

QUEENSLAND IMPRESSIONS.

By F. LAUDER.

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III.—THE VANGUARD.

Socialism in Queensland is well represented by the Social Democratic Vanguard. This advanced wing of the Queensland Labour Army is composed of the very best fighters—courageous, intelligent, amiable men and women. Socialism in Our Time" is a motto by means a platitude among the members of the Vanguard. Already steps have been taken to spread the Gospel of humanity throughout the length and breadth of the Kanaka State, and when that gospel has done its work an upward move in the right direction will be made. Needless to say, the Vanguard will not be content with Queensland alone, but will be determined to impregnate the whole of the Commonwealth with its an of salvation. Would that it were possible to infuse the same amount of energy, enthusiasm, and forethought into the Victorian Socialistic cause as that being done by the Brisbane Vanguard. And could not some enthusiasm for the ever-pressing needs of the wage-labourer be manifested in Victoria? Yes, surely yes, if men and women of the same calibre as those associated with the Vanguard were forthcoming. As it is a few zealots are allowed to struggle on as best they can, while the masses whom they are striving stand rapidly off. The Social Democratic Vanguard in Brisbane has received something like encouragement, and day it stands forth as the most important Socialistic body in the whole of Australia.

And who and what are the splendid men and women fighting in its ranks? Are they but mere sophists—mere theoretical, arm-chair Socialists? Not at all. The doctrines they preach—like some people of other creeds—they attempt to carry into practice. Any man imbued with a desire to make the world somewhat better than it now is will always be sure of fraternal greetings from the Vanguard. Nay, more. Even a bitter opponent of all forms of Socialism can rely upon a conciliatory and friendly reception if he wishes to make acquaintance with the Vanguard. The venerable Adam Tramp always—or nearly always—on the benches. And should the hostile critic of Socialism venture therein, Adam may rely upon to sell him an Encyclopaedia or some other less harmless work. Socialism in Queensland is so rampant that it welcomes all kinds of hostile criticism—as a matter of fact, invites it. And it is, indeed, pleasurable to witness the demolition of the critic when Joe Collings gets on the job. Joe is undoubtedly, one of the ablest exponents of Socialism in the Commonwealth. Joe, perhaps, will think this story. But it is not.

The Vanguard aims at construction—not destruction. Its objective is to give something like order out of the chaotic social and political conditions prevailing in Queensland. So as to attain that objective now in Queensland, and as in other parts of the Commonwealth, it throws itself zealously to political work, and the success of its Labour candidate has been in some measure due to the Vanguard. The Vanguard, however, of the Vanguard has not been upon too much confinement to books and lectures. The healthy mind in the healthy body is a trisism of the Vanguard's espouse. In addition to its healthy lectures on various politico-biological subjects and propaganda

in your further efforts in this direction. The work you are performing in the Northern State does not go unheeded by the Southerner. While you flourish, there is little need to fear the suppression of the revolutionary spirit, in at least one corner of the world—in Australia.

Like the "Clarion," the Vanguard would sing Socialism to the people. It would show—and it does show—how congenial conditions could make men and women happy and free. To go, by way of experiment, to a Vanguard picnic is an eye-opener to the cynical anti-Socialist. I can never forget one beautiful day spent at Indooroopilly, a delightful little place on a bend of the Brisbane River. Among the kind spirits there assembled were men and women whose very presence seemed to be in harmony with their environment. For the day, at least, a socialistic community had been established, and its establishment augured well for the careers of any such community under favourable conditions.

And so in the endeavour to brighten the morbid, harassing, uphill fight against modern capitalistic exploitation, the Vanguard is doing its work. Before that work will bear fruition may seem to some a very long time, yet the leaven of Social Democracy is permeating the minds of all Queensland Labourites. Away in the shearers' huts Socialism applied to Labour is understood in a way Southern workers do not understand it. In the mines, the bush, the city, and wherever good propaganda has been done—and is being done—the cause of the Vanguard is taking root. The rights of the toilers are beginning to receive some recognition in reactionary Kanakaland, and when those rights are substantially secure, no small meed of praise should be accorded the worthy men and women of the Vanguard—the men and women who have in season and out of season kept burning the sacred torch of Eternal Justice.

//A JINGO BARD CRITICISED.

Alfred Austin, poet laureate of England, has been at it again. He has written a poem entitled "Together," which sings of the cemented friendship between Great Britain and the United States. Two verses of his ode are here given:—

"Should envious aliens plan and plot
'Gainst one and bow the other,
They swift would learn how strong the knot
Binds brother unto brother.
How quickly they would change their tack
And show the recumbent feather
Should Star and Stripes and Union Jack
But float mast together."

"Now let us give our hearty grip,
As by true men is given
And vow fraternal friendship
That never will be riven;
And with our peaceful flags unfurled,
Be fair or foul the weather,
Should need arise, face all the world,
And stand or fall together."

These verses are not reprinted because of their worth, but merely to give an opportunity for showing how easy that sort of thing is. The sentiment expressed by Austin is very beautiful—when you happen to be ignorant of existing conditions. But after reading of the concentration camps in South Africa and the killing of men in Luzon whose only crime is loving liberty well enough to die for it, there seems to be something akin to hollow mockery in the lines. It is not difficult to write verses like the latest from the pen of England's laureate, and still less difficult when one writes of things as they really are and not as he would have them. Had Austin stuck to facts he might have written something like this:—

"Should alien races dare to fight
Against our conquering banners,
Although they strive for home and right,

means a platitude among the members of the Vanguard. Already steps have been taken to spread the Gospel of Humanity throughout the length and breadth of the Kosciusko State, and when the Gospel has done its work an upward movement in the right direction will be made. Needless to say, the Vanguard will not be content with Queensland alone, but will be determined to impregnate the whole of the Commonwealth with its message of salvation. Would that it were possible to infuse the same amount of energy, enthusiasm, and forethought into the Victorian Socialistic cause as that being done by the Brisbane Vanguard! And could not some enthusiasm for the ever-pressing needs of the wage-slave be manifested in Victoria? Yes, surely yes, if men and women of the same caliber as those associated with the Vanguard were forthcoming. As it is, a few zealots are allowed to struggle as best they can, while the masses whom they are striving to help stand rapidly aloof. The Social Democratic Vanguard in Brisbane has received something like one encouragement, and today it stands forth as the most important Socialistic body in the whole of Australasia.

And who and what are the splendid men and women fighting in its ranks? Are they but mere sophists—mere theoretical, arm-chair Socialists? Not at all. The doctrines they preach—like some people of other creeds—they attempt to carry into practice. Any man imbued with a desire to make the world somewhat better than it now is will always be sure of fraternal greetings from the Vanguard. Nay, more. Even a bitter opponent of the terms of Socialism can rely upon a conciliatory and friendly reception if he wishes to make acquaintance with the Vanguard. The venerable Adam Tramp always—or nearly always—on the premises. And should the hostile critic of Socialism venture therein, Adam may rely upon to sell him an Encyclopedia, or some other less harmless work. Socialism in Queensland is so tolerant that it welcomes all kinds of hostile criticism—as a matter of fact, invites it. And it is, indeed, pleasurable to witness the demolition of the critic when Joe Collings gets on the job. Joe is undoubtedly, one of the ablest exponents of Socialism in the Commonwealth. Joe, perhaps, will think this a story. But it is not.

The Vanguard aims at construction—not destruction. Its objective is to solve something like order out of the chaotic social and political conditions now prevailing in Queensland. So as to attain that objective now in Queensland, and later on in other parts of the Commonwealth, it throws itself zealously to political work, and the success of many Labour candidates has been in small measure due to the Vanguard. The crowd, however, of the Vanguard is not based upon too much confinement to books and lectures. The healthy mind in the healthy body is a trisism of Augustinian spouse. In addition to its regular lectures on various politico-economic subjects and propaganda literary work, social and picnic parties are organised from time to time, and thus Socialism is made an attractive recreation as some would suppose it to be. A ghastly misanthropic, destructive, and dangerous potentiality.

During the time I lived in Brisbane, I had frequent opportunity of closely serving the men and women of the Vanguard. I became a member of the Vanguard—and am still a member. As I was thrown into contact with one of the best friends I have yet made. Sincere, zealous, amiable, kind-hearted Socialists of the Vanguard I will offer you a tribute of respect for your noble work on behalf of Humanity. In my poor way, I wish you well

and I have never forgotten the beautiful day spent at Indorocopia, a delightful little place on a bend of the Brisbane River. Among the kindred spirits there assembled were men and women whose very presence seemed to be in harmony with their environment. For the day, at least, a socialistic community had been established, and the establishment sugared well for the careers of any such community under favorable conditions.

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"Should alien races dare to fight
Against our coast, fighting banners,
Although they strive for home and right,
We'll teach them better manners.
We'll scatter ruin in their track
And loose the war dog's tether,
While Stars and Stripes and Union Jack
Spread tyranny together."

"Now let us give one hearty grip
As tyrants ever are doing,
And pledge hard pirates' fellowship
While trade and gold pursuing,
And with our battle flags unfurled,
Be fair or foul the weather,
We'll shoot our way around the world
And share the swag together."

These verses are as smooth as Austin's and it is left to an unprejudiced public to decide if they do not come closer to the real facts than the Austician spasm of versification.—"Organised Labour," San Francisco.