

23rd April 1908.

*This should have
been posted to you yesterday*
[Signature]

Dear Norman,

The next meeting of the Fabian executive will be on Friday, too late for the Manchester Poll; and I am not prepared to cut in on the election in any way without consulting my colleagues. It will make no difference to the result of the election; Irving has not the ghost of a chance unless he insures the defeat of both of his opponents by sending Quelch to support Winston Churchill and Jo Burgess to support Joynson Hicks, in which case, no mortal power could save either of them from destruction.

Wells's action raises a question which will finally have to be settled one way or another in the movement. Is the S.D.P. in any serious sense a Socialist body? In the Fabian Society we have always felt it to be absolutely intolerable that any person, by merely calling himself a Socialist, could compel us to support him against any candidate whatever running under the Progressive, Liberal, or Conservative flag. At Municipal elections we have repeatedly ignored Socialist candidatures in favour of Progressive ones. It has become a strong tradition of the Fabian Society that its members are free to act on their own judgment in elections; and when, at the last General Election, this freedom was carried by