

THE COMMONWEAL

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WEEKLY; ONE PENNY.

A REPLY TO MRS. BESANT.

"SOCIALISM AND DYNAMITE."

MRS. BESANT has thought it necessary to issue in the *Link* a sort of manifesto against the Commemoration of the Chicago Massacres and Bloody Sunday, in which we have been greatly engaged during the last fortnight. This is much to be regretted, since Mrs. Besant has often of late been working so hard and so harmoniously with the League and its members; and on the present occasion we cannot let this article in the *Link* pass without comment. Mrs. Besant says that "the union of the two memories was strongly protested against by the majority of representative Socialists." Such protest has not yet reached us. The Social Democratic Federation, when invited by us to take part, did indeed decline to do so officially, but did nothing further. A member of the Fabian Society appeared as a delegate of that society at one of the preliminary meetings. At the meeting in Store Street, which was the central meeting of the demonstration, members of the S.D.F., John Burns and Blackwell, spoke on our platform, and were quite sympathetic with the meeting; as well as a delegate from the German Collectivists in London, our comrade Lessner; and Mr. Cunninghame Graham, who has taken throughout an active part in the Commemoration. Mrs. Hicks was present, and prepared to speak had time allowed. Furthermore, letters of sympathy were received at that meeting from persons who can by no means be counted as Anarchists, such as Vaillant and Lavroff. In short, the whole tone of that meeting was that of protest against the judicial murder of innocent men engaged in championing the workers in a labour struggle. Mrs. Besant says that she does not know if the Socialist League officially approved of the Commemoration; she could easily have found out by looking into this paper that they did so.

Mrs. Besant's name was, she says, advertised as a speaker, though she had refused to go. This mistake happened at the meeting on Clerkenwell Green on the 13th, with the organisation of which the Commemoration Committee had nothing to do.

After careful re-examination of all the circumstances, we find that in no single case was a name advertised in connection with the Commemoration meetings without its owner's consent. A line did appear on the announcements that the presence of the Trafalgar Square prisoners was expected, but it was Mrs. Besant herself who deliberately thwarted the intention of the committee to invite these friends, by repeated refusals to give their names and addresses, which she alone holds.

As to what might have been said at any of the meetings, it is clear that the promoters of a meeting cannot be responsible for every word that is said on such occasions; nor can one see why Mrs. Besant should condemn the whole commemoration for a few words which she considers rash, when, as above said, the spirit of it was a protest against a peculiarly base and cruel instance of the injustice of the false society against which all Socialists, of whatever section they may be, are daily struggling.

Last year Mrs. Besant entered heartily into our protest against the murder of these men before it was accomplished. Few amongst us at that time hoped that our protest would be of any use except as a protest: since then Bloody Sunday has intervened to show us that we were more nearly concerned with the violent suppression of opinion in America than some would have had us think; otherwise the situation is unchanged, and what was good to protest against then, is still good to protest against, and we fail to see why Mrs. Besant should have objected to make that protest in common with Cunninghame Graham, Burns, Blackwell, Lessner, Vaillant, Lavroff, and many others (including a great many of the members of the Social Democratic Federation present at our meetings), who are not Anarchists, but who think themselves bound to protest against the worst consequences of capitalistic tyranny whenever the chance offers.

*Signed on behalf and by order of the
Council of the Socialist League,*

F. KITZ, *Secretary.*

JOHN BROWN.

ON the 2nd of December, 1859, John Brown was hung at Charlestown in Virginia, a few miles from Harper's Ferry, amid the derisive yells and ribald songs and jests of thirty million fools inhabiting the North American continent, and with the applause of all such portion of Europe as heard of the death of the pestilent "agitator." A few wiser heads were shaken in solemn warning, and a still smaller remnant of reckless admirers cried "Hail to the coming hero!" All the infant fools from Maine to Texas were carefully instructed by the greater fools to heap odium on his name. In less than a year and a-half those thirty million fools were flying at one another's throats in a deadly struggle. About what? "About nothing," still babbled the fools and humbugs and hypocrites. "John Brown and slavery? Pooh, pooh! nothing to do with it!" In less than another year, five hundred thousand men were invoking the memory of John Brown, not now in ribald jest or contemptuous mockery, but with all the noblest and truest elements of the human soul, to lead them on to death where death was worth the dying. They did not invoke the name of cheap-jack presidents of the Cleveland and Harrison type, not even the scholarly genius of Jackson nor the copy-book morality of Washington. These are not the sort of people who inspire us to die nobly and unselfishly. Inspiration came not from very clever men who sat at home and thought very fine things and then only wrote about them, or from very nice people who never did any wrong for fear their neighbours would cry fie upon them. No, the heart and soul of a great legion of desperate men went out to the memory of a man who dared to think and dared to act before and above all others. John Brown of Ossawatimie! The noblest, fullest, roundest, completest hero the great Anglo-Norman race has ever produced. He lives in the hearts of the people as no one else can or will ever live. He was fortunate in his very name. Its simplicity and common ring has a charm which no affected accents of territorial possessions can ever possess. John Brown! Many men have owned the name, and many have risen to notoriety with it, and especially is it of recent years connected in England with anything but ennobling associations. But all this by-play of meaner John Browns will pass into oblivion, and John Brown of Ossawatimie, John Brown of Harper's Ferry, John Brown who was hung, John Brown who gave his life for liberty, will forever shed a reflected lustre upon whoever claims the name in future years. Perverse and ignorant humanity have very absurd notions about names. They think a name must be without honour because it is common, and forget that in names as in all else nature decrees the "survival of the fittest." John is the most common of names because John the Baptist braved everything in the cause of human emancipation, not that the worthless kin of his murderers have adopted his ideas, but because his noble blood has, from a tiny stream, spread over the globe, and refined all meaner currents with its superlative essence. This is why there are so many Johns, Joneses, and Johnsons. So with surnames. There are so many John Smiths because John Smith has hammered out the English race on his anvil, not because there were originally many smiths. The cousinry of the earls of Derby in the north country bred that army of English billmen, whose strong right arms could bend a bow no other race could approach, and send those shafts with unerring aim which laid the armoured chivalry of France and Spain low in the dust, long before Cervantes had the opportunity to "laugh them away." The English archer has given the novelist his theme. John Smith has won the pre-eminence of the English-speaking race. Superior skill begets manly confidence and independence; independence begets generous compassion for weaker ones. In other words, complete manhood, self-reliant, able to do all things for itself and for others as well, taking orders from no one and giving orders to no one. This is real manhood. This is the real John Smith, the truest and noblest born of England. The helpless, foppish idlers and bloodsuckers of society are but the lice and fleas, whom John Smith will brush aside when he wakes to their dangerous proximity.

As with the Smiths, so with the Roberts, the Robertsons, and Robinsons. They owe their name as they owe their blood to the fair Heloise, the tanner's daughter of Falaise, washing the linen in the brooklet. It is because young Robert of Normandy, in the truth and strength and courage of youth, clasped the fair vision at once to heart,

and said that this woman, and this woman only, should sway his destiny and bear child for him. The fruit of that law-defying alliance was the greatest master of men since "the mighty Julius fell." Among the whole hundred thousand warriors who swooped down upon Hastings, proud above all other things of their lineage, their commanding capacities, and independent rank, not one but knew the bastard scion of the brooklet of Falaise was the greatest genius and most commanding mind and body of the whole. The Conqueror we call him, and conqueror he is to this day, but his untamed spirit is conqueror not in the small minds and sickly bodies of rent-robbers and dividend-eaters, and cheating buyers and sellers, who set up as cheap aristocrats on the strength of a stolen name, furbished with ancient polish, to back up a silly story about one among many millions of our ancestral lines who "came over with the Conqueror" and then squatted like an ugly toad upon some sheltered nook, and there, toad after toad, poisoned the air with mischievous wickednesses, century after century. No, no! The conquering spirit of the Conqueror is in the breasts of his courageous sons and daughters, numbered by hundreds of millions, who are working out their destiny by breaking the bonds of artificial restraint and claiming the rights which nature gives all who have the courage to seize their own. All Europe, most of the Americas, great germs in Asia and in Africa, are descended from that bastard of Falaise, many in thousands of ways and through thousands of daring souls: they are working out the grand idea that social slavery must be swept away to preserve the master and not the slave. This is often miscalled the "spirit of the common people." It is really the spirit of very un-common people, but yet nature's assertion of equal rights and equal liberties. Another of the full-rounded, self-reliant, freedom-loving houses of the Norman race have been the Fitz-Geralds. In the "survival of the fittest" the Fitz-Geralds far distanced all other Irish houses. Half the Irish people would be named Fitz-Gerald to-day had they not in sheer self-defence split this paternal name into a thousand variations, while all the Irish race have far more Fitz-Gerald blood than of any other. All the world has heard of the fascinating beauty of Irish women, but Irish women are only beautiful because the Fitz-Geralds have made them so. For the Fitz-Geralds have, almost without exception, possessed the only germs of true human loveliness, brains and poverty, virtue and capacity, intolerance of shams and generous regard for our fellows. Cheap-jack politicians, seeking votes and offices, jabber about the centuries of oppression of "Ireland" by "England." Milk for babes! Flattery for fools! What is "England" and what is "Ireland"? The war against social shackles has gone on in each island hand and hand. The race of one is the evolving mixture as in the other, discarding its weaker and meaner elements, portion by portion. The house of Fitz-Gerald is nominally one of the much-mouthed-about "foreign oppressors." Yet again and again, and again and again, have the greatest and noblest of the Fitz-Geralds dared all in the cause of the people against usurping authority, leading desperate ventures in the fields and facing axe and halter times without number for man and true manhood, women and true womanhood.

Now all the Browns of the English-speaking race are but a branch of the Fitz-Geralds. In Ireland the name was invented, and from Ireland the name has spread over both islands and over the globe. And there is significant appropriateness in the fact that the greatest of all our race's martyrs for human freedom should bear this name. Common as it is, there is a grandeur in its simplicity, a portentous ring to its historic connection. But Londoners perhaps above all others have good cause to reverence the oft-derided names of Smith and Brown. It would leaven with nobility an ocean of insignificant Smiths to recall young Henry of the Silver Tongue, who has hallowed the Church of the Vikings in the Strand with his immortal onslaughts upon usurers and luxurious livers and filchers from the industrious poor. No wonder the modern commercial crowd often chatter about removing this reproachful monument as an obstruction to their filthy traffic. No, no! take away London and leave us St. Clement Danes! Honest humanity can better spare the one than the other. And as with Smith so with Brown, scoffed at by fools. To London the name of Brown begins with a Lord Mayor who did not cadge for ostentatious "subscriptions," but himself literally obeyed the injunction "sell all thou hast and give to the poor," when in a time of real, and not artificially manufactured, famine, the poor were fed by the bread his utmost credit could procure from afar. Most of those arch-humbugs, the "titled" aristocrats, start their pedigrees from the lives their progenitors destroyed; the London Browns begin by the tale of the lives their founder saved. But John Brown of Ossawatimie was not the first of his family who alone and by force of all-pervading energy kept a whole nation in beneficent commotion. His great ancestor, Robert Brown, founder of the Independents, flying for fifty years over England, Scotland, Wales, and Ireland, daring and defying all the pains and penalties of established privilege, sowed the seeds of our intellectual freedom. Yes, a name like that of John Brown is uncommonly common. But it is the commonness of Nature's best and truest qualities. The sunlight is common, the air is common, the whirling storm and the thunders of the heavens are common, but they are inspiring and great and glorious. Such was the commonness of John Brown of Ossawatimie, his name, his ancestry, his life, his character, his death. It took the best of many climes to produce his matchless parts. The best of the Netherlands and the Rhine, of Italy and Spain, wherever true manhood finds its truest expansion, and high thoughts and high actions have been engendered, thence came inspiration by right of descent to plain John Brown. Every section of the British Isles lent him strength and courage and intellectual and physical superiority. His physical perfection came from those grim soldiers of

English freedom whose unyielding valour hurled back the myrmidons of Romish despotism in the long war in the Low Countries—those matchless soldiers whose masses of mouldering bones are still pointed out with whispered awe by the Dutch countrymen even to this day. But John Brown's superlative brain came direct through many strains from the miraculous family connection which furnished all the intellectual giants of the London of the Virgin Queen; and in John Brown's veins was found the descent from the closest kin both of the author of "King Lear" and of the "Novum Organum," about whose respective personalities foolish scribblers have lately wasted so much good paper. But the preponderance of John Brown's nature, after all, came from the Welsh mountains, that last and surest stronghold of human freedom, and to the noble house of Owen, name dear above most others to social reformers, was he most indebted. Owen Glendower's soul looked from his very eyes, and his father bore the name, and to his father he owed his inherited avocation of Chain-Breaker.

This was our John, and thus he was begotten; for it is only by knowing who he was that we can appreciate what he was. Sorry indeed is the spectacle of the product of noble lineage in corruption and decay. The glory of John Brown and all such as he, is that they come from the noblest the earth can furnish and are greater than all their progenitors. His life was a poem and his death was a psalm. It was the noble self-control which could scorn the scurvy politician's tricks and the wretched money-grubber's ideal of heavenly bliss. John Brown lived and died a simple, useful, honest citizen, bowing to none, cheating none, cajoling none; using no one for his selfish benefit and doing his best to prevent all others from being thus exploited. From his birth on the 9th of May in the last year of the eighteenth century, in Connecticut in New England, as a pioneer on the plains of Ohio, or in the fastnesses of the Adirondacks—above all, as John Brown of Ossawatimie in far-off Kansas—terror and torment to every slave-master of the South, and finally in the last scene of all, he was, above all things, honest; not with the cheap conventional honesty of commercial complacency, but with nature's rugged honesty of exact fairness to all. The commercial crowd, with that uneasy sense of their overshadowing by such a neighbour which always induces them to attempt his corruption, tried again and again to make a tool of John Brown, but in vain. He might have been rich in worldly plunder had he swerved one jot; but he preferred the wealth of innate nobility. This made him an element in life on the American continent which had to be reckoned with,—

"Strong of faith, how weak a hand
Can turn the iron helm of fate."

Others might truckle, others might compromise, others might keep silent, but John Brown made this trucking, this compromising, this silence, all in vain. He simply stood on his right to utter his thoughts, and assist others who claimed their rights. Thus all the Southerners came to know John Brown, the homespun tiller of the soil at Ossawatimie, as the one man who could not be bribed or silenced. They, however, gave away their case into his hands. Negro slavery fell because the slave-holders insisted upon bringing all freemen down to the dust beneath them. They invaded Kansas, and were hurled back in humiliating ignominy by the dauntless courage of John Brown, of Ossawatimie. Then John Brown saw his opportunity to punish these over-reaching autocrats. Acting upon the very arguments and lines which the slave-holders had used for invading Kansas, John Brown invaded the "sacred" slave-ridden soil of Virginia, simply to claim the right to help such negroes as chose to renounce their bondage, enforcing Jefferson's law that "all men are created free and equal." Of course, the attempt was "absurd," but the logic was invincible. They hung John Brown for the attempt; but the logic hurled down negro slavery from the gallows tree above him. Such was John Brown of Ossawatimie, one of those honest breaths of human character which occasionally brush aside the hackneyed sham and humbug of life. What a contrast to the pet heroes of the commercial ideals. Take the cheap hero of the hour in commercial England! At this moment he is fittingly closing his career as he began it, by one of those schemes of gigantic corruption which rot out the heart of a nation. He began his public life by engineering a job for heavy plunder for the loss of his father's slaves. To-day, he is practically engineering a most insidious network of chicanery for abolishing landlordism in name, and making it really more oppressive. "Compensation! compensation!" has been the shrieking burden of his life. He wishes to let the Irish rent-robbers have a grand drunken debauch before they shift their ground. Compensation for what, forsooth? For the robbery of the past? For the rotten useless lives of the past? For the helpless vacuity of to-day? Not only is compensation immoral, it is impossible. There can be no compensation for a man who claims to live upon the labour of others, except to continue the same privilege. Rent or usury, it is all the same; these self-confessed imbeciles must be told that, if they cannot support themselves, they can go to the almshouse and live at our expense, and we will be more humane than they, the black-hearted scoundrels, have been in the past. They shall have a fair living and no tasks, for we are well able to support them in common charity if they will only rid us of their leprous presence.

"Shall we upon the footing of *our land*
Send fair-play orders, and make compromise?"

Denounce the scheming wretch who advises it. No wonder the great spokesman of this wicked policy is the pride and glory of the social scabs. All the riff-raff bred by the commercial corruption, the bum-bailiffs and pap-fed parasites of the exploiting system, the counter-

Socialism at least has gained; our principles have obtained a far wider circulation, and the heroic deaths of our martyrs have taught men how to die. Tyrants tremble when they think of the 4th of May: they are scarcely likely to do so when they think of the Birmingham programme of the Liberal party.

We have gained much here, and in America the cause has gained still more. The whole trial of our brave comrades was one long propaganda of Socialist principles, and the fruits of that propaganda are already appearing in the defiant attitude of the American people towards the "law and order" of their grinding monopolists. Another thing it has done, it has proved Republicanism to be a delusion and a snare, so long as capitalism flourishes beside it. Thus in every way the 4th of May has advanced the cause of the Social Revolution. Political humbugs do well to deride it; but it will prove too strong for them; and they are beginning to find it out—witness the boycotting of our meetings by the "advanced" press of this free and happy country. I have an important question to ask, and that is,—Please, Mr. T. P. O'Connor, how much nearer are we to Trafalgar Square through this new-found enthusiasm for the law and the constitution?

D. N.

JONES' BOY AGAIN.

"SAY, pa, I heard a couple of men talking stocks the other day. What's stocks?"

"Stocks, my son, are shares. You see, when a number of men form a company each subscribes so much money, and then he is given so much stock in the company. Sometimes it's a bank, sometimes a mercantile or manufacturing concern. Do you understand?"

"Well, no; I don't think I hardly do. Have you got any stocks?"

"Yes; I have got some shares in a coal company."

"Oh, I've heard folks talking about a coal ring! Is that it?"

"Not exactly. Our company is a member of the coal section of the board of trade; that's what some rascally fellows have been calling the coal ring."

"The men I heard talking about it said the coal ring were a gang of thieves who ought to be in jail. Did they mean you?"

"No; they couldn't mean me, for I am only a stockholder in my company, and my company is in the section or ring as they call it; so even if the ring did wrong and were extortioners, my company is only one part of it and I am only one in twenty in the company; so, you see, I can't be personally responsible."

"I don't hardly see that; but if you say so, I guess it's so. The men said that the ring kept up the price of coal unfairly, and one man said that, as they took advantage of the people's necessities to force them to pay more than was right, they were all the same as highway robbers."

"Oh, he was some crank. Why, all business is done that way! Anybody who didn't take all the chances that offered would get left. He'd be a fool."

"If you got a chance to get hold of a man's pocketbook when he wasn't looking, would you hook it?"

"No, certainly not; that would be stealing."

"But it would be a chance, wouldn't it?"

"That is not what I mean by chance. I mean a fair chance in the way of business."

"Well, if the man was so cold that he was just going to die, and you made him give you his pocketbook before you would let him into the house to get warm, would that be a fair chance?"

"No; that would be most uncharitable; most un-Christian."

"Would it be stealing?"

"Morally it would; in the sight of God it would be."

"Well, if you knew that ever so many people were almost dying of cold, and you had all the coal there was, and you said you wouldn't let them have any till they gave you ever so much more than it is worth, would that be a fair chance?"

"It wouldn't be right for me to charge more than the market price, I suppose."

"Well, but if you had all the coal, whatever you said would be the market price, wouldn't it?"

"I suppose it would; but one man can't own all the coal."

"But the men, anyway the one you said was a crank, said that the ring had all the coal. So they could make the market price, couldn't they?"

"Yes, I suppose they could."

"Well, didn't they?"

"Oh, I don't know."

"Are the ring fools?"

"Well, hardly; they're about the sharpest that's going."

"Then of course they took all the chances in the way of business, didn't they?"

"Oh, well, it's pretty generally admitted that the rings do things which it would not do for private individuals to do."

"I guess if anyone did, they'd think he wasn't much of a Christian, wouldn't they?"

"Yes, I suppose so."

"But if your company is in the ring then it is as bad as the rest."

"Well, maybe it is."

"Then, if you are one of your company, you are just as bad as the ring, too. Ain't you much of a Christian?"

"Oh, nonsense, boy! A man can't be blamed for what a company does because he happens to hold stock in it."

"Well, your company gets a share of what the ring squeezes out of the people, don't it?"

"Yes, I suppose it does."

"And you get your share of what your company gets, don't you?"

"I'm not supposed to know how every dollar of my dividends is made."

"Say, pa, my Sunday-school teacher says Moses was the greatest law-giver; I guess he wasn't very smart, was he?"

"Yes, my son, Moses was the greatest law-giver that ever lived."

"Well, I guess he didn't know everything, for all that."

"What do you mean? Don't you know it's wicked to talk that way?"

"Well, it wasn't very smart to tell us we musn't steal, when all we have to do is for a lot of us to get together in a company, and then the company can steal all its likes and nobody to blame."

"Oh, you are talking nonsense."

"Why is it nonsense? Isn't getting a man in a fix, and then making him pay more for his coal than it's worth, stealing? You said it was. Then if a company can do this without the members being thieves, don't that get 'round Moses' laws? I guess Moses didn't know much about companies."

"Oh, bother; don't talk so much!"

"Say, pa, I read in the paper the other day about a band of thieves away out in the west, and the people got guns and went after them and killed them all. Was that true?"

"I think likely it was."

"Well, it wasn't right, was it?"

"Oh, out there, where the courts are not regularly established, the people have to take the law into their own hands sometimes."

"But the members of the thieves' company were not responsible for what the company did, were they?"

"Why of course they were."

"But you said that even though the coal ring were extortioners that didn't make you an extortioner. If a member of a ring isn't to blame for what the ring does, how is a member of a thieves' company to blame for what the company does?"

"Oh, bother! you chatter too much."

"Say, pa, you told me once that the majority of people can make any laws they like; can they?"

"Yes; to be sure they can."

"Well, suppose the people who think that members of rings are just the same as thieves and highway robbers get to be the majority, would they get their guns and go gunning for you and the other members of the ring, like the folks out west did for the thieves?"

"Oh, drop it; I'm tired of your senseless jabber."

"SPOKESHAVE," in *Toronto Labour Reformer*.

CORRESPONDENCE.

"MISREPRESENTATIONS."

Mr. Nicoll's rejoinder only makes the matter worse. My letter was a brief one, but his reply is based upon a misconception of everything I said. One of us is at fault. I may be incapable of expressing myself clearly, or he may be incapable of understanding me. In either case our controversy is futile. For my part, I am content to stand by what I wrote, which I do not wish to add to or amend. I have only to say, in conclusion, that I am not "crying out for toleration." In asking any one to be tolerant I merely ask him to be a gentleman. Whether he is so or not is of less importance to me than to himself.

G. W. FOOTE.

MRS. PARSONS' VISIT TO ENGLAND.

ON Tuesday 19th Mrs. Parsons lectured in the Pioneer Hall, Ipswich, meeting with an enthusiastic reception. A little opposition was splendidly disposed of.

On Wednesday Mrs. Parsons visited Norwich, speaking in evening at St. Augustine's School. Mowbray in chair; subject of lecture was "The Labour Movements in America," closing with an urgent appeal to the workers to support our movement. On Thursday, open-air meeting of some four or five thousand persons in Market Place at 7.45 p.m., Mowbray in chair. Mowbray moved resolution which appeared in *Commonweal*, seconded by W. Moore, supported by Mrs. Parsons. The resolution was carried unanimously. Mrs. Parsons then proceeded to Gordon Hall, which was filled to overflowing with members and friends who had assembled to welcome her. Chair taken by Houghton. Mowbray moved and Mole seconded in name of the Branch, "That this the Norwich Branch of the Socialist League heartily welcomes our comrade Mrs. Parsons to this city, and hopes she will convey our deepest sympathy with herself and the wives and children of our comrades Spies, Engel, Fischer, Neebe, Schwab, Fielden, and the mother of Louis Lingg, and pledges itself to work to the utmost of their power for the cause for which our brave comrades laid down their lives and are suffering imprisonment at the hands of a universal band of exploiters." Chairman then presented Mrs. Parsons with an illuminated address. Mrs. Parsons acknowledged her reception and made a most pathetic appeal to audience to do all they could to help the cause. The meeting concluded with singing "Annie Laurie," "No Master," and the "Marseillaise." A large quantity of literature was sold during the meetings.

Mrs. Parsons returned to London on Friday. After a much-needed rest, she visited Berner Street Club on Sunday evening, and delivered a vigorous address. In the course of her remarks she strongly denounced the article written by Mrs. Besant in the *Link*.

On Monday she went to Edinburgh and spoke to a very successful meeting, returning to London next day.

On Thursday evening, after this paper is published, a farewell meeting will be held in South Place Chapel.

Mrs. Parsons leaves England on Friday.

THE LABOUR STRUGGLE.

BRITAIN.

The Sheepbridge puddlers are still out.

The callenderers of Dundee have unanimously resolved to obtain 5 per cent. advance in wages or strike.

THE weavers' strike at Lower Heyes Mill, Macclesfield, has now lasted over four months, and seems likely to last.

At a meeting in Dundee, on Saturday, of the recently formed Bleachfield Workers' Union, it was reported that the membership already amounted to 415, these being all connected with the bleach-fields in the neighbourhood of Dundee.

CLEVELAND IRON-WORKERS.—The moulders employed at Cochrane and Co., Middlesborough, have sent in a claim for an advance, and the men employed at the North-Eastern Steelworks have waited on their manager with a similar object.

WOMEN'S TRADE UNION.—A women's trade society has been formed in Glasgow, 89 names having been enrolled, and committee and officials elected. The need of effort was shown by a girl who worked last fortnight for 112 hours, and had as wages 2s. 7½d.

SEAMEN'S SOCIETY.—Mr. Darby, from South Shields, who for the past fortnight has been organising a society in Glasgow amongst the seamen and firemen, has enrolled over 270 members, and he has also been successful in getting large accessions to the society in Greenock.

WALSALL SPRING BAR MAKERS.—At a meeting of the Spring-bar Makers held on Tuesday Nov. 20 it was stated that the whole of the masters had consented to give the advance asked for by the men, and the whole of the men have now commenced work at the advanced prices.

DUNDEE MILLWORKERS.—A demonstration of Dundee millworkers was held in the Barrack Park on Saturday for the purpose of pressing on the employers the necessity of granting the further increase of 5 per cent. on their wages on the 1st December instead of 1st January.

PORT-GLASGOW LABOURERS.—The labourers employed by the ironworkers on piecework have come out on strike for an advance on wages. The rate paid was 6d. per hour, the demand is for 6½d. The rate paid to the ironworkers when they themselves are on a time job is 6½d. per hour.

MILLWORKERS' STRIKE.—About 200 of the spinners employed in the Tay Works, Dundee (Gilroy, Sons and Co.), came out on strike 19th December. They demand that the resolution of the employers to concede an advance of 5 per cent. on their wages, should take effect at once instead of at the New Year.

DOCKERS WAGES.—The secretary to the Dock Labourers' Union before the Select Committee of the House of Lords on the sweating system, said there were more dock labourers than there was work for. Sixteen years ago they could earn on an average 24s. or 25s. per week, now they could only average 7s.

OLDHAM TWISTERS AND DRAWERS.—The twistors and drawers at Derker Mills have now been on strike nearly three months against a reduction of 10 per cent. They have appointed four deputations, but have been unable to bring the dispute to a close. They are prepared to accept the master's terms for plain calicoes, but they want to make arrangements for all heavy goods—viz., all fustians.

CALENDERERS' STRIKE.—At a meeting on 24th November at Dundee the calenderers at present on strike for 5 per cent. on their wages were informed that two of the employers had intimated they would give the rise demanded on 1st January, but the men resolved that unless they got it on 1st December they would not resume work. The men in Victoria Road Calender, who previously remained in, came out in the afternoon.

EAST-END "WAGES."—The following figures are given in a recent pamphlet: Brushmakers work ten hours for 7d. Artificial flowers, 144 violets for 1d. Matchbox-making, 144 for 1½d. Paper bags, 4½d. to 5½d. per thousand. Umbrella-making, 10d. per dozen. Shirts, 2d. each, worker finding her own thread; can make six between 6 a.m. and 11 p.m. Better class shirts, 5d. each; a good worker, by sitting close, can make one each day. Pill-boxes, 1s. for 36 gross—5184 boxes. Ladies fur tippets (sold at £20 each) 3s. a-week.

GLASGOW TRADES' COUNCIL.—At a meeting held on November 21st, a letter was read from the committee of the House of Lords in connection with the inquiry on the sweating system, intimating that the scope of their enquiry is now extended to the United Kingdom, and desiring to know in what trades in Glasgow it was alleged the sweating system existed. The executive could have honestly replied "All," but it was agreed to allow the letter to lie over in order to give trades so affected time to communicate with the Council.

MIDLAND COUNTIES MINERS' FEDERATION.—The Executive Committee held their monthly meeting at the Staffordshire Coffee House, Five Ways, Wolverhampton, Monday 26th. It transpired that there were still a few cases in South Staffordshire where thin-coal miners and ironstone workers had not gained the full 10 per cent. advance, and a resolution was carried urging upon the employers in those instances to act up to their resolution passed at Queen's Hotel, Birmingham, on October 22nd, when it was agreed to concede the workmen a 10 per cent. advance.

SEAMEN'S WAGES.—At Dundee on Wednesday eleven A.B.'s were engaged for the Anchor Line steamer *Devonia*, in the Clyde, at £3 15s. per month. Nine firemen were also engaged, but they held out and obtained £4, being 5s. more than what has been paid up to this time to the men engaged at Dundee for the Anchor and Allan Liners. Seamen shipping at Greenock are able to secure an advance on former rates of pay, and the crew of the barque *Neophyte* were engaged for a voyage to Cape Town via Cardiff at £3 per month—an advance of 5s. per month on the rate given a few weeks ago.

OTLEY STATUTE HIRINGS.—The annual statute hirings were held at Otley on the 16th, when the streets were thronged with persons in quest of servants and servants in quest of situations. There was a scarcity of female servants, but males were numerous. Young girls were engaged at from £5 to £10, and older and experienced hands commanded from £10 to £15. Strong lads obtained from £5 to £9, and higher prices had to be given to older and more experienced servants, though there was a slight tendency downwards owing to the advanced state of farm work at this time of the year.

RAILWAY SERVANTS' WAGES.—We drew attention a few weeks ago in this column to the dilemma of our contemporary the *Economist* in not knowing how the Scotch railways could pass an enormous increase of traffic without increasing their working expenses, and suggested the workers would likely know. A signalman writing to a Glasgow paper states that at Glasgow Central the signalmen are paid 24s. per week, or the fraction of a farthing for every two trains they pass, not including shunting, and the signalmen at Newton and Rutherglen, who have 300 trains daily, get for every four of them the sum of 3d. Verily these companies spare no expense in securing the safety of their passengers or the welfare of their workmen, and that's how it is done.

DARLINGTON ARBITRATION AWARD.—This award which has now been issued, determines that the wages of the men, other than fitters, moulders, roll-turners, carpenters, pattern makers, and boiler and other smiths employed at the Darlington Steel Works, shall remain as they are until the end of the year 1888, and from the 1st of January, 1889, until the operation of the award is determined by either party giving to the other three calendar months' notice, which notice, however, may not be given before the 30th of September, 1889, so as not to expire earlier than the 31st December, 1889. The wages shall be regulated by a sliding scale on the following basis:—The standard rates to be those prevailing on the 12th of May last and continued to the present time, namely, £3 16s. per ton, the wages to advance half per cent. per ls. increase in the net average invoice price of steel rails of 40 lbs. and upwards, until the sum of £4 10s. is reached, when the advance is to be increased to 1 per cent. per ls. rise, without maximum or minimum. A corresponding deduction of half per cent. per ls. is to be made when the price of rails falls below £3 16s.

INDIA.

WORK HOURS IN INDIA.—"Ever since I have been in Bombay city, twenty-three years, the trade-custom in the building trades has been eight hours work per day—just what you are agitating for. Up country, in the country districts, the system has always been ten hours per day—viz., 7 to 12 a.m., 1 to 6 p.m. It gets dark about 6 all round the year here. In Bombay the trade hours are 9 to 1, and 2 to 6—eight hours. The reason is that up country the men have their wives to cook for them and work near their homes. In Bombay they have to walk two to four miles to their work, which is mostly piecework, and having to cook their own meals, refuse to start work till 9 a.m. This does not apply to the spinning-mills, where they have to work from sun-dawn to sunset—from 13½ hours actual standing in summer to 12 hours in winter. This last is terrible slavery, and ought to be stopped by legislative enactment."—So writes a friend.

INTERNATIONAL NOTES.

FRANCE.

On the 2nd of December there will be at Paris a manifestation organised by the Municipal Council and all the revolutionists of the French capital, on the grave of the Socialist deputy Baudin, who fell on the barricades of the rue St. Antoine, on December 3, 1851, whilst defending the Republic against the criminal *coup d'état* of Napoleon. The manifestation will be all the more important because of the present political situation of France, which is certain to lead the country into a revolution. Next week we will examine the condition of things, as they result from the treason of Floquet and the other leaders of the sham Republic, stating at the same time what hopes the Socialist revolutionary cause might expect as to the possible overthrow, in the very nearest future, of the reactionary institutions upheld by the so-called "republican" rulers of France.

GERMANY.

At Düsseldorf and at Hamburg a number of comrades were tried for secret conspiracy and, as usual, sent to prison. Some other friends of the cause met with the same fate at Constance. In a few days the same justice-farce is to go on at Freiburg in Baden. Another one, always of the same description, is coming on at Berden (Hanover). Then we will have the secret conspiracy trial at Elberfeld: more than two hundred persons have already been interrogated in connection therewith, including comrades Harm and Schumacher, Socialist members of the Reichstag for Elberfeld and for Solingen respectively.

Comrade Eiter has been tried at Stuttgart, in Germany, because he had in his possession at Zürich, in Switzerland, a box containing some dynamite, which he handed over to the notorious police spy Schröder, of Zürich fame. Eiter got two years and six months' hard labour for that "offence" which at any rate he did not commit in Germany. William II., the Crank, is safe.

During last week several new Socialist publications have been prohibited, among which a pamphlet entitled "To the Indifferent," and another headed "To the Agricultural Labourers." The last named is an exceedingly well-written one. In spite of the prohibition, thousands have been spread all round and the distribution is still continuing.

At a meeting held at Essen, where M. Krupp reigns supreme, the Socialist delegates of the mining districts have decided to issue a *daily* paper, which will be devoted to the defence of the interests of the working people. In spite of all the reactionary measures of Bismarck and his clique, things are going on pretty fairly at Essen and in the neighbouring places. Let us hope that they will become better still, with the help of William and Bismarck, who really work very well for the cause.

BELGIUM.

Our Belgian comrades have begun a new departure in their propaganda. At Brussels, a member of the *Parti ouvrier*, Laurent Verrycken, has spoken in the open-air. For Englishmen, of course, this is not new; but in Belgium, although the Constitution does not prohibit open-air gatherings, the Socialists have always been in-door workers. In spite of the absolute legality of these meetings, our Belgian comrade has at once had to face a kind of minuscule Charles Warren, in the person of the burgomaster of Schaerbuk, a suburb of Brussels. That silly phenomenon of a burgomaster has ordered his commissioner of police to disperse the meeting, and comrade Verrycken is now to be tried for "obstruction," exactly as the Trafalgar Square speakers have been. In the meantime, some more open-air meetings have been arranged, at which Verrycken, Volders, and others again intend to speak, and they have resolved to stand and fight out their case against the "authorities."

In the province of Hainault the miners are busily engaged in the achievement of their organisation, because it is pretty certain that ere long they

jumpers and tally-keepers, schemers and traffickers, who impudently purloin the noble name of "clerk" (which is a gift, not an occupation), every sort of cheap human foppery which lives by taking and never making, howl themselves hoarse at such a sententious trader's tin-pot deity as the Grand Old Compromiser of to-day. Upon such a spectacle, with what contempt looks such a complete man as John Brown of Ossawatomie, he, who above all others, knew that,—

"They enslave their children's children,
Who make compromise with sin."

LOTHROP WITHERINGTON.

LETTER FROM AMERICA.

Two years ago all America was startled by the number of votes Henry George polled in New York as candidate for the Mayoralty of New York City. Not that I mean to say that the politicians and capitalists were much terrified by the voting in itself, but no American exploiter of labour previously believed that there existed so large a number of discontented people in New York City. Anarchism, Socialism, antagonism to capital, were believed to be all very well in Europe, but it was never thought possible that revolutionary doctrines, however indistinct and moderate, could spread to and get hold of the people of a country with "free institutions." I know that the Henry-George-for-mayor-of-New-York-City movement did not identify itself with any particular school of the labour movement, and that it rather represented the discontent of the "lower classes" of New York. It was a momentary crystallisation of the discontent. The discontent was proved to be there, and could not be disputed away. Among the wage-workers Henry George was looked upon as the heaven-sent messiah of the toilers. The formation of a party was the result of the movement: the United Labour Party, with George's land-tax as the principal plank in the platform. Henry George, Dr. McGlynn, John McMackin, and Gaybert Barnes were the leading spirits. The New York politicians having recovered from their "terror," took stock of the new party, "sized" it up, and resolved to try the boodle policy. As a result, the Social-Democrats were expelled at the first convention. Henry George was put up as Secretary of State for the State of New York, but his candidacy proved a complete failure. He then openly stated he would work hand in hand with the Democratic party. The whole United Labour party was already disintegrating. Glynn, McMackin, and Barnes became, or were already, an annex of the Republican party. The toilers had lost all confidence in the old leaders. The United Labour party evolved into one mass of corruption. The tactics—i.e., boodle—of the united politicians and capitalists had been most effective. Looking out this season for new boodle, McMackin found in James Coogan, a retired furniture-dealer on the installment plan, a man possessing many millions, a fool willing to spend a good deal of money for the "honour" of being put up as a candidate for the mayoralty of New York City. He received 9,000 votes. Here is what a capitalist paper says of the result:—

"CHECK UP, MR. COOGAN.

"Ex-candidate Coogan seems to be the sorest of all the defeated aspirants for office on Tuesday. He went into the contest, he says, with assurances of support from all the united labour leaders, and fully expected to win. Listen to Mr. Coogan:—

"Mr. McMackin assured me repeatedly on his honour that I would get the entire labour vote. Even on last Sunday he told me that if I should not come in first I would certainly be a good second in the race. The lowest number of votes which he said he could swing into line was forty thousand, and I felt sure of getting enough more to elect me. Barnes also told me several times that he had no doubt whatever of my victory. The demands for money made by McMackin and his lieutenants were of daily recurrence and urgency. They said it was required to keep up the needed enthusiasm."

"In the fond expectation that his election was thus assured and that the honours of the chief magistracy of the metropolis were surely to be his, Citizen Coogan cheerfully 'paid out during the short campaign not less than a hundred thousand dollars' to 'keep up the needed enthusiasm.' What was the result? Hear Mr. Coogan:—

"I have been informed that these men, after getting my money and solemnly assuring me that they would strain every nerve to bring out a large vote for me in their districts, deliberately pocketed my money, destroyed my ballots and betrayed me at the polls."

"Don't take the matter too much to heart, Mr. Coogan. There is a bright side to it. The people that got the hundred thousand dollars doubtless needed it and enjoyed it. The poor labour vote in New York that was so exultant and resonant in 1886, where is it in this campaign? Then, the terror of its coming compelled Tammany and the Republicans to drop their political favourites and nominate Roosevelt and Hewitt. This year the labour vote is never mentioned. It is as dead as Julius Cæsar. The halls and conventions ignore it. Yes, the labour party is dead. But the sixty-eight thousand men who voted for Henry George, where are they?"

Truly, that is a good question to ask: what has become of the 68,000 votes? Well, some of them, the least in number, the Social Democrats, have formed a party of their own, and their candidate for mayor, Alexander Jonas, obtained during this last campaign 2,000 votes all told. Some of the others have gone back to the old parties, but most of them have turned somewhat pessimistic, partly believing that a new messiah, but a more honest one than the little red man had proved to be, was to come, partly having come to the conclusion that American politics are too corrupt a business to meddle with. These are on the right track.

The result of the presidential election, the turning out of the Democrats and the turning in of the Republicans, had been forecast by me in my letters to the *Commonweal*. The large mass of the American voting cattle, the farmers and the aristocrats of labour, want to be protected, and they certainly are in favour of building a Chinese wall round the States. They are apparently less afraid of trusts and combinations than of "pauper labour" and pauper labour products. "Mostly fools."

The General Assembly of the Knights of Labour meets to-day in Indianapolis, Ind. This meeting will probably settle the Order. The "kickers"—that is, the people who object to the administration and the general policy of the Order—are well organised and they intend to make things lively for Powderly and his crew. On the other hand Powderly has used all his influence to get a good many delegates elected from the different assemblies who will stand firm to him, come what may. In his last annual address Powderly said that under no circumstances would he accept office again. He has said so before, however, and afterwards he changed his mind.

The Sugar Trust has closed another factory. The Boston Sugar Refinery at East Boston, Mass., has shut down on the 10th inst.

The Ides of November have been well remembered over here. Commemoration meetings were held in nearly every one of the large towns in the United States, but it must be confessed that the audiences everywhere consisted principally of foreign born citizens. Americans seem as yet totally incapable of grasping our ideas.

I have travelled and lived in a good many countries on either of the two hemispheres, and have had in consequence many opportunities to study the ways and customs of most of the prominent races and nations, but I must confess that nowhere have I met with a greater absence of idealism, of culture, and of refinement than in the United States of America. Mutual goodwill between the citizens is an unknown quantity. The whole country appears to be corrupt to the core, eaten up by materialism in its worst sense. The only *raison d'être* of Americans can be summed up shortly in making money and breeding money-makers. Every American has but one ambition—to get rich. And this ruling passion is not restricted to the non-producing class only, but from the worst paid unskilled labourer, aye even down to the tramp, up to the man commanding previously in history undreamt of fortunes, every one has but one idea: How can I make money? And the harlot of competition makes fools of them all. Nowhere in the whole world is less consideration shown to the weak, to the good-hearted, to the true humanitarian; and this cannot be wondered at. People who come to the United States have left their countries, not because they fled from oppression, not because they desired to develop their better qualities in a "free country." No! They had but one motive—to make money, to become rich, to rise in the world. They have preserved all the worst qualities of their respective mother countries, and not one of the perhaps somewhat conciliatory characteristics. Brutality, vulgarity, and coarseness, undisguised and unmasked, reign supreme in the land of the dollar. One look at the "charitable institutions" ought to be sufficient to convince even a European bourgeois of this. Yesterday I found in a *capitalist* paper an article about the lunatic asylum in Flatbush, near Brooklyn, King's County, in the State of New York. Here are a few extracts:—

"How many of the eight hundred thousand people of Brooklyn ever think of their fellow beings who are insane enough to be cooped up in the asylum Flatbush?"

"And yet in that great city of ostentatious charities—the 'City of Churches,' which fairly bristles with the spires of pretentious church architecture—there is as cruel an exhibition of man's inhumanity to man as can be found anywhere. There is nothing on earth so pitiful as the mind bereft of reason. Even the animals respect the helplessness of such afflicted ones among their own species. The wild Indian whose mind is gone is free to roam the forests at will. He will be cared for by every passing group, friend or stranger. A 'higher' and more cruel civilisation insists that persons insane shall be confined to prevent their doing injury to themselves or others.

"The overcrowded condition of the Kings County Insane Asylum would not be tolerated by a humane community. If the unfortunate inmates of the institution were sane criminals they would tear down the walls and escape, and their friends in the outside world would assist.

"Shall we begin at the bottom or top?" asked Dr. J. J. Shanks, the medical superintendent, to whom I had expressed my desire to go through the wards.

"The bottom," I replied.

"Leading the way the doctor went down a pair of stairs to the basement, and then another to the second basement. Most people would call it the cellar, and most people would be right.

"This place was not intended for such use," said my guide, as he unlocked a heavily barred door and motioned me to enter. It would have been, indeed, a cruel matter to suspect that the original constructors of the building had ever intended this cellar for human habitation, and yet to-day there are huddled in this underground hole 120 women and 36 men!

"Is it damp down there?"

"Well, I put my hand against the shining wall and the water trickled through my fingers. The poor souls who lived there did not know what made them sneeze and cough, and start with pain and ache, and grow weaker daily; but the doctor did, and his face grew grave when I showed him my wet hand.

"The air was laden with dampness and the exhalations of many people. It was not cold, yet I shivered as I turned to go upstairs.

"Surely," said I to one of the attendants, "people—even crazy people—cannot live here long?"

"They don't," was the laconic reply.

"This interested me, and I stopped and continued: 'I should think they would get rheumatism, consumption, fevers of all sorts, pneumonia, and die rapidly.'

"They would die if we left them down here, but as soon as they get very bad we move them upstairs, where it is a little dryer."

"And move somebody else down to get sick?"

"Yes."

"Keep them rotating in and out of this pest-hole?"

"Yes, sir."

"But do not their friends make a fuss?"

"Some of them do make a good deal of trouble about it, but we try OUR BEST TO SEND DOWN THOSE WHO HAVE NO FRIENDS, OR WHOSE FRIENDS DO NOT CALL TO SEE THEM!"

"This is going on to-day!"

I repeat, the foregoing is not written by a revolutionary paper, but by the capitalistic *New York Herald*. When capitalistic papers are obliged to publish such horrible revelations it must be bad indeed!

Newark, N.J., November 13, 1888.

HEFRY F. CHARLES.

UNEMPLOYED MEMBERS OF THE LEAGUE.—In the Hammersmith Branch there are two painters, two carpenters, and one builder out of work.

METROPOLITAN PAUPERISM.—The weekly return of metropolitan pauperism shows that the total number of paupers relieved in the first week of last month was 97,581, of whom 58,834 were indoor and 38,747 outdoor paupers. The total number relieved shows an increase of 981 over the corresponding week of last year, 5,878 over 1886, and 6,806 over 1885. The total number of vagrants relieved on the last day of the week was 1,212, of whom 1,022 were men, 170 women, and 20 children under sixteen.

A contemporary remarks that labour rebelled in 1877, broke away in 1879, went to work in 1880, has organised considerably since, and yet now seems to have forgotten that there ever were 3,000,000 tramps in the United States. Aye, men, you have forgotten. You may be forcibly reminded of it yet. Panics return under our false system of society. We had desolating panics in 1818, 1837, 1857, and 1873, and wealth has all the time steadily accumulated in the hands of the few. When will the next crash come? Take care, men! Be prepared for it; don't take things too easy. Political excitements won't help you.—*Paterson Labour Standard*.



HAVE YOU NOT HEARD HOW IT HAS COME WITH MANY A CAUSE BEFORE NOW: FIRST, FEW MEN HEED IT; NEXT, MOST MEN CONTEMN IT; LASTLY, ALL MEN ACCEPT IT—AND THE CAUSE IS WON!

Communications invited on Social Questions. They should be written on one side of the paper, addressed to the Editors, 13 Farringdon Rd., E.C., and accompanied by the name and address of the writer, not necessarily for publication.

As all articles are signed, no special significance attaches to them because of their position in these pages. None to be taken as more than in a general manner expressing the views of the League as a body, except it be so explicitly declared by the Editors. Rejected MSS. only returned if a stamped directed envelope is forwarded with them. Subscriptions.—For Europe and United States, including postage, per year, 6s. six months, 3s.; three months, 1s. 6d.

Business communications to be addressed to Manager of the COMMONWEAL, 13 Farringdon Road, E.C. Remittances in Postal Orders or halfpenny stamps.

Periodicals received during the week ending Wednesday November 28.

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| ENGLAND | San Francisco Arbeiter-Zeitung | SPAIN |
| Glasgow Herald | Coast Seamen's Journal | Cadiz—El Socialismo |
| Justice | FRANCE | Madrid—El Socialista |
| Labour Tribune | Paris—Cri du Peuple (daily) | Seville—La Solidaridad |
| London—Frete Presse | Le Parti Ouvrier (daily) | PORTUGAL |
| Norwich—Daylight | La Revolte | Lisbon—O Protesto Operario |
| Railway Review | Le Proletariat | AUSTRIA |
| Social Demokrat | La Revue Socialiste | Brunn—Volksfreund |
| Telegraph Service Gazette | Lille—Le Cri du Travailleur | HUNGARY |
| Worker's Friend | St.-Etienne—La Loire Socialist | Arbeiter-Wochen-Chronik |
| UNITED STATES | Sedan—La Revolution | ROMANIA |
| New York—Der Sozialist | HOLLAND | Jassy—Municipal |
| Freiheit | Hague—Recht voor Allen | DENMARK |
| Truthseeker | BELGIUM | Social-Demokraten |
| Volkszeitung | Ghent—Vooruit | SWEDEN |
| Alarm | Liege—L'Avenir | Malmo—Arbetet |
| Workmen's Advocate | SWITZERLAND | WEST INDIES |
| Boston—Woman's Journal | Arbeiterstimme | Cuba—El Productor |
| Liberty | Bulletin Continental | MEXICO |
| Chicago (Ill)—Vorbote | ITALY | Sinaloa—Credit-Foncier |
| Detroit—Der Arme Teufel | Rome, L'Emancipazione (daily) | |
| Fort Worth (Tex)—South West | | |
| Paterson (N J) Labor Standard | | |

NOTES ON NEWS.

THE Government have passed their bill for the relief of the Irish landlords to the extent of five millions, as they were quite sure to do in the teeth of all opposition, but their victory is not very likely to do them permanent service. Compensation to the Irish landlords at the expense of the British tax-payer is just the rock they are likely to split on, but they cannot help steering in that direction; so that before long they will probably have to make way for their opponents to try their scheme for peasant proprietorship in Ireland; or more plainly, for making a number of small landlords in Ireland instead of a few big ones. Needless to insist on the fact that this also will have to be done at the expense of the British tax-payer, whatever hanky-panky may be used to conceal the fact.

"The flowing tide is with us" (the Liberals) cries the *Pall Mall Gazette*. From the election agents' point of view that is probably true; that is, at present the chances of a Gladstonian success at the next election are brightening. But another metaphor more accurately describes the process by which the change of ministries is being brought about: "The pendulum is swinging to our side again," is the due figure of speech. That is not so encouraging perhaps to some of the members of the "Liberal party," that curious creature with a Whig head and a Radical tail; though I fear a very great many of them are much better pleased that so it is. When the "flowing tide" of really advanced opinion sets in, these gentry will skip out of the way of it with all the nimbleness they are capable of.

Mr. Henry George has come to England once more with his old pretensions to Socialism abandoned, but clinging obstinately to his old economical heresies, with which in past days he used to weave a veil of vague socialistic aspiration and eloquence. Free trade and the single-tax, *i.e.*, what he used to call land nationalisation, but which he now more accurately describes as the taxing of land values, is his platform. He says it is but a step from free trade to the single tax, with a very curious oblivion of the not very recondite fact, that England has been a free-trade country for many years and is not very far on the road to the "single-tax."

Mr. George combats the cry of the land for the cultivator with the cry of the land for the people; but, unhappily, it is but a cry. What he really means is "the land for the money capitalist"! And how he proposes to separate the land-capitalist from the money-capitalist passes human ingenuity to imagine. Is it possible for a man to be sincere, who with plenty of people teaching him, has not been able to learn this through all these years? To be a forward politician; to make a

great agitation, clamouring for a great change which would change nothing in the life of the toiling people; but which happily cannot by itself be attempted even. This seems now Mr. George's career, after all his big words.

The frightful case of injustice perpetrated by "justice" against the two poor men, Murphy and Branaghan, and the case mentioned by Mr. Bernard Coleridge, in which no pretence to remedy a similar injustice has been made (though, indeed, how can you "remedy" the murder of so many years of a man's life?), shed a lurid light on all the ways and manners of our criminal law. For who can doubt but that many and many such cases have happened, and will happen as long as our sham society lasts, and calls for such a system of defence?

One remark in the papers about this shameful affair struck me particularly. It was stated that there were serious doubts at the time of conviction as to the guilt of the men, but that they were overborne by the sympathy felt for the victims of the burglary. Does not this show how the whole feeling of the public is corrupted by our laws? An offence is committed, and straightway in the interests of society a man-hunt is set on foot; some one is arrested, and the public will be so bitterly disappointed if nobody is caught that if the guilty person cannot be convicted, at least convict somebody; and then the whole machinery of the law is set at work to get a conviction, of the guilty man if possible, but at least of some one. A theory of prosecution is started, and the whole mass of circumstantial evidence is manipulated by it; a sham jury give a verdict which purports to be theirs, but is in fact nothing but a deduction from the judge's summing-up—and, as far as they are concerned, the play is over and the public speedily forgets it, while the unhappy victims of its idiotic thirst for theatrical revenge are rotting in jail if they have not been hanged. The word *rotting* being no figurative word, let us remember, but a literal expression of a fact.

Mr. Pyke, in his interesting volume on the 'History of Crime,' notes that in the height of the Middle Ages in England juries were very unwilling to convict. There is no more significant token of the servile condition we have dropped into than the ease with which convictions are got now-a-days; *per contra*, when juries begin to think about their position, and the Courts complain of the difficulty of getting convictions, we may begin to lay some claim to be of the same blood as our stout ancestors.

W. M.

What trifles will throw some people into rapturous ecstasies. A week or so ago that very advanced *Star* went almost insane with joy over Mr. Gladstone's Birmingham programme. This perhaps should not occasion any remark, for that organ of London Radicalism, having its due share of Celtic impetuosity, takes very little to excite it; but when the Able Editor of the *Star* asks comrade Morris what the people in America have reaped from the bomb at Chicago compared with what the people of London have gained from the peaceful and constitutional action of the *Star* editor, the time has come, I think, to make some reply.

What in the name of all that is wonderful is there in this Birmingham programme for the people of London to rejoice and be thankful for? What above all is there for the poor wretches who hardly know where to get their next meal, who are starving for want of work, and who see the grim demon of hunger advancing to devour them?

Leasehold enfranchisement! This may make the heart of the small shopkeeper and house-farmer leap with joy within him, because he will have no ground landlord to share the spoils he wrings from his rack-rented tenant; but it will hardly afford much comfort to the unemployed workman who is going to be turned into the street by the house-farmer because when he is out of work he cannot pay the exorbitant rack-rent which his landlord wrings from him.

"Such changes in the land laws as would prevent the dreadful overcrowding of the poor in London." What does this mean? As far as I can see it may mean *anything*, from free land to some form of land nationalisation; but those who know the Liberal party may well guess that it does not mean the latter.

It means "free land," then—that is, expropriation of the encumbered aristocratic landlord in favour of the arrogant plutocrat of the towns. Capitalism may then own the land as well as the factories. A grand advantage, truly; but how this will diminish overcrowding, I will leave my readers to find out.

Then again "something" is to be done to provide the working classes with decent dwellings, but concerning *what* is to be done the great chief of the Liberal party is commendably reticent.

On the whole, nothing has occurred to justify the enthusiasm of the *Star*, or to give London workmen any notion that the great Liberal party has changed its character. It is still the miserable sham it has been in times gone by, and those who trust to it will reap their reward

The workers of London have gained nothing but promises, and very poor promises. But it may be objected that the American workmen have gained as little from the events at Chicago. This may be, but

will once more resort to a gigantic strike, which this time might become a general black strike. Already some partial strikes have occurred at Carnières, Hornu, and other places. In the province of Liege also the miners of Tilleur have struck, and it is expected that this and next week work will be stopped in various other localities. Never have the toilers been so badly paid as nowadays in Belgium, and the misery of the wealth-producers seems at last to have become unbearable.

ROUMANIA.

The Socialist propaganda makes very great progress indeed in Roumania; day after day our friends form new groups, which carry on the work in a systematical way. There, as elsewhere, there are Parliamentarians who go in for what is called constitutional means; comrade Mortzun, one of those who believe in legislation, has been re-elected member of the Roumanian Chamber; comrade Nadetje, formerly Professor at the University of Jassi, and one of the ablest propagandists of Socialism, has been returned in the capital of Moldavia. At Galatz and at Suceava also, Socialist candidates are likely to win legislative seats. At the municipal elections a number of Socialists have been chosen in some places, as for instance at Cuenteni, the Socialist candidates securing five times as many votes than the candidates of the landowners.

A new Socialist paper has been issued, which appears daily under the title of *Drepturile Omului* (the Rights of Man) and the editorship of comrade C. Millé, who has formerly written very interesting articles on the Roumanian peasantry in B. Malon's *Revue Socialiste* (Paris). The Socialist party has now in Roumania one daily paper, one monthly magazine, and two weeklies.

Along with the Socialist movement there is also a strong propaganda made, almost in the rural districts, in favour of the Anarchistic view of Socialism, and it will not be long before a new organ, a daily one too, will come to light in defence of the principles of Anarchical Socialism.

V. D.

SPAIN.

VALENCIA.—The saw-mill employés of this city are occupied at present in taking preliminary steps for the formation of a trades' union among themselves.

GRAZALEMA.—The situation of the working-class in this part is one of the most extreme poverty and wretchedness. Many of the labourer's wives find themselves obliged to go out to domestic service so as to keep body and soul together. Not a few of the men on returning from their work in the fields at night fail to find a crust of bread in the house. At the same time money has been provided by a capitalist to the extent of 12,000 or 13,000 crowns for church reforms and alterations.

SABADELL.—A meeting was held here lately, organised by the "Union of Resistance." The attendance was numerous, almost filling the theatre where the meeting was held. The speakers laid stress upon the necessity for union and organisation among the working-classes for the forwarding of the emancipation of labour and the Social Revolution.

CUBA.—HAVANNAH.—The tobacco strike in Havannah has terminated with the victory of the employés in the majority of the factories. It will be remembered that what they demanded was a rise in price in certain departments of the industry, besides complaining of the quality of the tobacco they had to manipulate. We hear that the solidarity among the workers during the strike has been most satisfactory, help being received from other associations in the island and in the United States.

SANTIAGO.—*El Productor* (Havannah) says that the working-class movement is decidedly progressing in this town. In December next, the employés in the tobacco factories intend to organise a movement whose object is to obtain for themselves higher pay and certain necessary improvements in the workshops.

M. M.

REVOLUTIONARY CALENDAR.

WEEK ENDING DECEMBER 8, 1888.

| | | |
|---|-------|--|
| 2 | Sun. | 1816. Spa-fields riots. 1851. <i>coup d'etat</i> in Paris. 1852. Frances Wright died. 1859. John Brown hung. 1872. Strike of 2,400 gasmen in London. 1887. First victim of Bloody Sunday (Linnell) died. |
| 3 | Mon. | 1871. Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants formed. 1882. Arabi Pasha banished to Ceylon. |
| 4 | Tues. | 1795. Thomas Carlyle born. |
| 5 | Wed. | 1806. Trial of "Thrashers" at Sligo. |
| 6 | Thur. | 1793. Trial of Thomas Briellat for seditious words. 1882. Louis Blanc died. |
| 7 | Fri. | 1683. Algernon Sydney beheaded. 1795. Meeting of London Corresponding Society at Jews' Harp House. 1879. Jón Sigurdsson died. |
| 8 | Sat. | 1643. John Pym died. 1837. Faneuil Hall meeting on Lovejoy's assassination; Wendell Phillips' first speech. |

If wage-workers hope to succeed in their struggle for justice, freedom, and honest pay, they must aid their labour papers. The papers which are subsidised and supported by capital will not defend capital. Why should they? Are they not well paid to defend capitalism?—*Labour Standard*.

The Manchester, Sheffield, and Lincolnshire Railway Company would seem to have been ill-advised in appealing against the award of £4,500 made by a Sheffield jury, a few weeks ago, to Mr. Vernon, who lost his leg and sustained other injuries in the Hexthorpe collision, seeing that after appealing to the Queen's Bench the company agreed to a reduction of the amount to £4,000. After the costs that the company has incurred in prosecuting this appeal have been met, and the limbs of the law are satisfied, it is to be feared there will not be much of the £500, withheld from the injured man, left to find its way to the coffers of the company. £4,000 is a large sum to pay for taking off a man's leg compared with what a railway company pays for taking one of its own workmen's legs off, which by the new Employers' Liability Bill would be compensated for with a paltry £250. This is an example of the laws we have for rich and poor respectively. We venture to say that the £4,000 would be of much more service to a working man than to one in the position of the gentleman alluded to above, but our laws give the most to those who have and the least to those who haven't.—*Railway Review*.

KETTLE AND POT.

("This Helmet, I suppose."—SULLIVAN.)

"THE landed class, said Joe,
"Will clearly have to go;
Their wealth to win,
They never spin,
And do they toil? oh, no.
So off those gentry go."

The game-preservers groan,
"Oh, leave the land alone!
The employers who
Apply the screw,—
With them go pick your bone;
But leave the land alone."

'Accept our thanks, we pray,'
The working folk may say,
"From each in turn
This truth we learn:
We work that you may play.
Be off, and clear the way!"

C. W. B.

They can reduce it to a fine point at Buchan. They have not yet reached the single straw, but the current report of the managers of the New Maud Poorhouse, shows that the inmates are fed (!) at the rate of 2½ per head per day. The managers no doubt believe in the golden rule, but they hold it as some sentimental socialists do their belief—true, but under present circumstances, unpracticable. The managers of the Scotch poorhouses are generally men who have been enriched by the poverty of the poor, and so it is pleasing and proper to them that the poor should slip their skins as soon as practicable, in accordance with "law and order," the god of the pillars of present-day society. The poor, with the increased education now forced on them, will not for long be content to "fold their tents like the Arabs and silently steal away."—G. McL.

DISCRIMINATING CRUELTY.—Every one knows, I presume (writes a correspondent), that there is a society of ladies in London, presided over by the Princess of Wales, which aims at the abolition of the cruel and foolish fashion of wearing stuffed birds as ornaments for female attire. I had the curiosity the other day to inquire of a fashionable Bond-street vendor of ladies' hats how the principles of this society affected her trade. "I don't find that it makes much difference," replied Mdme. L—. And, indeed, nearly all the smartest hats in her window were adorned with the skins and feathers of brilliantly coloured birds. "I suppose the ladies who belong to the society do not deal here?" I queried. "Oh, yes, they do," said Madame. "I have ten or a dozen of them on my books; but when I sell one of them a hat trimmed with birds, I have to cut the heads off; they don't mind wings and tails, but they think it cruel to wear the heads." Alas, poor humanity!—*Pall Mall Gazette*.

THE SOCIALIST LEAGUE.

OFFICES: 13 FARRINGTON ROAD, E.C. •

The Offices of the Socialist League will be open for the sale of *Commonweal* and all other Socialist publications from 8.30 a.m. to 9 p.m. every day except Sunday. The Secretary will be in attendance from 10 a.m. to 9 p.m. daily.

Notice.—All letters on League business, except those intended for Editors of *Commonweal*, to be addressed to me. No other person is authorised to sign any official communication. FRANK KITZ, Secretary.

Propaganda Fund.—H. Samuels, Is.

London Members' Meeting.—The next monthly meeting of members will take place on Monday, Dec. 3, 1888, at 13 Farringdon Road, at 9 o'clock sharp.

CHICAGO MARTYRS COMMEMORATION FUND.

The expenditure in connection with this commemoration having greatly exceeded the estimate of the Committee, and a wish having been expressed that the Committee should pay Mrs. Parsons' return fare to Chicago, this will bring the expenditure up to about £70. The Committee up to the present have received about £40. All those having monies in hand from collections, sale of tickets, or donations, are urgently requested to pay them in to the Treasurer the latest.

Already acknowledged—£31 2s. 2½d. Received—United Scandinavian Club, 10s. F. F. M., 5s. Total, £31 17s. 2½d. J. LANE, Treasurer.

REPORTS.

HAMMERSMITH.—Good meeting Latimer Road, Sunday Morning, Astbury, Dean, Lyne, and Tochatti, speakers; choir sang several songs, and were well received. Weltje Road, 11.30, Catterson Smith and S. Bullock spoke, moderate meeting owing to weather. Same place at 7 o'clock, Mordhurst and Hall held meeting, at conclusion inviting audience to Kelmescott House to hear William Clarke (Fabian), lecture on "Growth of Capitalism in the United States." Good lecture, full of information, audience much impressed by it.

ABERDEEN.—No report last week owing to misunderstanding. On 18th, large meeting in Castle Street, by Aikens, Duncan, and Barrow. On 20th, at indoor meeting, Leatham lectured on, "An Individualist's Nightmare," criticising the article "Socialism Seen Through American Spectacles," by General Buyce, in *The Nineteenth Century* for September (the lecture will be published by request). On 25th, largest and most enthusiastic meeting of season, addressed by Aiken, Duncan, and Leatham.

IPSWICH.—Sunday, Read lectured in Pioneer Hall, Woodhouse in chair, upon "Co-operation as it is, and as it Should Be." Read will continue his discussion on Thursday night at 8 o'clock, sharp, in the Pioneer Hall.—J. T.

NOEWICH.—Sunday, meetings in Market Place, addressed by Mowbray in morning, evening by Poynts and W. Moore. At Gorden Hall, Mowbray lectured on the "Anti-Statist Manifesto."

LECTURE DIARY. LONDON.

Bloomsbury.—This Branch is now actively working. Socialists resident in this locality should send their names in at once to 13 Farringdon Road. Clerkenwell.—Hall of the Socialist League, 13 Farringdon Road, E.C. Sunday, December 2, at 7 p.m., Adjourned Business Meeting. At 8.30, Free Concert by Members and Friends. Fulham.—8 Effie Road, Walham Green. Committee meetings are held on Sunday evenings at 7 o'clock sharp. All members are earnestly requested to attend. Hackney.—Secretary, E. Lefevre, 14 Goldsmiths Sq., Goldsmiths Row, Hackney Road. The next meeting of members will be held at 28 Percy Terrace, Victoria Road, Hackney Wick, on Sunday Dec. 9, at 5.30 p.m. All members are requested to attend. Hammersmith.—Kelscott House, Upper Mall, W. Sunday December 2, at 8 p.m., A Lecture. Wed. Dec. 5, at 8 p.m., Graham Wallas (Fabian Society), "Property under Socialism." Hoxton.—12, Basing Place, Kingsland Rd. Business meetings of this branch are held every Friday evening at 9 o'clock. London Fields.—All communications, etc., to Mrs. G. G. Schack, 26 Cawley Road, South Hackney. Merton.—Club-house, 3 Clare Villas, Merton Road, Singlegate. Lecture on Sunday evenings at 8.30. Mile-end and Bethnal Green.—95 Boston St., Hackney Road. North London.—Secretary, Nelly Parker. Business meetings held on Friday evenings at 6 Windmill St., Tottenham Court Road, after open-air meeting at Ossulton Street. Whitechapel and St. Georges in the East.—Meets at the International Club, 40 Berner Street, Commercial Road, on Saturdays at 7.30 p.m.

PROVINCES.

Aberdeen (Scottish Section).—Secretary, P. Barrow, 14 Ann Street. Branch meets in Oddfellows Hall on Monday nights at 8. Choir practice at 46 Marischal Street on Thursday evenings at 8. Bradford.—Read's Coffee Tavern, Ivegate. Meets Tuesdays at 8. Carnoustie (Scottish Section: Forfarshire).—Meeting every Tuesday, at 8 p.m., in the Carnoustie Restaurant. Samuel Wilson, Secy. Dundee (Scot. Sect.).—Meetings every Sunday in the Trades Hall, opposite Tay Bridge Station. Edinburgh (Scottish Land and Labour League).—35 George IV. Bridge. Meetings for Discussion, Thursdays at 8 p.m. Galashiels (Scot Sect).—J. Walker, 184 Glendinning Terrace, secy. Galloway and Dysart (Scottish Section: Fife).—Meet every Tuesday at 7 p.m. in Galloway Public School. Secretary, A. Paterson, 152 Roslyn St. Glasgow.—34 John Street. Reading-room (Draughts, Chess, etc.) open 10 a.m. till 10 p.m. daily. Weekly meeting of members on Thursday evenings at 8. French Class meets every Sunday at 11. Ipswich.—Pioneer Hall, Tacket Street. Meets on Sunday evenings. All members are earnestly asked to meet Sunday morning at 10.30. A Concert will be held on Saturday November 9, at 7.30; members and friends please turn up and make it a success. Kilmarnock.—Secretary, H. McGill, 22 Gilmour St. Branch meets on every alternate Tuesday. Leeds.—Clarendon Buildings, Victoria Rd. and Front Row. Open every evening. Business meeting Saturdays at 8 p.m. communications to T. Paylor, 11 Sheldon Street, Holbeck, Leeds. Sunday Dec. 2, at 7.30, F. Corkwell, "Two Systems: A Contrast." 3th. T. Paylor, "What we Want, and How to Get It." 16th. T. Maguire, "Leeds and its Inhabitants" (with lime-light illustrations). Leicester.—Hosiery Union Offices, 11a Millstone Lane. Fridays at 8 p.m. Norwich.—Sunday, at 8.15, Gordon Hall. Monday, at 8.30, Members' Meeting. Tuesday, at 8, Meeting in Gordon Hall. Wednesday, at 8, Educational Class. Thursday, at 8 p.m., Lecture "An Enquiry into the Life of Christ according to Strauss and Rénan"; tickets 1d. each. Saturday, 8 until 10.30, Co-operative Clothing Association. Oxford.—Temperance Hall, 25½ Pembroke Street. Wednesdays, at 8.30 p.m. Walsall.—Lecture Room, back of Temperance Hall. Mondays at 8 p.m. West Calder (Scottish Section).—Sec., Robert Lindsay, West Calder.

All persons who sympathise with the views of the Socialist League are earnestly invited to communicate with the above addresses, and if possible help us in preparing for the birth of a true society, based on equality, brotherhood, and freedom for all.

OPEN-AIR PROPAGANDA. SUNDAY 2.

11.30...Latimer Road Station ...Hammersmith Branch
11.30...Mitcham Fair Green ...The Branch
11.30...Regent's Park ...Mainwaring & Parker
11.30...Walham Green, opp. Station...The Branch
11.30...Weltje Rd., Ravencourt Pk ...Hammersmith
3.30...Hyde Park ...Mainwaring & Parker
7.30...Broad Street, Soho...Mainwaring & Parker
7.30...Clerkenwell Green.....Nicoll

Monday.
8 ...Wimbledon BroadwayThe Branch
Tuesday.
8.30...Fulham—back of Walham Green Ch. ...Branch
Friday.
7.30...Euston Rd.—Ossulton StreetThe Branch
EAST END.
SUNDAY 2.
Leman Street, Shadwell 11 ...Nicoll.

TUESDAY.
8.30...East-end C'mittee.
FRIDAY.
Philpot St., Commercial Rd. 8.30...Whitechapel Bch.

PROVINCES.

Aberdeen.—Saturday: Castle Street, at 7 p.m.
Glasgow.—Sunday: Glasgow Green at 2 p.m.; Paisley Road at 5.30.
Ipswich.—
Sproughton, Wednesday evening.
Westerfield, Thursday evening.
Needham Market, Sunday morning and evening.
Leeds.—Sunday: Hunslet Moor, at 11 a.m.; Vicar's Croft, at 7 p.m.
Norwich.—Sunday: Market Place, at 11, 3, and 7.30. St Catharine's Plain, Friday at 8.30 p.m.

CHELSEA BRANCH S.D.F., Pelham Rooms, Kimbolton Row, Fulham Road, S.W.—Sunday Dec. 2, at 8 p.m., Daniel McEwen, "Irish Land and Labour." THE SOCIALIST CO-OPERATIVE FEDERATION.—The Committee will meet at the house of S. Oliver, 139 Trafalgar Street, Walworth Road, on Saturday Dec. 1 and Dec. 8, at 7.30 p.m., to receive subscriptions and enrol members. Friends in South London particularly requested to be present. FABIAN SOCIETY.—Willis's Rooms, King Street, St. James's Square, S.W. December 7, at 8 p.m., Annie Besant, "Industry under Socialism." December 21, Hubert Bland, "The Outlook." Tickets may be obtained from the Hon. Sec., Sydney Olivier, 180 Portdown Rd. W.

LEICESTER.—A course of lectures on "Socialism, its Aims and Principles" is being delivered in Leicester Secular Hall. The third lecture will be delivered on Sunday Dec. 9 by William Clarke—subject, "The Industrial Aspect." Dec. 30. Sydney Olivier, "The Moral Aspect."

SOUTH LONDON.—Friends who are willing to form a Branch of the Socialist League in South London will please place themselves in communication with C. Henze, 41 Bolton Street, Thomas Street, Kennington Park, S.E., or by letter to H. Hopkins, 17 Cairloch Road, Shenley Road, Peckham, S.E.

SOCIALIST LEAGUE LITERATURE.

- Chants for Socialists. By William Morris. . 1d
Organised Labour: The Duty of the Trades' Unions in Relation to Socialism. By Thomas Binning (London Society of Compositors). 1d.
The Commune of Paris. By E. Belfort Bax, Victor Dave, and William Morris. 2d.
The Aims of Art. By Wm. Morris. Bjsen edition, 3d.; Large paper, 6d.
The Rights of Labour according to John Ruskin. By Thomas Barclay. 1d
The Tables Turned; or, Nupkins Awakened. A Socialist Interlude. By William Morris. In Wrapper 4d.
The Manifesto of the Socialist League. Annotated by E. Belfort Bax and William Morris. An exposition of the principles on which the League is founded. 1d.
Useful Work v. Useless Toil. By William Morris. 1d.
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