

paying exceptionally good wages. This was practically a new industry as founded by the Department of Explosives. The factory produced 2050 tons per week. Previous to this great experiment the British price for oleum, procurable only in small quantities, had been £30 per ton.

When, therefore, we are told that the State mismanages everything, we are justified in reversing the saying and claiming that the worst State and municipal management is better than the best private management so far as the results to the public are concerned. The different motives explain this. The private management exists to *take* from the public; the public management exists to give and serve.

The working folk of this country are not so dull as to miss the moral of the many facts that have been placed before them showing the advantages of public over private enterprise; and if this be the Socialism on which you are to fall back, my dear MacDonald, it is very safe ground and the only feasible line of social progress.

A Fantastic Alternative.

But of late there have been “many inventions.” The very latest is the Living Wage. I was amused to read last week-end an I.L.P. advertisement headed “Socialism in our Time—The Living Wage.” The lecturer was Bailie Dollan, who has made two appearances in this district—at Maud and Aberdeen—for the purpose of turning down Public Ownership and setting up the new demand for “A Living Wage.” In cross discussion it appears that Bailie Dollan, like Messrs. Brailsford and J. A. Hobson, does not believe in nationalization of mines and railways, because they do not pay, but pins his faith to the idea of a living wage being demanded for every worker whether the industry in which he (or she) is employed can pay it or not. The idea is that the people who are making high profits are to be taxed to pay a living wage to the employees of those who are not making such profits, even with wages as low as they are.

This is a new and non-Socialist stunt, like those other discarded I.L.P. novelties, the Right to Work and the Abolition of the Poor Law. That the Living Wage should be announced under the caption “Socialism in our Time” is a