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OF THE

SOCIAL-DEMOCRATIC FEDERATION.

Address Secretary, Social-Democratic Federation,
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EDUCATE. AGITATE. ORGANISE.

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1886.

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SOCIALISM MADE PLAIN,

BEING THE

Social and Political Manifesto of the Democratic Federation.

EDUCATE.

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FELLOW CITIZENS,

THE time has come when it is absolutely necessary that the mass of the people should seriously take in hand their own business unless they are content to find themselves in the near future worse off than they have ever yet been. At present, social and political power is monopolised by those who live upon the labour of their fellows; and Tories or Conservatives, Whigs, Liberals or Radicals strive only to keep the workers ignorant of the truths which most nearly concern them. After the Reform Bill of 1832 the capitalists entered into alliance with the landlords except on one question, and from the repeal of the Corn Laws in 1846 to this day the lords of the money-bag and the lords of the soil have together been absolute masters of the millions who labour throughout the United Kingdom. So complete has been their control that since the year 1848 no vigorous attempt has even been made to overthrow it. But what has been the result to the workers of this supremacy of the luxurious classes? During fifty years our labourers have competed against one another for wages which barely suffice to keep them alive. Whilst the realised

wealth and the annual income of the country have more than trebled, those who create these riches remain a wage-slave class, overworked and underfed, at the mercy of every crisis and the victims of each succeeding depression. The improved machinery, the extension of railways, the great steam and electric communications—that vast increase of the power of man over nature which has been the main feature of our epoch, has brought luxury for the few, misery and degradation for the many. Even in the past ten years what have we seen? The interests of Great Britain utterly neglected, Ireland shamefully misgoverned, India ruined and South Africa estranged. In 1874 the Liberals were dismissed for incapacity and Conservatives ruled in their stead for six years. Not a single measure did they introduce during that long tenure of office which could in any way lighten the lot of the millions who toil. The Conservatives having been turned out in disgust the Liberals again try their hand, and once more not a single measure is before Parliament, not a single measure is proposed for future legislation, which can benefit the working men and women who are really the source of all our wealth.

Fellow-Citizens the further success of this pitiful trickery depends upon your ignorance and will last as long as your apathy. Landlords and capitalists, who own the House of Lords and fill the House of Commons, wish nothing better than to protect their interests under the pretence of looking after yours. Take up then your own heritage, push aside these wealthy hucksters of both factions who trade upon your labour, and trust for the future in your own strength alone.

Consider the figures below.

Total Production of the United Kingdom	£1,300,000,000
Taken by Landlords, Capitalists and Profitmongers	1,000,000,000
Left for the Producers	300,000,000

Study these figures all who toil and suffer that others may be lazy and rich ; look upon the poverty, the starvation, the prostitution around you ye who labour and return the value of your entire day's wages to the employing classes in the first two or three hours of your day's work. Ponder on these facts, reflect upon these figures, men and women of England, and then ask yourselves, whether it is worth while for such a result as this to bow down in slavish subjection before your "governing classes," whether you will not rather demand and obtain the full fruits of your labour and become your own governing class yourselves. Submit then no longer to a system of Parliamentary Government which is maintained in the interests of those who rob and oppress you—which has proved itself for generations to be alike a failure and a fraud.

EDUCATE! AGITATE! ORGANISE!

Fellow Citizens, we of the DEMOCRATIC FEDERATION demand complete adult suffrage for every man and woman in these islands, because in this way alone can the whole people give free expression to their will ; we are in favor of paid delegates and annual Conventions because by this means alone can the people control their representatives ; we stand up for the direct reference of all grave issues to the country at large, and for the punishment as felony of every species of

corruption, because thus only can tyranny be checked and bribery uprooted; we call for the abolition of all hereditary authority, because such authority is necessarily independent of the mass of the people. But all these reforms when secured mean only that the men and women of these islands will at length be masters in their own house. Mere political machinery is worthless unless used to produce good social conditions.

All wealth is due to labour; therefore to the labourers all wealth is due.

But we are strangers in our own country. Thirty thousand persons own the land of Great Britain against the 30,000,000 who are suffered to exist therein. A long series of robberies and confiscations has deprived us of the soil which should be ours. The organised brute force of the few has for generations robbed and tyrannised over the unorganised brute force of the many. We now call for Nationalisation of the Land. We claim that land in country and land in towns, mines, parks, mountains, moors should be owned by the people for the people, to be held, used, built over and cultivated upon such terms as the people themselves see fit to ordain. The handful of marauders who now hold possession have and can have no right save brute force against the tens of millions whom they wrong.

But private ownership of land in our present society is only one and not the worst form of monopoly which enables the wealthy classes to use the means of production against the labourers whom they enslave. Of the £1,000,000,000 taken by the classes who live without labour out of a total yearly production of £1,300,000,000, the landlords who have seized our soil, and shut us out

from its enjoyment, absorb little more than £60,000,000 as their direct share. The few thousand persons who own the National Debt, saddled upon the community by a landlord Parliament, exact £28,000,000 yearly from the labour of their countrymen for nothing; the shareholders who have been allowed to lay hands upon our great railway communications take a still larger sum. Above all, the active capitalist class, the loan-mongers, the farmers, the mine-exploiters, the contractors, the middle-men, the factory-lords—these, the modern slave-drivers, these are they who, through their money, machinery, capital, and credit turn every advance in human knowledge, every further improvement in human dexterity, into an engine for accumulating wealth out of other men's labour, and for exacting more and yet more surplus value out of the wage-slaves whom they employ. So long as the means of production, either of raw materials or of manufactured goods are the monopoly of a class, so long must the labourers on the farm, in the mine or in the factory sell themselves for a bare subsistence wage. As land must in future be a national possession, so must the other means of producing and distributing wealth. The creation of wealth is already a social business, where each is forced to co-operate with his neighbour; it is high time that exchange of the produce should be social too, and removed from the control of individual greed and individual profit.

As stepping-stones to a happier period, we urge for immediate adoption:—

The **COMPULSORY CONSTRUCTION** of healthy artisans' and agricultural labourers' dwellings in pro-

portion to the population, such dwellings to be let at rents to cover the cost of construction and maintenance alone.

FREE COMPULSORY EDUCATION for all classes, together with the provision of at least one wholesome meal a day in each school.

EIGHT HOURS or less to be the normal WORKING DAY in all trades.

CUMULATIVE TAXATION upon all incomes above a fixed minimum not exceeding £300 a year.

STATE APPROPRIATION OF RAILWAYS, with or without compensation.

The establishment of NATIONAL BANKS, which shall absorb all private institutions that derive a profit from operations in money or credit.

RAPID EXTINCTION of the NATIONAL DEBT.

NATIONALISATION OF THE LAND, and organisation of agricultural and industrial armies under State control on co-operative principles.

By these measures a healthy, independent, and thoroughly educated people will steadily grow up around us, ready to abandon that baneful competition for starvation wages which ruins our present workers, ready to organise the labour of each for the benefit of all, determined, too, to take control finally of the entire social and political machinery of a State in which class distinctions and class privileges shall cease to be.

Do any say we attack private property? We deny

We attack only that private property for a few

thousand loiterers and slave-drivers, which renders all property in the fruits of their own labour impossible for millions. We challenge that private property which renders poverty at once a necessity and a crime.

Fellow-Citizens, we appeal to every man and woman among you who is weary of this miserable huckster's society, where poverty and prostitution, fraud and adulteration, swindling and jobbery, luxury and debauchery reign supreme, we appeal to you to work with us in a never-ceasing effort to secure a happier lot for our people and their children, and to hold up a high ideal of national greatness for those who come after. Such an ideal of true greatness and glory, needs but intelligence, enthusiasm, and combination, to make it a reality even in our own day. We, at least, will never falter. We stretch out our hands for help, co-operation, and encouragement, to all creeds and all nationalities, ready ourselves to render assistance in every struggle against class injustice and individual greed. The land of England is no mean heritage; there is enough and to spare for all; with the powers mankind now possess wealth may easily be made as plentiful as water at the expense of trifling toil. But to-day the worn-out wage-slaves of our boasted civilisation look hopelessly at the wealth which they have created to be devoured only by the rich and their hangers-on. To the abject poor patriotism is but a mockery, all talk of happiness, of beauty, of morality, is a sneer. We call, then, upon every lover of freedom to support us in our endeavour to form a real party of the people, which shall secure a noble future for our own and other lands.

The aims and objects of the DEMOCRATIC FEDERATION

are before you. Success can only be achieved by organised effort.

EDUCATE ! We shall need all our intelligence.

AGITATE ! We shall need all our enthusiasm.

ORGANISE ! We shall need all our force.

EDUCATE ! AGITATE ! ORGANISE !

(Signed) **The Executive Committee,**
 June, 1883. **Democratic Federation.**

The Federation consists of branches in various towns, membership of which is open to all who hold the principles set forth in the manifesto of the body, and who subscribe to its programme. Subscription 1d. per week.

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 Secretary, Social-Democratic Federation,
 Bridge House, Blackfriars, E.C.

MANIFESTO

OF THE

Social-Democratic Federation.

Issued after the West End Riots, Feb. 8, 1886.

15th February.

FELLOW CITIZENS,

We invite you to attend a mass meeting of employed and unemployed workers in Hyde Park, at 3.30 p.m. punctually, on Sunday next, February 21st, to demand that the Government should organise the labour of those who are now starving, owing to no fault of their own, and should, as at other periods of distress, commence useful public works, paying to those engaged rates of wages sufficient to ensure a healthy subsistence.

In calling this meeting we earnestly appeal to all who attend it, whether in or out of work, to help us to keep order. Those who understand the vital importance of the Social-Democratic movement to workers of every grade will be the first to put down any attempts of their enemies to discredit the cause of the people, or to endanger that right of public meeting which can alone enable the producing class to gain any real advantage without bitter civil strife.

The objects of the Social-Democrats when attained will benefit not the workers only but even those who to-day live in luxury, at the expense of the misery and

degradation of the labourers. The present hopeless breakdown shows clearly enough that the upper and middle classes are unable to handle the industrial machinery even to their own profit. Hundreds of thousands of our fellows eager to do useful work, in order to maintain themselves and their families in reasonable comfort, find that they cannot earn sufficient wages to give them the bare necessities of life. At the same time the very goods which they themselves most want are unsaleable because the producers are thus denied the possibility of purchasing them. Even the employed must know that the lot of their workless fellows to-day may be theirs to-morrow. The uncertainty of employment is yearly increasing in every trade, while in many branches men over forty years of age are systematically refused work.

Hard times now come much oftener than formerly and each crisis lasts longer than the one before. The reason of this is that the workers themselves, having no property, are forced to compete with one another for subsistence wages, and have nothing to do with the disposal of the wealth which they produce for the profit of others. When capitalists cannot make that profit, they cut their men adrift.

What is to be done? The landlords and capitalists practically confess that they, at least do not know. When forced to recognize that people will no longer starve in silence, they condemn skilled artizans as well as famine-stricken labourers to prove that poverty is their only crime by breaking stones or picking oakum at tenpence a day; or they endeavour to salve their consciences, shocked by the misery which clamours at

their doors, by the pitiful expedient of an unasked-for charity.

Social-Democrats alone dare deal directly with the difficulty. More than two years ago as palliatives for the serious distress which even then prevailed, we issued the following proposals :—

“1.—That no Government servant be employed at his or her present wages for a longer period than eight hours in each day. This alone would give room for many now out of work, seeing that the ordinary hours of work in the Post Office and other State establishments are from ten to twelve hours, or more, in the day.

2.—That all uncultivated Crown, or other lands, or lands now in pasture, which in the opinion of skilled agriculturists, would best pay to cultivate, be at once worked with improved machinery by such of the unemployed as are accustomed to or would prefer agricultural occupation. These labourers to be paid the rate of wages which, in the judgment of a board of assessors, shall be sufficient to keep them and their families in health and comfort, or that such necessary food be supplied at cost at a general meal, lodging being provided on the spot. An equitable portion of the profits, if any, derived from such farming operations to be divided from time to time among the people employed.

3.—That any public works of importance in or near any industrial centre—such as artisans' dwellings, embankment of rivers, construction of canals or aqueducts—should be begun at once instead of their commencement being deferred; and that the same rate of wages be paid, in proportion to cost of living, to the workers employed that is paid to the agricultural labourers, or

that their feeding be conducted on wholesale principles as above. That if, on valuation of works completed any profit should be shown above what such works would have cost, at rates of wages for similar work averaged for the last five years, an equitable proportion of such profit be divided among the labourers.

4.—That, where possible, light relief works on similar principles should be commenced for those women or men, who are incapable of heavy labour; or that they be engaged on clothing or other work which they could exchange through the State with the products of those who are at work upon the land.

5.—That the cost of the initial proceedings and the payment of wages be met by the ratepayers and the State in equal portions, or in such proportions as may be determined. The advantage to the ratepayers is that able-bodied persons would be engaged upon beneficial remunerative labour, instead of upon useless workhouse tasks; the advantage to the State would be that no permanent pauperism would result from the prevailing depression. Therefore the Municipalities and the State should at once organise the unemployed labour and thereby save expense later."

To these we would now add free dinners for the children in all Board Schools, as nothing is more terrible for the workers at times like these than to see the health of their offspring ruined for life by sheer lack of nourishment.

Is this incendiarism? Are these proposals anarchical? That they can be but temporary expedients we readily admit. But every man must acknowledge that a society in which the statement of such elemen-

tary truths as that men should be allowed to work and children to eat is accounted revolutionary cannot long be propped up even by the adoption of the continental methods of police repression or the arbitrary despotism of a military governor.

All the facts around us confirm us in the conviction that the class supremacy due to historical development is even now being sapped by the growth of new economical forms. The scientific truths on which this belief is founded, can be studied in the authorised publications of the Social-Democratic Federation.

We call then upon the workers of London and of these islands to stand side by side with us in orderly union, to the end that they may organise for themselves and for their children a sound system of national and international co-operation which shall happily replace the anarchy and misery of to-day. The work that we have taken up is no light one, but the object is noble and the reward is sure.

Let the governing classes face the inevitable downfall of a decaying civilisation without hypocrisy and without panic. On them rests the responsibility of a peaceful or a forcible issue to the last great class struggle of our times. Here in the centre of capitalist domination and commercial greed we at least are resolved to continue our efforts, confident that they must lead to the final emancipation of labour and to the conquest of the future by the workers of the world.

(Signed) THE GENERAL COUNCIL OF THE
SOCIAL-DEMOCRATIC FEDERATION.

The Working Man's Programme (Arbeiter Programm). By Ferdinand Lassalle. Translated from the German by Edward Peters. Crown 8-vo., paper cover, price 6d.

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