Introduction

H. G. WELLS'S 1906 utopian novel *In the Days of the Comet* takes place in a socialist future where newspapers have become "strange to us—like the 'Empires,' the 'Nations,' the Trusts, and all the other great monstrous shapes" of the past (75). The narrator, an old man who remembers the capitalist days before "the Great Change," describes late Victorian commercial print culture to an audience of postprint socialists, and he emphasizes above all its speed.

[Imagine] a hastily erected and still more hastily designed building in a dirty, paper-littered back street of old London, and a number of shabbily dressed men coming and going in this with projectile swiftness, and within this factory companies of printers, tensely active with nimble fingers—they were always speeding up the printers—ply their type-setting machines, and cast and arrange masses of metal in a sort of kitchen inferno, above which, in a beehive of little brightly lit rooms, dishevelled men sit and scribble. There is a throbbing of telephones and a clicking of telegraph needles, a rushing of messengers, a running to and fro of heated men, clutching proofs and copy. Then begins a clatter roar of machinery catching the infection, going faster and faster, and whizzing and banging—engineers, who have never had time to wash since their birth, flying about with oilcans, while paper runs off its rolls with a shudder of haste. The proprietor you must suppose arriving explosively on a swift motor-car, leaping out before the thing is at a standstill, with letters and documents clutched in his hand, rushing in, resolute to "hustle." . . . You imagine all the parts of this complex lunatic machine working hysterically towards a crescendo of haste and excitement as the night wears on. (76)

The passage is a study in velocity. Words such as "haste," "projectile," "swift," "speed," "rush," "fast," and "run" fly as the narrator exhausts

his supply of speedy synonyms. Here Wells's socialist novel expresses a radical consensus of the era: that the speed- and profit-oriented print marketplace had become a synecdoche for capitalism, an automatic machine for reproducing the logic of mass production.[1]

Radical writers sought to counter this development. Hence the final decades of the nineteenth century witnessed not only a flood of print production aimed at mass audiences but also a corresponding surge in small-scale radical periodicals, or "slow print." What I call slow print is print that actively opposed literary and journalistic mass production; it was often explicitly political in objective, as socialist, anarchist, and other radical groups came to believe that large-scale mass-oriented print was no way to bring about revolutionary social change. On issuing the first printed number of their anarchist newspaper *The Torch*, for example, Olivia and Helen Rossetti, who produced the paper from their parents' basement, apologized for its late appearance: "We have comp'd it ourselves and as we are but novices in the noble art of printing we are as yet slow" (15 July 1892: 2). With the emergence of a mass public came manifold countercurrents, erupting against a broad trend toward the rapid mass production of literature and print for larger and larger audiences. In this book I investigate anticapitalist print and literary countercultures in this key moment of literary, print, and media history.

From the onset of the socialist revival around 1880 to the early years of the twentieth century, Britain saw a flourishing of radical political activity as well as an explosion of print production.[2] Although the rise of mass print was a long historical process, the final decades of the nineteenth century were a watershed moment because of such innovations as mechanized composition, cheaper paper, and photomechanical reproduction and such cultural shifts as universal education and widespread literacy.[3] Economic factors were also key. Print in the second half of the nineteenth century went from being a predominantly "authoritarian" to a predominantly "commercial" communication system, to use Raymond Williams's terminology; the printing industry was consolidated, publishers became ever more profit oriented, and advertising became for the first time the major source of revenue in periodical publishing.[4] Key to this shift was the late nineteenth-century "Northcliffe revolution," when Lord Northcliffe (Alfred Harmsworth) "and similar figures

saw increased revenue from the new display advertising as the key to modern newspaper finance, and in particular as a means to reduction in price per copy so as to gain a large circulation" (Williams 18). As circulations became larger and larger, ownership became narrower and narrower; newspaper capitalists such as Lord Northcliffe, Arthur Pearson, and George Newnes built publishing empires by launching and acquiring many periodicals, a mode of ownership that resembled "the major forms of ownership in general industrial production. The methods and attitudes of capitalist business . . . established themselves at the centre of public communications" (24).

On the heels of such changes, Britain saw a dramatic rise in the number of printed periodicals: from 643 magazines published in 1875 to 1,298 in 1885, 2,081 in 1895, and 2,531 in 1903 (Keating 32–34). Literary historians have focused on such numbers as evidence of a new mass market in publishing, but many of the new periodicals were small, specialized, and independent organs oriented toward alternative publics. For example, hundreds of British radical papers originated in this era, and this microsurge in the radical press paralleled the macrosurge of periodical publishing in general.[5] The term *slow print*, which I use throughout this book, suggests that late nineteenth-century radical literature's challenge to mainstream print culture was largely temporal— slow as opposed to fast—but the radical literary countermove to print mass production was as much about scale as it was about speed. The print community that emerged in British radical circles during these years directed itself, for better or worse, to a small-scale audience, a political and aesthetic counterculture, a public that defined itself against a mass-oriented, mainstream print culture.

Such an orientation developed, in part, from the ideas of John Ruskin, whose critique of modern labor, industry, and information networks is everywhere apparent in the late-century radical press, although his name is not often invoked.[6] By the 1870s Ruskin had become, as Judith Stoddart puts it, "increasingly cynical about the benefits of free discussion. In 1865 he had criticized Mill's liberty of thought as little more than liberty of 'clamour'" (7–8). According to Brian Maidment, Ruskin deplored the commercial press and "above all the *quantity* of Victorian popular journalism" because it "created a baffling proliferation of in-

formation" (36). In 1871 Ruskin began to publish his letters to work-men, *Fors Clavigera*, which were issued in monthly installments for a yearly subscription and continued with some interruptions until 1884. He sought to bypass the infrastructure of commercial publication alto-gether by issuing the pamphlets himself at a fixed (and expensive) price, with no advertisements or trade discounts. As he wrote in his Decem-ber 1873 letter: "I find it . . . necessary to defy the entire principle of advertisement; and to make no concession of any kind whatsoever to the public press—even in the minutest particular" (Ruskin 167). Inter-spersed with the letters were clippings from the periodical press, meant to define Ruskin's work against the mass press through juxtaposition. In their cost and their style, Ruskin's letters were mostly inaccessible to the "workmen and labourers of Great Britain" to whom they were ostensibly directed, but as Dinah Birch comments, "Those who did re-ceive the letters on their first appearance . . . could feel themselves to be members of a privileged and distinguished coterie" (xxxv). Ruskin's attempt to opt out of the commercial publishing industry, where an an-ticapitalist gesture became the mark of a privileged coterie, anticipates the key dilemma of the late-century radical press.

Some late-century radical writers were more conscious than others of the dangers of coterie authorship, but across radical writing, at the heart of the move toward slow print, was widespread doubt about whether a mass public could exist outside capitalism. Was the mass public merely a reflection of capitalism's drive toward ever-widening, ever-quickening global expansion? Was it possible to imagine a wide, anonymous pub-lic outside capitalist ideology? Many socialist utopian novels of the era imagine an international postrevolutionary socialism, but in England the most influential visions of the socialist future—such as William Mor-ris's *News from Nowhere* (1890) or Robert Blatchford's *Merrie England* (1893)—were intensely local, a reaction against the expansive capitalist ideology that seemed to be the grounds for an emerging mass media. The radical turn away from mass audiences was thus not merely elitist or bourgeois, although it sometimes was that. It was, at heart, anticapi-talist. The duality inherent in the rejection of the mass market—that it seemingly required a degree of elitism or exclusivity, a betrayal of the democratic ideal, in the service of rejecting capitalist networks of

production—was the central challenge for radical writers, and it created the literary and cultural dynamic from which literary modernism would emerge.

This dynamic little resembled the situation of radical print and radical communities in the first half of the nineteenth century. The first chapter of E. P. Thompson's classic history *The Making of the English Working Class* is titled "Members Unlimited," referencing the London Corresponding Society's cardinal rule "that the number of our Members be unlimited." For Thompson this rule, instituted in the pivotal political moment of the 1790s, is "one of the hinges upon which history turns. It signified the end to any notion of exclusiveness, of politics as the preserve of any hereditary *élite* or property group" (21). The rule of unlimited membership ascribed a democratic sensibility to the notion of limitless scale, evident in discussions of "free print" in the period Thompson analyzes, 1780–1832. As William St. Clair notes, these years saw "the last sustained attempt by the British state to control the minds of the British people by controlling the print to which they had access" (12). Under such conditions the radical press became, as David Vincent puts it, "both the vehicle and the object of political protest" (128). "There is perhaps no country in the world," Thompson says, "in which the contest for the rights of the press was so sharp, so emphatically victorious, and so peculiarly identified with the cause of the artisans and labourers" (720). Ian Haywood describes "the sense of optimism, self-confidence and ambition which fuelled radical periodicals. Spreading the gospel of the radical enlightenment could only be achieved by constant proliferation and expansion" (*Revolution* 76).

Thus early nineteenth-century radical print culture associated successful class-oriented protest with rapid and large-scale expansion into a potentially limitless print frontier. It was a moment when, in Oskar Negt and Alexander Kluge's phrasing, English radicals created something akin to a "proletarian public sphere that embraces the nation as a whole" (199).[7] In the following chapters I consider another print cultural context, some fifty to a hundred years later, but this later context was shaped in part by the history of a radical investment in the dream of limitless print. As Thompson notes, early nineteenth-century radicals "thought that the only limit imposed to the diffusion of reason and

knowledge was that imposed by the inadequacy of the means." He calls this the "rationalist illusion," the mechanistic confidence that "the art of Printing is a multiplication of mind'" (*English Working Class* 732–33). The phrase "multiplication of mind," coined by radical journalist Richard Carlile, epitomizes the "celebratory tone of a techno-determinist account" in early nineteenth-century conceptions of radical print, as Kevin Gilmartin puts it (26). By the end of the century, however, the tone had changed; radical thinkers came to believe that print's endless reproducibility made it especially subject, as a technology, to the expansive market ideology of industrial capitalism.

Did print function as a synecdoche for capitalism, wordlessly conveying the values of mass production, homogeneity, and invisible labor? Could this capitalist technology—which in its very form implies standardization and the mechanization of manual labor (handwriting)—be used to produce anticapitalist political effects? These were the questions of the day for radical writers at the end of the nineteenth century, and the answer, for many of them, involved purposefully reducing the scale of print by appealing to a small, countercultural audience.[8] Some radicals still reiterated the "rationalist illusion," but many others had been disabused of it; they came to think that the large scale that had been achieved by mass print was possible only within a commercial infrastructure of production and distribution that inevitably tainted the print that was produced. By redirecting independent small-scale print toward a limited community, these writers hoped to resist the political failings of a mass-produced medium.

By focusing on the literary culture of the radical press—the literature published within and around radical periodicals—I suggest that literature was a crucial means by which the turn-of-the-century radical counterpublic defined itself against capitalist mass print culture. In a wide survey of radical journals of the era, I have found that all of them included literature, to varying extents: poetry, serialized novels, short fiction, drama, and dialogues in addition to reviews and criticism of contemporary theater, fiction, and literary culture. As Peter Kropotkin remarks in his *Memoirs of a Revolutionist*, the socialist cause "has never been rich in books. . . . Its main force lies in its small pamphlets and its newspapers" (275). The same is true of its literary culture. Within this radical sphere, we find a series of debates concerning how to use literature

as an agent of radical change, how to make and distribute print literature without compromising anticapitalist values, and how to situate radical values within an evolving media ecology—a nascent mass media sphere characterized by New Journalism, ghostwriting, celebrity authorship, and other shifts in the modern author function. These debates engaged some of the most famous writers of the era, such as William Morris and George Bernard Shaw; a host of lesser-known writers, such as Annie Besant and Edward Carpenter; and countless obscure, working-class, and/or anonymous contributors to the radical press.

Working within the radical print sphere, these writers sought to explore medium as a conveyor of meaning, and they struggled with the common challenge of how to start a mass movement without using what they understood to be aesthetically and politically compromised mass media. Despite a shared aversion to literary mass production, they rarely agreed on how best to use literature or print to effect radical change, and their work exhibits a considerable variety of media strategies and literary modes. William Morris, for example, would produce artisanal, handcrafted books through the Kelmscott Press, while George Bernard Shaw sought to vivify the radical public by merging radical print with the radical stage. At the same time, such writers were participating in major literary and aesthetic debates raging outside the radical sphere: aestheticism and the autonomy of art, naturalism, the decline of the Victorian novel, the dramatic revival, and the protomodernist rejection of Victorian literary convention.

The literary culture that emerged from turn-of-the-century radical print complicates and contextualizes critical understandings of a modernist rupture from Victorian literary sensibilities. Although critics such as Jonathan Rose have argued "that the fundamental motive behind the modernist movement was a corrosive hostility toward the common reader" and that modernist writers strove "to maintain social distinctions in an increasingly democratic and educated society" because they "felt threatened by the prospect of a more equal distribution of culture" (393), literature of the late-century radical press reminds us that the protomodernist backlash against mass print culture was also anticapitalist, an expression of class critique.[9] Radical writers were often unsuccessful in balancing anticommercialism against elitism, as we will see, but to

reduce their reaction against mass print to elitism is to misinterpret a social movement that intended to decapitalize print literature. Ian Haywood has cautioned against "essentialist thinking about the relationship between radicalism and commercialism," arguing that although "it may be difficult for the anti-populist instincts of the political left to accept the fact," the Victorian popular press, especially *Reynolds's Newspaper* and *Lloyd's Weekly Newspaper*, was the true inheritor of early nineteenth-century print radicalism ("Encountering Time" 80). However, this was not the way the late-century radical press saw it; *Reynolds's* slogan, after all, was "Largest, Cheapest, and Best." Henry Hyde Champion's socialist paper, *Labour Elector*, called the mass print *Reynolds's* "a mere Liberal Will-o'-the wisp, whose flickering and expiring flame would lure the British workers to their destruction" (14 January 1893: 7).[10]

Appraising the relative radicalism of a popular paper like *Reynolds's* begs a larger question of terminology. The term *radical*, which I use throughout this book, denoted in the early nineteenth century an anti-government or limited-government perspective. Class-oriented social protest literature at the end of the century does not sit easily under the term *radical*, both because of internal conflict over the role of state structures in achieving classlessness (e.g., socialist vs. anarchist, big-state vs. small-state collectivism) and because by the end of the century the term *Radical* had been effectively appropriated by the left wing of the Liberal Party, making it less useful in describing anti-establishment groups (hence Charles Bradlaugh was a Radical, but he was far less radical than the writers under consideration here).[11] I will nonetheless use the uncapitalized term *radical* as shorthand for "wholesale class-oriented social protest," drawing on its etymological sense of "the root" to describe late-century activism with the aim of "root and branch" political and economic change.[12] As one writer put it in the *Workman's Times*, "Radicalism, we all know, means going to the root of things. And there can be no radical reform of the present hateful condition of society without advancing Social Democracy" (25 November 1893: 1). This focus on attacking the root of social dysfunction was characteristic of turn-of-the-century class radicalism.

The term *radical* is not a perfect terminological solution, but neither are other potential descriptors such as *socialist* (which would exclude

anarchist and labor groups that actively rejected that label), *labor* or *working-class* (which would include some apolitical or politically tepid print organs and would exclude middle-class groups such as the Fabians or the Fellowship of the New Life that shared the objective of a classless society), or *left-wing* (which might include left-wing Liberals who did not advocate thoroughgoing economic change). The commodious term *radical* suits a print community that defined itself against mainstream culture yet left ideological divisions among groups loose and unenforced. Indeed, although much has been written about "hair-splitting over doctrine" in the late Victorian left (MacKenzie and MacKenzie 71)—rifts emerged, for example, between reformist and revolutionary, nationalist and internationalist approaches—a strong collective spirit also led diverse groups to work together.

For example, Charlotte Wilson edited the most important British anarchist paper of the era, *Freedom*, but in the 1880s she was a member of the Fabian Society, a group that advocated incremental reform on the path to state socialism. Shaw, a fellow Fabian, collegially wrote an anarchist essay for her to publish in *Freedom*, "more to shew Mrs Wilson my idea of the line an anarchist paper should take in England than as an expression of my own convictions" (*Collected Letters* 1: 109). Initially, *Freedom* was printed by Annie Besant and Charles Bradlaugh's secularist Free Thought Publishing Company, although Bradlaugh was antisocialist and anti-anarchist. Wilson, in her notes on the history of *Freedom*, writes that at the time of the Chicago Haymarket affair, the paper was "obliged, in deference to the strongly anti-anarchist views of Mr. Bradlaugh, to remove from its original office on the premises of the Free Thought Publishing Company." *Freedom* then "set up at the Socialist League printing office, by the kind permission of William Morris." Morris was no anarchist either, although his tolerance for anarchism ultimately led to its takeover of the Socialist League organization. After leaving the Socialist League press and before finally securing a press of its own, *Freedom* was also printed by the Fellowship of the New Life, an "ethical socialist" group that advocated individual ethical transformation but not anarchism.[13] As *Freedom*'s promiscuous migration among diverse leftist presses demonstrates, printing equipment was literally common ground connecting all these movements: anarchist, revolution-

ary socialist, state socialist, ethical socialist, secularist, and so on.[14] Even among groups with clear ideological differences, there was an impetus to work together: to speak on one another's platforms, to reprint material from one another's papers, and to develop a shared literary canon and a mutual print community.

This sense of community was created in large part by a united effort to define a radical print sphere in opposition to the capitalist print sphere. In the following chapters I describe literary efforts in this direction, but in this introduction I want to first establish how strongly this sense of print opposition characterized radical press discourse. For example, *Justice*, the newspaper of the Social Democratic Federation and the first major socialist paper in England, was perhaps the first British paper to define a socialist public by means of vehement opposition to the capitalist press.[15] The paper declared, "Capitalists own almost all the whole Press; they are masters of the ordinary means of distribution. We must consequently organise a distribution of our own" (5 July 1884: 4). A letter in its correspondence column, from Mr. Reeves of Liverpool, expresses views typical of the paper's readership: "Any Social Democrat who is in the habit of writing to the newspaper press knows that nothing detrimental to the interests of capital is allowed. . . . Profit is the great aim of speculators in magazines and newspapers, hence the lying advertisements of quacks which flood the advertising columns, hence the sickening accounts of royal shows and the revels of aristocratic flunkydom" (16 February 1884: 6). When another reader wrote to complain about press coverage of a West Midlands strike, the editor commented, "The working classes must expect this. The whole capitalist press is but one huge machine in the hands of their enemies" (18 October 1884: 5).

Justice's attitude toward mass print anticipated the tone of many papers that came in its wake. Glossing and correcting the conclusions of mainstream newspapers became a favorite pastime of radical writers and editors, and cut-and-paste montage took on a revolutionary cast long before the advent of Soviet film. In its first issue *Justice* juxtaposed a clipping on "Yachting in the Mediterranean" with one on "The Homes of the Poor" under the headline "How We Live Now" (19 January 1884: 3). The technique recalls Sergei Eisenstein's argument that class difference is the social origin of the montage aesthetic, that the structure of mon-

tage reflects "the structure of bourgeois society . . . *a contrast between the haves and the have nots*" (234). In its July 1893 issue the *Labour Leader* similarly juxtaposed two columns of clippings under the heading "Our Un-Social Contrasts"—one on the rich and one on the poor—noting that the contrast was "sufficiently eloquent to need little comment or introduction" (8–9). Henry Hyde Champion's paper *Common Sense* was almost entirely composed of quotations and cuttings, edited in clever relation to make an argument; the paper nodded to Thomas Paine in its title, but its content implies a very different moment for radical print. Annie Besant's socialist magazine *Our Corner* said *Common Sense* "might almost be called *Socialist Tit-Bits*," comparing the paper to George Newnes's wildly popular exercise in New Journalistic mass print (1 June 1887: 375–76), but although *Common Sense*, like *Tit-Bits,* emphasized short cut-and-paste items, its use of this technique was satirical and dialectical. In the June 1887 issue the article "Why People Die: Class Mortality Statistics" reprinted information from government-produced blue books as a form of revolutionary propaganda (27). Juxtaposition also served in *Common Sense* as a formal reflection of class difference; side-by-side columns titled "Our National Wealth" and "Our National Poverty" visually instantiate the extreme gap between the social classes (May 1887: 3). The whole scheme of the paper suggests an age of overabundant print and a need for cutting and selecting from an overload of information.[16]

Despite this effort to draw a clear division between the capitalist press and the radical press, such distinctions were not always easy to maintain, as in the case of advertising. *Justice*, like most radical papers, was chronically underfinanced and never self-supporting. In its second issue the paper noted having received a number of complaints about its 2 penny price: "In reply we can only appeal to the workers to support a paper which is entirely independent of trade or capitalist advertisements or pecuniary support. A journal cannot permanently appear in the interest of the mass of the people which is not supported by the people and by the people alone" (26 January 1884: 1). The price was reduced to 1 penny in the third issue, but *Justice* was not always able to hold to the declaration that it would not accept advertisements. From early on it ran "trade advertisements" for other radical papers and publications, although its rejection of regular advertising remained central to its

counterprint identity; the editor boasted on 13 March 1886 that *Justice* had survived thus far "without receiving a single capitalist advertisement" (1).[17] The *Commonweal*, the Socialist League newspaper edited by William Morris, likewise ran advertisements for books and other materials relating to the cause, yet even this limited concession to commercialism produced defensive apologies, as in its "Terms of Advertising" circular (see Figure 1): "The proprietors are confident that in taking this step they are alike benefiting their readers and advertisers." Many papers experienced a conflict between the desire to denounce the newspaper industry's reliance on advertising revenue and the necessity of running ads to stay afloat. *Labour Elector*, a paper that itself ran regular ads, not just those associated with the cause, argued in an attack on the *Daily Chronicle* that "the interests of the paper's clients—the propertied and *advertising* class—[are] necessarily opposed to the interests of the workers" (7 January 1893: 1).

Conditions of late nineteenth-century mass journalism were such that it was difficult for a paper to survive without advertising.[18] Newspapers and magazines had shifted to make more of their profit from advertising than from subscriptions; prices went down in consequence, and papers sold for a penny or even a half-penny. Radical papers kept the low prices but found surviving without advertising difficult. The *Clarion*, the most mass-oriented socialist paper of the era, ran many advertisements, often with the attention-grabbing fonts of New Journalism. Julia Dawson, a *Clarion* columnist, defended the paper on this score.

May I beg of my readers to complain to me on any subject except that of the advertisements which appear in our columns. I don't take exception to any one of them—because they are all necessary, at present. There may, nay, there *will* come a time when the support of Clarionettes will enable us to be as dainty as we like in these matters, and accept only those advertisements which correspond to our *highest* ideals. But that time is not yet. (17 April 1897: 128)
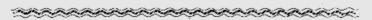
E. Belfort Bax, one of England's most influential early Marxists, launched a wholesale assault in *Justice* on the ideal of "free print," which had been the center of early nineteenth-century radicalism, arguing that the conditions of the modern print industry—such as dependence on advertising revenue—made a mockery of this ideal. The article,

THE COMMONWEAL

PUBLISHING OFFICE,
13 Farringdon Road, London, E.C.

WE beg to call your attention to the under-given Terms of Advertising in the *COMMONWEAL*, which, circulating as it does throughout Europe, America, and the Colonies, affords by far the best medium for bringing books—especially those which deal with Social questions—under the notice of probable purchasers. Among the subscribers and readers of the *COMMONWEAL* are numbered the most prominent Political and Social Reformers of this Country, as well as of the Continent and America; and the greater part of its *clientèle* are men continually upon the alert for the latest expressions of opinion or statements of fact upon the problems of the day.

Hitherto there has existed no medium capable of bringing the publisher of works upon Social questions into such close connexion with his special public; and the proprietors are confident that in taking this step they are alike benefiting their readers and advertisers.

For the Proprietors,

H. HALLIDAY SPARLING.

TERMS OF ADVERTISING.

On Back Page, . . .	4d. *per Line each Insertion.*	
Half Column (57 Lines), .	18s. *each Insertion.*	SCALE OF BREVIER LINES.
One Column (114 Lines), .	35s. *each Insertion.*	
One Page (two Columns), .	£3, 5s. *each Insertion.*	

Discount on Monthly Accounts amounting to £1, five per cent.;
£5, ten per cent.

Advertisements must be acceptable in every respect. Copy received until Tuesdays, 3 p.m.

The COMMONWEAL *is sent free to those who advertise in it as long as their advertisement continues.*

Figure 1. Terms of Advertising circular, *Commonweal.* Socialist League Archives, International Institute of Social History (Amsterdam).

"A 'Free Press,'" disabuses readers of the liberal idea that a deregulated print sphere was necessarily an advantage for democracy: "Among the glories of latter-day liberty, the first place is commonly accorded to our 'free press.' That the newspaper press, at least in this country, is really free, few persons appear to have the faintest doubt." But, Bax argues, an unregulated press is far from a "free" press.

What are the conditions of the success of a newspaper? That it should have a good circulation of course, but first and foremost that it should obtain advertisements, the backbone of the newspaper publishing trade being the modern system of advertising. What are the conditions of a circulation and of obtaining advertisements? Obviously that the paper should appear to the interests of those who have money and leisure. . . . Is not the newspaper proprietor himself a capitalist, generally on the largest scale . . . ? But some may say surely there must be a large section of the workers who would give an independent organ a circulation. Unfortunately there is not in this country at present. The workers have received, where any at all, a class education, having been fed by class literature. . . . This is in the first place. In the second, the middle and upper classes having control of the *means of distribution* can generally succeed in smothering an organ which is offensive to them. . . . It follows then that our boasted freedom of the press is a "snare and a delusion". . . . "Free Press" indeed! Ye men of England, when will ye forsake these idols, these empty and vapid abstractions—"freedom," "toleration," "equality before the law" . . . for belief in a real, a concrete social order in which while the truth of these things will be embodied, their false and evanescent form will have vanished. (6 December 1884: 4)

To Bax the long-standing radical ideal of free print is not only misguided but also misguiding, a false ideal that inhibits widespread recognition of the real conditions of print media.

Justice recognized that appealing to the free print ideal could generate widespread sympathy for its program, but it was dubious of the wisdom of such a tactic. After several of the paper's promoters were prevented from selling it in the streets, on the charge of obstruction, *Justice* organized a successful demonstration and drew positive attention from the mainstream press (3 October 1885: 2–3). But even amid this victory the paper stressed the importance of fomenting economic reform, not settling for the old liberal "rights." A letter from correspondent J. J.

Dobbin voiced impatience with the liberal discourse of radicalisms past: "Freedom of speech we hold to be one of our inalienable birthrights, and naturally we cling to it . . . but we Socialists are not going to rest satisfied here. Free speech to millions of our starving fellow countrymen and women savours too much of middle-class mockery." Dobbin makes an "appeal to the workmen of England to unite with us to take hold of the land and the means of production . . . and, depend upon it, the next demonstration in Limehouse will be one for something more than the mere right of free speech" (17 October 1885: 3). Harry Quelch, who took over as editor of *Justice* after H. M. Hyndman, also felt the danger of a liberal agenda as a distraction from socialist change: "Englishmen have always prided themselves upon the enjoyment of rights and privileges which were denied to the people of other countries. We, as Englishmen, are constantly being congratulated on the possession of the right of combination, of public meeting, and of free speech." And yet "the classes which have controlled all the political as well as all the social forces have permitted the enjoyment of these rights only so long as they have been used either entirely in their interest or with the effect of checking instead of helping on the cause of the workers" (19 March 1887: 2). The liberal cause of free print no longer made sense as a galvanizing force within the radical sphere, depriving radical writers and editors of one of the most successful planks in the nineteenth-century radical tradition.

In lieu of the free print cause, attention to printing as a capitalist industry became a prominent topic across the radical press. For example, many of those who produced *Justice* labored in the printing trade; on a list of fifty-nine working men who helped turn out the paper in London, fifteen were compositors and three were otherwise employed in the trade (18 July 1885: 5). The paper depended on volunteer compositors and printers for its production: "This journal is written, set up, edited, and in great part distributed gratuitously. We are showing how even a newspaper may be produced under Socialism. Will not all workers and sympathisers help?" (21 March 1885: 5).[19] Other papers made similar appeals. *Home Links*, a short-lived communistic magazine, announced on the inside front cover of its February 1897 issue: "One or two compositors, willing to render voluntary services for the cause might find a genial home and vegetarian meals provided for them, on application to Mr. Gottschling [editor]."