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PRICE ONE PENNY.]

[SEVENTIETH THOUSAND.

WHAT SHALL I DO WITH MY VOTE?

A Few Plain Words to the New Voters.

BY

ERNEST PARKE.

The Right Hon. JOHN BRIGHT writes: "I have read your pamphlet, which contains much that is good. It is not easy to write as briefly and as simply as is needed for the instruction of a large portion of the new voters; but they will understand much that you have written for them."

Mr JOSEPH ARCH writes: "I have read your pamphlet very carefully. It contains some very good advice to the new electors. Any one contesting a county division would do well to widely circulate your pamphlet."

Princes and lords may flourish or may fade;
A breath can make them, as a breath has made.
But a bold pe santry, their country's pride,
When once destroyed, can never be supplied.

The Deserted Village

LONDON

W. REEVES, 185 Fleet St., E.C.; THE COBDEN CLUB; or, THE AUTHOR.

BIRMINGHAM: The National Liberal Federation, Colmore Row.

MANCHESTER: The National Reform Union, 46, Brown Street.

LIVERPOOL: The Financial Reform Association, 18, Hackins Hey.

All Booksellers in town and country.

Read these Facts.

There are about 520 members of the House of Lords.

490 of them are Landowners, owning 15,213,000 acres, and the rental is at least £12,750,000.

They draw out of the national moneys for salaries, pensions, etc., over £600,000 a year, of which the Royal princes take £104,642, the Bishops £165,771, and other peers the rest.

Since 1850, the peers and their relations have had over £100,000,000 out of the taxes.

If you want to know what they have done for it, look at page 8.

The annual income of the bishops and parsons of the Church of England is about £6,000,000.

The greater part of this belongs to the whole nation, and might go to pay for the schooling of the children.

In about 120 years over 8,000,000 acres of common lands have been enclosed.

Taxes on food and other goods brought into a country are paid, not by the foreigner who sends them, but by the people who buy them, because taxes make the goods dearer. It is not the Chinaman, but the Englishman who pays the tax on our tea.

If a tax were put on corn, every man who bought a loaf would help to pay it and the benefit would go into the landlords' pockets.

If Tories deny this, read to them what Sir Stafford Northcote, their leader, lately wrote. (see page 12).

A TALK ON THE QUESTIONS OF THE DAY.

THE VOTE.

At last, after many years of waiting and hoping, you have the vote, and you will be able to use it most likely this autumn. Up till now you have been of very little account in politics. No one cared what you thought because you had no power. But that is all changed, and as your class is now very powerful, many people will be telling you not only what to do, but what to think. But you will be wise to think for yourselves, and not take your opinions second-hand from anybody.

IT IS SECRET.

The first thing you should remember about the vote is that it is quite secret, and NO ONE can know how you have voted unless you tell him. If any persons say that they can find out, it is not true, and they are merely trying to make you vote for somebody whom they think you dare not vote against. If YOU don't say how you vote, no one else can. This way of voting secretly, or by Ballot, was made law by the Liberals in 1872, though the House of Lords did all they could to prevent it. They were afraid that the farmers would vote against their landlords sometimes instead of voting for them. Many of you, I dare say, know cases where, years ago, farmers have been turned out of their farms for voting against the landlord or his friends; but that cannot happen now, unless the farmer tells somebody how he voted. Some years past the Marquis of Exeter, a great Tory landowner, since dead, ordered all his tenants who were widows to get married again or else leave their farms. The women had no votes, and he wanted only men as tenants, so that he could make them vote as he liked. The Ballot has put a stop to doings of that sort, and that is the chief reason why the House of Lords opposed it so long.

WHOM WILL YOU VOTE FOR?

Feeling now quite sure that the vote is secret, the next thing is, to whom will you give it? It seems natural that you should support that party which has for so many years tried to get you the franchise. You know that the men who have struggled to get you your rights are Liberals. They have worked for you in Parliament and out of Parliament. They have shown themselves to be your friends before you had any power, and they are still more likely to keep friends now you have got it. The Tories,

till a very few months back, always said you were not fit to have the franchise because you were not educated. Then the Liberals passed the Education Act in 1870, which gives every child in the land an education, and soon we hope to make the schools free, because it is for the good of all that every child should be educated. The Tories thus lost this excuse, and then they took to saying that you did not care anything about the vote, and would not know what to do with it when you had got it. Last of all, when they found it was of no use trying to keep it from you, they said they had been in favour of your having it all along. They became afraid you would vote against them, and so they are now trying to make you believe they have always been your friends. I don't think you will be deceived so easily. You will most likely agree with me that these facts form very good reasons why you should trust your votes to the Liberals. But there are very many other reasons.

ARE YOU CONTENTED?

A short time ago Sir Stafford Northcote, the leading Conservative in the House of Commons, said he was afraid people would be going about telling you that you had wrongs to be righted and ends to gain, and that you were as good as your betters. It is plain that he does not think so. He seems to believe that you are quite happy and contented. If you are, it will be of no use any one telling you otherwise. But if you are not, if you think the laws, as they concern you, want altering, then Liberals and Radicals mean, if you will help them, to get the laws altered so that they may be just towards you and favour you as much as others. Your vote will enable you to do this. Up till now you have only had to obey the laws; now you can help to make them as well as obey them.

THE LAND LAWS.

The Land Laws will have most interest for you, because they affect your means of getting a living. If they are not good laws as they stand now, farming must be bad, and you cannot get better wages. Now, Liberals and Radicals believe that our present Land Laws need altering, for they partly account for there being so many millions of acres of land not being tilled now. The result is that wages are low and thousands of labourers have left the land, and either gone into the towns to try to get a living, or else gone to America and other countries where men are better paid for working on the soil. Mr. Chamberlain, M.P., says it is reckoned that there are about 800,000 fewer persons living on the land in England now than fifteen years ago. Think of that! It is the same as if two thousand villages, each with 400 people in, were all empty and the people gone away—God knows where. I can tell you of a case in my native county—Warwickshire—which will show you one way how this has come about. A landlord there has about 3,000 acres, and besides that he is a rich man. When times got bad, about 1875, his

tenants asked him to reduce their rent. He refused, and they left their farms. He had plenty of money, and it did not matter to him if the farms were not taken. But what became of the labourers on this estate? They had to work or starve, and as there was no work for them there, they had to go wherever they could get it. I dare say most of you can call to mind cases like this one. This landlord, who never lifted his finger to work, had the power under the present law to send scores of hard-working farmers and labourers out of their homes, and besides that the land produced no food, and the other rate-payers in the parish had to pay the rates that this land should have paid. This is one way in which the law wants altering. If the land will produce enough for the farmer and the labourer—the men who really work—it ought to be farmed to grow food for the nation. The landlord—the man who does not work—can take his share out of the land after the other two have got their living, but he should not be allowed to let the land lie idle and starve the labourer because he cannot get as much rent as he wants. He cannot be allowed to act like a dog in a manger, who won't eat the bait of corn himself, or let the horse eat it. When a ship is in a storm, the passengers don't throw the captain and the crew overboard, but they pitch the useless lumber out. So, when farming is bad, either through bad laws, bad seasons, or bad prices, the farmer and the labourer should justly be the last to suffer, and the rich, do-nothing landlord should feel the pinch first. One good way to effect this is that suggested by Joseph Arch—make landlords let their farms by compelling them to pay rates, whether empty or not. They would be glad to let them then, if only to get rent enough for the rates.

THE DEAD MAN'S CLUTCH.

Other laws which must be done away with are the laws which permit settlement and entail. These allow a landowner to tie up his land for three generations, so that his son and his son's son do not own the land to do what they like with, but only receive the rents as long as they live. The result of these laws is that the landlord is not often willing to spend any money to improve the land, because all he cares about is to get as much rent as he can as long as he lives, and if the farmer makes the soil bear better, the landlord will only raise the rent. Consequently the land is not tilled nearly so well as it should be, and it does not find work for so many labourers as it ought to. These laws the Liberals and Radicals will try to do away with, and if you help them, they will certainly do it.

THE GAME LAWS.

In the same way, we must do away with the game laws. The game feeds on the farmer's crops, and as he keeps the game, it ought to belong to him—if it belongs to anybody. I wonder how many thousand English labourers have been sent to prison for disturbing the sleep of those sacred rabbits and hares! Land-

lords and parsons sit on the bench and try the cases, and they order men to pay heavy fines or to go to prison, without ever thinking of how great a temptation it is to a poor man to kill a rabbit for his children's dinner. But the game has been preserved long enough. We must now make some laws to preserve the labourers.

ABOUT ALLOTMENTS.

The law as to allotments is the one in which you will, perhaps, feel most interest. In many parishes there have been allotments for years which have been let out to a favored few, often at rents much higher than were paid by the farmer on the other side of the hedge, and when one of the labourers offended the parson or the squire, the allotment was taken from him. In 1882, however, as you may know, the Allotments Extension Act was passed by Parliament. Mr. Howard Evans, who has for many years worked hard for the labourer's rights, and whose name is well-known to every reader of the *Labourer's Chronicle*, collected the facts and figures for this Act of Parliament; and Mr. Jesse Collings, M.P., whose political life has also been mainly given up to the good of the labourer, got it passed into law. By this Act it is ordered that all land left for charity shall be let to labourers in allotments if they ask for it, at the same rent as the farmers round about pay. As Mr. Collings made the Bill, if a labourer could not get the charity land, he was to apply to the judge of the nearest County Court, who would inquire into the reason why he was not allowed to have it, and the matter would soon have been put right. But when the House of Lords examined the Bill, they ordered that the labourers had to apply to the Charity Commissioners in London, instead of the County Court, which meant in most cases they could not get the land at all if any difficulty arose. To help labourers who were in this trouble, Mr. Collings started a society for which a lot of Liberal gentlemen find the money, and now any labourer who cannot get the people who manage the Charity lands to let it out in allotments, should write to the Secretary, Allotments Extension Association, Birmingham, and he will advise and help him. But this is another law which must be altered so that all Charity land shall be let out to labourers who require it. If you show that you mean to have this done, the law will be changed very soon. Mr. Collings is trying to get another bill passed, called the Yeomen's and Small Holdings Bill, which will make it much easier for labourers to get allotments and plots of their own. But if you want good laws like this to be passed, ask the men who come to you to be sent to Parliament whether they will vote for such bills, and then you will know what to do when you hear their answer. The Liberals and Radicals mean to get the people back on the land again, and that the labourer shall have a bit of land to farm for himself, so that he will have something to look forward to in his old age besides the workhouse.

TAKING THE PEOPLE'S COMMONS.

They also mean to stop landlords putting fences round common lands, which do not belong to them, but which belong to the people of the parish. Landlords are very fond of enclosing land like this, and often say they do it so that the land may grow something instead of lying idle. But that is no reason why they should farm it for their own good. Why not let it out in allotments to labourers, and let the rent go to the good of the parish instead of into the pockets of the landlords? Mr. Jesse Collings is going to try to pass a Bill making landlords who have fenced in land that does not belong to them in the last fifty years give it up again. In the last 120 years about eight millions of acres, or land equal to one-third part of all the workable land in England, have been enclosed by landlords. Parliament was, and is now, full of landlords; and they can pass Acts which favour their own class very easily. For instance, when a farmer becomes bankrupt, the landlord can send the bailiffs and seize his cattle and goods for rent, but other people to whom he owes money have to take their chance of getting paid, and often lose their money because the landlord has taken all the farmer has got. Why should not the farmer's goods be sold and the money divided fairly amongst those to whom he owes debts?

LAWS MADE BY LANDLORDS FOR LANDLORDS.

But there are many ways besides this in which the lords and landlords in Parliament have made laws to suit themselves. When a man dies and leaves a lot of money, the people who come into it have to pay a heavy tax. But, if a landlord leaves a lot of land instead of money, those who come after him hardly pay anything for tax. Do you think this is fair? Then, again, the great squires and lords often do not pay as much for rates as they ought to. The reason of this is because they are so rich and powerful that the people who charge them dare not charge them their full share. I could name six or more of our noblemen, all of them with over £50,000 a year, who pay much less rates for their parks than their tenants do for their farms, and they pay nothing at all for their immense palaces. It would seem fairer if these very rich landlords were to pay rather more instead of less, than poorer folks. But there is a worse case than all these of how they have put their taxes on to the backs of the common people. About two hundred years ago, in 1660, when that immoral and base king, Charles II., came to the throne, the nobles stopped paying him the rents for their lands which they had always paid to the Government, and instead they imposed Excise and Customs duties. This meant that they taxed beer and other things that the people used, and thus the people paid to the Crown the taxes which the land had always paid. Then, in 1692, as the taxes did not bring in enough money, the nobles agreed to pay 4s. out of every pound they received as rent, but when land got worth more and rents rose they did not

pay any more taxes; and the result is that now, instead of the landlords paying about thirty-four million pounds in taxes for their land, they only pay a little more than one million. They have made the poor pay the biggest part by taxing the things that are used most—such as tea, tobacco, and beer. Here are some of the taxes which the poor pay though most of them do not know it. Out of every shilling they pay

For cocoa, $1\frac{1}{4}$ d. is for tax;
 For coffee, $1\frac{1}{2}$ d. is for tax;
 For currants and raisins, $2\frac{1}{2}$ d. is for tax;
 For tea, $4\frac{1}{4}$ d. is for tax.

For every 3d. spent in tobacco $2\frac{1}{2}$ d. is for tax, and $\frac{1}{2}$ d. for tobacco. Taxes make a shillingworth of spirits cost 4s. $4\frac{1}{4}$ d.

The tax on a shillingworth of champagne (which poor men don't buy) is $\frac{1}{2}$ d.

TAXING THE POOR.

I will give you an instance of how the poor were taxed. This case was brought before Parliament in 1842. William Gladstone, a labourer, earned 11s. a week, and spent 7s. 7d. on food, as follows:— 1 ounce of tea, 2 ounces of coffee, 8 ounces of sugar, 8 ounces of meat, 8 pounds of flour, seven pints of ale, and a quartern of brandy.

	s.	d.
The real cost of these was	2	$4\frac{3}{4}$
The taxes on these were	5	$2\frac{1}{4}$
	7	7

Thus out of the £28 a year that this poor man earned, £13 went in taxes. A man who had £10,000 a year ought, at the same rate, to have paid about £4,700 a year in taxes. Instead of that he paid not more than about £500—that is the poor man paid nearly ten times as much as the rich man, according to his means. Since that day the poor man's taxes have been lightened—chiefly by Mr. Gladstone and the Liberals—but there is still plenty of room for change, for even now the poor man pays a good deal more than the rich man, considering how little he has to pay with. Liberals hope to reform this, and make the laws so that rich and poor pay each according to their means.

THE HOUSE OF LORDS.

You will remember that last autumn, when meetings were being held all over the country to get the Franchise Bill passed so that you can have the vote, a great deal was said against the House of Lords. They had refused to pass the Bill. Everybody expected they would not pass it, because they have always delayed or refused to pass every Bill of importance that the Liberals in the House of Commons have brought in for the good of the people. Before 1832 the Lords used to govern the country how they liked, without taking much notice of what the people who paid the taxes wanted. Nobody but wealthy 'a.n.d-

Lords could sit in Parliament, and the House of Lords really chose the greater part of the House of Commons. But in 1832 the Liberals passed the great Reform Bill, after nearly two years' struggling with the Lords and the King. The Peers agreed to it at last, because there had been riots all over the country, and they could see, if they did not, we should have civil war in England. They did not know whether the soldiers would fight against the people, or side with them; so, in their fear, they passed the Bill. By this Bill large towns like Manchester, Leeds and Birmingham were allowed to send members to Parliament, and little villages of a few hundred people, and, perhaps, with only a dozen electors who were in the pay of some lord, stopped sending members. This was the beginning of that great reform which has brought it about that now every man in the country who has a house has a vote.

WHAT THE LORDS HAVE DONE.

It is easy to see that the more power the people got, the less was left to the lords, but they have struggled hard to keep their wrongful power. They have always opposed bills to make elections cheap and stop bribery, because they were rich and could afford to bribe. They opposed the Ballot because it prevents them knowing how a man votes, and so they cannot threaten to turn him out of his farm or cottage if he does not vote as they want. They refused to do away with cruel laws which punished people severely because they were Roman Catholics or Jews, or because they went to chapel instead of to church. They, of course, opposed the first efforts that were made to give the poor man's child a cheap education, partly because they were afraid of the poor knowing how the lords have treated them for hundreds of years, and partly because there would be many other people to teach the children besides the church parson. Then they opposed the Liberals taking the taxes off paper, because they knew when paper was cheaper the poor would be able to buy newspapers for a penny or a halfpenny, and these would educate the workman and tell him of his rights and his power. They did all they could to prevent people in the towns from having town councils to manage their affairs for them.

HOW THE LORDS HAVE RULED IRELAND.

In Ireland they have been far more powerful than they have here, and the result is seen in the dreadful condition of that unhappy country. For years the Lords refused to pass every Bill which the Liberals proposed for the good of the Irish people; and, as the English did not care quite so much as when the Lords refused English Bills, the reforms were much longer delayed. The greater number of the farmers there only have small plots of land. They build their own houses of mud, and make all the fences and hedges on the land at their own expense, but when they cannot pay the high rents to their landlords they are turned out on to the roadside to beg or die. I could tell you of

cases where as many as seven hundred men, women and children—some of them sick and ill—have been turned out of their homes in one day because the landlord wanted to knock down their houses and turn the land into sheep-farms. This sort of treatment has been going on for hundreds of years, and the Lords refused to alter the laws which allowed it, although some Irish landlords themselves said they were most unjust. It is no wonder that landlords get shot, and Fenians come over here and make disturbances. It is almost certain that if we had had no House of Lords, we should have had no Fenians. The high rents and bad laws in Ireland will also explain why Irishmen come over for harvest time and do work which Englishmen might do. Always remember that our House of Lords, by refusing to pass better laws for Ireland, has made that country so that millions of the people have left it and come here to live or gone to America. Mr. Gladstone and the Liberals overcame the Lords in 1881, and passed a Land Act in spite of them. Ireland is much quieter now, and when we have given the Irish full justice it is to be hoped that they will live at peace with us. We must let them know it is not the English people but the English lords who have refused them justice. Our lords own immense estates over there, but most of them spend the money in London and abroad which their Irish tenants pay. This helps to make Irish trade bad and the people more discontented.

HARSH AND CRUEL TO THE POOR.

Then, again, the Lords have always been in favor of punishing the poor severely. How the squires send men to prison for making a rabbit run away you already know. But that is mercy itself to what the Lords allowed by the laws. In 1810 it was lawful to hang a man for stealing half-a-crown's worth of goods, and the Lords refused to alter the law although the House of Commons wanted to. Between 1810 and 1845 it was reckoned that 1,400 people were hanged for doing what, if they did it now, they would only be sent to prison for. But the Lords refused for years to alter the law, although often asked to do so. These noblemen were rich and well fed, and did not know, or care, what a temptation it is to a poor and hungry man to steal a loaf. I wonder how many poor people have been sent to prison for months for stealing a turnip not worth a farthing? Of course it is wrong to steal a turnip, but often a man's character has been taken away for life because he took some such trifling thing. When rich men do worse things (for only very poor people steal turnips) they generally have a chance to get off by paying. For instance, in January last (1885) a married clergyman in Lincolnshire committed shocking assaults on two little girls. He was only fined £20 and lost his situation. If a poor man had done such a thing, he would certainly have had a long time in prison, and most likely would have been sent to penal servitude for ten or fifteen years, and his family would have gone to the work-

house. So, when a noble lord, not long since, assaulted a servant, instead of being sent to prison and hard labour like any other man, they arranged it so that he hardly suffered at all.

THE LORDS, THE LAND, AND THE LABOURERS.

But you will feel most interest in regard to what the Lords have done about the land and the labourers. Every effort that has been made to get justice for the farmer has always been opposed by the Lords, although they pretend to be his friends. You know that when tenants leave their farms, however much they may have improved them, their landlords were not bound to give them any money to pay them back what they had spent in making the sheds better, or in manuring the land, or doing other things that improve the farm for all time. The House of Lords have always opposed any attempt to protect the property of the tenants from greedy landlords. In just the same way they tried to defeat the Bill giving the farmers the right to kill hares and rabbits. How they have passed Bills enclosing immense quantities of common land, and how they spoiled the Bill giving you the right to have charity lands cut up into allotments, I have already told you. In Ireland they refused to cottage allotments the same fair treatment which the law gave to large farms. Then the workmen in towns have suffered from the action of these noblemen just as badly. They refused to women and children working in coal-mines the protection from hard masters and long hours, which Liberals tried to get for them in 1842. Many of the lords are owners of coal-pits, from which they get immense incomes, and they did all they could to keep women and children at work in them for long hours because their labour is cheaper than men's. They also tried to spoil the Employer's Liability Act, which gives a workman or his widow a claim against his employer if he is hurt or killed through his master's or the foreman's carelessness. In fact, the House of Lords has always opposed every Bill intended to do good to the working classes or make them more free. These noblemen sit in the House of Lords because they are the eldest sons of their fathers, and not because the people elected them. That may have been a very good reason many years ago,

BUT IT WON'T DO NOW.

No matter whether the Liberals or the Conservatives are in power in the House of Commons, the House of Lords is always Tory, and no one will say it is fair that the Liberals who have been elected by the people to govern them should have all their work delayed or spoiled by a lot of rich landlords who are elected by nobody. Even if a peer goes to prison, as some do sometimes, he can go back and make laws for us or spoil other men's good work. The People's League, whose offices are at 14, Buckingham Street, Strand, London, has been formed to spread the truth about the Lords amongst the voters, and you may be sure that when their evil deeds are more generally known by the voters,

the House of Lords will be either changed or done away with. The People's League, before it had been started three months, had over 100,000 members, and it is still growing rapidly; so you see very great numbers of your fellow workmen have made up their minds that we can do better without the House of Lords than with it, and I hope you will think so too.

WANTING TO TAX THE LOAF.

There is one change which a good many Tory landlords and others want to make. They would like to put a tax on all corn that comes into the country—that is, they want to tax the loaf. But you will find that nearly all the people who want to do this are landlords or their friends. They will tell you that if a small tax is put on the corn you will have more work and more money. It is not true, and I will tell you why. The landlord would get a lot more rent, but will you be willing to pay more for your bread that rich men may still be richer? There used to be a tax on bread. Between the years 1815 and 1846 bread was always taxed, and what was the state of the people at that time? Far worse than it is now. Landlords were better off, but the working men were starving. Farmers were ruined by thousands. The workhouses were full; thousands of families had no food, no clothing, nothing; there were riots in many places, women sold their wedding rings for bread, people boiled nettles for food and ate bad flesh. At this time there were only half as many people in Great Britain as there are now. Do you want these dreadful sufferings over again? They were the result of a tax on bread, which benefits nobody but the landlords. Your wages are very much higher even now than they were then. Joseph Arch has written a book which shows up the shocking state of the country at that time but folks who want to tax your bread don't tell you of these things. They say to you, "What is the use of cheap bread if you have no money to buy it with?" They mean you to understand that if bread was dearer you would have more money. It is false. Bad as trade is now, it was far worse when bread was taxed, and would be still worse if we were so foolish as to allow it to be taxed again. The real change that wants to be made is to alter the land laws so that the soil may be freely tilled. There would be plenty of work then, and very much more corn grown at home than there is now.

HOW TO MEET A TORY DODGE.

In the month of April (1885) Sir Stafford Northcote, the Conservative leader in the House of Commons, wrote—"As regards the future, I am distinctly of opinion that a return to a protective duty on corn would be impossible, and that the idea that a Conservative Government would attempt to impose one is groundless." Lord Salisbury a few days afterwards expressed the same opinion. When a Tory comes to you trying to make you believe that a tax on corn would raise your wages, show him this sentence of Sir Stafford Northcote's, and ask him why he is so

dishonest as to recommend a plan that his own leaders will not carry out and declare to be impossible.

THE CHURCH.

Now there is the question of the State Church. You know that the Church of England, which does not include nearly half the nation, uses for itself alone money which was meant just as much for the poor as for the parsons. The Church is thus very wealthy and powerful, and though the parsons are often good and kind men, in many cases they use their power against the poor who go to chapel, or who don't send their children to the church school, and they forget these poor people when the time comes round for giving out blankets and coal. Sometimes these parsons are magistrates and I have known some who have been very severe in sending men to prison for poaching. When they are on the Boards of Guardians, they often forget what their Great Master told them about being kind and merciful. Well, the Radicals are working to put an end to the special power which the State gives to the Church of England, and they wish to have the enormous wealth of the Church spent for the good of all the people. For instance, it might be used in paying for the schooling of the children. It was meant for all the people years ago, and it ought to belong to all the people now, instead of to only a part. These parsons are usually great friends of the squires and the landlords. They taught you at school and at Sunday school to be contented in that state of life into which it shall please God to call you. You have learnt since that it is a good thing for a man to better himself when he can. It is easy to see why the parsons have taught you to be contented, for, as a rule, they want the laws to stop as they are, instead of being made better. The parsons and the bishops have always done their best to prevent changes being made for the good of the people. They often say the State church is the poor man's church, but if that is so, it is a strange thing the bishops and most of the parsons always oppose laws meant to give poor men their rights. The laws ought not to favour one church more than another, and we must do away with the State church, so that church and chapel will be on the same footing.

VOTE FOR PEACE AND AGAINST WAR.

Lastly, always vote for peace. No lasting good comes to working men or anyone else from war, which wastes our taxes and sheds the blood of our fellow men, and all for no real good. Often wars are made by our rulers without the people being asked, but the people have to find the money and the men, although often they don't agree with the objects for which war is being made. War makes trade bad and wages low. Nothing but misery and sorrow comes from it. It may be to the advantage of lords and gentlemen who are officers to fight and get higher rank, but it can never be to the good of working men to make war except to defend ourselves when attacked, and that

we shall be always sure to do. It will help you to understand what a curse war is when I tell you that out of every pound we now pay in taxes 16s. 3½d. goes for war, war debt, or war preparations and 3s. 8½d. for all other purposes of government.

WEIGH THESE CLOSING WORDS WELL.

I have tried to show you some of the objects which you may like to strive for. If you set your mind upon getting them, YOU CAN DO IT, for there are thousands and thousands of your brothers and relations in the towns who are bent on getting the laws and changes I have set before you. But how are you to do it? By acting together; and, if possible, through your Union. Taken one at a time, your votes are worth very little: taken altogether, there are no just and right things you cannot accomplish in time by means of your votes. But you must not think these objects can be gained without long and hard work. You must show the men who want to be your Members of Parliament that you mean to have these things, and tell them that if they won't vote for what you want, you won't vote for them. We send men to Parliament to do as we want, not to do as they like, and we must make them understand it. The Liberals in town and country everywhere will help you to improve your condition; they will aid you in gaining whatever is rightly yours. Stand shoulder to shoulder; work steadily with your mates for the same just ends, and there is no class in this country which is strong enough to deny you your rights when right is on your side.

ERNEST PARKE.

103, Camberwell Grove, London, S.E.

How the Lords and Bishops have Voted.

SOME SAMPLES OF HEREDITARY LEGISLATION.

- 1807—Rejected Bill appointing a Committee of Council for Education.
- 1810—Rejected Bill abolishing Punishment of Death for stealing goods value 5s. Seven bishops voted against the Bill. None for it. More than 200 crimes then Capital.
- 1825—Rejected Catholic Relief Bill.
- 1829—Disfranchised 40s. Freeholders in Ireland.
- 1831—Rejected Reform Bill. 21 bishops assisted. Great riots.
- 1832—Mutilated Reform Bill in Committee. Renewed riots. Run on the Bank of England. Country on the brink of Revolution. Refused to open Universities to Dissenters.
- 1833—Compelled withdrawal of Irish Education Bill.
- 1833-57—Denied civil and political rights to Jews. 20 bishops assisted. Rejected the Commons' Bill seven times.
- 1834—Refused to allow more than 20 persons to meet for worship in private house. Three times rejected Tithe Abatement Bill; also Bill for legalising marriages in Dissenting chapels.
- 1836—Ordered banns of Dissenters' marriages to be read before Boards of Guardians. Mangled Municipal Reform Act.
- 1838—Refused to mothers the custody of infants during separation caused by fault of father.
- 1839—Continued death penalty for sheep-stealing. Rejected National Education Bill.
- 1842—Refused to give women and children working in mines the full relief of the Commons' Mines Regulation Bill. Prevented protection of miners for 30 years.
- 1845—Refused compensation to the Irish tenants, and so for 25 years.
- 1858—Refused church rates abolition, and for next 11 years; 24 bishops in the majority.
- 1860—Rejected Bill taking tax off paper, which meant cheap press.
- 1868—Threw out Irish Church Disestablishment resolutions. Emaculated Artisans' Dwellings Bill.
- 1867-70—Thrice refused University Tests Abolition.
- 1869—Mutilated Irish Church Bill. Refused to allow Life Peerages.
- 1870—Mangled Irish Land Act.
- 1871—Rejected Army Purchase Bill. Threw out Ballot Bill and next year made secrecy *optional*.
- 1873-6-7-9—Refused to amend Burial Laws.
- 1879 and since—Refused to legalise marriage with a deceased wife's sister.
- 1880—Rejected Compensation for Disturbance Bill. Ireland became in a state of anarchy. Threw out Irish Registration of Voters Bill.
- 1882—Made Allotments Extension Act unworkable.
- 1883—Maintained Trap Pigeon Shooting. (No Bishops attended to vote.) Spoiled English Agricultural Holdings Bill, but retreated.
- 1884—"Hung up" the County Franchise Bill.

After reading the above, do you not think that the House of Commons was right when, in 1649, it resolved that the House of Lords "was useless, dangerous, and ought to be abolished?"

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