(PUBLISHED BY SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT.)

"THE SCOURGE OF MORTALS,"

By J. M. JACOBS,

Author of "A Talisman," "The Stolen Picture," &c., &c.

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CHAPTER I.

James had remained so ominously calm during the whole of my tedious statement that I felt that I could not expect even his one short word of comment as he betokened some kind of interest in the matter.

"Well, what do you exactly," said I, "but I know that that justification enough," he said. "Strange, I always did like you."

"Do you think that justification enough," I asked, "for always leaving the reckoning to me?"

"My dear James, are you not the head—the brain, of course, the figure-head—of this partnership?" I inquired blandly.

"Have I had long before learnt, experimented that my place was on the side of a question on which I was one that usually commended me to James's admiration, so that it was no more than a mere surprise, that I felt pierced by a sense of a coming storm. Biting my lip in vexation, he rose from the chair and walked restlessly to and fro. I knew that he was counting ten, for there must have been time for two minutes at least, before he spoke, and even then he spoke with a jerk.

"Ten halfpence been a thorn in my side," he burst out, inconsequently.

"The sting and the accompaniment of the pain are the world began," I replied, soothingly, pulling away at my cigar. "Or ought to be so, since the gates of Eden were closed to the general public."

"I cannot deal," he went on, rebuke-laden, "looking out his own train of thought which I had read for my attempts to render his conversation more interesting and interesting that you have been perfectly amazing in your generosity."

"A thousand thanks for the word—this is, I fear, phrase from Cesar. Was my gratitude, James? I know, James, I have been worrying myself terribly of late, in the hardest you might accuse me of blighting a promising career?"

"Is no set your mind at rest for ever on that point," he said with bitterness. "Your deviations from the normal have been completely regrettable, if they are invariably on the wrong side of the line. Didn't you make an excellent start in life by getting yourself sent down from Oxford?"

"Was it my fault if the Vice-Chancellor was so scientific—and a testotaller to boot? Jacobs was the only way to save the family credit. I thought I made sure. How could I have had second to your double-first?"

"Then you scraped into Sandhurst—"

"Pass, I mean, I had quite a bigger scrape yet to make up for it," said I, laughing in the reminiscence.

"And at the end of six months got leave of absence on the rest of your life."

"What should I do in that galley?" I asked. I recollect, I was a bit of a coward.

"But, excuse me, are you writing a new Arabian Nights, with special reference to the glorious achievements of the Fitzmore family?"

He took no notice of my query, but continued the course of his peroration.

"Your mother's half-a-crown, a penny left of the lady sum you came in for at your majority."

"My dear brother," I protested, "do morals—"

"I really don't like these reflections on your father's judgment."

He compressed his lips, but kept his temper. I was not in the habit of his, which in the case of older sons is one of our family legacy.

"I have paid your debts four times," he resumed, slowly and deliberately, obviously trying hard to the debt old fellow—to brace himself for the coming reply.

"Three times, three times, you can't honestly reckon those pulpy 'Varsity bills."

"I did not have the confounded check after every occasion, I suppose, to remind you that I was the sole purpose of getting me to pay them a fifth time."

"No, really, I do be unjust, James," I pulled quite. "Also to breathe once more the invisible Wyldes are. Also to behold the right hand, I may said a good conscience and the charming countenance of my only brother—the Earl of Killines. Also to smoke some of his excellent cigars—where do they come, he, by the way?"

"I crave to this feeling," he burst out, and I saw with the satisfaction of realised attorney, that he was in a temper now—red what he called at Sandhurst the "elastic limit." "You grow a little too far this time, and I'm backing out."

"If you put out any more rope to your humble servant, I hazarded.

"Do, I beg of you. The harm I have done you in my indulgent weights on my conscience be gone."

"Yes, come—I retorted, raising my hands in mock appeal—I know I have been rising the balance of your own sins now, and you have yet years more than I to account for! Come, be fair, and do not down."

He continued in a minute in silence, and for several few minutes seemed to be trying his hardest to unravel the pattern of the carpet, which, I knew, was a sign of his habitually and meditative habits, usual by now. I conjectured, not have regarded it at the time. Then he rose, came straight to me and laid his hand on my shoulder. I shifted uneasily, knowing what was coming, and dreading it. His eyes were I could high away, his love made me awkwardness.

"Jack," said he, gravely, looking me earnestly in the face with his clear blue eyes, I turned my head away, and with a gesture of impatience threw my unfinished cigar out of the window.

"Well," I said petulantly, "what is it, dear old chap? what you want me to do? Drown myself? Will it afford pleasure in the world?"

"Jack," he repeated, "I'm sick of my guardianship! God knows, I have always striven to do my duty by you."

"Too much, I think, James!" I replied, half mollified by his genuine feeling. "Why, you had better let me go to the devil my own way."

"No, I will not—and you shall not!" he said, passionately. "Yet you know full well the little you have led during the past year cannot, I fear, that must be the end of all! Dishonour, disgrace, Canada, or a grave," said I, quietly.

He sank in a paroxysm of despair with almost a sob of pain.

"Yes, speak like an actor—or a madman. Do you think I'd do anything in the world for you? But you will, I know, pay your debts once more, you'd only recommence the old game."

"Exactly—that's why I warn you, better leave me alone."

"Stuff and nonsense, man! Did you come here to tell me this?" he asked in bewilderment.

"Yes, I am the head of the family—here is my title deed." I'm heart sick of everything. I'm bored and wearied to death. Can you think a real good cropper is half bad? Humpty Dumpty would be an excellent trade, but, candidly, I don't advise you to lend me money after bad."

"If I were to take your advice, Roy, I should be just as big an idiot as you," replied Jim, quite good-humouredly. "But I can't, if I do help it. Look here, I'll put you straight once more."

"Jesus, you're as big a brick as I am a brute," said I, much moved, as I clasped his proffered hand.

"But I mustn't forget—there's one condition," he suddenly recalled.

"Condition?" I repeated, raising my eyebrows at this view of James in a new light, as many as you please. Have I to join the Blue Ribbon Army or the Salvation Army, or is it the Anti-Gambling League? Let them all come, while I'm in the mood."

"Don't be absurd, Roy!" he replied, looking exceedingly uncomfortable. "But I've given my word of honour not to do anything more for you until you take up an occupation—a very good one, really!" he added, hurriedly.

"Word of honour! And to whom, may I ask?" I inquired, jeily, with a twinkling of fear and a curl of the lip at the unwelcome intimation of extraneous influence.

"To—to the one who got you the post. I told him of your letter when he was here last week, and—isn't it good of him?—I had the definite offer by this morning's mail!"

"Bet who is he, pray?" I asked suspiciously.

"I know you have some prejudice against him," he answered reluctantly; "but he's not a bad fellow by any means. It's Theodore, of course."

"Theodore!" I cried, furiously, jumping up in my turn. "May Theodore rot for a meddlesome ass! Do you imagine for one single moment I'm going to let that pompous prig spoil my life a second time?"

"Yes, I do—unjust," said James; "he has always offered to help you."

"Help me!" I almost shrieked. "Do you know who has brought me to this pass so early in life, a tormented, hunted, I live or I die? It is the good Theodore. Do you know who has flung me into the arms of ruin and made my life a torment—who is the burden to you? It is the kind, helpful Theodore, Jericho with Theodore and all his pests!"

"Are you mad, Roy?" asked James in surprise. "What on earth has the man done to you?"

"What had he done? I covered my eyes with my hands, as I thought of the agonies which had crept into my life and driven me down to sorrow as worst I might; only to render the contrast more poignant now. But I pulled myself together.

"Did he not rob me of Diane?" I replied, making a great effort to speak with calm. "Would she not have made my life sweet and I a different man, but for that confounded hypocrite of a guardian of here. With her smiling face went out of my life. There you have it!"

James regarded me curiously, pityingly.

"Are you quite sure, Roy," he said, "that it was all Theodore's fault?"

"Of course. I am!" I answered angrily. "Was she called in the end? Why, he told me himself he would never give his sanction for Diane's sake—as if he cared for her the hundredth part of what I did!"

"I fear you are making a serious mistake," said James, with a grave confidence that stirred my heart uneasily. "It was a much more common sight of yours than Theodore who made Diane refuse you."

"Tell me his name—his name!" I cried fiercely. "Who was he?"

"Yourself!"

I uttered a hoarse cry of denial. In the angry spirit that rose up within me I could almost strike him for the words. He was pitiful, him and myself afterwards. I clenched my fists and made a step towards him; then stopped, quaking slightly. I struggled with myself, mentally, physically. Yes, it was true, how could I deny it?

"It's a lie!" I shouted, "a cruel lie. We loved each other as children together. She would have accepted me if left to herself—if her mind had not been poisoned. But she did not love me, James, she did, if you have a spark of feeling in you, how can you say, how dare you say she did not?"

"Roy, I'm sorry—I'm very sorry—but I know she did."

"Do you know she spoke for her, in the devil's name?" said I, inconsistently enough, as I started back and resumed my emotion as his usually impassive face. In an instant more, I had read his secret, and was amazed at the revelation; he knew it, and faced me defiantly.

"Yes," he cried, bitterly, "Did you think you were the only man in the world with a heart? Fool! fool! to think a girl like Diane would ally herself with an idle profligate!"

"Steady, James, steady!" I interrupted, warningly.

He was never so angry but his passion wrecked itself on himself, and, with an effort, trying forth all his strength of resolution, he calmed down in a moment—a striking effort.

"I am sorry, Roy, if I have hurt you," he said, feelingly, "but have I not suffered, too? And think you any the less for the knowledge that what I would have given my life for would to obtain, you in your blindness have flung away?"

"James! James! have pity," I cried, with sobbing voice, stung as a lash.

"Roy, what can I say?" he went on, in sad tones that cut me more than all. "That I would food for your wife and children, but you had won her heart I prayed, and strove, I am ready to swear, to be the means to what can I say of the unholy madness that drove you to bruise and wound this priceless treasure to the death? No, it is needless to shake your head, for I will be more sharpened by my love, I saw it all—only too plainly. From Diane herself I learnt it in her anguish, and I said it in so many words. But surely you must have known?"

As James thus laid bare his heart, I could no longer doubt he pretended to myself these vain excuses, with which I have so long bolstered up my outraged vanity. Thence I could feel that I was to let my sense less pride lose me the sweetest girl in the wide world!

I could have laughed now, but that the pain was too great, at the folly of my resolve to blot out from my memory the bitter-sweet recollection of my darling Diane. Even in the delirium of fever I had fled the attempt was but a poor one, and at times when I thought of what I had done I could only curse myself and dash into—what? Oblivion? Yes, but in this rambling old house of our common ancestors, where not a door but creaked lovingly of her, not a portrait on the walls but conjured up her face? Ah, more beautiful features, is seemed truly ridiculous. Nor, indeed, at the bottom of my heart could I have desired to have obliterated her so such a struggle there is one thing worse than defeat, and that is—victory.

(To be continued next Wednesday.)

EDUCATIONAL EXPERIMENT AT SKIPTON

On the application of Mr. G. A. Langley, head master of the Skipton Water-street Provided School, the Skipton Education Committee have sanctioned a scheme of an advanced class designed to fill a gap between elementary schools and the grammar school. Mr. Langley was one of the delegates who took part in the Moseley Commission investigation of Canadian and American educational methods recently, and his scheme is the result of his observations. He is the West Riding Education Committee's agent.

The committee have had under consideration the matter of work for an advanced class submitted by Mr. Langley, the head master of the Skipton Water-street Provided School. I am to say that they note with considerable satisfaction the intention to give the children a course of work of a practical and educational character than is generally provided in the higher standards of elementary schools, and the encouragement thus offered towards the continuation of education. The committee are of opinion that so far as possible in all elementary schools the oldest children should be brought more into contact with good literature, should have instruction in practical arithmetic and elementary applications of geometry, should study under the guidance of the teacher a suitable book in geography or history, and also, as contemplated in the scheme, be given all available opportunities through the ordinary work of the school, should naturally take their place in the class, even though they may not be able to attend for the two years' course as suggested. Meanwhile, it will be encouraging to continue unless they have an intention of entering some other place of education. The Board of Education have sanctioned instruction suited to their age and stage of educational progress will be given, and it is hoped, be a stimulus to both parents and children.

Pollings took place in the Wimbledon Division yesterday, and the result will be known shortly to-day. The contestants are Mr. H. Chaplin (U.) and the Hon. B. Russell (Women's Suffragist).

BURNLEY MINERS FOR BLACKPOOL.

The men employed at the Burnley collieries, both belonging to the Exors. of Colonel Hargreaves and Messrs. Brooks and Pickup, had a holiday at Blackpool on Saturday next. To the number of over 3,000 they are to journey to Blackpool for the day. For the occasion five special trains have been arranged, and the men are to be allowed free railway tickets by their association. It is thought that in this way a cost of about £560 will be entailed to the association.

GARDEN PARTY AT GAWTHORPE.

In connection with the annual meetings of the Baptist Zenana Missionary Society in the Burnley district a garden party was held in the grounds of Gawthorpe Hall on Saturday afternoon. Some 350 persons were present, and these greatly enjoyed a stroll through the well-kept grounds. Games were indulged in on the cricket pitch. Tea was afterwards provided, and this having been partaken of, a meeting was held on one of the terraces. This was presided by Miss Horsfall, of Glusburn, who has recently returned from India. The Rev. J. Julian presided over the gathering, and spoke of what he himself had seen of Zenana work whilst in India. Miss Horsfall's address was descriptive of the industrial mission, to which she had been giving her assistance for the past two and a half years, and by means of which the orphans of famine and plague children were cared for and trained to useful occupations. A word of praise is due to the Rev. J. S. Langley's church at Padiham for the manner in which they prepared and served the tea.

THE VICTORIA THEATRE, BURNLEY.

Mr. Fred Karno supplies the bill of fare at the Victoria Theatre this week, and, as usual with his catering, the profit-making side of the venture is assured. There was not a large audience on Monday evening, but it was an appreciative one, the entertainment being of unusual great hilarity. This was especially the case with the Burnells, in their absurdity, "On the Links," in which they introduce amusing and smart knockabout and acrobatic business, boxing, maze spinning and selections on Xylophone, for which they earned a warm encore. The Sir Æolians were enthusiastically received for their musical act, in which they introduce several vocal numbers, including popular selections, a number of simple dances, the juveniles in the "cake walk," etc., being especially worthy of mention. Among the other members of the company are Mr. and Mrs. Fred Karno, of Burnley, and notably Mr. Edgar Budden, bone soloist and skate dancer; and Mr. Stanley Jerrom, comedian, who was particularly successful with his parody on "In the Shade of the Old Apple Tree." The other members of the company, all of whom meet with considerable success, are Miss Norah Noble, comedienne; Miss Grace Langley, comedienne and dancer; the Fredos, musical eccentrics and acrobatic balancers; Mr. H. A. Moore, character actor and mimic; Mr. Woolmer Young, vocalist; and Messrs. Frank and Free, comedians and dancers.

SALTERFORTH STRIKE SEQUEL.

"KNOBSTICK" WITH HIS BACK TO THE WALL.

An assault case resulting from the weavers' strike at Salterforth, near Barnoldswick, was investigated by the Skipton magistrates on Saturday. The defendant was Walter Haines, a non-union weaver (who was represented by Mr. M. R. Lambert), and the complainant, Walter Riddough, a youth employed as a weaver, and one of those on strike at the Salterforth mill on the question of union wages, and he was represented by Mr. G. M. Robinson.

The complainant's case was that the defendant on the previous Saturday was waiting on the canal towing-path between Colne and Barnoldswick, and he (complainant) was "reckoning with certain union weavers who had been making matters hot for him." One of the union men referred to the defendant as "Nobby" (meaning a "knobstick"), whereupon he turned upon the complainant, seized him by the throat, lifted him off his feet, and dashed him to the ground. The complainant, remonstrated with the defendant to let go, and the lad's father appeared on the scene, and said he would summon the defendant before the magistrates.

The defendant's version was that since he had found himself obliged, if he wanted to provide food for his wife and children, he had his back on the weavers' union and resume work, his life had been made a hell for him. He emphatically denied the assault, and said it was to prevent the complainant and his companions putting into practice their threat of throwing him into "Gut" (the canal) that he stood with his back to the wall abutting on the towing-path. He had gently pushed the complainant away with his shoulder.

The village constable spoke to hearing the complainant and the strike companions utter threats to the defendant a few days prior to the alleged assault. He had found the defendant a good character, and the magistrates, at once dismissed the case.

WHEN MAY CONSTABLES INTERFERE?

CURIOUS POINT AT BURNLEY.

The point as to whether a constable can be called upon when off duty was recently discussed in the case of a case as Burnley Police Court on Monday.

On Saturday night P.C. Patten received a complaint of a disturbance, and on going to the spot found a man behaving in a very disorderly manner. He took him into custody, and it was alleged for assaulting the police. The way in which he was obstructed by James Edward Cornforth, the constable had to let his prisoner go. Cornforth was brought before the magistrates on Monday, the constable stating that he obstructed him by clinging to his coat. (He the constable was accompanied by a large number of the crowd, but he could not say positively that Cornforth kicked him. The disturbance occurred just as he (the constable) was going home.

Mr. Meller (Magistrates' Clerk): Then that is the end of the matter.

Mr. Sharples (Chief Constable): A constable is never off duty.

Mr. Meller: I don't think the Chief Constable should make a remark of that sort. Cornforth is a young man. I'm inclined to think that the magistrates should never be vaccinated, but they did not care, they would not grant compensation. If they had been afterwards prosecuted, and sent to prison, because he could not pay the fine. There are some magistrates in Lancashire who boast that they have never signed an exemption certificate, and they do not. They make poor people get exemption when such magistrates sit on the Bench? We circulate thousands of (exemption) forms. We have helped a great many people to get exemption, but we cannot afford to distribute them in every town. Our people are poor, and although they give all they can afford to help on this work, it cannot cheer all. It does not amount to much. I believe we have distributed 500,000 copies of this leaflet since the Act came into force, and we are always sending out copies. To-day I am sending copies to Southampton; but my point is this, "What use is it telling people how to get exemption, when the magistrates refuse to give them the certificate, and imprisoned them for it, if they were criminals to dare to ask for the certificate? And that is the state of affairs in many of the Lancashire courts."

Who can read the foregoing facts without feelings of indignation? That magistrates should be allowed to imprisoned people for the law, and treat poor people in this contemptuous fashion, is a disgrace to our civilisation. Surely some means could be adopted to bring these tyrannical and tyrannical magistrates to their senses. Public opinion from the Bench they have disgraced would be a fit and adequate punishment.—Thanking you in advance, I am, Sir, yours faithfully, I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

JAS. H. WILLIAMSON,

100, Chedington-road, Upper Holloway, London, N., 11th May, 1907.

Wych-street, omitted from the Post Office Guide, is to be re-inserted by instructions of the Postmaster-General, on representations made to him by Mr. T. A. G. Brown, the well-known advertising agent, of Wych-street, Strand, W.C., the only Brown in the trade advertising.

CORRESPONDENCE.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

J.M. (Burnley).—The reason why the Foundry Park is the Calder—

"Colne.—We have asked an old resident who remembers, in Pulledge, in the sixties, an inn with, as the sign, the globe, with a man's legs and arms, on it. We presume this will be the place you mean.

FOR PUBLIC SAFETY.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE EXPRESS AND ADVERTISER.

Sir,—A gang of six or eight youths are prowling round the streets, public thoroughfares as well as by-streets, jostling and mauling and ogling passers-by, and otherwise molesting and insulting them. My son, while quietly going on his way, has been kicked several times within the last three weeks. I think it is quite time the police had orders to keep their eyes on such gangs, and try to protect people from them.—Yours, &c.,

PROTECTION REQUIRED.

Burnley, May 13, 1907.

[We should advise our correspondent to inform the Chief Constable of the districts complained of.—Ed. E.&A.]

A THURSBY-ROAD NUISANCE.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE EXPRESS AND ADVERTISER.

Dear Sir,—Now that the new Fire Station Hospital in Thursby-road has been completed, it is made the rendezvous of a number of worthless chaps, who are not content with simply riding round the building, but are doing a good deal of damage. Quite a Melville-street has been knocked down, and another was rescued just in time. The "scorchers" have not, but, unfortunately, the "scorched" are pleased to say, for the other evening there was a collision, with the result that considerable damage was done to the machine. The presence of a plain clothes policeman and a policeman on duty would be a guilty one would doubtless have a salutary effect on the rest.—Yours,

PATERFAMILIAS.

Mytle-street, May 13, 1907.

INCOME TAX.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE EXPRESS AND ADVERTISER.

Sir,—If the Budget passes in its present form it will inflict a grave injustice on the trading and professional classes, I refer particularly to the proposed abolition of section 133 of the Income Tax Act of 1842. This proposal is meaningless to the majority of the public, but by the initiated it is recognised as a blot that should be erased in the Income Tax Acts, and all to the detriment of the taxpayers.

Under section 133, if a person in business has had a bad year, he can claim to have his assessment reduced. To make this clear, let us take an extreme instance. Our taxpayer makes the following profits:—1904, profits £9,000; 1905, £6,000; 1906, £1,000; and 1907, £600. If section 133 is abolished our taxpayer will be called upon to pay income tax in 1907 on his three previous years' profits of 1904, 1905, and 1906, and this for a year in which he has actually made no more than £600. Perhaps the case is a minor of simple dances, the juveniles in the "cake walk," etc., being especially worthy of mention. Among the other members of the company are Mr. and Mrs. Fred Karno, of Burnley, and notably Mr. Edgar Budden, bone soloist and skate dancer; and Mr. Stanley Jerrom, comedian, who was particularly successful with his parody on "In the Shade of the Old Apple Tree." The other members of the company, all of whom meet with considerable success, are Miss Norah Noble, comedienne; Miss Grace Langley, comedienne and dancer; the Fredos, musical eccentrics and acrobatic balancers; Mr. H. A. Moore, character actor and mimic; Mr. Woolmer Young, vocalist; and Messrs. Frank and Free, comedians and dancers.

Dear Sir,—The retreat of Charles Bulcock is like his version of conceited, it is—ingenious' and ingenious, it is—ingenious that have conceived from the publication of my letters with the supposed replies of "C." So any criterion of the stupendous ingenuity he has exerted the result is lamentable indeed. The Bulcock of "C.B." postulated a series of objections to the work of Dickens, which he has utterly failed to eliminate. He has ignored the question of the role of an artistic authority, and in defiance of the popular and universal feeling proclaimed himself a Philistine. Indeed, it is impossible to repress a smile when one recalls the Bulcock pedantic "I am a superior person" dogmatism-style, in which he charged Dickens with "leaving a nasty taste in the mouth." Dickens, forsooth, is "a vulgar" and "a sloppy sentiment art." And the indisputable fact remains—that he has ignominiously turned tail. The "ingenious" message received by "C.B." then, does imply that I have some acquaintance with the "minimale, which is more than can be said of this modern grandiloquent Bulcock, who appears to know that Dickens's reputation and fame has emerged unhurt and unsullied, and that he is still the most popular, the most humane and original of novelists, a Prince of Humanity, a sociological writer of large power, and a genius who "has let in air upon a local habitation and a name," which is unexpelled, if it is not inexpugnable. Dickens is my Dickens, whatever "your Dickens" may be, "C.B." Now, that the controversy is ended, I for to Dickens's Bulcock's work the opportunity you have so kindly given me to vindicate—as far as in me lay—a writer with whom you are not wholly acquainted, so has been made manifest in your admirable journal from time to time. I have appreciated the references goes without saying, and to my mind such citations as Codlin, Pecksniff, Mr. Bumble, and the old sexton who always talked of what he was going to do "next summer," are a complete summary of the Labour Question, and a history of the present Government, in particular, and Humanity, in general. Yours, &c., "G.B."

Mr. Bulcock's reply to "G.B." who has retired (perhaps not gracefully) to that obscurity from which he ought never to have emerged, is a description writer of Carlyle, which is:—"It is an event world-wide—a unique of talent suddenly extinct. The good, the wise, the humane, the gentle, noble Dickens—every inch of him an honest man. I have the pleasure to remain, yours truly,

J.P.

Burnley, May 11, 1907.

MAGISTRATES AND CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTORS.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE EXPRESS AND ADVERTISER.

Sir,—Referring to "Alleged Vaccination Tyranny," reported in your valuable paper of the 10th inst., I shall be obliged if you will insert the following painfully interesting communication has been recently received by a clergyman and philanthropic lady, the Countess De Noailles, from Mr. Charles Gane, the hon. secretary of the National Anti-Vaccination League, which I think ought not to be reserved for private perusal only:—"Madam,—I am very much obliged for the cutting, but would respectfully point out that there are a great number of magistrates in England who refuse to grant the certificate, which is applicable. The week I have had ten letters bill men and women who have hardens to get exemption at different courts, and have all been refused. One poor man tells me the magistrate said, 'I cannot grant it to anyone through vaccination?' and when he said 'No,' the magistrate refused him the certificate. At Tunbridge Wells there are from six to six times to the court, and lose a day's wages every time, before he gets the certificate. A Brentford no one ever gets the exemption; they absolutely refuse to give it, no matter what a case may be. Some magistrates hide behind the word 'satisfy.' The Act says the applicants are to 'satisfy' the magistrates of their conscientious objection. But the magistrates refuse to be satisfied, what are the poor men to do? One poor man at Spilsby, who was earning only 15s. a week, had to go to court, walked 17 miles to the court, and then was refused the certificate. He said the magistrates the child would never be vaccinated, but they did not care, they would not grant the exemption. He was fined £1 and costs afterwards prosecuted, and sent to prison, because he could not pay the fine. There are some magistrates in Lincolnshire who boast that they have never signed an exemption certificate, and they do not. They make poor people get exemption when such magistrates sit on the Bench? We circulate thousands of (exemption) forms. We have helped a great many people to get exemption, but we cannot afford to distribute them in every town. Our people are poor, and although they give all they can afford to help on this work, it cannot cheer all. It does not amount to much. I believe we have distributed 500,000 copies of this leaflet since the Act came into force, and we are always sending out copies. To-day I am sending copies to Southampton; but my point is this, "What use is it telling people how to get exemption, when the magistrates refuse to give them the certificate, and imprisoned them for it, if they were criminals to dare to ask for the certificate? And that is the state of affairs in many of the Lancashire courts."

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JAS. H. WILLIAMSON,

100, Chedington-road, Upper Holloway, London, N., 11th May, 1907.

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PRESSING NEED FOR IMPROVED CONDITIONS.

ENTHUSIASTIC MEETING IN BURNLEY.

Sunday was utilised the country over by railwaymen for taking stock of themselves and bringing before the public the grievances they have with the various railway companies. Burnley was not behind in respect, for an imposing procession and enthusiastic meeting were held. The procession led by the Burnley Catholic Prize Band started from Rosegrove Station, and went by way of Rosegrove-lane, Padiham-road, Belgrave, St. James-street, Manchester-road, Hammerton-street to the Weavers' Institute, where a meeting was held over by Councillor Fred Thomas, was held.

Councillor Thomas, in opening the meeting, remarked that it was sufficient for him to know that that was a movement on behalf of a trades union to try to organise, and to get their outstanding grievances remedied. In the railwaymen's programme two points stood out prominently—Which they, as a textile association, were very much in touch with. The first was a demand for recognition by the railway companies. He was rather surprised that the railway companies, having been so long established, and the men's society having been in operation so many years that there should be any attempt on the part of the railway companies to refuse to recognise the men. He found in his experience that individual efforts to treat with employers was not the most advantageous, to be very advantageous, but when they came to the substance and the lasting impression of the benefits of combination, it was them almost a myth. He was glad they were going in for the all-grades movement. In their branch of the trade they had recognised it was time they were federated. (Hear, hear.) Nobodies, or anybodies, cared about the looked upon the weavers' grievances as one of their own, and he took it the same principle was animating the men who were the drivers, guards, porters, etc. (Hear, hear.) That was a movement in the right direction, for it was the only way employers would recognise in future the trade union movement. If they had could not treat with the employers that if the grievances of the weavers, or whatever branch it might be, were not remedied they would be compelled to take the world get their rights. That was even more necessary in the railway movement than in the textile industry.

The branch secretary then read correspondence with Mr. Bell, secretary of the Bell, the general secretary of the Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants, and the various railway companies in reference to the all-grades movement. They were not prepared to grant the request that Mr. Bell should attend all deputations of the men. He (Councillor) said stated that they were only prepared to receive deputations from their own men, and not from the outside interference. Mr. Bell pointed out that the men were entitled to have skilled advice, and that they could only demand it by being federated. It was for them to decide whether the old arrangement was to continue or not. Other companies had recognised the way companies, recognised the men's representatives.

Mr. Hitts, Burnley, proposed, "That this meeting of railwaymen heartily approves of the national all-grades programme approved by 57,000 members of the Bell, and that, if not in November last, endorses the policy adopted at that conference that a negotiation committee shall be accompanied by the general secretary of the society, further we approve of the action of the Burnley branch in the past in the cause of the movement and hereby instruct the delegates to urge upon that body and their successors to adopt the all-grades policy, and to urge the companies; and we hereby pledge ourselves to support any further action that may be adopted, and now call upon non-unionists to join the Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants." He was remarkably pleased at the letters from the railway companies read he imagined they were back in the middle ages instead of the twentieth century. He had not an opportunity to demonstrate what a useful and powerful force the Bell was, and what it was worth. Men who would enjoy the benefits derived by trades unions for the workers but who would not become trade unionists he designated the meanest of skunks. (Hear, hear.) He told non-unionists that their bodies were the sinews of their fellow workers and the strength of the employers. Referring to the all-grades movement he observed that it was too much sectionalism, and too much distinction in their trade union movement. There was no reason why all-grades movement amongst the railwaymen because they all stood in need of reforms. (Hear, hear.) He was remarkably pleased at what he for was a reasonable one. The railway companies had said they could not afford to concede the demands, but they had not the truth in their statements. In 1904 27 railway companies paid a dividend in wages to 500,000 employees £29,000,000 but it only averaged 25s. a week. In dividends the same year, £29,000,000 went to 50,000 shareholders by the companies themselves that if they conceded all the demands of the men the wages bill would only be £7,500,000. They could well afford to pay that out of the £40,000,000 dividends. He was glad to see the men had taken the position of demanding that human interest and human welfare should have consideration equal to securing the interest of the shareholders. (Hear, hear.) What would an eight hours day mean? It would find work for an additional 100,000 men. The unemployed were always a standing menace to their fellow men, and they had to be prepared to stand in dragging workmen down. An eight hours day on the railway would go some way to the easing of the unemployed.

Mr. L. Rippon seconded, and stated that there was a lot too much snobbishness in the movement amongst men. He was glad the custom of one grade to look down on another, and to taking up the attitude that one man's interest was not another's, he was glad to find that that spirit was dying out, and that the movement was one of a character that unity which would bring about better conditions in the future. The railway-workers must not stand upon their dignity, because it was necessary for workers of all trades to stand shoulder to shoulder for the emancipation of the people that they belonged. If they wanted the directors of the railway companies to recognise the men they had to show that there was unity and interest among them, and make their union strong. He was glad to see the men had got things from the employers that the employers took up the position that if the workers could do with so little they could do without employers. (Laughter.) That was the weakness all through. The long hours of labour of the railwaymen were responsible for many lives being lost. If the men had better conditions of employment and fewer hours of labour the railways would be safer to ride upon. (Hear, hear.) Men who had to work upon the saving of money than upon the human beings under their control. Railways, in conclusion, he remarked, ought to be owed by the Government. (Hear, hear.)

Mr. John Sparling, in supporting the motion, pointed out that 30 years ago he was a railwayman. It appeared to him that the railwaymen had not moved from the position they were then in. He criticised non-unionists, and said miners would not stand conditions they had to stand, simply because of their unions. They seemed to be lacking pluck or they would not be content to work for 16s. 17s., and 18s. a week. Forty-three per cent. of the hardest working people in the country—the miners—had to be content to beg of the workers to organise. Eighteen months ago there was an election. It was a shock. He leaves a widow and a son, and a brother, Mr. John Brown, now of London, with whom much sympathy is felt. The interment took place on Monday at the Trawden Cemetery, the Trawden Band of the Colne Conservative Club attended, and acted as bearers.

Advertise in the "Express." It pays.

HOMING.

RACE FROM STAFFORD.

The North-East Lancashire Federation of Homing Societies held a race from Stafford on Saturday, with the following results to hand:—

Burnley F.C.—Thirty-three members sent 460 birds: Knowles and Atkinson, 1,346 yards per minute; J. Crowther, 1,316; W. Robinson, 1,310; Spencer Nos. 1, 2, 1,300; J. Crowther, 1,274; Holgate and Thornton, 1,270; J. Bailey, 1,266; T. Heywood, 1,267; J. Parkinson, 1,241; H. Byrcroft, 1,236; J. Ashworth, 1,234; J. Bailey, 1,229; J. Bailey, 1,227.00; Baldwin and Son, 1,227.70; J. Parkinson, 1,223.

Stockport—Sixty-eight miles, 81 birds sent by nine competitors: J. Spencer, 1,284 and 1,280; Sagar Bros., 1,264; J. Spencer, 1,257; Lord and Hyslop, 1,250; Sagar Bros., 1,232; Sutcliffe and Sons, 1,194; Wood and Wilkinson, 1,150.

Burnley South End—Sixty-seven miles; 183 birds sent by 12 competitors: Special, "Sutcliff, 1,318.9; Coal Bros., 1,318.6; Sutcliffe, 1,314; McMahon, 1,313; Duerden and Shack, 1,302; Spencer, 1,284; Walmsley and Pickles, 1,278; Sagar Bros., 1,264; Brierley and Lord, 1,——; J. Smith, 1,194; J. R. Lord, 1,141. "Clock bird.

Burnley East End.—Ten members sent 200 birds: J. Crowther, 1,317; W. Robinson, 1,316; J. Crowther, 1,310; J. Bailey, 1,274; J. Parkinson, 1,266; J. Jackson, 1,241; A. Cunnan, 1,234; J. Bailey, 1,229; J. Parkinson, 1,227; J. Crowther, 1,223, 1,215.36; J. Crabtree, 1,215.36; J. M. Crabtree, 1,200; W. Place (3), 1,198.

Burnley West End—Sixty-eight miles; 360 birds sent by 29 competitors: aJ. Ashworth, 1,310; bW. Shepherd, 1,284; cYates Bros., 1,281; Ingham Bros., 1,255; dC. Greenwood, 1,234; eR. Smith, 1,233; fWalsey and Barrett, 1,229; R. Smith, 1,225; gFletcher and Green, 1,208; J. Ashworth, 1,205. a wins first 14, second and 3rd, second and first club; b second pool and 2s. 6d. and second club; c third pool; d wins special for best nominated bird.

Padiham—Ten members sent 176 birds: Thompson and Waddington, 1,259; Robinson Bros.1,247; Swindlehurst Bros., 1,173; Sutcliffe and Sons, 1,162; Hartley, 1,150; Wilkinson and Marsden, 1,132; Thompson and Waddington, 1,105; Rutter and Son, 1,127; Greenwood, 1,056; Thompson and Waddington, 1,016; Rutter and Son, 1,149; Swindlehurst Bros., 1,094.

Briercliffe H.S.—69 miles; 104 birds were sent by 10 competitors: Hoyle and Howorth, 1,327 and 1,310; H. Halstead, 1,278; W. Morley, 1,268; A. Duerden, 1,255; W. Morley, 1,246; W. Atkinson, 1,241; A. Rawson, 1,237.

Briercliffe H.S.—17 members sent 25; birds: *Stuttard, 1,315 and 1,311; W. Dyson, 1,294; *T. Bowling, 1,292; T. Manley, 1,291; *McCulland and Marrow, 1,290; Kidson, 1,288; Sagar, 1,283; W. Dyson, 1,281; G. Hartley, 1,——; W. Dyson, 1,276; *C. W. Hamer, 1,276; H. Bowling, 1,275; *Cook (2), 1,272; Nelson H.S.—J. Snowden, 1,384; T. Hartley, 1,338; G. Stuttard, 1,335; T. Berry, 1,327; J. Snowden, 1,321; G. Stuttard, 1,320; S. Hesketh, 1,316; W. Stuttard, 1,315; Dave and Son, 1,518; Penny Bros., 1,301; W. Hargreaves, 1,300; T. Berry, 1,297.

Burnley H.S.—72 miles; 449 birds sent by 36 competitors: *Halstead and Son, 1,355; Stow Bros., 1,330; F. Howarth, 1,327; J. Blakey, 1,322; *A. Brown, 1,320; H. Howarth, 1,319; Stow Bros., 1,317; J. Howarth, 1,309; J. Howarth, 1,309; Stow Bros., 1,309; Sutcliffe Bros., 1,307; Ashworth and Sons, 1,302. *Clock birds. †1s. and 6d. pool winner

Colne and District H.S.—38 members sent 460 birds: Special, Pilbeck, 1,355; J. Hall, 1,346; Pilbeck, 1,337; Southworth, 1,336; Bailey, 1,334.64; J. H. Naylor, 1,334.41; A. P. White, 1,331; Hartley and Roberts, 1,329; Haworth and Sons, 1,324; J. Holmes, 1,322; Cockstick, 1,322; J. H. Naylor, 1,320.