

THE NECESSITY OF AN AMERICAN ZOL-  
VEREIN BECOMING APPARENT FOR  
THE SAFETY OF THE HOME OR BRIT-  
ISH POPULATION.

WHAT IS TO BE DONE FOR THE WORKING CLASSES?

[From the Annan Observer of 4th February, 1861.]

Parliament meets to-day, and great things may depend on its first proceeding. A change of Ministry is not an improbable event. The firmness of the Premier and the position of Denmark render it indeed highly probable. Who are to succeed the present men? Lord Derby and Mr. Disraeli? Great and deserved as their fame is in wars of words, are they the men for the present emergency. Have they a policy—a policy that will at once commend itself to the masses of half-starved working men in the manufacturing districts, now far advanced in their second, and many in their third year of pauperism and parish relief, with prospects of worse coming? Have they a policy to benefit even the agricultural laborers, and keep them from flooding out of England and Scotland as they are doing out of Ireland? If they have, let them declare it; if they have not let them stand aside. In that case they can do good neither to the indoor workers or the outdoor workers, nor to the country at large. They may consider themselves bound in honor, by pledges given more than six years since, to abstain from following their better judgment. If so, let their conscientious scruples be respected; but let them make way for men not unhappily pledged as they are. Surely if such men are rightly sought for they will be found.

Old Toryism is palsied—hopelessly so. Whiggism is much the same—hopefully so. Radicalism waits only the capture of the Dannewerke, and the apotheosis from Downing street of Lord Palmerston to bring forth “reforms” in litter—base whelps of Birmingham, Rochdale, or Manchester kennels—abolition of primogeniture, abolition of entails, abolition of the law of hypothec, abolition first of church rates, then of church. As for peerage and royalty, such as they are, treat them according

to circumstances—the one may be made as harmless as the other. Before all other yells, however, let there be a great extension of the franchise, if that be thought compatible with the supremacy of the powers that really be, and rule those that only seem to be; otherwise a smaller extension of the franchise; but in either case an extension specially directed against present landed interests—an extension professedly liberating the people, but in reality binding them with tighter and more subtle chains.

Reform, extension of the franchise, &c., &c., captivating phrases, but impotent to procure the big loaf which Free Trade promised to get, but failed in getting. Yet they will be listened to again, if real benefits are not offered to the people in their stead.

Thanks to Free Trade, old Toryism, or even old Conservatism, is now impossible. True Conservatism must outbid Radicalism—must offer to honest industry palpable benefits instead of plausible but lying promises.

What has true Conservatism statesmanship got to offer to the workmen who are willing to work? One thing—which is worth ten times all the nostrums that Radicalism ever has offered or can offer, were they all realized and made the law of the land—viz., the opening of the British colonies as fields of all kinds of honest industry. And that is the sole policy by which the workmen, agricultural and manufacturing, can be peaceably elevated from their notoriously downtrodden state. Radical statesmen won't offer that. They can't. It goes against their Confession of Faith in what has been called “the gospel of enlightened selfishness.” It would make what they call their hands really free, which is the very last thing they would like to see. Ay, but will it not make the Agricultural workman really free to? And how will the landlords and farmers like that? It will make these workmen free too, and some—let us hope not all, or even a majority—of the landlords and farmers may think such liberty excessive, and quietly argue that it is not desirable for the sake of the working