landlord. If
you had all refused to pay your rents and pointed a revolver at the first
chap who demanded it, these troubles would never have overtaken us.
What are you going to do now? I suppose you are going to sit here
like a lot of cubs and let those poor devils be murdered, when—"

"It's not that we are cowards," interjected another, "we'd as soon put an
end to this cursed business as you would yourself, Bill, but we can't do
what we like, and no more can you. I only wish I could see some way of
frustrating their schemes, and preventing more bloodshed. But what can
we do against the power of money? When it comes to this, that
hundreds of innocent working men and women can be shot down at the secret
instigation of the wealthy, and then hang our leaders who are equally
innocent with the other victims, I think it's time we called a halt somewhere
and began to talk sense instead of violence."

"That's always you, Walton, showing the white feather just like Hold-
fast does with his talk about peaceful co-operation," remarked Felix
Slymer, who occupied an arm-chair in the corner of the room, "you haven't the
courage of Bill Smythers, so you want to stop him because he shows
some."

"Look here, Slymer," said Hypatia Stephens, who had hitherto kept
an insipid silence, "if you don't stop your shameful allusions to Harry
Holdfast, I'll make you regret it. Don't dare charge him with cowardice
in my presence, for I cannot endure it. I know Harry too well to think
him a coward. He is as brave and honorable a fellow as ever breathed.
Oh, that there were more like him! Never slander him in my presence,
or by the Living God, Slymer, you'll incur the wrath of an injured
woman; and I think you know what that means."

"I don't think we ought to quarrel now," said Walton, "and I cer-
tainly think Slymer's remark uncalled for. We are met to fight the
common enemy, not each other."

This remark met with general approval, and the business of the meet-
ing was proceeded with.

"Well, comrades," said Smythers, "to test the feeling of the meeting,
I'll propose that we post spies in all directions to watch the movements of
our adversaries. Each spy shall carry a bomb to protect his life in case of emergency, but not for purposes of aggression. Near each spy we shall put a group of secret soldiers, each of whom shall be well armed with bombs and other weapons of destruction carefully concealed about their persons; their dress shall also be disguised to make them resemble ordinary working men carrying on their usual occupations, and as messengers of the plutocracy carrying letters and messages; they shall also be sworn in as special constables under fictitious names, and shall now and then furnish secret reports of bogus plots to influential public personages. We have full lists of all the jurymen and witnesses who assisted the judge in ordering the murder of our comrades, and we have already a number of trustworthy men and women watching their every movement and in many cases in close confidence with them. In fact, since the trial first came on, we have been carefully working up an organization similar to that hoax called the Knights of Revenge, and have met with unexpected support and encouragement. Comrade Slymer can corroborate my words."

"Yes," said Slymer, "Smythers is correct; and although it would not be prudent for me to say much about it here, because 'walls have ears,' I have no hesitation in saying that our success is certain. I gladly support the proposition."

"Am I to understand that these persons of whom you speak, the spies and 'soldiers,' are under any organized direction from some executive body or other recognized authority?" asked one.

"I can only answer Mr. Millar's question by stating that all who have volunteered those duties, and are now performing them, have hitherto done so solely under the supervision of myself and Slymer, and few others who for certain reasons dare not be present. We are to meet here to consider what to do in the present crisis, and to see if we can appoint such an executive out of the present meeting."

After a considerable amount of talking, the proposed executive was formed, and the majority of those present swore in their adherence to the new body; the remainder, among whom were Hypata Stephens, Harry Walton, and Fred Wilboforce, taking their departure. Then the remainder proceeded to "business." The new organization was named The Band of Justice; but they also adopted another name by which to be known to the outside world—The Excelsior Mutual Improvement Society. The adoption of this latter name would enable them to stave off the curiosity of the public, and to conduct private meetings without raising suspicion, even in the ante-rooms of public halls. The necessary arrangements were made to carry out the objects of the Band by appointing each to his particular office, having the necessary passwords and grips, fixing the dates and places of their future movements, and attending to many other details that were necessary to deal with on the occasion. Special pains were taken to avoid the finding of any documentary evidence on any members of the Band by any of the authorities or spies; and for that reason an easily remembered cypher was adopted to express several important words that would be in frequent use by them, and the secretary, Felix Slymer, was instructed to keep no minutes or accounts of the Band's transactions. Having made all these necessary arrangements, the members dispersed for the night, each entrusted with a part in the fulfillment of their dangerous mission.

IX.

When Hypata and the others left the conspirators' meeting in the Carlton cottage, they did not go each at once to their several homes; but slowly walking down Lygon Street together, and keeping on the road to avoid listeners as much as possible, they talked quietly together over the meeting they had just left and the general state of public affairs. They did not dare stand together conversing, as it would be sure to excite suspicion, and they did not know but that the first person they met might be some secret detective.

"I am afraid," said Fred Wilboforce, after they had been conversing for some time, "that nothing will come of all our efforts after all. The more I think over it, the more satisfied I am that the present state of affairs is as likely to endure as it was to come. What can you do with the workers when they never trouble about their condition until it is too late? They are certainly very anxious just now, and seem as if they were fully resolved on doing some desperate deeds; but they won't do anything. Look at Smythers and those fellows trying to organize a revolutionary conspiracy amongst a lot of fools whose whole thoughts are occupied with such childish absurdities as a football or cricket match, who can tell you the names, weights, and pedigrees of the winners of the Melbourne Cup in past years or the probable winning horses of this, and whose chief literary food is the perusal of penny comic papers whose humor is on an intellectual level with that of a children's nursery; while the preservation of their health or their liberty is a thing they never think about, but only call you a 'crank' if you mention it to them!"

"That is very true," replied Harry, "but it isn't everything. You might have added that when they cannot find food for themselves and their families they always manage to poison themselves with alcohol or tobacco. But on the other hand, you must remember that nations in the past have had the same vices and yet have effectuated mighty changes of one kind or another. The legislative charlatans who now bamboozle the proletariat by granting land for football grounds are only imitating the tyrants of medieval days who blinded the people with gladiatorial combats while they forged the chains of slavery tighter round their necks. But some day the slave awakes, and the chains are broken; and who knows but what the slaves of modern Melbourne capitalism may not some day do likewise? I shall not be surprised to see them do so in the present struggle, even before the fatal verdict of to-day is carried out; but I am afraid they are not yet ripe for a victorious rebellion."

"Do you think the penalties will be carried out?" asked Hypata.

"I do not see why they should not," replied Walton. "The machinery of the law is powerful; the execution of its decrees are finely established.
been forgotten now that affairs had assumed such a militant aspect. But no one seemed very clear about the matter; and for their fears they might have tired of speculating about it at all. But when the day arrived for the dread ceremony to be performed, the pent-up feelings of the populace could not be subdued any longer. Men began to say what they were thinking, and to say it rather noisily. Women vied with the men in threats of vengeance, and showed by their demeanor that they were in desperate earnest. Even the police seemed to feel as if they had been sitting on a slumbering volcano quite long enough, for they began to be unusually haughty and officious, and not at all scrupulous about maltreating the citizens who had deputed them to carefully watch over them. All along the walls of the jail, at every possible point, armed men were stationed. Thousands of police in uniform or plain clothes mixed up with the tens of thousands who waited outside its grim walls. Large bodies of soldiers were stationed in all directions, and others throughout the city, at the request of the Victorian Government many of them having come from the adjoining colonies. The latter were carefully posted in the most dangerous positions, the authorities rightly reasoning that as they were necessarily ill-informed on Melbourne affairs they would be less in sympathy with the people, and therefore more amenable to duty and more likely to fire upon their unfortunate fellow-men when ordered to do so by their commanding officers. All the available mounted troopers had been brought to the scene; and in their case, too, care had been taken to place those accustomed to country duty in the thickest part of the crowds. At last the hour for the execution drew near, and the favored few within the walls prepared to assist in, or witness, the revolting details with a zeal worthy of a cannibal feast. The attendants went about their accustomed work with almost as little unconcern as a cook would show in preparing her meals. And the spectators showed a zeal even more intense. There they waited, like human vultures, thirsting for the blood of the unfortunate victims. When, waiting to glut over the sight of a species destroying its kind, waiting to hear the last despairing words of the tortured, or to note the quivering muscles of the unfortunate victims of human brutality. There they were, like so many tigers—no, not like tigers, for tigers and other quadrupeds do not devour their own species: it is only man, brutal man, the boasted "lord of creation" who stoops to such base deeds as these—there they were, waiting anxiously to feast their brutal eyes on their victims. And at last those victims came. Manfully and boldly did they eye their captors. Nobly did they hold their heads erect, as only men can hold them. Then there was a profound silence as the brave fellows prepared to say their parting words to their earthly tormentors. But alas, this was denied them. Tyranny durst not let its victims speak. The devourer of his kind dare not hear the voice of him he would devour. The martyr's words might echo outside the walls, and perchance that echo might penetrate, but might herald the victim's redemption. So the authorities had decided that the victims, like the martyrs of Chicago, should be gagged before being murdered. A few stifled cries were all that was heard; and seventeen more human beings had suffered the utmost
penalty of man's brutality. The spectators were delighted. Law was triumphant. Its power was vindicated. Its institutions were assured. And its foes were crushed like worms beneath its feet!

Immediately that the news reached outside that the dread penalty had been fulfilled, fearful groans rent the air, bitter curses were heard in all directions, and the indignant millions madly and despairingly rushed against the foes before them. Then followed a scene that baffles all description. Men and women frantically rushing at each other like starving wild beasts; the armed butchers of the law shooting down all who failed to assist them; truncheons of police breaking every available skull; troopers' horses trampling down anyone, and lances and swords spilling blood like a bursted reservoir; buildings were blazing; consuming their inmates; while in all directions explosives were flying, hurling master and slave together to destruction. The combat was sharp; but it was short. Madness act with frenzy; but frenzy does not last. Ammunition destroys; but ammunition runs out. And before long this frightful combat was nothing but a few skirmishes here and there; presently the earth slept in murderous silence.

But the conflict between master and servant had not been ended.

The proletariat had not triumphed.

It was a sad day. It followed on the events just described. No rioters were prosecuted, for no rioters remained. Blood had been spilt, but freedom had not been found. Comrades, relatives, were all missing. All, or nearly all, of the labor leaders were dead. Though hundreds of the authorities were no more, thousands of others filled their places. Men commenced again to seek for bread, and failed to get it. They sought employers as of yore, but few found employment. Landlords commenced again to send their collectors for the rents, and the starving proletariat again attempted his vain task of paying it. The hypocrites offered their accursed gold, and the poor once more bowed down before it and pursued their lives to Mammon from whom they could never redeem. Crime went on merely as of yore, and legislative charlatans waxed fat on its creation; while the proletariat and the parasite vied with each other in the practice of vice to drown their cares. Jails continued to be built, and laws made to fill them. Women sold their purity to man for a crust; and men made themselves bestial to win woman's flattery. Children continued to be educated without learning sense. Vanity and pomp flourished as destructively as ever, and self-respect continued to be the rarest virtue.

The Melbourne Riots were over.

The Workers yet awaited their emancipation.

XI.

Fifteen years had passed since the events narrated in the last chapter. The Melbourne Riots had become a matter of past history, and the actors in it were getting fewer as years rolled on. Melbourne, with all its wickedness, had grown, as all other wicked cities grow, and had become a modern wonder. Industrial improvements of all kinds had built it into something scarcely conceivable by those who had existed in the "riot days," as they got to be called. The finest architects of the world had come there to take up their abode, and wealthy men had employed them to build some of the finest edifices in the world. The city was like a magnificent palace, fit dwelling-place almost for a demigod. The decorations of the houses, the dresses of the wealthy citizens, and the wonderful advances made in locomotive, detective, and other comforts, were amazing. Such was the appearance that it gave one on first seeing it that the great international traveller, Sir Hercules Crayon, could not help remarking that "If Paradise were to be re-instituted on earth, this is where we would find it." Certainly, that was but one side of the mighty city; and the remarks of a critic were well chosen when he said that "Were Paradise to visit us, unless she stopped her nose and stifled every other sense, she'd soon turn up her toes." As a matter of fact, things had gone on drifting in the one direction. Invention had grown as rapidly and so had its accompanying vices. There was no turning back from the order of social evolution; but a constant extension of the old order of things. It may easily be surmised that along with this growth of poverty, alongside of wealth, the organizations of the discontented still continued to find a place. One of the most important of these organizations was that of The Brotherhood of the New Socialism which met weekly in a large room in a house in Latrobe Street.

The meetings of the Brotherhood of the New Socialism were usually not much out of the ordinary run of such gatherings. The workers met there to declaim against the injustices of the existing social order, the penury of the politicians, the increasing disparity between rich and poor, and the hopes that the newest schools of socialistic thought held out to the hungry and oppressed. There were generally the usual stock speakers, armed with the usual stock resolutions that signified nothing. Sometimes, however, there was a more or less unexpected change of programme; and at the particular meeting that is just going to be described the proceedings were enlivened by affairs certainly very much out of the common. It was the usual Thursday evening when the Brotherhood were to meet, and various people were making their way up the steps to the room where the proceedings were being carried on, when a rather elderly man, whom one might take to be close on fifty years of age, but whose manner nevertheless was more like that of a younger man, accosted one of the Brotherhood stationed at the door.

"Is this where the Socialists are meeting, and if so, are strangers permitted to attend?" he asked.

"Certainly," was the reply, "everybody is welcome. Go upstairs after the others there."

The old gentleman followed as directed, and soon found himself in a large comfortable room, capable of seating about two hundred persons, although there were only about fifty present. It was now time to com-
The chairman then thanked the comrades for entertaining them, and said that William Treadway would introduce the principal business of the evening with his promised address on "Labor's Hopes and Prospects." An intelligent looking young man here arose, and mounted the platform, the applause that greeted him showing that he was a familiar favorite amongst them. Without any ceremony, he commenced his address, the elderly stranger eyeing him with eager attention.

"I shall not trouble you to-night," said he, "with a repetition of the questions we are always discussing as to the sufferings of the working classes. We are already too painfully familiar with them. Nor will I weary you with the conventional platitudes that must be as tiresome to you as to myself. But I will endeavor to treat the subject as thoroughly and clearly as I can in order that some real good may come of it. It is now fifteen years since my poor father lost his liberty in striving to do what we are still striving for; and when I look back I ask myself, What has been accomplished in that time? I think, comrades, you will agree with me when I say 'nothing.' Of course, I was but a lad at the time of the famous riots, and have a very imperfect knowledge of the facts connected with it. I lost my dear mother, as many of you may know, in the bloody massacre that took place upon the execution of 'the Noble Seventeen,' and my father was taken from me at the same time, never to see my face again; for, as you know, he died three years ago in jail—died, so they say, from an hereditary and incurable disease; though I firmly believe they feebly murdered him because they could not break his indomitable spirit. I love no relatives surviving that unhappy day, so I can but glean my information from the historical sources known to you all. I have principally taken my facts from McCulloch's History of the Melbourne Riots, of which a valuable three-volume edition is in the Public Library. What do I find from a carefully studied of it? Why, that matters are no better now than they were in the pre-Riot days; that poverty is as keen as then, if not worse; that the apathy of the masses, their ignorance, their scampal after recreation when they required bread, and their treacherous actions towards their trusty champions were as common then as now. And I find too that they rested on the same hopes as we do. They vainly waited, as we are waiting, for honest legislators, just laws, a wide diffusion of humanitarian sentiments, mutual sympathies, the disappearance of vicious habits, and all those other elements that we contend are the essential precursors of the glorious social life for which we are striving. But I now see where they erred, and where you, friends, are erring along with them. They trusted to bad conditions to create good human beings. They tolerated the institutions of human slavery, and hoped, poor fools, for the day when the slave should be noble and the slave-master kind. They believed that the human race was wicked, that it gloried in its wickedness, and that all the vices and crimes committed were but the natural manifestations of its totally depraved nature. They thought the individual character was superior to the conditions environing it—that the human will was free, and therefore responsible for the individual's wicked actions (although inconsistently giving it small credit for
his good actions)—that man's nature was bad, bad, irretrievably bad, and therefore that his fellows should treat him with the brutality inherent in their own brutal natures and so richly deserved by the brutal nature of himself. But, friends, I find this is a lie, a fiendish falsehood, a slander on humanity. I find that the man is what his circumstances make him. That great reformer, Robert Owen, was right when he said that 'the character is not made by but for the individual.' If you put me in bad circumstances, you make me a bad man. If you ensnare me, I learn to rejoice in slavery. If you treat me brutally, you encourage brutality in my nature, and I act brutally to you. If in this land, which naturally belongs to all you who live upon it, you give me a special privilege to the ownership of this land, you make me a tyrant, and I cannot help but act a tyrant; and you make yourselves my serfs and cowardly crying curs willing to lick my feet in truly slave-like fashion, that I may graciously afford you permit to till on the land I have deprived you of. Then you hate me, because I am your master; and I hate you because you are my slave. We pretend to love each other to win each other's favors, but in our hearts we love one another and yet the other with suspicion and mistrust. So it is throughout all society. All true morality is forbidden by the laws under which we are associated. The landlord, despite his higher sentiments of love and justice, must rack the rents from his starving toilers lest he become a toiler and wear out his life's blood for others. The remorseless usurer must stifle his conscience, and forge the yoke of Mammon round the neck of the proletaire that he may exhort, by interest, the product of their toil. Let no device perform that endless, fruitless toil himself. The legislator, offered bribes of wealth and power, dare not be true to manhood and refuse such bribes, lest he lose all his power and join the toiling proletaires who waste their wretched lives in others' gain. No, friends, we have fought on wrong lines. We have hoped to achieve fraternity by creating bitter antipathy. Our preachers have called on men to be honorable, while supporting all the institutions which compel us to be dishonorable. Every so-called 'revolution' has been a failure, because all the evil conditions were allowed to remain and new tyrants were created out of old institutions. The cannibal, with his chiefs and warriors, makes war upon his brother cannibal and eats him. The civilized man, with his rulers and their subordinates, makes war also upon his civilized brother, and he too devours him, but he devours him with the law instead of with his teeth. All those men—cannibal or civilized—are the creatures of their conditions, the victims of power and plunder. But, fortunately for the human race, there are exceptions to the general rule of mutual theft and destruction. The Donkshoors, the Masinkeys, the Veddas, and others who lack our civilized customs of law and disorder, have shown us that man is moral when the conditions of his existence are such as necessitate morality. They have shown us that when man lives on his own efforts instead of on his neighbor, that he daily enjoys the noble virtues of universal friendship, health and contentment that we only dream of; and that they who have no laws over them are 'a law unto themselves,' and that self-instructing law invariably teaches them that as
"Do you permit a visitor to speak?" he asked.

"Certainly," replied the chairman, "come to the platform."

The elderly gentleman lost no time in doing as requested.

"Friends," said he, "for I feel I must address you thus, although an utter stranger--I have listened attentively to the able and thoughtful speech of the young man who has just spoken, and I must say he deserves more than credit for it—he fully deserves to have his wish fulfilled (applause). I may tell you that I have gone through the scenes he has spoken of, and although I never before heard of McGullich's work on the subject, I can assure you the conditions of society in those days, and the hopes and aspirations of the people, were just as he has described them.

Although I have been in the city for three weeks in your city, I can see that no change has occurred in the past fifteen years for which you need be grateful. Certainly the buildings have become more stupendous, and the luxury of the few is more like that of an Eastern monarch than what the plutocracy of Melbourne enjoyed before; but the conditions of life are no better—in fact, they are actually worse than I then knew them. I told you I have been roaming through your streets for the past few weeks, but do not think I come from any other city, for I have been all these years an inmate of your jail, having been incarcerated there for complicity in the riots."

"But you are not Holdfast?" asked the chairman.

"Yes, Sir, I used to be well known as Harry Holdfast, although I don't suppose I 'carried my years' quite so well in confinement as I might have done with proper air and sunshine. The authorities have released me, as my conduct appears to have satisfied them; though I understand they did it as quietly as possible to prevent any demonstration on the part of the public, and that is why I have not found you before. However, here I am. And now I wish to say that all the time I have been confined I have brooded over this awful problem of the struggle between Labor and Monopoly, and while coming to the same conclusions as the brilliant son of my poor old friend, Treadway, I have found what I am sure is the true solution. Therefore, if you will grant me a little time, I will be very glad to explain it to you, so that I can help you to give the desired application to Treadway's principles, and assist you by devoting my remaining days to the glorious cause of labor's emancipation (applause). You all realize that the great trouble now is that the few are very rich, and the many very poor; and you also know that the wealthy are rich out of the legal robbery of the others whom they thus impoverish. Of course, you know how this comes about. The world is monopolized in the hands of the few, and the governments of the world exist to secure them in that monopoly. All the great masses outside of that monopoly thus become the unwilling slaves to the favored monopolists. Of course they want to live; but to do so they must work. They can't work in the air, so they turn to the land. But instantly the landlord catches them and tells them it is his land, and if they want to use it they must give him a part of their produce from that land for the privilege of using it. Of course, they can't do without it; so they give him what he asks.

That is the first step in the plunder of the workers, and we call it rent. Then when the worker wants to exchange the surplus part of that product, over and above what he consumes and gives to his landlord, for the surplus product of someone else, he has to do so through a legal medium, which we call money. This of course he has to borrow from the privileged monopolists who are chartered by the landlord government to issue it. But they demand that when he pays it back, in a given time, he shall repay more than he borrowed. This extortion is the next burden on the laborer, and they call it interest, or usury. Of course, he can't pay more than he borrows, though he agrees to; and so somehow the banker, who lent him the money, metaphorically gobbles him up, robs him of all he has got and makes him a pauper, when he will perhaps finish by imprisoning him for vagrancy. Then the officers, who run this landlords' and bankers' government, want paying, as they are not producers themselves, and that makes another big hole in the worker's product, which we call taxation. But that is not all. A man can't work on land unless he has tools. So if he is only a worker, with nothing but his arms, he goes to one of the fortunate possessors of the money (which alone buys the monopolized lands and tools), and he asks him to let him use those tools. This the employer agrees to do provided he gives him another large slice out of his product, which of course the worker does, and we call that loss the profit. The little slice that now remains to the worker we call his wages; it is sometimes so small that it takes a powerful economic microscope to find it (laughter). Now here is the way such an unjust system operates. You go to work for a man, and in a given time produce an article, say a suit of clothes, which he offers to sell you for $21. But he only gives you $1 for your labor in producing it. So you produce five more suits before you can afford to buy one, which you then do. You have now a suit, and he has five, one of which he uses himself. But you want to buy something else, so you ask him to let you make more suits, as you want to earn more money. But he tells you he can't till you buy the four that he has got by him. And so you are thrown out of work. He calls this 'overproduction,' and you call yourself 'unemployed.' All the workers under our present slave system are in exactly the same position; and although there is a division of labor and a distribution of products it doesn't alter the relations between employer and employee a bit, but leaves them just as I have described them. Now you see that if you got the full $2 for making that suit, you could have bought it at once, and all this trouble would have been avoided; you would have remained at work making another to exchange with someone else; your employer would have had to make his own instead of being idle; and everyone else would be doing the same, and we would never have depressions or riots, excessive wealth or poverty, but would all be happy and prosperous men like the Masuhers that Treadway told us about. Now, if you will help me, I will show you how we can do it, and thereby earn the gratitude of our fellowmen and better our own condition. If you are agreeable I will fully explain the whole thing to you at another meeting when you have more time, so that you can fully understand it, and be prepared to help me in
my efforts to emancipate the workers of Melbourne and the whole civilized world."

Immediately that Harry had done speaking, the meeting burst out in
furious applause; all the etiquette of public meetings was forgotten, and
nearly all rushed forward to greet the veteran "agitator," with a warmth
of handshaking that would have made one think they had been intimate
friends of years' standing instead of a few minutes.

It was decided that the next week's meeting should be devoted to Hold-
fast's lecture.

"One thing more before I go," said Holdfast. "Can you tell me the
present address of Miss Hypatia Stephens?" asked Harry.

No one could tell him, but some of them thought she had gone to
Bennah in a situation as general servant. She was rather well known,
although taking little part in public affairs, and had not been heard of for
over twelve months.

Harry went away, thanking them sincerely for their cordial reception
and their friendly intentions. But he thought of his poor lost Hypatia;
and he felt sad. Where could she be? Why was she not near the jail
when he was released? And now that he had been a free (?) man for a
fortnight why had he heard nothing from her in the meantime? Perhaps,
thought he, she is dead; she would not be silent otherwise. And with
this cruel thought racking his brain, he sought the establishment wherein he
lodged and tried to forget his dear one in slumber. But sleep had forsaken
him; and the poor fellow laid in his bed in a mental agony more severe
than any he had experienced during his long imprisonment. He had faced
the world's torture all these years, only to find his life's hope gone!

XII.

"I think I have seen your face before!"

"And I think I remember your's!"

The speakers were Harry Holdfast and a gentleman he had met in the
street a few days after the evening of Trenday's lecture. The two had
looked steadfastly into each other's face while passing, and their eyes
met and a mutual glance of recognition had prompted the above remarks.

"Might I ask you your name?"

"Certainly. My name is Holdfast-Harry Holdfast. And yours?"

"Frederick Wilberforce, your old friend and co-worker. Dear me, to
think I should meet you again! But how you have changed! It can't
be twenty years since I last saw you, and yet you look like an old man.
Where are you living?"

"Living? Well, I suppose it's living. I am trying to exist at
Fillenump's Restaurant, where I get a shilling a week, besides board and
lodging, such as it is, for doing all sorts of odd work and helping in the
kitchen."

"Come along with me, then; I'll find something better for you than
that."

Harry, after a short conversation on the matter, willingly agreed to go
along with his old friend, being careful, however, to deliver the letter with
which he had been sent by his employer before going to Wilberforce's.
Arrived there, he wrote out a short note to Mr. Fillenump, telling him he
would not hold his situation any longer, as he had found one more
suitable, and he would forfeit the week's wages due to him.

Wilberforce's place was a really comfortable one for Harry to be in.
It was a nice roomy house, with plenty of accommodation for a few visi-
tors, and adjoining it was a large hay and corn store, of which Fred was
the sole proprietor, and which was doing a very large business indeed.

"And now, Harry, tell me a little of how you have been getting on all
these years. I have often thought of you, and wondered whether I
would ever see you again; and now that you are here, I long to know all
about you."

"All I can tell you is very little, Fred. A prisoner's life is very much
like that of any other prisoner, and the fact of his being a political
offender falsely charged with crime does not cause him to be treated
otherwise than as an actual criminal. One thing, however, was in my
favor, and of course distinguished me from the exact treatment of a
criminal: I commanded the respect of the individuals in immediate
authority over me, and was as kindly treated by them as they dared let
me be. I took every opportunity to explain to them my true position,
and I know they were really sorry for me. One of them told me he often
felt the falsity of his own position, and realized that while he was there to
assist in keeping the criminal elements of society under subjection that he
knew many who were detained there were not really as bad as the majority
who still enjoyed their freedom, while the greatest villains of all enjoyed
their freedom. He could not see how we could do without jails, but he
thought we might almost be as well without them when scores of legislators
and plutocrats were allowed to rob the struggling masses by fraudulently
conducting bogus building societies, banks, and other financing institu-
tions with impunity, and rarely paid the penalty of their roguery, because
they had a mutual understanding to protect each other against legal pros-
secution when any of them were detected by the public. But, Fred, I can
tell you about all this sort of thing any other time. I am longing to know
how all my old friends are getting on. Can you tell me anything about
them?"

"Well, of course you know about your widowed mother?"

"Yes, I learned that she died of a broken heart shortly after my sen-
tence, and just before my final imprisonment. What became of my
brother John?"

"I believe he went to America about twelve years ago. He couldn't
make much of a living here, and he gave the place up in disgust, and has
settled I believe in San Francisco. He told me just before his departure
that he did not think the Melbourne people deserved to have a 'decent
person stopping in their midst; they appeared to like being plundered,
and therefore should have what they liked. He wasn't going to waste his
life for them as his foolish brother had done."
"Yes, that's the way he be used to rebuke me," responded Harry, "he was always saying I should not meddle with the business of other people, and prophesying that I would get into trouble over it. He turned out right in his prophecy, unfortunately, though his stupid idea of non-interference with wrong never improved him or anybody else who held it."

"But surely, after your recent experiences, you agree with the principle of not interfering with another's liberty, don't you?"

"Certainly I do. But can't you see that interfering with another's liberty, and interfering with another's slavery, are two very different things? The laissez faire doctrine is a very good thing if rightly understood; it simply means that each individual should be let alone to follow out his own natural desires to satisfy his wants by his own efforts. And I like to see a man exercising that right. But when he won't stop there, but demands that he be let alone when oppressing or exploiting others, it's time we interfered. That man's victim requires to be let alone just as much as the other fellow, and it is to our mutual self-interest to see that he is left alone. Laissez faire isn't a one-sided virtue; but to become a living principle, it must be universal in its application. When the authorities imprisoned me they destroyed that principle, because I was not limiting the liberty of others and wrongly losing my own. Had I limited others' liberty, by legal or illegal means (it is immaterial which) I should then have been a destroyer of that principle of non-interference, and society to preserve itself would be justified in removing me out of harm's way."

"But the capitalist and the legislator do not directly interfere with the liberty of the proletaire, who are free to work for an employer or not, as they choose."

"No, Fred, they are not free to do anything of the kind; they are compelled by unjust conditions to do so—not by their own free choice. The old Socialist cry of 'Freedom of Contract,' which the plutocrats have tried to appropriate, expresses the true idea of economic freedom. Your own success in business is obscuring your sense of justice, as it does so many others, and in endeavouring to vindicate your well-deserved efforts at success under unjust conditions, you make the common mistake of endeavouring to vindicate those conditions; instead of stopping short after having vindicated your efforts to subsist, and then honestly condemning the conditions through which you successfully struggled. Every landlord, every usurer (or banker, if you prefer the word), and every other parasite on labor is justified in his success under our present exploitive system; just as every proletarian is equally justified with his poverty under that system. But landlordism, usury, and all other forms of exploitation and restriction, are unjustifiable. It is the system that is wrong, not the men who suffer or succeed beneath that system. Society has forbidden you to live in the full enjoyment of your own efforts and has enacted in all its Statute Books a new commandment, 'THOU SHALT ROB OR BE ROBBED,' and you have succeeded in leaving the robbed classes and in joining the robbers. You have done your best, and merits your success. 'Society has done its worst, and merits the undying hatred of both you and me—the parasite and the proletaire.'"
lature. This extended his popularity. The other members of the House, having now an interest in common with his own, supported him in any measure he brought forward, no matter how daringly oppressive it might be. Even this did not cause him to lose the confidence of the proletariat. For, even time that he was depressed, as the inevitable results of his financial undertakings, he would organize charitable societies to distribute relief and handsomely contribute to their funds a few thousand pounds out of the hundreds of thousands of pounds which he had robbed from the workers by means of those undertakings. Honors continued to shower upon him, and he got the title of Sir Felix Slynor which he now holds. That mansion which you saw first round the corner is his city office; but he has far more delightful residences in different parts of the country, each of which is connected with the city by a line of railway, constructed, in most cases, specially for him. His wealth was greatly augmented by the old friend (?) Gregory Grindall, who, on his demise about nine years ago, bequeathed to him nearly all his possessions on account of services performed.

"And is Slynor happy with all this luxury?"

"Well, that's a funny question to ask, and one I really can't answer. I know he has tremendous worry with it all, and is in constant danger from the number of starving tramps who are always threatening to take his life. But I think he's happier than he would have been in jail as you have been."

"But not as happy as he might have been living in a state of social justice and freedom."

"Perhaps not."

"But, Fred, you have told me about the others, and yet I have not heard you say anything about Hypatia Stephen. Where is she?"

"Ah, poor fellow, I understand your anxiety. I think I can set your mind at rest on that score."

"I hope she is all right?"

"Yes. I hope so, and have every reason to think she is. As you know, we have always been intimate friends, and although you did unintentionally cross my path in our affections, I have never let that interfere in the relations between us. Hypatia has often been in my company, and she generally spoke of you and longed for the day when she should again behold you. Having no parents, or other relations, and being boycotted by strangers owing to her confessed sympathies with the workers, she was unable to get employment here, and I assisted her in going to Sydney. I would have liked her to stop with me and assist me in the business I was working up. But she thought as I was a bachelor and she a spinster it would be better for her to go elsewhere among strangers; not that she feared the scandal of little-talking society, as you know, but she contended that human nature was human nature, and that it would require too strong a resolution on the part of both of us if she were to remain true to the pledge she had given you. I tried to dissuade her from going away at the time; but I think it is as well that she did do so, for I confess that I still cherish the old regard for her, and if our relations had become more intimate it would certainly have caused unpleasant relations between you and me, perhaps between her and yourself, and very likely even between Hypatia and myself. Marriage is not a very satisfactory institution. The evils is often occasions are easier done than undone. Love has no difficulty in uniting us with our eyes shut, but Reason can't always save us when our eyes are opened. Hypatia, as you know, holds very strict and somewhat unpopular views on the marital relations, which she looks upon as the necessary outcome of our present system of industrial slavery, and totally incompatible with the dignity of a true woman who should never enter into what she calls sexual slavery. So she had her own way, as I have told you, and went to Sydney, where she got a quiet situation as housekeeper. Here is her address. Shall I write her to return at once?"

"Do, Fred; and tell her to come immediately."

Fred wrote the following message—Return immediately. Holdfast waiting here. Pay all expenses. Call Bank at Australia, Sydney, for money. Fred sent a messenger to the telegraph office, and then went to the bank and got them to telegraph twenty pounds to Sydney.

When Fred returned, he began to initiate Harry into the mysteries of a hay and corn business, and the latter recounted his past experiences while performing the light work set him.

XIII.

Thursday had arrived, and Harry was that evening to propound his scheme of social salvation. But, although the day had far advanced, Hypatia had not arrived, nor had any word come from her. He had hoped to see her before the meeting, but there would be no train in till late at night, so he decided to lose no more time but prepared for the meeting.

Fred had agreed to go with him that evening, although he had not been in the habit of frequenting the socialists' meetings for several years past; and after they had taken tea, the two went out together to the rooms of the Brotherhood.

On arriving at the hall, Harry found it yet wanted half an hour to the time when they would commence the proceedings, so he filled the time looking around the place, and reading the numerous labor newspapers from all parts of the world that were hung round the walls. Taking down a copy of the London Revolutionist, his eye caught the following:—"Our comrades in Manchester, finding the co-operative schemes a failure, so far as the improvement of the workers are concerned, are taking important measures to force on a better state of affairs. They are now carrying on a rigorous campaign against the payment of rent, and are calling on all the workers to inaugurata a universal strike, when they will quietly seize all the machinery and produce in the factories and mines and start to work for themselves, offering to let the proprietors join them in the undertaking provided they do their share of the work and accept an equal share.
of the common product along with the rest. There are already half the tenants of the houses in that town positively refusing to pay their rents, which they have not the means to pay even if they desired to do so; and they are readily joining in the grand campaign. We wish our comrades every success. If the other industrial centres imitate their example we will soon accomplish the Social Revolution.

"What do you think of that?" said Harry, showing the paragraph to Fred.

"I think it disgraceful," replied Fred.

"I don't," said Harry, "I think it foolish."

It was now time to commence, and the chairman called the meeting to order. He said he was glad to see the hall so packed; it showed respect to a worthy veteran (applause), and also showed they appreciated an earnest attempt to end the present social injustice (renewed applause). He had to announce that, at the request of the lecturer, a new departure would be made in the conduct of the meeting: instead of the usual debate at the close, members of the audience would be invited to interject pertinent questions throughout the discourse, so as to clear up the subject and create a thorough understanding of the lecturer's methods. Before introducing the lecturer, he would ask the whole audience to join in singing the "Anthem of Labor."

THE ANTHEM OF LABOR.

In the good old days when the Roman power
Held sway o'er the human race,
And the working millions like oxen toiled
In sorrow and disguise,
The wise men of that day did say
Men should rule the earth for ever;
But Slavery's day has since passed away
To return no longer to the cruel.

CHORUS.—For Labor shall be free; yes, Labor shall be free;
In spite of Mammon's cruel thefts—
In spite of Law's decree—
We'll yet make Labor free—we'll yet make Labor free,
Over all the world we'll brothers be,
And Labor shall be free!

But, alas, from the ashes of slavery rose
The lords in their Feudal might,
Reducing to serfdom the laboring throngs,
And seizing the land as their right,
But the Feudal barons and their castles strong
Are relics of the past;
And the worker's no longer sold with his hand—
He strives to be free at last.

CHORUS.—For Labor, etc.

But alas for the day that saw Capital reign
With Labor prostrate at its feet;
The insolent few overburdened with wealth,
While labor has nothing to eat.
The worker is free! yes, free to starve,

CHORUS.—For Labor, etc.

Or work as a tyrant's call?
The gold of the idle has bought the whole world:
The worker has nothing at all.

CHORUS.—For Labor, etc.

Then hail to the day when the worker shall say:
"The world by our feet is mine;"
The wealth in your hands is the fruit of my toil;
"Restore it—it is not thine;"
The coal and the metals I bring from the mine;
The engines I make with my brain;
The houses I have built, and the clothing I weave
"Are all part of Labor's domain!"

CHORUS.—For Labor, etc.

And here's a health to all who toll
In this and every land;
Who'er they be, where'er they roam,
We stretch a friendly hand.
We know no race, nor creed, nor clan;
We fear not Russ or Turk:
The only one whom Labor fears
Are they who will not work.

CHORUS.—For Labor, etc.

When the audience had finished singing, the chairman reminded them of his previous announcement, and called on Harry Holdast to give his promised address on the all-important question, "How You and I Can Emancipate the Workers."

When the deeming applause, that followed on chairman's remarks had subsided, Harry proceeded as follows:

"I intend to-night, friends, to convey to you the thoughts that I have evolved during fifteen years' confinement in your jail. During the whole of that time I have never ceased to think of the unhappy conditions of those outside it, and to work out some method by which I could end those conditions if I ever became liberated. At last I have matured my plan, and to-night I shall lay them before you before I carry them out (applause). Understand, I am going to ask you to help me, and I want every one of you here to lend me a hand; but if you don't—if not one of you assist me, I shall go on carrying it out all the same, and seeking the assistance of more willing co-operators (applause). I will presume that you have realized already that government will do nothing for you, that philanthropy can't afford to do anything for you, and that you need expect no wealth or power outside of your own selves to emancipate you; but that you are resolved on working out your own salvation (hear, hear). I will also presume that you have seen through the fallacious methods of your trades unions, which never alter the false relations existing between employer and employee, but allow them to continue—set the worker to fighting his master instead of dispensing with his master; and which accomplish nothing but futile strikes which always in the end succeed in striking the strikers while the master waits his time and then puts on the screw tighter when defeated labor comes begging for the right to toil. It is
interchanges of commodity with each other? Certainly not; for in many cases that interchange was entirely spontaneous and unregulated, and in others it was successfully directed by a labor-note system that gave results quite the reverse of the pauperizing monetary system that we are suffering under. Then what were the causes of their failure? Let us find them, then we may not fail also, but may take advantage of their example by imitating their successes but avoiding their stumble. If we study their history, we soon find that their successes were due to the fact that they freed the lands, gave employment to the labor upon it, worked with their own machinery instead of the machinery of others, and rendered themselves dependent upon the product of their own labor instead of upon the money belonging to the owner. And their failures we find were due to the fact that they freely made the products of the individual labors the common property of all, whether they assisted in the creation of these products or not, and utterly regardless of the amount of exertion each individual put forth in their creation; some failed because the land they were throwing open to the free use of all their members was not out of the monopolist's grip before they commenced to use it, and they had to relinquish it to the cruel mortgagees, with all the improvements they had placed upon it; others failed because although they had the land, and perhaps had paid for it, they had not the means to work that land properly, but like many a poor struggling farmer they lack sufficient means to 'hang out' until the crops begin to ripen and the harvest comes to reward their patient till; or they have means too small to tide over famines, droughts, fires, or other calamities; and others yet again failed because they were overburdened with authority, hemmed in by laws, regulations, and restrictions, imposed upon men who knew little of the requirements of hard pioneering life by others who knew still less of those requirements, and who unintentionally only brought about the very misery and poverty that existed in the old exploitative society from which they had just fled. Now, friends, I propose that you assist me to imitate their successes, and avoid their failure, by the following, you may be able to do. Club together a stated sum each, say ten shillings. If there are a hundred of you that means fifty pounds; a thousand of you, five hundred pounds; and ten thousand of you, five thousand pounds. Now that five thousand pounds employed in securing you what I have suggested would do more good than five hundred thousands of pounds employed in charity, or government relief works (hear, hear). After that you can pay a small sum every week, say a shilling, until you have paid up some five or ten pounds each. Now that isn't much to pay to secure your emancipation, is it? You'd think nothing of paying a hundred pounds through a building society for a house and land, and a poor one at that. And yet that small ten pounds will gain you not only a house and land free of all liabilities, but it will find you capital to work it, and sufficient food and clothing for you to carry on with until you become absolutely independent. And here is how you go about it. You have clubbed together say the five thousand pounds. With some of that you buy enough land somewhere in the country, and decide amongst yourselves by ballot who shall first go and live on it. You don't need to all
go on it once, as they did in the experiments I have told you of, because you'd soon come back again as they did. You wouldn't have enough means to live on. But suppose you sent a hundred of your number. Let them take plenty of tents, food, seed, live stock, and all the other things they require with them. You can easily do this, because you have plenty of means. Now there is already a hundred of you on your own lands and out of the crowded city—a hundred less proletaires to compete at the capitalist's feet for a starvation wage. Well you continue to supply them with food, week after week, while they are up there; it doesn't cost much to live rent free in the country, and your united capital can easily do it without diminishing much. While you are finding these commodities for them, they are doing their share towards sustaining you. They are building little houses away up there, so that they can live in them instead of the tents; and they are also building others for you; they also dig and prepare the ground so that fruit and vegetables may be planted in it to sustain you and them in the near future, and they erect sheds for the cattle and poultry. After a while, they begin to get 'the house' ready, as we would say; and you ballot to select a few more pioneers to go and help them. You might this time send their wives and sweethearts; because you know no community will hold together long if there are no sweethearts there (laughter), the men would soon return to the city with all their sorrows, rather than suffer country bachelordom. Then you gradually send more and more of your numbers up there, according to your means, which are constantly being increased by your own money contributions, and buy more and more land as you require it. And now you will begin to see the advantage of securing this surplus product that I was telling you about—the big profit that the capitalist appropriates out of your labor. Some of your crops begin to come up, your poultry begins to supply you with eggs, your cows to give milk, and so on. And your friends in the city send all these things, over and above what they require for their own food, to you for you to sell in Melbourne. You accordingly dispose of it, and the money realized goes to swell your fund which had been somewhat decreased by the purchases of land and the settlement of your members upon it. As time goes on this surplus product gets more and more in proportion; your few dozen head of poultry will have increased to hundreds, and then to thousands; your few shillings' worth of seeds will have grown to loads of grain and vegetables, and will also have furnished you with thousands of times as many seeds as you started with; your cattle will have multiplied from dozens to hundreds; and your exports will be increasing every year. This prolific increase of nature, which is to be the principal agency by which you were impoverished because it did not belong to you, becomes the means by which you all get wealthy now that it does belong to you. You soon have realized so much by the sale of your growing surplus product that you can easily buy more land than you need; you can send your remaining members in larger batches to colonize, and can buy them costlier and more efficient machinery. And you can keep on doing this until one after another, member after member has gone up to assist in the pioneering work, until at last the whole of you have been absorbed in it, and not one of you remains in Melbourne to struggle with each other for a bare crust of bread."

"I would like to ask the lecturer what chance there is of a body of men succeeding as he has so graphically described when we know very well that individual farmers, with far greater means, are always coming to grief. If these pioneers got fairly started, there is no doubt they might succeed as he says. But the thing is for them to start. Many a farmer might make a successful start; but when the crops fail him, or a drought comes, or his goods do not realize sufficient in the market to pay him, he is compelled to mortgage his little farm to raise sufficient money to tide over his difficulties. But even then he generally loses it. What would these people in your scheme do under such circumstances?"

"In the first place," responded Harry, "there wouldn't be such circumstances. It would be impossible. The individual farmer, who has to struggle along unaided is in a very different position to the co-operative pioneers I have been describing. If she farmer comes to grief when his crop fails, it is because he is dependent on those crops to pay his rent or the interest on his loans, or to purchase the food he cannot produce; but these pioneers have no rent to pay at all, no interest to meet, and no food to buy, because those remaining behind are sending them a sufficient supply from the city every week to keep them going. It doesn't matter to them if not one of their crops came up for six months, or not one cow gave milk, or not one hen laid a single egg; because their supplies are guaranteed and forwarded to them regularly; and while the farmer is starving because a drought has set in, and he cannot afford to employ labor to irrigate his lands, or the markets are not realizing a price sufficient to pay him properly, the pioneers are irrigating their own lands, instead of recking their brains to find out how to set others to do it, and the prices their commodities are fetching in the market concerns them very little, because they don't depend upon it for their living, and the smallest fraction it brings them in is a fraction more towards the accumulation of the mutual capital which is to free them from the dependence on the capital belonging to the outside capitalist and to ultimately employ every one of their members in the same manner. Now I have shown you briefly how the collected money of the members will act in finding them employment, in providing them with capital, in the form of machinery, seed, live stock &c., in providing them with homes, and in drawing them out of the city of exploitation and into a newer city or village of freedom. You see they have no swindling building society to gorge them up, no rent collector to worry them, no grinding lease to pay, because they have paid for their lands in full already. But they have now to guard against the evils of the present property system cropping up again in their midst, and they do so by not permitting anyone to monopolise land to another's detriment, nor to charge another for the use of any lands they may be using or desirous of using, but according to the constitution adopted by them all, and incorporated in the registered deeds of their association, they are legally and morally bound to recognize no other title but the »wurflat. That is to say, every individual has the right to certain land only because he is using..."
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it; he is only entitled to the exact area that he is using; and he has only a claim upon it while he is using it. The instant he ceases to use any part of it, he ceases to have any right to possess that part. That is the only just system of holding and working land. It is the natural land law that existed before the world was ever cursed with statute law; and it is the law which will live and be recognised in society when all our statute law are forgotten.”

But won’t some greedy fellows take more land than others, while the rest will not have enough?” asked someone. “You can’t expect to have people taken out of the city, and possessing all the greedy riches of city life—you can’t expect to have these people acting justly towards each other, and only taking a fair share of the land. Now if everyone had a certain allotment given entirely to him, or leased to him by the society, or even gratuitously allotted to him, it would prevent all the land scrambling that would be bound to exist if all the places were a sort of ‘no-man’s-land.' If you didn’t want to have the members always going to the courts to redress their grievances, and all the old troubles would be repeated.”

“Not so fast,” replied Harry, “not so fast, my friend. Do not confuse up thoughts of legal warfare amongst the members, because it would be one of the last things they would be likely to seek. Nobody seeks anything unless he sees, or fancies he sees, some advantage in it; and no sensible person appeals to the law when he thinks he can settle a thing without it.

Lord Bacon wisely advised that ‘everyone should have enough of the law to keep out of it;’ and most people soon learn from experience that Bacon’s advice is the best. But still, under present conditions, it is sometimes wise to have recourse to the law, because we are living in a world ruled by robbers, and law is the only weapon these robbers permit us to use to get our battles. But with these pioneers the case is entirely different. Their circumstances are just the reverse to ours. The questioner and myself, for instance, are not likely to quarrel over the use of the air in this hall which we both require for the purpose of respiration. He doesn’t say, ‘Holld Iraq, you’re breathing too much air, there won’t be enough for me if you persist in breathing so hard and consuming some of my share of the oxygen’ (laugh). You laugh, friends, but the illustration I have made is no mere grotesque than the one my questioner has put to me. Why don’t you object to my consuming so much of the air, which is equally essential to all of you as it is the land? ('Because there is plenty for all.”) Not at all; there is plenty of land for all, and apparently more than enough for all the inhabitants that the world is ever likely to contain (bear, bear). So you see there is some other reason why you don’t growl at the quantity of air I use. I’ll tell you what it is. It’s because the air isn’t monopolised as the earth is. The capitalists haven’t yet found out how to bottle it up and charge us for the use of it; they don’t know how to secure it, or they’d have sold it to us at the rate of so much per cubic acre, and leased it to us according to law, while those who don’t have money would have to die for want of breath, just as they now do for want of land. The unfortunate occupants of the Black Hole of Calcutta would have given all their worldly possessions to have had good pure air to breathe there, so that their lives could have been spared; and it would be just so with us, were the air monopolised; we would willingly pay the monopolists’ own price for the use of the air, just as we now pay his price for the use of the land. But with our pioneers it is very different. The land with them is as free as the air with us. It costs nothing to use it, so no one has any incentive to monopolise it from another who also requires to use it, because he could get nothing from that other for the loan of it even if he wanted to. It is only because the land has become monopolised and transformed into a marketable commodity, that we try to secure more of it than we need. When it ceased to have that market value, and becomes valueless in a financial sense, we take good care not to have more than we can just use ourselves. The Bethel community, who owned their land in common, but used it individually, never had any dispute about the area each one should occupy. Each member, or his family, had their own little house, and there wasn’t even a fence round it. You couldn’t tell where one man’s ground ended, and another man’s commenced. If you did see a little enclosure here and there, you found it was one to keep the fowls in so that they wouldn’t destroy the crops; or it was one to protect certain vegetable growths from different animals who roamed about and might destroy them; or for some similar reason. But there wasn’t any fence to say which was my land and which was your’s. If ever we see a fence round some land, we know it is a sort of public notice to say ‘This land’s mine;’ but you see the land of our pioneers, like the land of the Bethel people, is nobody’s, so they don’t want any fence round it to say whose it is. And they wouldn’t quarrel over it, any more than they would need to fence it from each other. The Bethel people were happy, contented and prosperous; and although they had not the perfect social organization that might be desired, their system of using the land gave every satisfaction that could be desired, and showed to all who want to live a noble life, where there are no such things as landed proprietors and rack-rented tenants, that that life can only be sustained when the land is as free as the air, and no one has the right to own any of it, but each one has the right to use just as much as he requires. Now that is the grand lesson that Commuanism has taught us—that the natural resources of nature should be absolutely free to all. That is the lesson to be learned from its successes. But we know that all experiments in communism have sooner or later failed, and we have to learn the reason of its failure. Commuanism did good when it secured the common use of natural wealth produced by the efforts of human labor; but it did harm when it secured the common use of artificial wealth produced by the efforts of human labor. That is the rock on which communism has always foun-dered and which its unfortunate wrecked crews have forsaken, preferring to struggle in the maelstrom of capitalism. Many a good endeavor has been spoilt owing to this one serious economic defect, many a brilliant enthusiast has been turned into a disheartened pessimist through witnessing the failure that inevitably follows such a rash denial of the right of the worker—the right to the product of his own work. If Labor is to
rejoice in its labor, it must reap the full rewards of its labor. It must have the whole of what it produces—nothing more, nothing less. It must not share with the capitalist, as in capitalism; it must not share with the community, as in communism. Because in every community there are apt to be some idlers; and the only way to create idlers is by making it possible for an idler to live—a thing he can only do at the expense of the worker. Thus it is that in the communist experiments, the hard-worker has had to see the non-worker enjoying the fruits of others’ toil because he did not toil himself; and so it has invariably come to pass that the most vigorous, the most intelligent, and the most industrious members have one after another forsaken these communities, and only the few enthusiasts along with the laziest and most unprincipled have been left in possession, until they eventually came to grief. Now it is very easy to secure this private possession of product, simultaneously with the free access to nature that necessarily precedes it. And the doing of this is what is rightly called ‘co-operation.’ Of course, we know that what is often called co-operation is only so in name, but is in reality stock-jobbing, dividend hunting, or respectable usury. True co-operation precludes dividends, profits, or interest. True co-operation is that form of laboring in which each works with the other for mutual benefit, not for mutual plunder; where each gets the full equivalent of what he produces; and where each sells his surplus product for its real worth—that is to say, that he sells it for just what it costs him in labor, receiving in exchange the equivalent in what it cost another in labor for his commodity. That is the true individualism—it is that individualism which exalts the individuality of the laborer to the highest possible point, by making him a truly independent man, one living entirely by his own labor and not living in any degree on the labors of others; it is that individualism which makes him a real sovereign over his own individuality, and a worthy being to associate with others, equally elevated to the same social, economical, and moral level. It is not the ‘individualism’ that the capitalist talks and boasts about—the individualism of the few only that rejoices in and lives upon the suppression of the individualism of the many; that isn’t individualism at all—it’s only domination. The present system isn’t individualistic; it’s exploitative.

We live on each other instead of each one living on himself; and it’s only those who succeed in living on plenty of others who ever get wealthy; no man ever got enormously wealthy out of his own efforts, but only by enslaving others and living upon them. But these pioneers couldn’t possibly do this. Each one can only get what he makes by his own exertions, so he can’t become a millionaire or a pauper; but he would earn about twelve pounds a week, when his city brethren would be earning only two pounds for doing the same thing and the ‘sweating’ capitalist who employs them would be getting two or three hundred pounds a week out of his fifty or a hundred hands. And there’s another thing these pioneers can do when they get fairly started—they can commence making their own money. I don’t mean lending gold out to others and robbing the borrowers of more than they borrowed; that’s called making money, but it isn’t anything of the kind: it’s only a polite way of legally robbing money. I mean they can commence making labor money, not plutocrats’ money—money that represents product created by labor, not money that represents the mines that the usurers have stolen from the laborers by their wicked schemes of law and disorder. I mean the money that Robert Owen used to issue, that Josiah Warren used to issue, and that Proudhon and all the other great champions of the working classes have tried to introduce as the laborers’ substitute for the plutocrats’ gold. These pioneers can easily make a paper money to give to any member who raises a certain product and deposits it with them for sale. It’s a sort of I.O.U., that the receiver gives to the producer to record his indebtedness to the producer. This Labor I.O.U., or Labor-note as it is called, can pass from one to another just as the plutocrat’s money does to-day; and, so far as the pioneers are concerned, it can take its place. It’s just the thing that Labor wants; it helps us to exchange our product with each other, by giving equal value for equal value; it doesn’t cost anything to make, beyond the trivial cost of paper, ink, and labor, of which it takes but very little to produce; it can’t rob us as gold does, because it doesn’t bear interest. ‘Bearing’ interest you know, is the polite name for exaction interest; because money hasn’t the power to reproduce its species, as animals and plants do, but it only gains for some that which others have lost.

Now I think I have shown you the nature of the undertaking that I had resolved upon when I got released from your jail; and I think I have said enough to show you that it is the readiest, if not the only way, to secure justice, not alone for ourselves, but for all our fellow-men, women and children. Before concluding, I shall give you a number of facts and figures to show how I have worked it all out; and to let you see that the scheme is not at all utopian; but that, with your present means, it will enable you to amass, step by step, all the wealth and advantages that I have described to you, and a great deal more than I could tell you in a single lecture.

Harry then went on to lay his facts and figures before them, showing the every possible and likely transaction that the pioneers could engage in, and showing them, week by week, and month by month, how their little share capital would be spent and what returns it would give. He wanted for the accuracy of the figures, which everyone could test for themselves. He had canvassed the various technical and industrial works in the Melbourne Public Library, besides gleaning valuable information from the current newspapers and many practical men both in business and private capacities; and therefore he could speak with authority on the matter.

When Harry had ceased speaking, he was greeted with round upon round of applause, nearly everyone present taking part in it, although the audience was a very mixed one, and there were many present, tempted thither by curiosity, who felt anything but comfortable at the cutting thrusts they received every now and then from Harry’s remarks, especially when he trod too severely on their corns of conscience and charged them with being thieves. But somehow they seemed to recognize that his sentences, though severe, were well deserved; that his objections were against
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a system and not against the individuals who were born into that system and had hitherto been unable to change it; and they could not help admiring his candor, his consistency, and his evident earnestness to better the condition of every man, no matter what his present position in society might be.

Then the chairman got up. He said he felt that the Brotherhood had not been disappointed when they expected something really good from the lecturer; but for himself, he found it is so new a departure, so wide in its possibilities, and so daringly radical, that he scarcely felt himself competent to give it the minute criticism that it undoubtedly deserved; and he thought most of the others would be likely to receive it in the same way (hear, hear). It was now too late to ask any criticisms upon the subject from anyone present; but if they desired it, controversy could be carried on at the next meeting. He would now, as promised, invite any present to assist Holdfast in his laudable endeavor, and should formally declare the meeting closed, any who desired to co-operate being invited to remain behind.

Harry thanked the chairman and the rest of the society for their kindness, and immediately stepped into the body of the hall where most of the audience continued to listen, and he was soon in the midst of an earnest group of men, some congratulating him, others arguing with him, and a few excoriating him and telling him it as a ploy the authorities ever released him.

"I do not blame you," said Harry, smilingly, to the latter, "you abuse me now because you are the creatures of the existing conditions of society which will not let you do otherwise. Soon I will create new conditions when you will regret what you are now saying and will do all you can to help me."

XIV.

"Well, Harry, how are you getting on with your social salvation scheme?" asked Wilberforce one day as the two were weighing out some corn for an order that had just come in.

"Very well, all things considered," replied Harry, "I don't expect to accomplish things all at once. I only got two members, as you know, out of that enthusiastic meeting of the Brotherhood that I addressed four weeks ago, but I have now got ten members besides yourself, and I am quite satisfied the others will follow."

"Yes, Harry, but if they come at that rate it will take another eight hundred years before you get the ten thousand members you anticipate. I think you'll be rather too old by that time; and as for me and the other members, we'll all be dead. I'm afraid you are too sanguine."

"Not at all, Fred. I look at the past, and see how ideas developed, and learn how they will develop in the future. When that great social reformer, Charles Fourier, brought out his new theories of social reconstruction, his books were thought little of and scarcely ever read, and he waited five years before he got a single convert! And even that convert was one he wasn't at all proud of. And yet, forty years after, hundreds of the leading minds of America were enthusiastic converts to his ideas, thousands of dollars were gladly clubbed together to give those ideas a practical test, and experiment after experiment was conducted to carry out Fourier's ideas as best they could; and now Fourier's writings have influenced all sociological thought, and his author has become one of the great classic writers of Socialism. Surely if Fourier had reason for hope when he had but one convert in five years, I have every good reason to be sanguine when I have ten times that many converts in one month!"

"You certainly deserve to succeed, Harry."

"And I mean to, if it is only in my dying breath."

"That's the same old Harry."

Fred speakers looked up to see who had interjected the last remark.

"Hypatia!" exclaimed Harry after a moment's hesitation.

"I wonder you recognize me, Harry. Don't you think I have changed for the better, of course?"

"You have changed, certainly; and at first I could scarcely believe it was you. You look so very ill. Whatever is the matter with you?"

"Oh nothing serious. Pardon me, Mr. Wilberforce, for my discourtesy in not noticing you before. I am so much interested in my fellow sufferer here that I almost forgot anyone else was present. I know with your large-heartedness you will make full allowances for circumstances; but I really feel I am doing a gross injustice in even temporarily forgetting the presence of one who, in spite of my past coldness, has magnificently acted as my greatest benefactor in the hour of need."

"It's all right, Hypatia, no self-respecting person omits to assist a friend when he can do so without injury to himself. It is the least I can do. But who is that young woman I see waiting outside? Isn't she waiting for you?"

"Yes, that is my fellow traveler, Rose Wilson, who was working at the same place as I was in Sydney. She is waiting till I go out, when I have promised to go with her to a friend's place where she intends stopping."

"Why not invite her in? There is no need for her to wait out there,"

Hypatia instantly did as requested; and after the usual introductions the whole party adjourned into the adjoining drawing room.

"Well," said Fred, when they were seated, "I think Miss Stephens ought to tell us where she has been all this time, as there has been more than one anxious to hear after her welfare, and now that she's here we want our curiosity satisfied."

"I have not much to tell you, Mr. Wilberforce, unless I wish to weary you with the dry details of a housekeeper's life. If you have no objection, I would like to speak privately with Mr. Holdfast for a few minutes in the next room. Perhaps Miss Wilson will give you the information you seek, and Harry can learn it some other time."

"Certainly," said Fred, "don't let me, or empty ceremony, stand in
the way of your conversation. If Miss Wilson can enlighten me I shall
be as pleased to hear it from her as anyone else.”

The young lady cheerfully proceeded to impart to Fred the desired
information; and the re-united lovers withdrew.

XV.

It was a very cold wet day in June when Harry Holdfast sat in a little
office in Melbourne, busily writing and arranging an affair of unusual
importance. He was sitting at a simple deal table, with a host of letters
piled up in front of him, and a few files of papers hanging up here and
there on the walls. Opposite him sat Hypatia. And at a table a little
further down the room were two elderly gentlemen and a lady in busy
conversation.

“Then now, I think that is all,” said Harry, looking up at last, “it is
now six o’clock, and the men start at seven o’clock sharp. Have you
nearly finished?”

“Yes,” replied Hypatia, “I have just completed the amounts. After
deducting all the preliminary expenses, and reserving sufficient to pay all
the other rent, advertising expenses, and wages for the ensuing three
months, I find the balance left from the collective payments on application
and allotment leave a clear balance of over two thousand pounds. The
total cost of the three hundred and twenty acres of land, and the total
expense incurred in sending the hundred men with a full supply of food
utensils, implements, and their transit, all of which have been paid, leaves
a balance of £1040 in hand.”

“That is correct. I make it come the same. And now I think we
had better close up the office and go down to the station. Are you ready,
Mr. Martin?”

“Yes, we’re all waiting.”

The whole party quickly took their departure for Spencer Street, and
Harry locked the door behind him.

When they reached Spencer Street Station, they found all the members
of the Social Pioneers who had been bailed out for waiting to take their
departure. The day was not one to cheer the hearts of any enthusiasts
bent on seeking a happier life; for the elements seemed to be striving
to make them as uncomfortable as possible. It was now raining hard, and
the cold wind that was blowing made one feel miserable and loath to
quit the wicked city with all its sins, but with its habitations so firmly
secured against the gale. However, once in the train, our pioneers
seemed to partially forget the woes of man or the elements, for most of
them were busily occupied in speculating on their prospects, and wonder-
ing whether the Lake Boga settlement was likely to be the success they
all hoped. Besides the private possessions that the pioneers were taking
with them, in the shape of clocks, clothing, and many other little domestic
comforts, the directors of the Social Pioneers had sent up fifty new tents,
material to build houses, thousands of pounds of provisions which would

keep them well fed for a month, three good colonial ovens, plenty of
kitchen and other utensils, a good supply of axes, spades and other imple-
ments, a careful assortment of garden seed that could be planted as soon
as the ground was prepared, ten healthy-looking cows, and a few dogs.
Such a collection was itself enough to make the pintle hand feel some
confidence in the undertaking, and the cheerful faces of the many earnest
women and men who had come to see them off was just the best thing to
increase that confidence.

It was night by the time the party reached their destination; and if
their departure was cheerless, their arrival was still more so. But men
used to roughing it, do not get appalled at trifles; and they thought
little of the inconvenience of stopping at the station for the night, where
they managed to keep off the cold by the assistance of the tents they had
with them, for although the weather was blusteringly sharp there had been
no rain there, and they did not find it so very uncomfortable as they might
have done. At dawn, Mr. Martin conducted them to one of the
adjacent farms, where they found drays waiting in readiness for them to
take their luggage to their own farm.

The men were not long in reaching their destination; and as the morn-
ing was a fine one they had a good opportunity to look around them and
inspect their future home. The place they had chosen was very nicely
situated only a short distance from the shore of the lake, and the position
was one admirably adapted for the object they had in view. Certainly
the place was not seen in its prettiest aspects; the recent oppressive sum-
mer had made the place wear a very desolate look, and there were not
many evidences of vegetable life about. There were a few farms here and
there, looking a little brighter than the great waste around them; but even
they did not seem to receive the careful attention they might have
had bestowed upon them, for they were not particularly well cultivated,
but had evidently suffered their share of the parching dryness of an Aus-
tralian summer, and looked even then as if they could advantageously
do with a goodly supply of the clear water that lay at such a little distance
from them. There was not even a decent forest to relieve the desolate
monotony of the scene, but only here and there a little timber struggling
to survive the destructive attacks of man and nature’s hot blasts. Now
and then an aboriginal or two could be observed, the last remnants of a
crying race, fast hastening to obliteration together with the crumbling
civilization that had strangled it and was now strangling itself. Hares
and rabbits were there in abundance, as many a farmer knew to his sorrow;
and the wood ducks were so plentiful that the settlers found them a con-
stant source of destruction to their crops. Wild fowl were there in
immense numbers forming easy sport for the settlers’ rifles; and the black
ducks, teal, and wild geese sported themselves over the quite scene in
crowds quite astounding to city eyes. And every now and then the
settlers would catch sight of some of the bronze-winged pigeons which are
so plentiful in the district. But it was the soil itself, the sandy chocolate
soil beneath their feet, that appealed strongest to the new visitors. It was
the first little spot of land that they—the rescued, expropriated pros-
"Well, Thompson," said he, addressing one of the men, "how do you like your first day's experience?"

"Oh, Mr. Thompson, said he, looking at the men as they worked, "we haven't really started yet."

"Very true; it is rather soon to ask you. But I suppose you already begin to feel as if we are breathing a very different air and enjoying far pleasanter associations than you can find in the hum and hurry of city life?"

"Yes, Mr. Thompson, said he, looking at the men as they worked, "we haven't really started yet."

"We were just talking about Holdfast raising the necessary funds. Is it true that Sir Felix Slymer has expressed an interest in the undertaking, and thus caused the public to support it?"

"Yes, it is well known that Slymer did speak approvingly of it before the Bankers' Institute; and although his statements were not reported in the papers it got out somehow, and that seems to have given it a bit of a lift. For a long while Holdfast got very little encouragement, but when he had got several hundreds to join it, it got to be looked upon with more favor by the public; and although the papers tried to boycott it as much as possible, just as they are doing now, he wasn't long getting the whole of the five thousand shares taken up. Several other influential persons besides Slymer, are believed to be interested in the matter, although they are all keeping very quiet.

"When are we going to have the first meeting?"

"I don't think it is exactly that in all cases. Holdfast thinks that Slymer is quietly encouraging it to keep the discontented a bit quiet and to make it appear to the working classes that he sympathizes with their efforts; and I think he is not far out. I believe many others give it an occasional word of half-hearted praise for a similar reason. Of course, there are certain to be many standing out from a thing until they see it has become a success."

"Has Holdfast had any definite communication from Slymer?"

"Don't ask me too much. You will hear something to surprise you shortly; but it would be a breach of confidence for me to tell you everything. I suppose you know that Holdfast wrote to a number of influential functionaries when he first tried to float his scheme, but got little encouragement from them. One noble Supreme Court judge, to whom he wrote, replied respectfully that he could not have anything to do with it, because he couldn't see how it could be successful as it didn't award dividends to the shareholders, and if a man wanted to get any good out of it he would have to work in it; another brilliant genius, with an 'M. A.' after his name, said it couldn't succeed unless the whole capital were subscribed by one or more wealthy philanthropists and bestowed on the society in the form of a charity; then another gentleman, a clergyman, was so busy thinking of going to England that he had no time to consider it, but would simply say he approved of it if it was a good thing; several others wrote in somewhat similar strains. But there was one reply, how-

Old Martin did not retire early with the others. He had too long been accustomed to the foolish habit of tobacco smoking to wish to break it off at his age, and so he stole into one of the tents where two or three others were enjoying themselves conversing on the only topic, of course, that was occupying all minds—that of the new village settlement scheme upon which they had all embarked.
ever, that Harry treasured above all the others, and it came from a clergyman who was well known as a hard worker in many philanthropic schemes. As you might like to hear it, I will read it to you from the copy I have with me:

Mr. Harry Holdfast,

Dear Sir,—I have received your interesting Prospectus, and beg to thank you for it, and for the honor which you do me in asking me to become a promoter. I feel, however, that I cannot accede to your request. The calls on my time and strength are about as many as I can answer, and an important scheme such as that which you are launching, should have, at its initiation, men who have the time and the ability to go into it thoroughly and watch over it day and night.

Wishing you every success in your effort to pioneer us out of climes,

Yours faithfully,

Charles Oaks.

That was the only favorable reply that Harry received out of a community that pretended it wanted to assist in getting out of the existing injustices. But fortunately he wasn’t disheartened, with the good results that we are here to-night as witnesses of the first success of his determined endeavors.

"I hope we will help him to achieve that success. We might as well die at once as go back to Melbourne."

"Oh, don’t talk about going back already," said another, we are hardly here yet."

The party were now pretty well enveloped in the clouds of tobacco smoke, and commenced to wander into dream-land, having little to say after this. It is one of the peculiar privileges of this habit to dull a man’s mental activity. Your smoker will often sit for hours in a state of silence that would drive a non-smoker almost mad with impatience mental agony. It was not until their pipes had exhausted their supply of tobacco that Martin and the others lay down to sleep.

XVI.

Early the next morning, some of the Pioneers went down to the lake for a bathe, while others took down the lines they had brought with them and tried to catch some fish for their breakfast. In this they were not unsuccessful. The Lake Boga is an overflow from the Murray, and the party had their labors well rewarded by capturing some splendid Murray cod, besides a few bream and cat-fish and several other fresh water fishes. These they took home with them and shared them amongst the other members who desired them. After breakfast, the whole party turned to their day’s labors. They had managed to erect all the tents the day before, but they had to erect the houses for their permanent dwellings as the lady folks would be coming up in four weeks, and there was no time to lose; besides that, the wintry weather was just upon them, and if they did not hasten on with their work the rains might seriously hinder their operations.

It was soon evident that the society had made a good selection in the first 100 Pioneers they had sent up, they being well adapted for their particular work. Although they had been selected by ballot from all members of the society who had chosen to submit their names for the purpose, the sound advice of the directors for only practical men to apply at this stage was so well respected that the names submitted were those of men in nearly every case thoroughly fitted for the task. They were not long setting about building the houses after completing all the necessary preparations. These cottages were constructed of Egyptian bricks, made of sun-dried clay; the roofs were of corrugated iron which they had brought with them in the train along with the windows, the doors, and the flooring. These habitations were excellent ones for the settlers to live in and cost scarcely anything for construction. If properly constructed they could stand for twenty years and then be as good as ever. And yet their whole cost in hard cash was no more than it would cost to rent a small cottage in the city for only six months; for the material of each only cost them fifteen pounds; and as they had nearly all their time to devote to the purpose they could give all the necessary labor to their construction without making any sacrifice.

The other members of the party devoted their time to sundry other occupations, such as apportioning parts of the ground for different industries, digging the ground and preparing it for the garden seed they had with them, preparing the victuals, doing a little fencing here and there, collecting fuel, and many other little jobs that came to their hand.

Day after day the men proceeded with their work with the will that did them credit, and they soon had the pleasure of seeing the results of their toil in the altered appearance of the place. The ground already began to look more cheerful than when they had first seen it; and the cottages were fast approaching completion. It was well they had hastened on with their building, for they had not been at it more than a week before the weather began to showery and frequently hindered their work, and towards the close of the month it became very stormy, and it was with great difficulty that the work was carried on. However by the beginning of July they had finished forty of these humble structures, and were ready to receive their families into their new made homes.

Exactly a month after their arrival at the Lake Boga railway station the settlers were back again at the same spot, not waiting this time to penetrate a strange land but to welcome visitors to that now familiar land. They were at the station long before the needful hour—anxious people generally manage to get too early in their efforts to appease their anxiety—and they had a full two hours to wait. The two hours seemed like ten hours, and when the train at last sped into the station one would almost think it was the first sight of civilization they had had for years, so eager were they to greet their own people. Then the train stopped, and there was the usual meeting that need not be described. It is hardly necessary to say that there was no bowing and scraping, stiff introductions, and affected smiles that makes one feel as if he is in an ice-bath. The manners of the 'upper crust' have fortunately not been adopted by the more solid human pie beneath; and working men and women are more human and
emotional than the starched and painted consumptive marionettes that society sticks up in high places for common people to laugh at.

When the women had all got fairly out of the station, they lost no time in assisting to pick up their different treasures into the six drays which had been waiting for them, while the men harnessed the horses, and put the crockery and utensils that they could into the drays. There were about thirty children, all of whom they managed to carefully stow away on the drays along with a few of the women, most of whom preferred, however, to walk along in conversation with their male relatives and friends, as the distance they had to traverse was not very great. Forty more cows had been sent up with them, and they helped to form part of the procession.

On arriving at the houses, all the men who could be spared instantly set to work to put the different things into them. They had managed to bring a few bedsteads and bedding with them from the station, and these were soon made ready, and the children, who were worn out with fatigue after so long travelling, were very soon soundly sleeping in them. As soon as the drays were emptied, they returned to the station to bring up the remainder of the beds, which were soon got in readiness for the women who were all sleeping soundly in them before the night was much advanced. Every separate family occupied one house, while the single women slept together in groups of six to each house, and the unmarried men occupied the remaining houses and the tents.

Next day the men went down to the station and brought up the household furniture, the forty colonial ovens, a single-throw plough, two harrows, two scarios, a steam plough, and the balance of the live stock consisting of five hundred hens, and forty hives of bees. The steam plough had been purchased by the society at a cost of £700 to save labor on the part of the pioneers, a deposit having been paid on it, with the understanding that it became their's if the balance with current interest were paid within two years.

There were now two hundred men and women, besides the children, on the land, and already the place commenced to wear a busy aspect. They were not long setting to work. The men started sowing sixty acres with wheat; another sixty acres they planted with vines, peaches, apricots, figs, and other fruits, besides planting various kinds of vegetables in between the fruit trees so as to utilize the ground while waiting for the fruit to arrive at maturity; they also planted twenty acres with tomatoes. The women attended to the household duties, besides cultivating flower gardens around the cottages, attending the poultry and the cattle and looking after the bees, the men giving them occasional assistance.

Although the weather continued to be very boisterous and heavy rains were falling most of the time, they managed to get on very well with their work. Next month the directors sent them up a first-class incubator, capable of hatching 200 eggs, and twenty-five superior bee-hives; besides another month's provisions, which were regularly forwarded to them so that they should not need to depend on the product of their own land for some considerable time to come. They, in their turn, managed to send a number of eggs to Melbourne, where the directors disposed of them through their own office, getting a fair price for them and yet selling them considerably under current rates, as there were no middlemen to come between them and the public, and thus increases the prices to the consumers. A number of the remaining eggs, beyond what they required for their own consumption, they reserved for setting or inculation. In the month of October the society had a good sum of money in the bank.

The directors then sent up an excellent cream separator and a large churn capable of being worked by steam; they also sent up a number of pigs and material to build twenty more houses similar to the ones they had already constructed. The settlers were now enabled to send their butter to market, as well as their usual supply of eggs and the sixty acres of vegetable crop. The society then bought another 820 acres of land, adjoining the previous allotment, it having been arranged with the vendors on purchasing the first allotment that any time within the next five years they could purchase any part of the adjoining 10,000 acres at the price already paid for the first lot, namely £5 per acre. The men immediately set about shifting their tents into the new tract of land, and erecting the twenty houses upon it for the accommodation of the next batch of settlers.

As soon as they were ready, the directors sent up a hundred men and women, fully provided as the others had been; and they also sent up a harvester with them, as the grain was now ripe for preparing for market. The weather was now delightful, and the Pioneers worked with a will, some gathering in the wheat, others cutting channels for the irrigation of their lands, a large area of which they intended to devote to intense culture, and others attending to the area they had reserved for grazing. Thus the much detested rate collector called round, demanding the shire rates and water rates, but that didn't trouble them much. City slaves can't pay their rates without great difficulty; but to free workers on a fruitful soil it becomes a matter of little concern. The society paid the rates, which amounted to some nine or ten pounds, out of the capital, and debited it to all of the members, but as that averaged less than a half-penny each for the six months nobody minded it.

With the New Year, the directors bought another 820 acres of land and sent up a hundred more persons, for whose cottages they had already been constructed, and who took up the usual supply of provisions, &c. By March the channels had been completed, and the directors sent up a pumping plant for the irrigation works at a cost of £900. They also constructed a large reservoir in one of the main irrigation channels; this was used as a public bath, as the waters of the lake were used for drinking purposes and could not be polluted. In the meantime the productivity from the various seeds and live stocks had enormously increased. The young chickens that had first come to bless the attentive care of the settlers were now full grown fowls, and were sent to market in large numbers, realizing a handsome sum; and the Pioneers could reserve as many as ever they wanted for their own use without the directors requiring to purchase any more for future batches of settlers. In the same way the bees and other live stock, the grain, and even the
flowers, tied with each other in accumulating their numbers for the settlers' benefit, as though they were intent on disproving the old capitalistical Malthusian fiction that man's offspring tended to increase faster than man's food; and they proved, to the satisfaction of the Pioneers, that man's food tended to outstrip man in reproducing its species, and not only tended to do so, but actually did so.

On the first day of June, exactly twelve months since the first 100 men had set foot on Lake Boga, there was great glee at the settlement. They had just completed their public hall, which had cost them £500 for building material alone. It was a large roomy structure, built partly of wood and partly of the sun-dried bricks like those employed in constructing the cottages. The main entrance was into a wide passage, on the walls of which were hung a number of choice engravings and some pictures the settlers had brought with them in the shape of water and oil color paintings. This passage was known as the picture gallery. The first door on the right led into a large room fitted up with shelves all round the walls and on the two uprights in the centre of the room; there were a few large tables here and there and a number of chairs. On the shelves were a variety of cheap books on all subjects, mostly however those of an industrial or economic nature; these, too, were partly lent by the settlers, but the majority were supplied by the society. Immediately behind the public library, as this room was called, there was a room set apart for a printing office, where it was intended to erect an extensive printing plant and to issue a newspaper for the benefit of the settlers, as well as to educate the outside public in the methods and progress of the society.

On the opposite side of the passage, the first door led into a convenient storehouse which was known as the mutual bank. It was here that the members were to receive their labor notes in exchange for their commodities, when the members became independent of the society's assistance and were able to produce entirely for themselves; and it was here that all the financial affairs of the society were regulated and the money stored, because several of them had a little money with them which was now of no use, but they wished to save it as it might be of service to them at some future time in their dealings with the unfortunate outside world. Behind the bank was a very large room, which was specially fitted up for use as a general store, and was known as the co-operative store; it was here that members could deposit their produce for the society to forward to Melbourne or elsewhere for disposal. At the very extreme end of the passage was a large double door, which led into the lecture hall. This lecture hall was the largest room in the whole building, extending the whole length from side to side and being fairly wide in proportion; there were doors at each end and side to afford facility for ingress in case of fire; and it was well fitted up with forms, and a stage at one end where theatricals could if necessary be carried on. This room was intended chiefly as a meeting place where the members of the community could meet together to discuss and arrange their affairs; on Sundays it was set apart for those who desired to hold religious services; on Wednesdays, for socialistic or free thought lectures and debates; and on the other days it was open to any members who wished to hold meetings on any subject of interest to the community. The inaugural ceremony was a very simple one and soon performed. It was decided to name the little settlement, which up to the present had done without one, by a word which all preserved perhaps above any other—'Freedom'; and the hall was named The Hall of Freedom.

There were now six hundred persons on the sixteen hundred acres of land, with two hundred and twenty cottages and animal and vegetable life in abundance, all of which had been fully paid for except the steam plough upon which the balance of their payment was not yet due. Even many of their foes admitted that was good work to be accomplished in one year by people who had started together comparatively penniless. But their brightest days were yet in store.

XVII.

Another year had passed over the settlers' heads. During that time their little community had enormously increased. Two thousand of them were already settled on the land, of which they had over 4,000 acres, which was more than two acres to each individual, being more than double the area that the people of Japan possess, where 42 million people are supported in comparative comfort on 32 million acres; the directors considered that over two acres per individual would be ample, as every acre was being used, and none held in idleness for speculative purposes. They had erected 500 cottages; their live stock amounted to 500 head of cattle, 90 draught horses, a number of saddle horses that some of the selectors had brought up on their private account, 30,000 fowls, a quantity of turkeys, besides a few dogs, goats, and other domestic animals, and a large number of bees. Their productivity was already becoming somewhat important. They were exporting monthly £500 worth of eggs, £850 worth of butter, and vegetable products of all kinds to the extent of over £2,000. And now the directors purchased 640 acres on the banks of the Murray River, about nine miles from the former site. This they settled in the same way as they had done at the Freedom community. The new settlement, which was called Equity, was opened with a batch of two hundred settlers, for whom fifty cottages had been built, and who took with them the usual stock of implements, utensils, seed, live stock, and provisions. This month they paid the balance of £590 due on the steam plough and erected a large steam factory at Freedom, at a cost of £1,000. In this factory was a large churn capable of making 410 lbs. of butter in about five minutes, the various requirements for canning and preserving fruits, besides different machinery that supplied power for many industries of the settlers and saved their labor.

The directors continued to extend and develop both of the settlements by constantly purchasing fresh land, and sending more members upon it, until at last the number of Pioneers remaining in Melbourne was very small indeed, and the day was fast approaching when that unfortunate city would see them no more. It was now thirty-five months since
The Melbourne Riots.

The subsequent proceedings were very brief. Most of the Pioneers formed themselves into a co-operative body, appointing several of the original directors to some of the principal offices in it. Others formed themselves into a communist group or two and “pooled” their little possessions into one common fund. And a few chose to “paddle their own canoe” alone, settling down to a quiet private life without enduring the worries and cares of any organization, whatever.

“And now,” said old Martin, when these matters were all definitely arranged, “I want to keep my faith with you, and tell you something about Felix Slymer. He promised our friend Holdfast before these communities were started, or the society fully formed, that when he got the whole five thousand members settled on the land he would give them a free grant of 10,000 acres of his magnificent estate at Healesville.”

This announcement was received with upmosted applause.

“That is what I promised to tell you,” continued Martin, “but now I have something better still to reveal. It is a letter that Sir Felix has just sent to our veteran, and of which he has sent a copy to me for read to you at this meeting:

Dear Holdfast,

I have long been a critic of your actions, and I am sorry to say an opponent to them. But, although I hesitate to confess it, I now proclaim myself one of your earnest disciples. I cannot help feeling ashamed of myself when I think how I have injured you and yours; but I know you are so large-hearted you will forgive me, especially as I shall try to make amends. When I offered you the 10,000 acres of land at Healesville I did not anticipate giving it, because I did not think it possible for you to succeed in carrying out your enterprise. Since then, I have seen you do so; and I have now lived as a resident member for over twelve months at your pretty village of Freedom, which I would not leave, with its smiling farms and cheerful inhabitants, for all the wealth in the world. I intend to stop here. You have made a changed man of me, and I hasten to confess that change in a practical sense. I therefore endorse deeds of all my valuable estates throughout the colony, transferring them gratuitously to the Social Pioneers, to use for the benefit of humanity in accordance with their system that has worked here with such admirable results. And I only reserve to myself $100,000 in cash, with which I shall erect a comfortable house at Freedom and try to live in comfort for the remainder of my days. I shall give you the balance of my possessions, except my title, which I shall retain to please my ambition and also on the grounds of expediency, and sign myself,

Your earnest well-wisher,

Felix Slymer.

When Martin had finished reading the letter, the whole meeting gave Sir Felix Slymer three hearty cheers, and after a little pleasant speechifying, the liberal donor, who was present in person, suitably responded, and the happy people then returned to their homes.

XVIII.

The directors, on receiving Slymer’s donation, instantly started to operate with it. They erected factories of all kinds on the various allotments, sent immense herds of sheep to some of the new settlements, despatched to the settlements all the people they could induce to join,
and soon made the colony of Victoria a real hive of industry.

The effect of the new system on the settlers was beginning to be observed in their healthy color, erect forms, and moral natures. Their sympathy for each other was equally remarkable: when one of the Pioneers had his little house burned down, hundreds of the neighbors instantly assisted to gratuitously erect and furnish a new one for him and his family. They scarcely ever drank spirits; and one enterprising genius, who joined the society and opened a hotel in Equity, was glad to turn it into a temperance boarding house to make it pay. Their profusion of fruit, grain, nuts, and vegetables, so weaned them from the eating of meat, that their health got better and better; and a large number of them became strict vegetarians, and soon enjoyed the superiority in body and mind which that simple diet always bestowed upon the fortunate individuals who intelligently embrace it.

XIX.

The Social Pioneers now increased their share capital indefinitely, and hundreds of thousands joined them to enjoy their many advantages. Mortgaged estates were bought up everywhere, thus benefiting both the mortgagees and the Society. They bought tracts of land in all parts of the colony—in country, suburb, and city—and immediately employed their members upon it. Branches were opened in the adjoining colonies, and the lands there treated in a similar manner. The movement soon spread to England, Europe, America, Africa, and even Asia; and the workers of all countries soon began to forget they had ever been divided into nations, for they were all becoming Social Pioneers, and realized they were all common brethren in humanity. In Melbourne and Sydney, the Chinese, and other unfortunate "sweated" foreigners, found it necessary to join the new organization, against whose cheap production they were unable to compete; and the Kanakas in Queensland gladly joined hands with their white brethren, whom the cruel capitalists had imported to injure.

The effect on the outside community was now marvellous. The unemployed disappeared from the city, as they became absorbed in the new enterprise. Wages rose everywhere, because labor was every day becoming scarcer, and employers had increased difficulty in getting men to work for them. Those who did get work demanded better pay than hitherto, and it was readily granted; they worked with renewed vigor, and pleased both the employers and themselves. The increasing demand for labor-saving machinery, by the different groups of Social Pioneers, became so enormous, that the prices went down considerably owing to the increased sales, and the purchasing power of the workers’ larger earnings was thus considerably increased. The universal desire to remove the restrictive tariffs on imports was met by a ready response, and such excellent labor saving machinery was imported so cheaply that the Victorian people soon began to almost monopolize the leading markets of the world by the cheapening of their commodities, for which, too, the highest wages on earth were paid. Employer after employer joined the new organization as he realized the advantages afforded him in abolished rents, decreased cost of production, an exit from financial embarrassments, and a steady market for his goods. Rents fell wherever the Social Pioneers bought up lands, because everywhere the adjoining tenants joined the Society and shifted on to the freed land alongside, and the vacant dwellings could find no new tenants. Empty houses became so common, and so few people wanted to buy them, that the Society got them for a trifling sum, even in the heart of the city. Rents were getting equalized in city and country, and were fast tending towards zero. The increasing reduction of rents and cheapening of commodities so increased the purchasing power of the laborers’ wages that they commenced beautifying their homes and enjoying the best of luxuries; while hotel-keeper after hotel-keeper had to close up his business, because the people were no longer miserable and poverty-stricken enough to drown their sorrows in beastly intoxicants; and even the tobaccoists found a deal of their income now seeking other channels. Everywhere the free competition of the equitably dealing Social Pioneers was fast driving out the plundering system of capitalism; and all classes of the community were hastening to participate in the new movement.

XX.

Harry Holdfast had intended to go to Freedom along with the last batch of the first five thousand settlers, but his health had not permitted him. The terrible strain, which the carrying out of his scheme had been upon his strength, was more than he could endure; and at last he broke down. During his fifteen years confinement in prison he had contracted a serious malady, which was now assuming such alarming symptoms that his best friends were losing hopes of his recovery. His affectionate lover was always by his side, cheering him with her kind and intellectual remarks; but she, too, was losing all hopes of seeing him restored to health and friends.

"I am afraid my last day is nigh," said he one day, as he moaned in agony on his bed and only brought out each word with difficulty and considerable pain and exhaustion.

At his bedside were Wilberforce, Miss Wilson, and Hypatia, with sorrowful looks that so well betrayed their fears for the sufferer.

"I hope not, Harry," said Hypatia; "it seems and that you should be lost to the world just when you have accomplished your grand work, and have not even seen with your own eyes the mighty results of your endeavors. But I am afraid, Harry, you are right. I would not deceive you by giving you false hopes."

"I know you would not, Hypatia. Honest men and women never deceive each other."

The doctors who had been in attendance on the poor fellow, had told Hypatia they did not think he could live many more hours, as he had allowed the disease to get such a firm hold of him that it had got totally beyond their power to cure. They had telegraphed for a young
Bauschiidist healer, who was an intimate friend of Harry’s, but he had not arrived.

Presently the patient opened his weared eyes and attempted to speak again.

"Dear friends," said he, speaking with the greatest difficulty, and pausing every now and then to regain his breath, "if I die, take a last message from me to the poor emancipated proletaire of Freedom and Equity. Tell them I hoped to see them and shake hands with them. Are, tell them if I could only see those happy lands of their’s, I would willingly meet my death afterwards. But, oh, I would like to see them first! Tell them, my pleasure at their happiness is more than my weak brain can stand. The cruel tortures of my persecutors did not affect me; but the thought of these poor starving men and women being made happy fills me with emotions that nearly choke me. I am afraid——." Here the poor fellow completely broke down, sobbing like a child.

After a little time, he regained his composure. "Tell them all," he continued, "that if I die, I die with the conviction that my life has not been useless, and that its end was all happiness. Tell those who have maligned and injured me, that I forgive them and love them; for I know they were poor fellow mortals like myself and could not help what they did. Tell Slynher I thank him for his kind donation, and I rejoice to see that one of his intelligence has been rescued from the ferocious system that had made him a traitor to his fellow-men; and tell Ellis I am proud to think that through my small efforts he is now helping the Pioneers in their glorious crusade against injustice. And, Hypatia, come nearer a minute. Hypatia, are you there?"

"Yes, Fred, I am here," she answered softly, "what do you want to tell me?"

The lips of the sick man were moving, as though he wanted to speak, but he made no sound. They both strained their ears and leaned over him to catch the last words of love to his devoted girl. But still, they heard nothing. Presently his lips ceased to move, and a happy smile stole over his face.

Harry Holdfast was dead.

A train reached Lake Boga station carrying a body of mourners and a coffin. In that coffin was the corpse of Harry Holdfast, whose friends had brought him to Freedom that the remains of the veteran emancipator might be humbly interred in the spot he had consecrated by his noble efforts. Amongst the mourners was Hypatia Stephens. She got out with the others, and entered one of the vehicles in the sad procession. But she did not seem to see anything. When she reached Freedom, she was like a simple child, and her friends had to lead her from the conveniences. She seemed suddenly to have lost her reason. Then she asked if she could retire into private communion with herself for a few moments. The request of the afflicted woman was readily complied with; and the funeral proceedings were suspended while she was escorted into one of the cottages near by and her reappearance waited for. Half-an-hour elapsed, but still she did not appear. At last, two of the women went into the room to see if any harm had befallen her. She was not there; but a newly-written letter was upon the table beside the inkstand. They took it up and read it. It was addressed to "Miss Wilson, care of F. Wilberforce, Melbourne," and ran as follows:

Dear Alice,

I have no one to consult with, no one to confide in. You are not here. My last friend, Harry, is gone. I find myself in a strange land amongst strange people. I cannot bear it any longer. I know they are good people and would love me and be kind to me, but the one I want is not amongst them. Poor sister, how often I have thought of you, and realized the troubles you had when we worked together in Sydney trying to earn a crust of bread. And how often I have thought of your struggles trying to earn that crust, and the misery and suffering it caused you. I know society maligned you. I know how when it had degraded you and nearly maimed you, it tarnished and spat upon you and called you its prostitute. But, Alice, I think you are no prostitute. I think you a martyr. Oh, how I wish every woman were as noble and independent as you, poor girl! I often wonder how it is that I did not sell my pleasures to lascivious hypocrisies as you have had to do, my poor sister. Why? Because I had not the courage! Or was it that I loved Harry too well to let the gaunt of empery banish my virtuous regard for him? Perhaps it was both causes combined. However, he is dead now. My life's hope is no more. The cruel world is black and cheerless. It has at last broken my poor weak heart; and I feel the thins have come when I must bid you all good-bye. Remember me to your good friend and future husband, Fred Wilberforce, and tell him I once again thank him for his many kindnesses to Harry and me. Give my love to Social Pioneer and all who are working for the true humanity. And tell them my last hopes are with them and with their glorious cause. And take the last farewell wishes from your loving sister in misfortune.

Hypatia.

When the women had read the letter, they hastened into the next room. There they saw the poor broken-hearted girl lying on the rough couch. They leaned over her, and felt her to make sure she still lived. But they felt the cold clay.

Hypatia was dead!

Just as the gardener plucks the choicest flowers and leaves the others to bloom without them, so Nature takes from us Her choicest flowers and leaves us to mourn their loss. Our brightest hopes leave us just as success seems sure. Our friends forsake us just as we learn to love them. Our martyrs sacrifice their lives unto us; and then, when it is too late, we regret them, and build our prosperity on their misery.

Harry Holdfast and his friends had sacrificed themselves for humanity. They had consecrated their lives to the martyr's cause of Freedom.

The Workers were at last emancipated!