

ardent allies, representatives of another class or grade of London's vast labor army, men who, by virtue of long-established and flourishing trade unions, were disposed to regard with hypercritical eyes this revolt of their unskilled brethren. Captious though they were, and strangely insistent in demanding that a well known unionist leader should address the meeting, they were soon subdued, as if by magic, when a tall, portly man,—a famous stormy petrel of Agitation,—began to speak. It was really wonderful to note the consummate tact of this person, and to observe how that, from the moment when, raising his hand with forefinger stretched out, he appeared to magnetize his auditors, he held full sway over the passions and the judgment of the vast crowd. At first deprecatory, he gradually became stubbornly, imperatively argumentative, until presto! with a mighty wave of his right hand a hurricane of denunciation fell from his lips. At this stage of his address he paused a moment as if for breath, when a voice from the middle of the hall, a woman's voice, began, at first tremulously, Ernest Jones' spirit-stirring "Song of the Lower Orders." Simultaneously, like a sudden snow-storm, hundreds upon hundreds of small printed handbills were scattered about, so that the whole audience was, in an incredibly brief space of time, in possession of the words. The air was very simple, half complaining, half defiant, but rendered impressive by the number of voices and the even fierce energy with which it was sung. This became even passionate when the final stanza, minatory in its suggestiveness, was reached, one or two excited individuals going so far as to raise clenched fists above their heads.

"We're low, we're low—we're very, very low,

And yet when the trumpets ring,
The thrust of a poor man's arm will go
Thro' the heart of the proudest king!

We're low, we're low our place we know,
We're only the rank and file;

We're not too low to kill the foe,
But too low to touch the spoil:

We're not too low to kill the foe,
But too low to touch the spoil.

Content with the success of his stratagem, the orator,—whose early reputation had been built up by tricks like this,—delivered himself of a few sentences by way of peroration and resumed his seat. His place was taken by Jack Escott, whose name and occupation the chairman announced to the meeting. Feeling probably that the chief interest was over, and that but little was to be anticipated from an unknown man, many persons took this opportunity of leaving the hall, but this movement stopped abruptly when Escott began to speak. The opening sentences were short and catchy, pregnant with sarcasm directed against the fat profit sharers who were grinding and goading the people into despair and madness. Assured by the applause which greeted him that he had secured attention, Escott plunged into a vivid portrayal of the actual condition of the modern day laborer. Piling statement upon statement, figures upon figures, contrast upon contrast, seldom or never pausing for a word, this strange man, himself a worker for his bread, grew fearfully eloquent in his arraignment of modern civilization and its economic lies. Men held their breath while he depicted the daily life with which they were, alas! only too familiar, while he spoke of overcrowded, fetid slums wherein rickets, scrofula, and consumption walked hand-in-hand with filth and hunger, morbid prurience, lechery and incest. His wide blue eyes glittered and his pale cheek glowed when he stigmatized capitalists, manufacturers, and speculators as successors of the mediæval robber knights, and when he said that society had better go to swift and sudden ruin rather than perish by the slow, consuming dry-rot resulting from physiological poverty and innutrition. Turning from this he alluded to what he termed the "grand nostrum" of emigration.

"Canada, Manitoba, and the great North-West," he cried, "I know them all, for I have seen them all. Shall I tell you