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The Week in Review

The problem of the unemployed in Great Britain threatens to be serious during the coming winter. There are at present over ten thousand unemployed operatives in Birmingham alone; in other parts of the country the position is even worse. In Glasgow, 20,000 men are out of work, and in many cases the masters have not only been compelled to reduce their hands, but they have considerably lowered the wages of those still employed. This has led to strikes and lock-outs, and thus the misery, already acute, has been still further intensified. Mr. D. T. Shackleton, presiding at the Trade Union Congress at Nottingham, said that unemployment was more than ever the urgent question of the hour, and he proposed an international association for shortening the hours of labour. He urged the British Government to arrange for the holding of such a conference.

The belief that shortening the hours of labour will produce more work and wealth for all rests on such a transparent fallacy that it is hard to see how thoughtful men can seriously entertain it. One great cause of the present distress has undoubtedly been the shipping strike. Many orders that would have gone to English firms have been placed abroad. The masters in consequence have had to reduce their hands through lack of work. It is perfectly obvious that if they shortened the hours of those at present employed, while more workers would be taken on, the wages of each would be correspondingly reduced. If orders in hand only allow of five hundred men getting £2 each a week, by halving the number of hours worked, you also halve the wage paid. You are merely enabled to pay a thousand men £1 each.

Government aid and State doles intensify rather than relieve the evil. The only real solution lies in producing more wealth and finding better markets. Work must be made for the workers, and this can only be done by England abandoning her fetish of free-trade. At present she is the dumping ground for foreign-made goods of every description, and these goods compete against the productions of her own workers. When she tries to export her surplus manufactures, the protectionist countries shut them out by prohibitive tariffs. Thus both at home and abroad is she handicapped in finding markets. Coldenites are already beginning to recognise that the urgent need of finding new sources of revenue to meet the expense of social reforms, joined with the clamour of the unemployed, demand some readjustment of Britain's fiscal policy.

The great Roman Catholic Eucharistic Congress at present taking place in London is likely to cause world-wide interest. Cardinal Yvanelliti, the Papal legate, paid a graceful compliment to England, when he said that the holding of the Congress there was a direct and palpable proof of the system of liberty the British enjoy in exercising their opinions. Signs have not been wanting that the different churches are drawing closer together in their teaching on the Holy Communion. In the Roman Catholic Church many of her foremost divines have insisted on the spiritual, rather than the corporal, nature of the Real Presence. Cardinal Manning, in a letter written in 1862, maintained that the nature of the change in the consecrated elements was sacramental, and that within the sphere of natural phenomena

and effects there was no change. This was also the view of Cardinal Newman, and is substantially that held by a large number of Anglican and other divines. The conference of members of the Church of England held at Fulham Palace in 1900 showed that opinions on this great subject are less divided than many suppose. This great assemblage of doctors of the Roman Church at present being held, will doubtless do much to still further promote unity of thought on this much vexed question.

As the proposed procession was giving rise to feelings of religious bitterness, which was likely to mar an otherwise harmonious celebration, it is gratifying to feel that both Mr. Asquith and Archbishop Bourne, in the interests of order and good feeling, decided to omit all ecclesiastical ceremonial from the procession. The cardinals and bishops proceeded to the cathedral in full Court dress, but all the ceremonies were held inside the building. This showed a desire on the part of the visiting dignitaries to avoid anything likely to stir up religious strife, whilst by not abandoning the procession itself, they paid Englishmen the compliment of believing that they would practise the doctrine of religious equality by granting the fullest possible liberty to those who do not belong to the national church. This spirit of mutual compromise is far more likely to bring about the much-desired re-union of Christendom, than is the spirit of partisanship and factiousness that has hitherto served to divide rather than to unite.

People are getting a little confused between the Absolute Majority, the Bare Majority, and the Second Ballot. The Bare Majority is to enable No-license to be declared carried in any district if a bare majority of the voters declare in its favour, instead of insisting on a three-fifths majority, as at present. The Absolute Majority means that no member shall be declared elected unless he polls an absolute majority of the votes recorded. The Second Ballot provides that in the case of three or more candidates standing for any constituency, if none of them gets an absolute majority, a second ballot shall take place for the two who head the poll. The necessity for some such provision has been clearly proved by the fact that an increasing number of members at each general election are returned on the votes of a minority.

Apart from the objections of a few Socialists and half-hearted attacks by some of the Opposition members, the principle involved in the bill has met with general acceptance. What has not been so universally approved, has been the suggestion that in the interval between the first and second ballot, there shall be no political activity shown. It is proposed to make it an offence to print or publish any notification, article, or document intended to promote the interest of a candidate. Any attempt to interfere with the freedom of the Press is always viewed with suspicion. We accept restrictions where good cause can be shown for their existence, as, for instance, in the rule that forbids comment on a case while still sub judice. But the free expression of political opinion is looked upon as being almost a sacred right of Englishmen, and only the gravest reasons would cause them to surrender that right.

Count Leo Tolstoy has been declared a backslider by the Russian Holy Synod, and all true believers have been ordered to refrain from participating in the celebrations of his 80th birthday. This will not surprise those who are acquainted with the Count's religious and political views. The Eastern Church has always stood for dogmatic orthodoxy, and has been the staunchest supporter of the Czar and the ruling classes. Tolstoy finds true Christianity in the maxims of the Sermon on the Mount, and has always exhibited the most self-denying tenderness for all that travail and are heavy laden. He has lately denounced in no measured terms the cruelties practised in the name of the Government, and countenanced by the members of the Holy Synod. He is a strange mixture of the Puritan, the Quietist, the Quaker, and the Buddhist. He has practically divested himself of all his property, and lives as plainly as the poorest peasant. His great ambition is to die a martyr to the cause of liberty in Russia. The sentence of ex-communication lately passed by the Holy Synod he would regard as one of the highest compliments he has yet received, though he has long been recognised as amongst the greatest of our modern writers and thinkers by reason of his deep knowledge of human nature, and the sincerity, wit, and eloquence of his style. He is the idol of the Russian peasantry, who would hardly be deterred from celebrating his birthday by any ecclesiastical anathemas. The priests have been ordered to refute his writings, and the task, though probably congenial, is likely to prove none too easy.

An old proverb reminds us that we can't have our cake and eat it. Mr. Justice Slin has lately brought the truth of this home by explaining that we can't have strikes and arbitration at the same time. If men go on strike, then the arbitration award automatically ceases to have effect, and the strikers, if they return to work, must make the best terms they can. "Heads I win, tails you lose," is a profitable way of playing pitch and toss, but the law refuses to recognise its legality. Were it otherwise, men on strike would stand to gain everything and lose nothing. If they won they would be so much better off; if they lost they could still fall back on the old award. Under this latest decision, if they lose, they will be in the position of the dog who lost the very substantial joint he already had, through dropping it in order to grasp at its magnified reflection in the stream.

The same difficulty arises over the question as to how we are to get high wages and cheap living. Mr. Fleming, a Dunedin Labour candidate, has suggested an export duty on frozen meat and a greatly reduced duty on imported timber. If this principle were extended and heavy imposts placed on all exports, and all duties remitted on imports, we should certainly have solved the question of dear living. Meat, butter, clothing, and all the necessities of life would go down with a rush. But where would we get the money from for the wages? On the other hand, a high protection tariff and large export trade give us wages at the expense of cheap commodities. The problem is a tantalising one. Like perpetual motion, its solution seems as far off as ever.

The Attorney-General is reported to have said that the support of the Press was more easily obtained by the man with a long purse than a man who had only his honesty to back him. This may be true of certain papers in America and even in London, but they are papers that carry no weight with anyone possessed of a grain of sense, and to most

people their support is more damaging than their opposition. It is certainly not true of our colonial newspapers. No Press in the world is more free from personal gossip and tittle-tattle. The paragraph commencing "It is whispered that a scandal is on foot concerning a leading Society dame and a well-known M.P." and similar innuendo, finds no favour with either our editors or our people. Principles and policies are criticised on their merits, free from personalities and personal abuse. To suggest that our papers are open to bribery and corruption is to cast a totally undeserved slur on colonial journalism. If it is necessary to push through the "gagging" clause in the Second Ballot Bill by casting aspersions on the Press of the Dominion, then the case for the Government must be weak indeed. To abuse the plaintiff's attorney is more in keeping with the traditions of the Old Bailey than with those that are supposed to govern the utterances of responsible law officers of the Crown.

Recent developments in the East have a deep significance as pointing towards a widespread determination to shake off the yoke of the foreigner. Persia and Arabia are both in revolt, China is demanding representative government, Turkey has witnessed a revolution, Morocco has deposed its Sultan. The whole non-European world is uniting to free itself from the domination of the West. In Egypt and in India sedition is rife against British rule, Azit was deserted by his people because they thought he was adopting European ideas, China rebuked her ambassador at Washington because he openly expressed his admiration for America, and advocated an entente. "Asia for the Asiatic" is as inspiring a watchword in the East as "Australia for the Whites" is with us. But while the races of the great continent are awakening, and learning European methods and European civilisation, the better to shake off the European yoke, the older nations are talking of reducing their armaments, and are allowing industrial strife and weak sentimentalism to sap the patriotic spirit which alone can keep a country great.

Our Minister for Defence tells us that we are living in a fool's Paradise. Sir Joseph Ward reminds us that when the East awakes something more than a political will be needed to keep out the Asiatic. In spite of this, questions of national defence are treated as of no account by the mass of our electors. We want to know if a candidate is for license or no-license, for freehold or leasehold, for arbitration or for strikes; but we never dream of asking him his views on the best means to be taken for the protection of his country. The late Archbishop of York said he would sooner see England free than sober; the sword of Islam would make us sober, but not free.

Sir Thomas Bont, the Premier of Victoria, is endeavouring to get a squadron of British battleships to visit Australia. It is to be hoped that he will be supported in his efforts, not only by the entire Commonwealth, but also by our own Cabinet. Some have asserted that the visit of the American Fleet was calculated to make us look to the States rather than to Britain for protection. This is, of course, absurd; but at the same time a visit from our own men-of-war would go far to make the British navy a more real thing to many colonists than it is at present, and it would enable the naval authorities to realise more fully the magnitude of the possessions which they are called upon to guard. In view of the menacing situation in the East, no opportunity should be lost of binding still closer the ties that link us to the Motherland, and