

TO THE UNEMPLOYED.

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Why are you out of work?

Rich people say—because you are an idler. But you know that this is one of their pious lies.

Politicians, lawyers and landlords say—because there is OVERPRODUCTION—too much of everything—or because there is OVERPOPULATION. But all these are A SET OF LIES, only to divert your attention from the real cause.

There are not too many workers in the land, but TOO MANY PEOPLE WHO LIVE ON THE LABOURERS' BACKS; too many drones in the bee-hive.

There is no over-production, but UNDER-PRODUCTION.

Is there too much bread in this country? Have we it cheaper than in other countries? Not at all.

Is there too much meat? Is it sold at a few farthings a pound, and yet finds no buyers? No, its price goes up every year.

Too much coal, perhaps—so that our wives don't know how to get rid of it?

Too many cheap houses for the working men?

Too much clothing in working men's dwellings? Too many cottons? Too many blankets for our little ones?

There is nothing of the sort. Bread, meat, coal, cottons, blankets—everything is too dear for the working man. He cannot buy with his scanty wages what he wants of bread and other things!

Everything grows dearer every year.

Every year there are in the shops more luxuries for the idleness, and less necessities for those who work with their hands.

Why is it so?

SIXTEEN MILLION ACRES OF GOOD ARABLE LAND REMAIN IDLE IN GREAT BRITAIN, while wheat, meat, butter, cheese, eggs, are imported from other lands. WHY SHOULD WE NOT GROW THEM AT HOME?

TWO MILLION ENGLISHMEN AND SCOTCHMEN LIVE IN ABOMINABLE SLUMS. Why should we not build cheap houses for them? Why should not the cities themselves begin that building at once?

Why should miners be idle, and scoundrelly mine-owners raise the price of coal at will? Why should not the miners have the mines, and work them for the benefit of the working men?

The land, the mines, the town lands, the quarries—everything is now owned by the rich, and the rich don't want that we, common workers, should earn an honest living. They are afraid we shall become too independent, if we don't starve from time to time.

If all the English working men died of starvation, the rich Englishman wouldn't care a straw. They have plenty of Blacks in Africa, plenty of starving peasants in Egypt, in Turkey, in China—everywhere—who will work for them on the land or in the factories, for a few pence a day. There, in those foreign lands, they invest their capital, WHICH THEY HAVE SWEATED OUT OF US HERE. It pays them better to build railways, gun-factories, cotton-mills all over the world, and to keep the land of England for their pleasure, WHILE WE STARVE UNEMPLOYED.

ENOUGH OF THAT!

We must take and manage that land, those mines, those town-lands! THEY ARE OURS, AND NOBODY ELSE'S. We want that land, those mines, those factories—not to keep them idle, but to get out of them what we, the whole nation, want for our living.

Let all unemployed working men come together in every town. Let us all see what there is to be done.

Then let us go in a mass to our Urban and County Councils, and make them understand it is food we need at once, then work.

NO SO-CALLED RELIEF WORK, NO WORK FOR CHARITY, BUT REAL WORK, USEFUL WORK.

But you will, perhaps, say: "What is the use of going to these Councils, they have no power to give us food or work; it is only the 'relieving officer,' under the Boards of Guardians, who can grant relief." And rightly you prefer to starve rather than submit to the humiliations, the indignities and degradations imposed by these upon applicants for food. It is quite true that the "Government" has been very careful not to give much *real power* to these local bodies. Local administrative work is for the most part all these councils perform, but your going to them will—nay, has already—forced them to apply to Parliament for greater scope, and in the meantime it will force them to hurry on those works which were only delayed through negligence.

Those of you who are members of Trade Unions should raise the question at your meetings. If there is a move being made in the matter through the local "Trades Council," try to see that your delegate gives it his support. If nothing is being done, instruct your delegate to raise the question of sending deputations from the Trade Societies to these local authorities, and if possible call public meetings, where all those interested can discuss the matter. For remember this question affects *all* wage earners!

Those unemployed to-day may get work to-morrow, displacing those now at work, often at reduced wages. Then, too, even if wages are maintained, it is only by the depletion of the funds of your Union, in support of its members out of work. Thus weakened it is unable to try again to improve working conditions for a long while.

All this time we see, too, more and more every year, of countrymen driven to the towns to compete with the workers already there, making things worse. And to think that all this misery is forced on you, when your past work has created all the wealth in the country! The agricultural labourer has ploughed and sown, and gathered the harvest, tended the cattle and sheep, only to see them sold to enable the farmer to pay the rent to the landlord and make his profit, while they had to be content with just enough wages to go on from week to week. Immediately bad weather set in, many were not wanted and had to set off to seek work in the towns. The miner has hewn the coal, the weavers woven the cloth and cotton, the tailor made the clothes, the builders built houses, and yet, somehow, all at once a large number find themselves quite unable to get enough to eat. This so-called civilization is unable to secure them the necessities of life. Only by abdicating their manhood will it provide them with a voluntary prison, called the workhouse.

It, therefore, comes to this:—those who control everything use their power to enrich themselves; those who have worked cannot enjoy the fruit of their labour. Is it not possible for you to grow food, hew coal, build houses, weave cloth, make garments, and arrange the distribution and exchange of all these things without those people who live by the plunder of your labour to-day; and when they have no longer need of your services—leave you to starve? Surely it is! So first go to your local authorities and tell them that as they pretend to represent you, to at least provide you with food and work.

And if they cannot, or will not do that, then let us drive away these Good-for-Nothings, and, taking the matter into our own hands, see what we can do ourselves for our relief, by getting back for the people the land, the mines, and everything of which the nation has been robbed by the drones under the protection of Parliament.

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