

# Making Tomorrow's World

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## BRITISH SOCIAL REFORM LEGISLATION



Birmingham, Eng.—"What is the most significant movement in British life today?" The question was asked of Aaron Watson, veteran liberal journalist, at the National Liberal club, of H. A. White, editor of the London Daily Standard, an organ of the aristocratic classes, at the Conservative club; of Robert Donald, editor of the London Daily Chronicle, the chief liberal journal; of H. A. Gwynne, editor of the London Morning Post, the journal which all society reads; of journalists, politicians, tradesmen, men in the street. The reply, in one form or another, was everywhere practically the same: "The growing insistence upon social reform legislation."

Ten years ago the Briton talked about world politics almost exclusively. Today, without losing his interest in world-politics, he talks about home affairs, land and labor and life. Ten years ago he made faces at Germany and planned a bigger navy. Today he studies Germany's social program for acceptance or avoidance, and is content with a navy maintained at ordinary strength.

### How Britons Talk Back.

Two avenues of approach to the real thought of the British people exist which are not found in other countries, at least not to such marked extent. The Briton has not lost the art of talking back. Building his home behind stone walls, stupidly reserved with strangers, he talks freely in public meetings and he writes letters to the newspapers. Besides other and usual ways of access to public opinion, these are characteristically British. He wrote a letter to the Times in other days. Now he writes also to the Daily Mail, the Daily Telegraph, the

than aliens, criminals or lunatics, is denied an Old Age pension. All the money for the pensions is provided out of the national treasury—no pensioner and no locality have to contribute anything. Nearly one million persons now receive old age pensions—603,380 women and 362,628 men. The number of persons who, as paupers, received outdoor relief from local poor funds, has largely decreased, falling off from 168,096 to 8,563 in six years. Of every 1,000 persons in Great Britain seventy years old and upwards 640 are old age pensioners, nearly two-thirds. The annual cost to the national treasury is about \$60,000,000.

"I think the greatest act of Parliament of the last fifty years, aside from the Parliament Act" (limiting the power of the House of Lords), said John Burns, cabinet minister and labor leader, "is the act which gave Old Age Pensions. It is the boon of the benevolent state at the cost of the bounteous rich for the benefit of the aged poor. It works easily, does not demoralize, solves many Poor Law problems, keeps the old among the young—and that is good for both—and prevents the growth of institutional life, which I do not like. I am for the home as against the institution." That's the opinion of the friends of the measure.

"A system of demoralization will be established among the working classes," said Lord Wemyss. "Thrift will be done away with, families will cease to regard it as an obligation to maintain those of their number whose working days are passed, and self-reliance will be diminished." That's the extreme view of the opposition.

### Insured Against Unemployment.

The National Insurance Act, in addition to insurance against the loss of health and for the prevention and care of sickness, provides insurance against unemployment. In state health insurance Great Britain followed the lead of Germany, but in unemployment insurance Great Britain leads the way. It is a far-reaching experiment in social legislation. "The essence of the problem of unemployment is that all work, or nearly all work, is more or less irregular, and will in large part always remain so,"

ter the first week of unemployment. Workmen more than eighteen years old get \$1.75 a week and under eighteen years old, 90 cents a week, up to a maximum of 15 weeks unemployed in any twelvemonth. The cost to the state of unemployment insurance is about \$2,000,000 annually.

**Government Employment Agencies.** The Labor Exchange Act is, in every way, a supplement to the Unemployment Act. It provides government labor exchanges to find jobs for workmen and workmen for jobs. In the three years since this scheme became operative 1,500,000 vacancies have been filled and nearly 270,000 jobs of a casual nature found for workmen. A large amount has been advanced by the state for traveling expenses for workmen for whom jobs have been found. The workman who would claim unemployment benefit must first show that he has applied to the Labor Exchange for employment and been unable to obtain it.

### Minimum Wage "White List."

The Workmen's Compensation Act is not new, but an extension to other workers, and to include compensation in the case of certain industrial diseases. The Trades Boards Act attacked the industrial and social evil of sweating. It established trade boards, composed of employers and workers in equal proportions, together with members appointed by the Board of Trade. These boards fix minimum rates for wages for time work in certain trades and may also fix general minimum rates for piece work. The trades to which the act has already been made to apply are: Ready-made and custom tailoring; cardboard box making, machine-made lace and net-finishing and chain-making. A "White List" of employers who agree to the minimum wage is made public and no government contracts are awarded to firms not on this list.

### Early Closing for Shops.

The Early Closing Act, which bothers some tourists who find shops closed at unexpected and apparently unseasonable times, gives weekly half-holidays all over Great Britain to shopkeepers and their assistants. All shops—American, stores—must be closed one week day not later than one o'clock in the afternoon, except where food or newspapers are sold—which, with letters, constitute the trinity for which man will not willingly wait. Even excepted shops may be closed if two-thirds of those in the district in the trade wish them closed. All classes of shop assistants must be given one half-holiday a week and the general work hours are regulated by law. Other acts prevent the employment of women in industrial occupations during the night, make regulations regarding the protection of health in factories and attack the problem of child labor. The Housing and Town Planning Acts amplify in their provisions earlier acts under which the state acquires land for housing purposes and deals with unsanitary areas and dwellings.

### "Rank Socialism?"

These are some of the more striking measures which Great Britain's legislature is using as tools in the construction of tomorrow's British empire.

"It is rank Socialism," said one, "but what are you going to do about it? A reaction will come and come soon, but until that does come these laws and more of the same kind will be enacted, weakening private initiative, diminishing self-respect and discouraging self-reliance and thrift. If the state is to be a crutch, we will all grow infirm in time and lean upon it. Contentment, not discontent, should be preached. We are sowing the wind to reap the whirlwind."

"Prosperity should pay a thank offering," said another Britisher. "So much for the new taxes. As for the so-called socialistic legislation, it is not socialism but democracy, the giving to every man a chance, and so far as honest, living wage and fair laws for capital alike with labor, and opportunity for education, leisure and employment can make it so, an equal chance. Is not that the chief business of a democratic state? As for contentment—did you read the White Paper—an official report of the distribution of wealth?"

"The toad beneath the harrow knows Exactly where each tooth-point goes; The butterfly beside the road Preaches contentment to that toad."

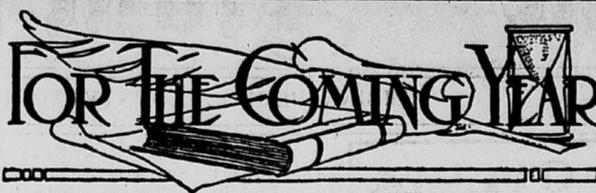
"The eyes of the fool are in the ends of the earth," said Solomon. In Great Britain it is a time of introspection, painful but profitable.

**Lord Rosebery's Story.** Lord Rosebery told a story the other day of an Aberdeen professor whose youth was properly full of zeal for learning, but who was too poor to gratify it. Through one long fierce winter in Scotland—where winters are winters—he shivered without an overcoat and starved without breakfast, because he had spent the money which might have bought them upon the purchase of a Hebrew Bible. In Lord Rosebery's story, of course, the Aberdeen professor, for being faithful to one book, was made ruler over a whole library. The social reform legislation, result of Great Britain's introspection and tumultuous discussion, seeks to secure to all provision against lack of breakfasts or of coats and, indeed, in the broad-visioned Education bill, to make possible for those who wish it, even the study and, perhaps, also the ownership of a Hebrew Bible. (Copyright, 1912, by Joseph E. Bowles.)

**Sweet Salt.** Mrs. A.—I told Willie on his way home from school to get me a bar of soap.

Mrs. B.—Oh, he'll forget it; my boy never remembers.

Mrs. A.—No danger; I said he might buy five cents' worth of candy at the same time.



**I**N this valley of life, on each side of which are the mountains of eternity, I resolve to walk onward, taking the sunshine and the rain in good spirit, helping any one whom you will meet on the way.

**S**UPPOSE your life is in the home. Resolve to make that home brighter and better for your presence. Do not spoil the happiness of life that is every human being's heritage. Rather add to the joy of the hearth, so that when you go, never to pass this way again, a loving thought will be your meet.

**H**AVE you children? Then remember that once you were young. Be kind to them. Never let it be said that you needlessly turned a child's laughter to tears.

**I**F YOU have gossiped either over the back fence or over the tea cups, here is your opportunity to make a change for the better. Of course you cannot recall the unkind word that has gone on with snowball proclivities, growing to unrecognizable proportions. But you can resolve to guard your tongue and to think twice before you speak once.

**E**ACH day read one beautiful thought, do one beautiful deed. It may be just a phrase of your favorite author. The sunset or a sunbeam or a child's golden curls will give a picture, if you are looking for it. And as for doing something—that's easy!

**D**ON'T polish the waiting bench with "hard luck" stories. Stir yourself. Hard luck never caught up with a hustler. This is true of any kind of work. Resolve to fight your battle minus weak excuses.

**L**OOK at your face. Do the lines curve down or up? It's never too late to smile. A frowner is an unwelcome companion. If persons make an effort to miss you, change the lines!

**B**E HONEST! Even with yourself. Some beings can believe their own lies. Don't enroll your name on the self-deceivers' list. There is no hope for you if you do.

**H**AVE you been a little bit shaky toward any ideal of conduct that you have formed? Surely you must have a conduct standard! Well, what's the use if you have ignored it? Make it a potent factor in the coming year. And may that standard be the best ever!

**W**HATEVER your work, let it be done better than it has been done before. In this world each one is filling a place. If you haven't any special work, make it. Don't be a parasite.

**I**F YOU have cheated any human being of his right, be ashamed and be penitent. And don't stop there. Resolve to make restoration of that which you have stolen. This may be a word of praise; it may be a dollar and it may be many things. Who are you in this great scheme that you should withhold that which is due?

**D**ON'T be a doormat. The homely rug on which people wipe their dirty shoes has a place; but you are a human being with a spine and a heart and a soul. Doormats must not be on your next year's calendar.

**B**EING a human being, you have the ability to grow in all ways toward the Superman, the Ideal. If you grit your teeth and hold back as a recalcitrant, ignorant child, you are sinning. You cannot stand still; you either move forward or backward.

**T**HAT question of love—how are you going to answer it this coming year? If you have closed the door of your heart against it, be merciful to yourself, if to no one else. Let love for some human being enter your door with the new year. It is the greatest force in the world. Let it come into your life!

**W**HATEVER has befallen you in the past, remember that there is another chance. The new year is on the threshold. Open the door and smile a welcome to it. It is as rich in hope and possibility as you care to make it. The happy new year is up to you!  
BARBARA LEE.

## The Turn of the Page

By FRANK FILSON

(Copyright by W. G. Chapman)

"Come along, 752," said the head warden cheerfully, clapping an enormous hand upon the young man's shoulder. "The chief wants to say goodbye to you."

The convict stepped out of his cell and followed the head warden obediently. Three years of discipline had taught him to ask no questions, to demand no reasons. He hardly dared to hope that the pardon board had granted his petition.

"Tention! Eyes front!" said the head warden mechanically, and the convict mechanically obeyed. But the governor stretched out his hand and took the convict's in a hearty clasp.

"The board of pardons has granted you your freedom, Graves," he said. "I strongly recommended it at the last monthly meeting. I know that you will run straight in future. If you shouldn't, remember that the dishonor and shame will be mine, and it will be just so much harder for the rest of us. Here's a letter from your mother in Mapleton," he added, handing the missive to the prisoner.

Graves read it and the governor watched him curiously. The young fellow had impressed him favorably ever since he had entered the penitentiary three years before to serve a first sentence for forgery. He had been a model prisoner; but he seemed unaffected either by the letter or by his release.

"Yes, sir, I'll run straight in future," he answered.

"Good," answered the governor. "And my advice to you is, go home to your mother. You have about thirty-seven dollars coming to you. Go home, face the world in your home town, be a man and begin your life anew. You will find people kinder than you imagine. Good morning."

He grasped the prisoner's hand again and dismissed him. Graves went out. Subdued and deferential though he seemed, he remained totally unmoved.

As a matter of fact, Philip Graves was deeply moved, but for all that he had not the least intention of returning home. He took the train to the capital and spent his money in two days' of riotous living.

The second evening found him penniless. It was cold and dimly wet, and the long tramp through the dismal suburbs had not raised his spirits. He sat down on the sidewalk and buried his head in his hands. That was the first time he had ever seriously considered the future.

"Ferging's a nut's game," one of the other prisoners had told him soon after he was brought to the jail. "Take my tip, lad, cracking a crib's the only thing worth while. Why, all you've got to do is to walk in after the lights are out, take your pick, and walk out again. But say, don't carry a gun, for that don't pay. Just trust to your legs if you have to get away quick."

Graves felt in his pockets. At the bottom of one, hitherto overlooked by him, was a dime. Graves knew where he could get all the whisky he wanted for a dime—if he chose the time when the bartender was not looking his way. He went there.

Graves tossed off the fiery liquid, set down the glass, and went out. New Year's eve! He had not thought of that. This was the evening for making good resolutions. The recording angel was writing the title at the head of a new page of life. What record would his page show this time next year?

He walked the streets until his head swam from the liquor. It was very dark and the rain fell steadily. Graves was wet to the skin. He walked an immeasurable time, until at last, looking up, he saw a house.

A flame of anger burned in his heart, hotter than the fire in his brains. Good resolutions! What were they for such as he? They were for the rich, for those who could afford to keep the laws! He was no fool to be bound by such a code.

He crept up the garden, felt a lower window, and found that he could raise it. A minute later he was groping inside a dining room.

Cautiously he struck and lit a match. Then he gasped in astonishment. For on the buffet, carelessly laid out, was a galaxy of silver plate. That central piece—that flat tray, which he could put under his coat and walk away with, must be worth a couple of hundred dollars alone!

He would take it on his way out. He opened the door and crept upstairs.

There were two rooms at the head of the first flight. The door of one was closed; the second door was open, and inside, by the light of the lowered gas jet, Graves could see a table strewn with rings. He crept in and stood staring at them. There were nearly a dozen of them—diamond, pearl, sapphire, cat's eye, flashing emeralds and rubies. It was the dressing table of some wealthy woman who...

There was somebody in the bed! An old, white-haired woman who lay there, hardly breathing, flat, with white hands picking at the bed covers!

Graves snatched up a handful of the baubles and turned. Suddenly two powerful arms caught him as in a vise and he looked up into the face of the middle-aged man.

"Come outside, you—you dog!" whispered the other. "Caught in the act, you dirty sneak-thief! Let me look at your face! So you would rob a dying woman, would you? I'm going to strip the hide off you before I call the police."

"I didn't know—" Graves babbled.

A feeble voice from the sick bed made both start. "John!" whispered the sick woman. "John! It's you, dear John! I knew you would come home!" The captor and the captive stood motionless, thrilled by the pity in the voice.

"John, won't you come here and kiss your old mother?" pleaded the voice. "I knew that I should live to see you again."

The middle-aged man whispered into the ear of the thief. "Her son was killed in an automobile accident last week. Now's your chance. I'll let you go if—"

"You're coming to me, aren't you, John?"

"Yes," muttered the thief, and with unsteady footsteps he staggered toward the bed, found it, and sank down upon a chair. He felt the hand of the old woman close upon his.

"Are you John? Are you my boy? I cannot see. Tell me that you are John," the old woman whispered.

"Yes, I am John," the convict whispered back.

She said no more for a while but seemed to doze. Gently, by almost imperceptible degrees, the man in the room lowered the gas light till it was only a little twinkling flame in the darkness. And the thief sat motionless, his hand held tightly in the light clasp of the dying woman.

After a long time she roused herself. "Johnny," she whispered, "turn me so that I can put my lips to your ear." And the convict turned the shrunken old body reverently, and with a new and strange fearlessness. Then the old woman spoke again, and so low and weak were her tones that he could only grasp them by bending his ear till her lips touched it.

"Johnny," she said, "I want you to be a good boy after I am gone. I want you to be good for your old mother's sake, Johnny. There's nobody will ever love you as I have done—nobody in the whole world. You've been wild, Johnny, dear, and people have said hard things about you and called you hard names, but I knew that you were my boy Johnny, my good boy, and that you were good at heart. Promise me you'll always run straight, Johnny!"

Graves promised.

"Then I can go in peace, Johnny, dear. Kiss me." The dying woman half raised herself and Graves took her in his arms and pressed his lips



There Was Somebody in Bed.

reverently to her forehead. And not daring to stir, he remained thus hark through the night.

The vital fires had burned themselves out; gently and imperceptibly the life had faded out of the old frame. The dead woman's placid smile seemed like a benediction.

Graves rose up. "I'm ready now," he said to the man.

"Go!" answered the man, pointing to the door; and the ex-convict shuffled along the carpet, his face working, his cheeks stained with tears. He halted at the door, hesitated, and shuffled back again. He went up to the man.

"I don't want to go," he muttered. "I want you to call the police. Say," he went on, in impassioned accents, "I've got an old mother like that in Mapleton, and she's alive and wants me to come home. Do you think if I went that I could ever become a man again? I've been in prison three years."

The man's hand fell on his shoulder, just as the head warden's had fallen. He seemed sorry for him; it was odd, to come to think of it, how kind men were to one another.

"My dear fellow, I believe that Providence sent you here—Providence, which is only another name for God," said the man. "Go back and face the world anew in your home town."

Why, that was just what the governor had said!

He held his hand out and the other took it and grasped it warmly. Suddenly Graves remembered. He pulled out from his pocket a handful of shimmering rings. He placed them upon the dressing table and walked lightly out of the room. He did not shuffle now, for his heart was filled with lightness and for the first time in years he was at peace.

"I'm going home!" he murmured. The rain had ceased and the air was keen with frost. From the four quarters came the sound of distant bells. And then Graves remembered that this was the New Year.

The book was still open and the new page had been auspiciously begun.



Group of English Laborers.

News and Leader, the Westminster Gazette, the Pall Mall Gazette, the Edinburgh Scotsman, the Manchester Journal, the Glasgow Herald, or one of a dozen other great journals, and sometimes to all of them. Nor are these letters from any one class. Everybody writes except the king, and he employs a secretary to write for him. At the public meeting the Briton "heckles" or interrupts with questions for information or impertinence. In the theaters he hisses—which Americans do not—as well as applauds. The public political meeting, as well as the letters in the newspapers, afford an interesting index to the questions uppermost in the public mind. Here, again, social reform legislation of every kind, from the far-flung ideas of the Fabians to the most conservative suggestions of Lord Lansdowne, is talked. Yet more significant is the legislation actually enacted, as the program of one party or another.

**A Million Old Age Pensioners.** The Old Age Pension Act is perhaps the most far-reaching. Under the provisions of this act, which became law in 1909, every person in the United Kingdom, whose income is less than \$160 a year, is entitled to receive from the government a pension. This government pension varies in amount, depending upon the income from other sources. The smallest is 25 cents a week, the largest \$1.25. No one, other

said Mr. L. G. Chiozza Money, M. P. "Man can never hope to reduce his operations to a machine-like regularity. He can, however, by concerted effort and common rule decide that irregularity of work need not mean irregularity of maintenance. Society can assure, should assure, to every honest man the regular maintenance which it now admits is due the dishonest man."

The Unemployment Act pools risks by insurance. It builds up a fund by contributions from the employer, the employe and society as a whole, in order that when irregularity of work touches a particular man and deprives him of wage, there may be pay to take the place of wage. The act provides for compulsory insurance against unemployment for about 2,500,000 workmen, skilled or unskilled, organized or unorganized, in building, construction of works, ship-building, engineering, construction of vehicles, iron-founding and saw-milling. The workman contributes five cents a week for each period of employment of a week or less, the employer also five cents a week, and the state one-third the total contributions of employers and employes. For workmen less than eighteen years old the contributions are two cents a week from both workman and employer. The benefit provided consists of weekly payments to the insured workman whilst unemployed at