

THE COMMONWEAL

The Official Journal of the SOCIALIST LEAGUE.

[REGISTERED FOR TRANSMISSION ABROAD.]

VOL. 5.—No. 175.

SATURDAY, MAY 18, 1889.

WEEKLY; ONE PENNY.

NOTES ON NEWS.

No one will wonder that the second reading of the new flogging bill has passed the House of Commons with a large majority. It was a matter of course that the present house would not lose an opportunity of showing how reactionary it is. But after all this was not, and was not likely to be, a matter of party; the Quaker Pease being as hearty in voting for it as any of the older kind of oppressor of the people. The vote was essentially the vote of the unthinking middle classes, and the debate was thoroughly in accordance with it.

It would be mere waste of time to take in hand the various forms which the ferocity and folly of these Philistines of Philistines took; but one may say that there were two lines taken up by the defenders of the measure. No. 1 was the effectiveness of brutality as a deterrent of brutality, and No. 2 was the exaltation of the moral duty of making the enemy whom you have caught pay for the enemy whom you cannot catch. On the one hand rank cowardice, on the other stupid revenge are the motives of such legislation.

With such cowards and ruffians as the reactionists of the House of Commons it would be loss of time to argue; and it would, of course, be no less a waste of time to prove to Socialists that while the gigantic wrong of class robbery supported by violence is overshadowing us like the deadly upas-tree, individual theft of any kind cannot excite much moral indignation in us; but since this paper will, it is hoped, fall into the hands of open-minded persons who have not yet learned what Socialism is, we may as well point out first that severity of punishment does not deter persons from committing offences which they are forced into by their surrounding circumstances; and next, that if it did, it might be possible to buy this benefit too dear; and that the price which these severe moralists and benefactors of their kind are prepared to pay for a diminished list of violent burglaries, is the degradation of the whole public.

Furthermore, these wiseacres might if they had read a little history (but fancy an M.P. reading history!) have noted that however pleasant revenge may be, it is an expensive pleasure, and that cowards should not meddle with it. And it is not easy to believe that the shopkeepers who want to add new tortures to our criminal law would venture on doing so if they really understood the necessary consequences of driving violent and brutal men (men made violent and brutal) to despair, and that that their precious bill will do will not be to deter the "criminal class" from burglary, but to egg them on to murder. It will probably, if it becomes law, prove the death-warrant of many a quiet householder, who might otherwise have gone on sanding the sugar and calling to prayers for many years.

But really it is a sickening job arguing about a set of cowardly and hypocritical pirates who have got just one idea into their heads on the subject of theft, which is that they alone amongst all the world should be allowed to rob with violence and then escape the consequences of robbery by violence.

W. M.

For far too long those who "go down to the sea in ships" were helpless, unorganised, and dumb under oppression. Even England, "mistress of the waters," left her sons to perish by sea, as she left them by land, wholly unheeded so long as their deaths were due to the profit-making greed of her capitalists. And they themselves seemed well-nigh content it should be so. But they have begun to move like the rest of the workers everywhere, and they have now a tremendous union, and an organ of their own. That they may meet with the success they deserve, and not be content for long merely with the objects they set forth in the platform to be found in another column, but go on to form the Navy of Labour which shall complement the Army of Labour that is growing so rapidly, is our earnest wish.

The rabid philanthropist makes himself a nuisance everywhere, as

indeed he seeks to do, counting it to himself for righteousness that he makes religion, temperance, or anything else, stink in the nostrils of the ordinary man, however admirable the things may be in themselves. The other day at the County Council there came up a question whether the licence of a certain public-house should be preserved or no. There were only a few—seventeen, as the division showed—in favour of its preservation; it was quite obvious from the very beginning of the debate how the vote was going. But Mr. F. N. Charrington could not let the opportunity pass for a speech of the most approved Chadband-Stiggins type, with a raw-head-and-bloody-bones addition of iron bars and broken skulls, etc.

Now, nobody familiar with the working class, or any other class in this country, can deny that the lessening of drunkenness is a most desirable end; and in these days of adulteration it would be quite as well in most cases to drop drinking altogether. But just when one has admitted so much, and perhaps begun to feel a little inclined oneself to do a little in the direction of discouraging the drinking habits of the people, along comes the Chadband or the Charrington with a scream of contempt for anything but his own doctrines.

"Think of your soul's welfare, and never mind your wages. Be sober and miserable and obedient, and everything your masters tell you, and you'll go to heaven. The more you suffer here, the happier you will be above. Be sober and save, and become yourself a capitalist. Don't ask for justice; all that's due to you is charity. Crawl and crouch and pray and snivel and whine, the more you abase yourself before your betters here, the higher you will be exalted hereafter."

A man is often measured by the company he keeps, and so is a principle. So when Temperance comes, as it nearly always does, mixed up with such doctrines, and also comes armed with a bludgeon with which to batter down anybody not actively on its side, what is one to do? To allow, even for a moment, that temperance or total abstinence, or anything of that kind, is a radical cure for all social ills, is impossible for a Socialist. If you do not swallow that pill, however, and swear by water, you are damned as a drunkard, and held up to opprobrium as a preacher of excess.

All that one can do is to keep one's temper as well as may be, and explain the true position of affairs; that so long as the wage-system lasts, so long will wages tend to a minimum marked by the amount required for bare subsistence; that so long as wages remain at this minimum, squalor, disease, and misery must be the lot of the working folk; and that so long as they are squalid, sick, and wretched, they will be drunken and degraded.

S.

OKLAHOMA AND VIENNA.

It is now an axiom in evolution that "the life history of the individual is an epitome of the life history of the race," of course conditioned and varied to some extent by immediate environment. The ontogeny and phylogeny of sociology is as much a certainty as in any other branch of evolution, but it is seldom that the student has so good an opportunity of observing and proving this truth in evolution as the newspapers have furnished in their reports of the rush in Oklahoma and the tram-slaves' strike in Vienna. The same papers gave reports of John Morley's plain talk to his labour constituents, and in the simple fact of reporting the first two events gave John the lie. With sturdy John, as with all the so-called philosophical Radicals, "thrift" and "self-help" are the sole saviours of Labour. Events in Oklahoma show how small a chance bare Labour ever has to get ahead of Capital and Privilege.

The treatment accorded to the native peoples of America by the whites has been precisely the same as that dealt to the natives of Australia, New Zealand, Africa, and, in short, to the natives of any land where once a few whites have been allowed a footing. The record of United States officialism in dealing with the Indian is one long

history of shameless trickery and fraud, backed up by brutality and force; law-'n'-order of the most approved type, as explained by the poet—

“Laws, as we read in ancient sages,
Have been like cobwebs in all ages.
Cobwebs for little flies are spread
And laws for little folks are made;
But if an insect of renown,
Hornet or beetle, wasp or *drone*,
Be caught in quest of sport or plunder,
The flimsy fetter flies in sunder.”

For some fifteen years a struggle has been carried on, partly by show of legal method and form, and partly by brute force, of the most nakedly old-fashioned form expressed by the lines—

“Let him take who has the power,
Let him hold who can.”

This particular struggle began when a few adventurers, headed by a Captain Payne, who having held the position of Sergeant-at-Arms of the Kansas State Senate, was able to make use of friends at court when he proceeded to utilise the knowledge he had gained of the district in question. A company was formed with a large capital for the purpose of backing up a party of desperate men, who then proceeded—to use a digger's term—to jump the Indians' claim. This party managed to evade (?) the troops, and effecting a lodgment founded a settlement. It must be noted here at once that the capitalist is already on the scene. £500,000 is a small sum to *subscribe* with the hope of controlling the fee simple of some two or three millions of acres of land. After a week or two these settlers were, however, dislodged and arrested by troops, but were only kept in prison a couple of weeks, long enough to make them heroes and short enough time not to deter numbers of men ready to be recruits for the new land. By this means in course of a few years something like a firm hold had been secured, and then of course something like a claim for consideration could be dodged up with which to go formally before the Legislature, and then comes in the very useful help of the quite respectable people who *sub rosa* find funds for *exploration*, and votes in the House to make a state title to the stolen lands.

Having next gone through the sham of buying from the natives their birthright, for the merest mess of pottage, in the shape of new allotments or reservations in more inaccessible districts, then comes the proclamation which throws open the new land for the benefit of the pioneers of civilisation (?), the settlers who shall make the land fruitful in every inch, and give reason for new capitalist dodges in shape of new railroads, markets, and all the other blessings which accompany civilisation to-day.

One of the first of these blessings, if not the very first, of course, is law-'n'-order, a recognised system of authority, and it is somewhat sad to find civilisation discounted at the very start by the fact that the bitterest curses are being hurled at the men elected—by popular ballot too—to be lower marshals, etc., for having used their power and influence to secure the most advantageous plots of land. It is hard to believe, impossible to understand, why, if America be such a paradise for the poor and the struggling, that so many should be willing to suffer the hardships of miles of travel to get a new start as for weeks have been marching towards Oklahoma.

When the day broke which was to allow the people on this tract of land, 50,000 people were ready to “Rush for the Spoil,” “La Terre,” and in a few days thousands were in as mad a rush to get out of the country. Death by cold, by starvation, and by murder had prevented many rushing back, and others remain because absolutely without any hope of reaching any part where they could get a new start, all their money gone in fares and food at excess rates. Railway companies, food rings, and frauds of every sort have, as usual, utilised the boom to eat up the small capitalist, the thrift man, and afterwards will eat up one another.

The state of things which in settled countries has been brought about by gradual steps of force and fraud, and fraud and force, in this new state were exhibited in every stage in a few hours. The man with the most dollars could buy the fastest horse, and could reach the best plot to claim as *his own*; had the best chance of hiring as his own private police the men whose capital had been all used up in reaching the land of promise; had the best chance of winning the election to public office—by buying votes with food—and the best chance of securing immunity for any and every act he should commit to secure his hold on what his dollars had put him in possession of. In a few hours an election for municipal officers had been held, a newspaper started, and a bank opened, one city, Guthrie, divided into lots and all sold. By the next morning some people were dying of cold and starvation, and several men shot in quarrels over disputed claims to land.

Reading every available report, and reading between the lines also, it is easy to see that in Oklahoma in the course of a few days, even hours, every hideous detail which goes to make up our vaunted civilisation was exhibited in its worst form; that in Oklahoma in less than a week a whole life history of society making was given in brief, at the same time that one detail was being given *in extenso* in Vienna.

In Vienna as in Oklahoma, the capitalist rules the roost. In both cases the government and the general body of the community have been the slaves of capital; by turns the capitalist tricks the government and the people, or boldly defies. The tram company in Vienna by use of capital secures a monopoly agreeing to certain rules; having secured its monopoly, sets aside as of no moment all idea of keeping

any other part of the covenant than to make dividends. It is only when its extreme use of its powers as monopolist employers of labour have driven its slaves to revolt, that the full results of this power is felt. It is only when all the horrors of a land war and rush to Oklahoma is seen, that the rotten state of things in America—as in every capital ridden land—is fully appreciated, and in both cases the only solution is the same.

THOMAS SHORR, jun.

A LESSON FROM ARGENTINA.

WHILE the debased dunces of the English daily press are amusing their readers with little nothings about parties, the world outside the range of these little minds does things which Anarchists may well applaud. The finance minister, Mr. Varela, of the Argentine Republic had courage enough to lay hands on the sacred ark of the present system—he closed the Bolsa or Exchange for some days, and the police held the keys. His reason for this act was based on the fundamental law of the State, which declares that personal gain shall not set aside the law for the general public good. This law the Bolsa gamblers had infringed by trafficking in the minted currency of the country, to make gains by withholding from circulation gold which had been minted, causing wild confusion in all financial transactions and paralysing trade. To such an extent had this proceeded, that in a proposed transfer of a banking account at Buenos Ayres to a London bank, paper might be taken at the same amount, but gold was not to be had except at the rate of £49 only for the £100 to be transferred. This in a country rich in gold and other metals in the soil, and with a great quantity already coined at great cost to the State.

To such a pass had the absorption of gold coin attained, that Signor Pechico in the Senate proposed the use of leather money, which, having no intrinsic value, would not be used for gain by trafficking in its varying premediated values.

The *Buenos Ayres Herald* of March 22 thus records the event:

“Last night at a late hour Mr. Varela signed two important notes which burst like bomb-shells in the quarters where their contents first leaked out. It was not considered probable that H. E. would proceed to extremities with the Camara Sindical, but as if scenting danger in the breeze on being made aware of the Camara's intention to fight the battle out, H. E. without a moment's hesitation ordered the chief of police to close the Bolsa hermetically, giving right of entry solely and only to the president and members of the Camara Sindical and porters in charge of the establishment. H. E. then turned his attention to the Camara Sindical itself and sent it a stiff note, advising the members of the measures adopted, adding that their attitude could only be ascribed to one of two causes—either that they were unable to procure the fulfilment of the decree, or that they deliberately set it at defiance. It is due to the minister to state that these measures were rendered a necessity by the action of the Camara, who put the fat in the fire by forwarding H. E. a note in which his authority to interfere in the Bolsa is respectfully disallowed. Only one of two courses was thus left open—battle or retreat—and with the vigour and energy which has characterised the minister's action throughout in the matter, he has elected for the former. This keynote of alarm will create consternation and no small confusion, not only in the ranks of bulls, bears, stags, and guttersnipes, but in the commercial world generally. What are merchants to do for their gold? What are brokers to do for their commissions, shipbrokers for their freights, and produce-brokers for their clients? The Bolsa with its traditions and memories was a meeting-place for all, worthy of the vast business interests worked from its centre and with which it rose, progressed, and thrived. It would be of course absurd to suppose that such a vast institution can have its career thus untimely blighted. Mr. Varela is neither Vandal nor Goth. He seeks not to desecrate nor destroy the temple, but to purify it, and his interdiction will only have a momentary duration. But in any case, whatever issue may arise or determination be come to, it will take more than a minister's note or a police commissary's influence to crush the Bolsa de Comercio.”

That's all right from a commercial point of view; it will “take more than a minister's note or a police commissary's influence to crush and uproot the Bolsa de Comercio.” But all the same, rude hands have been laid upon the “temple,” and if “purification” once begins, who shall say where it shall end?

A later mail says that after four days the Bolsa was opened by permission of the minister of finance, who, however, had shown that he looked upon the currency of a country the same as he would upon the water-mains or lamp-posts, as public property for general use, not for private individuals or companies to get hold of and keep back until enormous ransoms were paid to the gamblers and Bolsa thieves who had seized them.

H. KING.

THE COMMUNE IN AUSTRALIA.

By last mail we hear of successful Australian celebrations of the Commune of Paris. On Sunday, March 17th, the Sydney Branch of the Socialist League held an open-air meeting in the Domain in the afternoon at 3 p.m. In the evening a meeting was held at the Rooms, 533, George Street, when addresses were delivered on the Paris Commune by A. M. Pilter, W. H. McNamara, A. Crockett, Léon Planchenault, and others. The following resolution was carried at each meeting:—“That this meeting expresses the deepest sympathy with the heroic attempt of the workers of Paris to overthrow the domination of the classes that live by the robbery of labour, and looks forward to the time when the distinction of classes will be abolished, and the hopes for which so many workers have sacrificed their lives will be realised in the true society of the workers of all countries.” Appropriate songs and recitals were also given.

The Melbourne Branch held its demonstration on the 18th, at which J. A. Andrews, Rosa, Petrie, and others were speakers.

At Brisbane, and other places where our friends were not strong enough to hold public meetings, they met together to encourage one another, and to strengthen their hands for work.

“GETTING ON.”—An example of the remarkable change that has come over Mr. Bradlaugh's position in the House of Commons, since the days when a majority of the House were in arms against him, was forthcoming at question-time the other day. Among the many absentees were Lord Charles Beresford and Mr. Lockwood, who, both having notices of motion, placed them in the hands of the member for Northampton. The House laughed to hear Mr. Bradlaugh rising “on behalf of Lord Charles Beresford” to give notice of his intention on that day month to move his resolution on the organisation of the navy. But Mr. Bradlaugh has been getting on for some time, and is now rather a favourite with the Conservatives than otherwise.—*Court Journal*.

INTERNATIONAL NOTES.

GERMANY.

In Westphalia and Rhenish Prussia, a strike of considerable importance has broken out among the miners, which from day to day is assuming wider dimensions. Very nearly one hundred thousand men have left working, and they seem well decided to stick to their demands, viz., an increase of 15 per cent. on their wages and a shortening of their work hours. Soldiers of all arms have been concentrated in these provinces, and General von Albedyll, commanding the Westphalian Army Corps, has gone from his headquarters at Münster to Gelsenkirchen to direct the movements of the troops. Of course, in Germany as elsewhere, the usual course which is adopted for the regulation of the conditions of work consists in bringing on the spot as many soldiers as possible, and in ordering them to shoot right and left on unarmed men, who are merely asking not to be kept any longer on starvation wages. The presence of so many soldiers has already resulted in a lamentable loss of life, and threatens to bring still more about. Collisions are frequent between the military and the men on strike. Already a dozen people have been shot dead, and many wounded, including women and children. Whenever the strikers gather in order to discuss their interests the troops order them to disperse, and if they are not very quick in doing so fire is soon opened on them and "order restored." At Bochum the soldiers even shot dead two or three persons and wounded several others who had nothing to do with the strike, but had just arrived by rail. Near Dortmund they killed a number of colliers after having really provoked them to resistance. At Gladbeck three miners were shot dead, and ten or twelve severely wounded. At Brackel, another conflict between the military and the strikers ended with the result that three men were killed and a number of others wounded. That is the way in which the stupid representatives of law-'n'-order believe they will bring about an understanding between the mine-thieves and those who are employed as slaves on their own property.

BELGIUM.

The scandalous trial for high treason against our comrades Georges Dufisseaux and some twenty others, is now going on at the Court of Assize of Mons, in the province of Hainault. We intend to report fully this case as soon as the proceedings are terminated, which will not be before another week. But we must say, however, that this trial is one of the most disgusting illustrations of the abominable way in which the governments are continually getting up plots by their own agents, in order to ruin a movement and send to prison its supporters. The counsel for the defence have decided to call as witnesses the Premier of Belgium, one Beernart, who received the *agents provocateurs* in his cabinet at midnight to give them his instructions, the Minister of Justice, one De Volder, who encouraged the sinister *provocateurs* to use "violent language" underlined by dynamite explosions, and some other "big" personages. The indignation is general among the Belgian working-classes and part of the bourgeoisie; they ask for the complete acquittal of all the accused Socialists. We shall see.

SWEDEN.

The last Swedish Socialist Congress, which was convened at Stockholm, has come to the following results. In all the questions discussed there has been a majority with moderate views against a strong minority holding very extreme opinions. The majority thought it to be premature to sever there and then all connection with other political organisations. For instance, they found it expedient to unite with such parties as, at the elections, honestly and earnestly claim universal suffrage and popular rights. The minority was of opinion that Socialists have to stand aloof from all other bourgeois parties, as these parties amalgamate more and more in one reactionary mass. The majority declared religion to be matter of private concern, whereas the minority wished it to be understood that all religious creeds must be condemned and propaganda made against their spreading. The question whether the Socialist party thought it necessary that, in order to realise their aims, physical force should be resorted to, was negated by 18 delegates against a minority of 16, the following resolution being carried: "The Socialist party does not aim at a violent revolution, but if the blindness and the egoism of the ruling classes do provoke such a course, the party will be prepared to use any means in order to secure for the people the most abundant results of their struggle." The minority pleaded for forcible action, and wanted the proceedings on that question to be carried on with closed doors. In the case of a revolutionary movement breaking out, the Socialists were of opinion that they might possibly find good help among the military, the permanent army in Sweden being almost entirely recruited from the poorest classes of the population. As to the organisation of the party, an executive of seven members, with an equal number of substitutes, has been elected to direct the movement. The whole country has been divided into three districts (Stockholm, Malmö, Gothenburg) which carry on their propaganda on their own lines, each district having an official organ—*Socialdemokraten* for Stockholm, *Arbetet* for Malmö, and *Folkets Röst* for Gothenburg. At Novoköping exists also a local paper *Proletären*.

On the other side, it is said that the Swedish Government is about to submit to the deliberations of the Riksdag a Bill cut after the pattern of the German muzzle-laws against the Socialists.

SWITZERLAND.

The daily papers have reported at length the case of a certain Wohlgenuth, police inspector at Mülhouse, and a tailor of Basel named Lutz. The Swiss Federal Council have now settled the matter by the following decree: "The Federal Council, considering that August Wohlgenuth, police inspector at Mülhouse, has committed on Swiss territory acts of which the results are of a compromising nature for the internal and external safety of Switzerland; considering further that the act of tampering with Balthazar Lutz, of Bavaria, residing at Basel, has resulted in creating agitation among the workers of Basel, Alsace-Lorraine, and the Duchy of Bade; that among other manoeuvres, Wohlgenuth wrote to Lutz 'to act unscrupulously'; decides that Wohlgenuth be expelled from the Swiss territory. On the other hand, considering that Lutz, tailor at Basel, has accepted the rôle of an *agent provocateur* and the monies offered to him for agitating amongst the workers of Basel, Alsace-Lorraine, and the Duchy of Bade, and that he has accepted to report to Wohlgenuth, decide that Lutz be expelled from the Swiss territory." *Der Sozialdemokrat* contends that Lutz, who belongs to the German Social-Democratic party, has only acted in the way he did in order to be better enabled to catch the German officer at work, and we think it but fair, without expressing an opinion ourselves, to state what our German colleague has to say about him.

HOLLAND.

Last Saturday our friends at the Hague decided to have a lark, and they resorted to a tolerably good joke. Some Socialists succeeded in effecting an entry into the Great Tower, and replaced the old dirty yellow Orange standard by a red flag bearing a Socialist inscription, which was not discovered until broad daylight. The flag was of course then removed, and the dirty Orange rag restored to its place. A judicial inquiry has been opened; dear me! The *Star*, in its extreme Radicalism, calls the joke an extraordinary outrage!

FRANCE.

A new Socialist revolutionary paper will be started at Lyons on the 23rd of the present month, with comrades Augier, Servelle, Chabrat, and Humboldt as editors. It is to be entitled *Le Flambeau Rouge* (The Red Link), and the offices of the paper are established at 51, Rue des Trois-Pierres. The terms for subscription are very low, 1s. 2½d. per quarter for England and America. We hope that our Lyons comrades will succeed in their venture.

AUSTRIA.

The tramway strike at Vienna having succeeded, the bourgeois class are beginning to look after some vengeance. Last Monday, prosecutions were opened against some two hundred participants in the "troubles" in Favoriten and Waehring. The usual kind of charges were preferred against the accused, i.e., violently resisting the public authorities and causing damage to property. The bourgeois Nupkinses scandalously condemned these men, who had merely defended themselves against the brutality of the soldiers, to terms of imprisonment varying from five to fifteen months. V. D.

HERE'S A HEALTH TO THEM THAT DELVE AND HEW.

TUNE—"Here's a Health unto His Majesty."

HERE'S a health to them that delve and hew,
With a fal lal lal la la la la,
Whose backs are burdened by the few,
With a fal lal lal la la la la;
And he that will not pledge this health,
We'd wish him neither health nor wealth,
Nor yet a rope to hang himself,—
With a fal lal lal la la la.

And hurrah for the corn and wine they win,
Too good to stuff in an idle skin.

Then here's to the day, now dawning fair,
When all shall labour, and none go bare.

When the cowering slave, with forethought wan,
Shall fear no more than befits a man.

And the lordly wasters, who but they
Shall earn their victual an honest way?

So this our parting toast shall be,
Conversion to the enemy!

C. W. BECKETT.

REVOLUTIONARY CALENDAR.

WEEK ENDING MAY 25, 1889.

19	Sun.	1796. Paul Thomas Lemaitre, John Smith, and George Higgins acquitted of treason. 1816. Food-riots in Suffolk, and demand for maximum prices, wheat 2s. 6d. a bushel and meat 4d. a lb. 1825. St Simon died. 1886. Strikes in Belgium.
20	Mon.	1793. "Law of Maximum," fixing price of commodities, proclaimed at Paris. 1793. "Insurrection of Prairial" by <i>Sansculottes</i> (Prairial 1, year 3). 1796. Trial of John Reeves for "seditious libel" in his book intitled 'Thoughts on the English Government, addressed to the quiet good sense of the people of England, in a series of letters.' 1820. Murder of Sandt, executioner of Kotzebue. 1867. Sentence on Captain John McAfferty, Fenian. 1887. Private murder in prison of five persons implicated in the attempt of March 13th on the Czar.
21	Tues.	1358. Revolt of the Jacquarie. 1795. Insurrection of the Faubourgs. 1798. Trial of James O'Coigley, Arthur O'Connor, John Binns, John Allen, and Jeremiah Leary at Maidstone for high treason as United Irishmen. 1867. Trial of Edward Duffy for high treason as a Fenian.
22	Wed.	1793. First number of <i>One Pennyworth of Pig's Meat; or Lessons for the Swinish Multitude</i> , published weekly at 1d. by Thos. Spence. 1868. Second prosecution of the International at Paris; 9 prisoners. 1885. Victor Hugo died.
23	Thur.	1498. Savonarola burned. 1851. Lalor Shiel died. 1867. Captain John McClure and Edward Kelly, Fenians, sentenced. 1881. Nihilist manifesto issued at St. Petersburg, offering peace if reforms are granted. 1887. Great strikes among Belgian colliers and ironworkers.
24	Fri.	1744. Jean Paul Marat born. 1804. Trial of W. Cobbett for libel in the <i>Weekly Political Register</i> on the Lord Lieutenant (Earl Hardwick) and other members of the Irish Government. 1808. Weavers' riot at Manchester. 1879. William Lloyd Garrison died. 1885. Rioting at Paris.
25	Sat.	1803. R. W. Emerson born. 1839. Chartist meeting at Kersal Moor, near Manchester. 1848. John Mitchel transported for 14 years. 1871. Strike of 9,050 engineers at Newcastle. 1872. Sérizier, Bouin, and Boudin shot as Communards. 1881. Johann Most found guilty; judgment deferred for arguing of legal points.

Becky Sharp's acute remark that it is not difficult to be virtuous on ten thousand a year has its application to nations; and it is futile to expect a hungry and squalid population to be anything but violent and gross.—*Huxley*.



HAVE YOU NOT HEARD HOW IT HAS GONE WITH MANY A CAUSE BEFORE NOW? FIRST, FEW MEN READ 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.

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

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

- C. J. D.—To work a mine in French exploiter, to exploit it. By exploitation (*Exploitation de l'homme par l'homme*) is meant the working a man as one works a mine, getting all one can out of him anyhow.
- D. O.—J. P. Mendum and Horace Seaver of the *Boston Investigator* are the same who were connected with the *Social Pioneer* of 1844.

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Periodicals received during the week ending Wednesday May 15.

ENGLAND	Detroit—Der Arme Teufel	SPAIN
Justice	Milwaukee—National Reformer	Barcelona—Tierra y Libertad
Labour Elector	San Francisco Arbeiter-Zeitung	Madrid—El Socialista
Labour Tribune	S. F. Coast Seaman's Journal	Cadiz—El Socialismo
Norwich—Daylight	Valley Falls (Kan.)—Lucifer	PORTUGAL
Railway Review	FRANCE	Lisbon—O Protesto Operario
Social Democrat	Paris—Le Parti Ouvrier (daily)	GERMANY
Telegraph Service Gazette	Le Proletariat	Berlin—Volks Tribune
Worker's Friend	Le Coup de Feu	AUSTRIA
NEW SOUTH WALES	Lille—Le Cri du Travailleur	Wien—Gleichheit
Hamilton—Radical	HOLLAND	Brunn—Arbeiterstimme
UNITED STATES	Hague—Recht voor Allen	DENMARK
New York—Der Sozialist	BELGIUM	Social-Demokraten
Freiheit	Ghent—Vooruit	SWEDEN
Volkszeitung	Antwerp—De Werker	Malmö—Arbetet
The Truth	Liege—L'Avenir	Stockholm, Social-Demokraten
Znania	SWITZERLAND	Goteborg—Folkets Rost
Boston—Woman's Journal	Geneva—Friedewit	WEST INDIES
Investigator	ITALY	Cuba—El Productor
Chicago (Ill.)—Vorbote	Milan—Il Fascio Operaio	
Baecker Zeitung		

THE ENGLISH REVOLUTIONARY MOVEMENT, 1815 TO 1817.

SPA-FIELDS RIOTS AND DERBYSHIRE INSURRECTION.

(Continued from p. 147.)

Now a few words with regard to the origin of these events which had burst forth in every part of the country. As far as I can see, they were entirely spontaneous, totally unorganised, and were the result of the extreme misery which the masses of the people were then suffering. But now we are approaching a different period in the history of the revolutionary movement—a period of organised attempts at insurrection by men belonging to the advanced wing of the Radical party, who began to think that by their action they could overthrow the High Tory administration, and establish a democratic government in its place. Those days resembled the present in one respect, that the most advanced leaders in the popular movement were to be found in London; and prominent among those leaders were Henry Hunt, Arthur Thistlewood, and James Watson. Hunt was a famous orator, and was immensely popular with the people. He was a man of private means and in comfortable circumstances, and on account of his oratorical powers he was looked upon almost as a god by many of the Radicals. He had, however, none of the qualities of a man of action. James Watson had been a surgeon in the navy, but had left the service at the conclusion of the war. He appears in consequence to have been

in rather reduced circumstances at this time. He also had great influence among the London workmen. Last of all comes the ill-fated Thistlewood. He was the son of a Lincolnshire farmer of some wealth and position. He had passed some time in France during the revolutionary period, and there imbibed his Radical opinions. He perhaps more than any of the others was willing to carry those opinions into practice at any risk.

It appears that Watson and Thistlewood were in the habit of attending the meetings of the Spenceans, which were then held at the "Cock" in Grafton Street; the Spenceans, as I have before told you, being a land nationalisation society. Among other attendants at these meetings of the Spenceans were Preston and Hooper, two Radical workmen, young Watson, the son of Dr. Watson, and several others, not least among them being John Castles, a Government spy. Castles, it appears, had known Hooper for two years, but had only been acquainted with the others a few months before the daring attempt at insurrection which is known in history as the Spa-Fields Riots took place. It appears that Watson and Thistlewood took Castles to some extent into their confidence, and confided in him their plans for upsetting the Government. These, according to this informer, were most elaborate, and included plans for barricading the streets, taking the Tower and the Bank by storm, and setting fire to the Thames generally. As the imagination of informers is great, I do not propose to retail Castles' lies here, but will merely try to relate as far as possible what actually occurred. Ultimately, however, they decided upon leading up to an attempt at insurrection by calling a large public meeting of unemployed, and judging by the spirit of the people whether they were ripe for rebellion. Accordingly a meeting of the unemployed was called in Spa-Fields—then a large open space between Coldbath-Fields Prison and the New River Waterworks—for the 15th of November, at which Hunt was invited to speak. Here a petition was drawn up to be presented to the Prince Regent, and the meeting was adjourned to the 2nd of December 1816. The first meeting was only distinguished by the sacking of a few baker's shops by some hungry people, and it was probably that circumstance which gave Thistlewood and Watson the hope that the people in London, like those in the country, were ready for revolt.

In the meantime Thistlewood and the others employed themselves by moving among the different resorts of the people, and urging them to attend the meeting of 2nd December, giving them to understand that something startling was likely to happen. The bill calling the meeting was also of that description, and ran as follows: "England expects every man to do his duty. Meeting in Spa-Fields at twelve o'clock on Monday December 2nd, 1861, to receive the answer of the petition to the Prince Regent determined upon at the last meeting held at the same place, and for other important considerations. The present state of Great Britain—four millions in distress, four millions embarrassed, one million and a half fear distress, half a million live in splendid luxury; our brothers in Ireland are in a worse state. The climax of misery is complete—it can go no further; death would now be relief to millions. Arrogance, folly, and crime have brought affairs to this dread crisis; firmness and integrity can alone save the country."

On the 2nd of December the two Watsons, Preston, Hooper, and Thistlewood, before the time announced for the meeting, enter Spa-Fields in a wagon, wearing tri-coloured cockades and bearing tri-coloured flags. They are also armed with swords and pistols. The tricolour in those days was looked upon by the middle and upper classes with considerably more dread and terror than they now regard the red flag. The tricolour was the flag of the French Republic, the standard under which the French people had sent a king to the guillotine and many of his old nobility to keep him company. Therefore a flag which is now acknowledged as so harmless that it is used in the Jubilee decorations was then a symbol of sedition and revolt. The tricolour flags borne by Watson and his comrades differed only in one respect from the flag of the French Republicans—one of the colours was green instead of blue. One of these flags bore the following inscription: "The brave soldiers are our friends." Another tricolour was inscribed with an explanation of its various tints—Nature, Truth, and Justice: Nature to feed the hungry, Truth to protect the oppressed, and Justice to punish oppressors. The crowd who were waiting for the arrival of Hunt at the usual meeting place near a public-house known as Merlin's Cave, seeing this wagon decorated by these flags, rushed towards it, and when they had gathered round, Dr. Watson began to address them. He informed them that the Prince Regent had refused to answer their humble petition, and then continued in the following terms: "Are we to go on from time to time and month to month urging upon the father of the people, as he is called, in vain for redress? What! will men with the minds and hearts of Englishmen continue thus for months and years to be starved? How then are we to be restored to our rights? Not by talking, not by long speeches, not by petitions—for our petitions are not heard. They (the ministers) have placed us in a situation of misery—they have neglected the cries of the hungry and starving people; there is not a day in which we pass through the metropolis in which we do not see people starving to death. Are they ignorant of this?" He went on to show that they were not, and urged upon the people to revolt against their misery. His son made a stronger speech, and told the people that if the ministers did not give them what they wanted, they ought to take it. The crowd received this sentiment with loud cries of Yes! Yes! Are you willing to take? said the elder Watson. Yes! Yes! shouted the people. Will you go and take it? Yes! Yes! If I jump down among you, will you take it? Yes! Yes! Follow me said Watson, and seizing a tricolour, he leaps

from the waggon with his son, and the crowd roaring with fury rushes on. The rest of the people in the waggon follow, carrying the other flags. There are seventy police, the whole available force from Bow Street, upon the ground. These rush upon the men bearing two of the flags, one of which has the inscription "The brave soldiers are our friends" upon it, and drag them from them and break the flags to pieces. They, however, let the crowd rush on unmolested. The people pour on to the number of six or seven hundred down Coppice Row and through Cowcross Street to the city. In Skinner Street, Snow Hill, an arms shop is sacked. Young Watson rushes in, pistol in hand, demanding arms. Another young man, a Mr. Platt, in the shop, seized with a fear that Watson is going to shoot him, grapples with him, and in the struggle the pistol goes off and Platt is seriously wounded. The mob then rush through Snow Hill to Cheapside, down to Royal Exchange. The gates of the Royal Exchange are open and they rush through it. The Lord Mayor and some city constables are in waiting, and they charge on the crowd and capture Hooper and the remaining tricolour. The people who have got through the Exchange turn to rescue their comrade, but the gates of the Exchange are closed by constables and Lord Mayor. The rioters endeavour to force the gates, and discharge their guns and pistols through the bars at the upholders of law and order. Finding it impossible to force these solid barriers, they pour off towards Bishopsgate, young Watson leading their sword in hand. They reach Bishopsgate Street, and rushing down Houndsditch arrive at the Minorities. In the Minorities at that time were several gunsmiths' shops, and two were broken open and pillaged. In one of them near Tower Hill the people found two small field-pieces, and in obedience to orders received from the leaders, a sailor began to sponge and load one. Meanwhile Thistlewood and the elder Watson went on to the Tower. There were a number of soldiers on the ramparts, attracted by the tumult, for many of the crowd were loading and discharging their muskets and pistols in the air, to the alarm and consternation of the timid shopkeepers. Thistlewood climbed on the rails in front of the moat, and called upon the soldiers to join the people and hand over the Tower to the populace. The soldiers made no response to these overtures. Finding that the military would not fraternise, the people returned towards the Minorities. They had just reached the top when a wheel came off one of the small pieces. This caused some confusion, and young Watson called on the people to form themselves in military order. But before they had complied with the request the Guards rode into the Minorities and the crowd fled in confusion, throwing away their arms in all directions; and the leaders, deserted by their men, were forced to follow their example. Thus ended the famous disturbances of Spa-Fields.

D. J. NICOLL.

(To be continued.)

CORRESPONDENCE.

In answer to our comrade Blackwell's suggestion, and in default of someone else beginning that free discussion he speaks of, I wish to note down a few thoughts suggested by reading the clauses of the Anarchist Congress at Valencia, as stated by our comrade; premising that I do so in no polemical spirit, but simply giving my own thoughts and hopes for the future for what they may be worth.

I will begin by saying that I call myself a Communist, and have no wish to qualify that word by joining any other to it. The aim of Communism seems to me to be the complete equality of condition for all people; and anything in a Socialist direction which stops short of this is merely a compromise with the present condition of society, a halting-place on the road to the goal. This is the only logical outcome of any society which is other than a close company sustained by violence for the express purpose of "the exploitation of man by man" in the interest of the strongest. Our present "society" dominated by capitalism, the society of contract, is a form of this class-society which has been forced upon those who hold the slave ideal by the growth of knowledge and the acquirement by man of mastery over the forces of nature. The history of "society" since the fall of feudalism has been the gradual freeing of class or slave society from the fetters of superstition, so that it might develop naturally within its prescribed limits of "exploitation of man by man," and that stupendous and marvellously rapid growth in power and resources of modern slave society is due to this shaking off of superstition.

Communism also will have to keep itself free of superstition. Its ethics will have to be based on the recognition of natural cause and effect, and not on rules derived from *a priori* ideas of the relation of man to the universe or some imagined ruler of it; and from these two things, the equality of condition and the recognition of the cause and effect of material nature, will grow all Communistic life. So far I think I can see clearly; but when I try to picture to myself the forms which that life will take, I confess I am at fault, and I think we must all be so. Most people who can be said to think at all are now beginning to see that the realisation of Socialism is certain; and although many can see nothing further than a crude and incomplete State Socialism, which very naturally repels many from Socialism altogether. All genuine Socialists admit that Communism is the necessary development of Socialism; but I repeat, further than this all must be speculative; and surely in speculating on the future of society we should try to shake ourselves clear of mere phrases: especially as many of them will cease to have a meaning when the change comes that we all of us long for. And here I join issue with our Anarchist-Communist friends, who are somewhat authoritative on the matter of authority, and not a little vague also. For if freedom from authority means the assertion of the advisability or possibility of an individual man doing what he pleases always and under all circumstances, this is an absolute negation of society, and makes Communism as the highest expression of society impossible; and when you begin to qualify this assertion of the right to do as you please by adding "as long as you don't inter-

fere with other people's rights to do the same," the exercise of some kind of authority becomes necessary. If individuals are not to coerce others, there must somewhere be an authority which is prepared to coerce them not to coerce; and that authority must clearly be collective. And there are other difficulties besides this crudest and most obvious one.

The bond of Communist society will be voluntary in the sense that all people will agree in its broad principles when it is fairly established, and will trust to it as affording mankind the best kind of life possible. But while we are advocating equality of condition—i.e., due opportunity free to everyone for the satisfaction of his needs—do not let us forget the necessary (and beneficent) variety of temperament, capacity, and desires which exists amongst men about everything outside the region of the merest necessities; and though many, or if you will, most of these different desires could be satisfied without the individual clashing with collective society, some of them could not be. Any community conceivable will sometimes determine on collective action which, without being in itself immoral or oppressive, would give pain to some of its members; and what is to be done then if it happens to be a piece of business which must be either done or left alone? would the small minority have to give way or the large majority? A concrete example will be of use here, especially as it affects my temperament. I have always believed that the realisation of Socialism would give us an opportunity of escaping from that grievous flood of utilitarianism which the full development of the society of contract has cursed us with; but that would be in the long run only; and I think it quite probable that in the early days of Socialism the reflex of the terror of starvation, which so oppresses us now, would drive us into excesses of utilitarianism. Indeed, there is a school of Socialists now extant who worship utilitarianism with a fervour of fatuity which is perhaps a natural consequence of their assumption of practicality. So that it is not unlikely that the public opinion of a community would be in favour of cutting down all the timber in England, and turning the country into a big Bonanza farm or a market-garden under glass. And in such a case what could we do, who objected "for the sake of life to cast away the reasons for living," when we had exhausted our powers of argument? Clearly we should have to submit to authority. And a little reflection will show us many such cases in which the collective authority will weigh down individual opposition, however reasonable, without a hope for its being able to assert itself immediately; in such matters there must be give and take: and the objectors would have to give up the lesser for the greater. In short, experience shows us that wherever a dozen thoughtful men shall meet together there will be twelve different opinions on any subject which is not a dry matter of fact (and often on that too); and if those twelve men want to act together, there must be give and take between them, and they must agree on some common rule of conduct to act as a bond between them, or leave their business undone. And what is this common bond but authority—that is, the conscience of the association voluntarily accepted in the first instance.

Furthermore, when we talk of the freedom of the individual man, we must not forget that every man is a very complex animal, made up of many different moods and impulses; no man is always wise, or wise in all respects. Philip sober needs protection against Philip drunk, or he may chance to wake up from his booze in a nice mess. Surely we all of us feel that there is a rascal or two in each of our skins besides the other or two who want to lead manly and honourable lives, and do we not want something to appeal to on behalf of those better selves of ours? and that something is made up of the aspirations of our better selves, and is the *moral conscience* without which there can be no true society, and which even a false society is forced to imitate, and so have a sham social conscience,—what we sometimes call hypocrisy.

Now I don't want to be misunderstood. I am not pleading for any form of arbitrary or unreasonable authority, but for a *public conscience* as a rule of action: and by all means let us have the least possible exercise of authority. I suspect that many of our Communist-Anarchist friends do really mean that, when they pronounce against all authority. And with equality of condition assured for all men, and our ethics based on reason, I cannot think that we need fear the growth of a new authority taking the place of the one which we should have destroyed, and which we must remember is based on the assumption that equality is impossible and that slavery is an essential condition of human society. By the time that is assumed that all men's needs must be satisfied according to the measure of the common wealth, what may be called the political side of the question would take care of itself.

WILLIAM MORRIS.

THE NATIONAL AMALGAMATED SAILOR'S AND FIREMEN'S UNION OF GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND.—Among the chief objects of this recently formed but already very powerful Union are:—(1) To improve the condition and protect the interests of all classes of seafaring men. (2) To establish homes for seamen in all places where the Executive Committee deem it expedient. (3) To make advances of money to seafaring men at low interest on security of their wages and allotment notes. (4) To endeavour to obtain reasonable hours of duty, and to maintain fair rates of wages. (5) To assist members whose interests have been damaged by reason of prominent services rendered to the society. (6) To afford legal assistance, either as plaintiff or defendant, to any member of the society in respect of matters arising out of, or incidental to, his employment as a sailor or sea-going fireman, cook or steward, including claims for wages, damages for breach of contract for wages, compensation for injuries, claims for salvage, alleged liability for negligence or misconduct involving loss or forfeiture of wages or involving penalties, and all claims and liabilities, whether under the Merchant Shipping or any other Act or Acts of Parliament, or otherwise, of what nature soever, so arising or incidental as aforesaid, nevertheless, to the rules of the society; and to provide for the maintenance of members detained on shore till their cases are tried. (7) To use every effort to provide for the safety of ships work in order to prevent loss of life at sea. (8) To provide a better class of men for the merchant service, and to see that all members that are engaged through the Union shall be on board at the appointed time and in a sober condition ready for work. (9) To provide assistance to shipwrecked mariners. (10) To provide assistance to members who are travelling in search of work. (11) To put seafaring men, intending to become members but for the time being unable to pay, on the same footing as paying members, except with regard to financial benefits, by granting them Privilege Cards. (12) And to provide funds for the relief of members in sickness or temporary disablement, and for their respectable interment." Full particulars on application at any of the branches of the Union, or at the office of their organ *Seafaring*, 150, Minorities, E.

THE LABOUR STRUGGLE.

BRITAIN.

The strike which originated among the machine boys in the Armagh Spinning Mills Thursday week continues, and five hundred hands are out of work.

Nearly all the boilermakers at Southampton returned to work on Friday the 10th. All the firms but one have conceded the increased wages demanded. The strike has lasted eight weeks.

The Union seamen and firemen at Leith are demanding an advance of 2s. per week, which will make their wage 30s. per week. It is alleged by one employer that he can get men at Rotterdam for 20s. per week.

SALT TRADE STRIKE.—The salt workers employed at Newbridge Works, near Winsford, Cheshire, have come out on strike. It is anticipated their action will be followed by the whole of the salt workers in the district, numbering about 3,000.

At a meeting of the employés of the Glasgow Tramway Company held on Sunday, it was resolved to form a Union for all classes of workmen employed by the Tramway Company. Before leaving the hall, 150 of the men enrolled themselves members of the new organisation.

BEITH CABINETMAKERS.—At a crowded mass meeting on Tuesday, it was unanimously resolved to demand a reduction in hours of labour and the abolition of piece-work. A deputation was formed to approach the masters, and if an unfavourable answer was received action would be taken on the 1st of June.

GLASGOW CABINET-MAKERS' STRIKE.—This strike for an advance of 10 per cent. on day wages and 15 per cent. on piecework is still undecided. A considerable number of Cumming and Smith's men have returned to work, and Wylie and Lochhead's cabinet and chair makers have accepted an advance of 5 per cent.

AYR SHIPYARD.—Most of the labourers employed at Ayr shipyard have struck for an advance. There are two sections out, ordinary labourers who have been working for 3½d. an hour, and those who may be styled skilled labourers who have been working for 6d. an hour. The former demand an advance of ¼d. and the latter ¾d. per hour.

About a thousand millworkers recently engaged at Shrigley Mills, Killey bagh, near Downpatrick, are on strike for an increase of wages. After an unsuccessful meeting of employers and workmen on the 8th inst. was held, stones were thrown at the employers and a riot ensued. The manager's house and co-operative stores were attacked, and 60 panes of glass were broken in the factory.

ENGLISH COLLIERIES.—Northumberland soft-coal miners have refused to accept 2½ per cent. advance; they demand 7 per cent. A strong demand for coal and coke for Germany and some Dutch ports continues at Newcastle—another proof of the international interest workers should have in each other's labour struggles. The coals their English comrades dig and are robbed of are thrown at the heads of the miners on strike on the Continent. They supplement the bullets of the Continental capitalists' hired murderers.

GLASGOW JOINERS.—The Glasgow joiners, to the number of 200, came out on strike on Saturday 11th. They desire 8d. hourly; their present wage is 7½d. At a meeting in Albion Hall it was reported that several masters who have contracts to be finished before the term have granted the advance. It is believed the strike will be of short duration. *Later.*—This dispute is practically at an end. 89 employers have already conceded the ¾d. per hour demanded, but there are still about 300 men out. Deputations are visiting the shops at work in support of the men on strike.

NAIL AND CHAIN TRADES.—In South Staffordshire and East Worcestershire the operatives are agitating for an advance, but owing to employers' operatives being disorganised, no satisfactory decision can be arrived at. In some districts it is feared it will be necessary to resort to a strike. The horse-nail makers' notice for an advance of 6d. per thousand expired Saturday, but the employers say they cannot concede it, owing to machine-made nails being imported from abroad. At meetings of chainmakers on strike Saturday, at Cradley Heath, it was stated that about half of the operatives had resumed work at the advanced rate of wages, and others were determined to remain out until the advance was conceded. Some leading employers have stated that trade will not warrant a further advance, and one firm is said to have lost a foreign order for 200 tons through being unable to execute it at the prices lately specified. Several employers assert they shall be compelled to close their factories.

IRISH RAILWAYMEN.—According to a correspondent of the *Railway Review*, the following are the wages on the northern division. The traffic manager gets a salary of £800 per annum. The superintendents get £3 per week, first-class station masters 30s. to 40s. per week (very few at this latter figure), chief goods clerks 22s. 6d. to 25s. (one or two have 27s. 6d.), booking clerks 15s. to 20s. (at Belfast 25s.), second-class station masters 20s. to 22s. 6d., invoice clerks 8s. 6d. to 13s., while at Belfast it is a little higher; passenger guards 20s. (those on branch lines 15s.), night train guards 15s. There are also a few running on main line at 15s., and no prospect of an increase. Consequently it is only a matter of time, and 20s. guards will be a thing of the past, as the 15s. gents lately applied for an increase, which was declined. Goods guards 19s., assistants 18s., and their hours average over 70 per week, principally all-night duty. The hours of branch line guards are about 13 daily. Inspectors receive 20s., third-class station masters 16s. and 17s. 6d. per week; head porters 15s., 16s., and 17s., according to work; ticket collectors, 13s., 14s., and 15s., and at Belfast, 20s.; passenger porters average 11s., Belfast, 12s.; goods porters 11s., and in some cases 10s.; examiners, 15s.; wagon greasers, 7s. 6d.; shunters, 14s. and 15s., Belfast 20s.; signalmen, 11s., 12s., 13s., and one or two instances of 15s. and 16s. Sunday duty is worked 12 hours to the day, but it is not paid for; in fact, no pay is allowed in the traffic department for Sunday duty, nor is overtime paid for, except in a few cases in provincial towns. On market days for taking in and loading the butter, eggs, etc., the men are rewarded with the enormous sum of 1s. each, though they have been known to work till four o'clock in the morning. This company can also claim credit, if credit it be, for having a station master at 16s. per week, out of which they deduct 3s. per week for rents, thus leaving their official with a salary of 13s. per week. These figures will show that Irish railwaymen are nearly as badly off as the peasantry, but, like their brethren of England, they are too "respectable" to make much row about their condition.

LONDON BRICKMAKERS.—The brickmakers in North and East London are

on strike. The men have had their wages reduced twice during the last few years by 6d. per thousand bricks each time. Since bricks now average 5s. more per thousand than they did this time last year, they demand an increase of 6d. per thousand. The strike has lasted about six weeks, and all attempts at reconciliation have failed. The men have no trade union, and are now reaping the consequences. They are collecting subscriptions for themselves and families.

NOTTINGHAM LACE TRADE.—Nottingham lace manufacturers have decided on a reduction of 40 per cent. in wages paid to the men in the curtain branch of the trade. In the event of the reduction being rejected the employers will propose to refer the matter to arbitration. But it is believed the men will resist, and a strike affecting several thousand hands is probable. The employers state that they have come into serious competition with manufacturers outside the borough, who, it is asserted, pay their workpeople from 60 to 70 per cent. less than the rate of wages which prevails in Nottingham.

BRICK TRADE.—Subscriptions are being collected for the brickmakers on strike in Birmingham, and are received, amongst other places, at the headquarters, the Garrison Tavern, Garrison Lane. Up to the present £61 1s. 9d. has been subscribed, and a fortnight ago 1s. 6d. each was paid out to the strikers. The men have written a letter in which they desire to show that they are not fairly dealt with by the side of other branches of the trade. They write:—"Twenty-three years ago we were receiving 3s. 6d. per 1,000. We were then paying 1s. per 1,000 clay wheeling, and 7s. 6d. per week for carrying off. Suppose an average moulder to make 15,000 per week, that would leave the moulder £1 10s. At the present time we are receiving 4s. per 1,000, which is 6d. advance; out of this we pay 1s. 5½d. per 1,000 wheeling, 12s. 6d. per week carrying off, which at the present day leaves the moulder £1 5s. 7½d. This shows a reduction of 4s. 4½d. per week, although the masters consider we have had a rise." At a meeting of the masters it was resolved not to concede the demands, and endeavour to start their works with imported hands. Two yards have already started with imported hands, and a third will be next week. The masters stated that they had received applications for work from outside men.

LEWIS DIEMSHITZ AND JUDGE EDLIN.

At the Boro' of Hackney Radical Club last Sunday morning, after the band performance, the president of the club (Mr. Thomas Tongue) called the attention of the members to Lewis Diemshitz's imprisonment. After the facts had been explained, Mr. Wayne, the president of the Political Council, proposed:—"That the members of this club (numbering 1,800) protests against the brutal sentence of three months' with hard labour passed by Sir P. Edlin on Lewis Diemshitz for a trivial technical outrage, while discharging his duty as steward of the club, committed on P.C. Frost; and asks the Home Secretary for a remission of the remainder of his sentence." This was unanimously carried.

The Council of the S.L., at their meeting on Monday 13th, passed the following resolution unanimously, with instructions to the secretary to forward the same to the Home Secretary:—"That this meeting protests against the unjust sentence passed upon Lewis Diemshitz by Judge Edlin of three months' hard labour, and to find sureties for twelve months after, for simply trying, as steward of the Berner Street club, to prevent a forcible entry into the premises of the club by detectives, police, and others, on March 16th; and this meeting further resolves that a copy of this resolution be sent to the Home Secretary, with a request that he will exercise his prerogative by revising the sentence."

The same course has been followed on Thursday 9th at open air meeting in Euston Road; on 12th at Clerkenwell Green, open air; and by the Hammersmith Branch at their indoor meeting. Several provincial Branches have followed the example.

A working man—Mr. F. Willis, member of the executive, London Society of Compositors—has published a pamphlet entitled 'The Identity of Interests of Employers and Employed.' Having seen the title, we think our readers will dispense with any criticism from us; but any person wishing to know further of it may purchase a copy for threepence, although we should warn such a one that the production is not intended as a piece of humour. We suggest to Mr. Willis that in his next effort he should delight the scientific world by a monograph on the mutual good feeling that ought to subsist between the fox and the goose. After having squared the interests of the exploited and the exploiters, he would find the subject an easy one for his great literary powers.

POLICE!—Sitting at Wandsworth the other day, Mr. Bridge quite eclipsed himself as the policeman's friend. A tramcar driver, named Gommon, was charged with being drunk during his employment. Policeman Mackenzie swore that he "reeled against the car," "nearly fell headlong over the splashboard," and performed other acrobatic feats which showed that he was drunk. At the station Gommon said, "If you say I am drunk, I am drunk," a remark which sounds sarcastic, but which Mr. Bridge says "is a common one, and he did not know of a single instance where it was made by a sober man!" The Rev. W. Sharp, a "fare," said that Gommon was not drunk, but was charged because he said something "which ruffled the constable's temper" while changing horses. He had "never witnessed a more abominable breach of discipline," and he expostulated with the policeman. Another witness, a solicitor, swore that the constable "rushed violently at the driver three times," and "was white with passion." Several bystanders expostulated with the constable, and declared that Gommon was sober. Mackenzie, recalled, admitted the expostulation; whereupon Mr. Bridge "came unhesitatingly to the conclusion that the prisoner's manner and conduct justified the police in thinking that he was drunk, and the officer acted within his duty in removing him from the car. He did not believe that the indignation of the gentlemen who had appeared on behalf of the prisoner was justifiable, and it was to be regretted that they did not go to the police-station to complain, as this would have been the conduct of most Englishmen desirous of seeing fair play. He gave the prisoner the benefit of the doubt, and ordered him to be discharged." "Not guilty, but don't do it again," is wisdom itself compared with this. Mr. Sharp had explained that he did not go to the station because he had some heavy luggage with him; and the solicitor did not go because he had some business to attend to. Yet because a parson does not carry heavy luggage all over the country, and because a solicitor does not neglect his business, a constable may be "justified" in thinking a sober man drunk, and haling him off to prison!—*Fall Mall Gazette.*

HATHAM LIBERAL CLUB, Portland House, New Cross Road.—Sunday May 19, at 8.30, Annie Besant, "The True Radical Policy."

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.

London Members' Meeting.—The next monthly meeting of members will take place on Monday, June 3, 1889, at 13 Farringdon Road, at 9 o'clock sharp.

Commonweals for 1888, handsomely bound in red, are now ready, price 5s.; per post, 5s. 6d.

Annual Conference.—The Annual Conference will be held on Whit-Sunday, June 9th, at 13, Farringdon Road. Agenda has been sent to Branches.

Branch Subscriptions Paid.—1888:—Oxford, to end of September. 1889:—Mitcham, to end of February. North London, and St. Georges East, to end of March. Bradford, Hammersmith, and Leicester, to end of April. East London, and Yarmouth, to end of May. Clerkenwell, to end of June.

Notice to Branch Secretaries.—Please remit to Central Office your Branch apportionment fees as soon as possible.

Propaganda Committee.—The Propaganda Committee meets on Tuesday, May 21st, at 8.30 p.m. Important business; all members of the League interested in the propaganda invited to attend. The leaflet, "A Straight Talk to Working Men," is now on sale at 4s. per 1,000. Can be obtained of the Secretary, at 13, Farringdon Road, London, E.C.

The secretary of the Propaganda Committee asks members and friends to forward subscriptions for the purpose of printing leaflets for free distribution, of which there is a great need. Subscriptions to be sent to the Secretary, D. J. Nicoll, 13, Farringdon Road, and will be acknowledged in the *Weal*.

Defence Committee (Berner Street).—J. Wood (Limehouse), 2s.; Manchester Branch, 1s. 4d.; Norwich, 6s. 2d.; T. O'Connell (Woolwich), 2s. 6d.; per R. Turner, 1s.

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.

"COMMONWEAL" GUARANTEE FUND.

The following further sums have been received towards this fund:—Blundell, 6d.; Mrs. Schack, 6d.; R. Turner, 6d.; J. Turner, 6d.; Kitz, 6d.; Nicoll, 6d.; Rose, 6d.; C. Saunders, 1s.; B. W., 6d.; and Schmitt, 1s. Norwich, 1s. 2d.

Guarantors of Provincial Branches are requested to send up their lists at once.

REPORTS.

CLERKENWELL.—On Sunday, F. Charles lectured on "What's to be done during a revolutionary period" to attentive audience; questions and discussion followed; 1s. collected; 1s. 1d. collected for Defence Fund.—S. P.

HAMMERSMITH.—Fair meeting at Latimer Road on Sunday morning; speakers were Lyne, sen., Lyne, jun., Maughan, and Crouch; 32 *Commonweal* sold. Fair meeting at Beadon Road, speakers, Morris and Tarleton. Good meeting at Weltje Road in evening; speakers were Mordhurst, Lyne, jun., Kitchen, and Maughan; 16 *Commonweal* sold. At Kelmscott House, W. Morris lectured on Bellamy's "Looking Backward" and Grant Allen's article in the current *Contemporary*.

ABERDEEN.—No indoor meeting held last week, Monday being the Spring holiday. On Tuesday night, Henry George lectured under the auspices of the Junior Liberal Association, when Webster and Leatham put a number of questions. The answering of some of these cost him a good deal of rhetorical jugglery. Webster, however, did good "biz" by playing him off against the temperance people. At open-air meeting at Castle Street on Saturday night, Duncan and Leatham spoke to a large crowd, the latter dealing at length with George's "Remedy."

EDINBURGH.—On Sunday afternoon, John Smith, Davidson, Bain, and Gilray spoke in Queen's Park. In the evening in Meadows, Bain spoke along with comrades of S. D. F. Socialists who have worked with us in Edinburgh, will be sorry to hear that John Hossack died of consumption on 29th ult. after a very long and painful illness. He was an earnest and intelligent Socialist and a general favourite. As long as he was able he worked hard for the Cause.

MANCHESTER.—We found Stevenson Square on Sunday afternoon in possession of a meeting of the British Anti-Mormon Society with a brass band. We deferred speaking against the latter, but our comrade Ritson got an opportunity to expose their misleading and fallacious pictures of the horrors of Utah. Some *Weal* sold at the meeting. Afterwards we held a very good meeting, Parkinson and Ritson were speakers. At 7.30 we began at Chester Road, and Ballie and Ritson addressed the largest audience we have yet had here; some questions were put, to which satisfactory replies were given.

NORWICH.—Sunday afternoon the usual open-air meeting was held in the Market Place, addressed by Darley and Poynts. Comrade Darley moved a resolution for the release of Lewis Deimshitz, seconded by comrade Swash, and upon its being put to the meeting it was carried unanimously.

YARMOUTH.—We held two successful meetings here, speakers were Ruffold and Reynolds. At the afternoon meeting, Reynolds dealt with "Some Objections to Socialism;" 3s. 4½d. collected, and 22 *Commonweal* sold. On Monday next we hold a first meeting at Belton, a village five miles from Yarmouth. Next Sunday, Reid of the Glasgow branch S. D. F., will give an address on "The Present Position and Condition of the Masses."—C. R.

DUBLIN.—At Progressive Club, 87 Marlboro Street, Saturday May 11th, J. Landye, the veteran Internationalist, lectured to a fair audience on "What do we mean by Progress." A lively discussion ensued, Smith, Coulon, and others taking part.

NOTTINGHAM SOCIALIST CLUB.—On Thursday, Peacock read a chapter from the "Summary of the Principles of Socialism" at the club. On Sunday, good meeting in the Market Place; Peacock, Rools, and Hickling spoke; 1s. 6d. collected, and literature sold well.—R. P.

THE "THREE KINGS," CLERKENWELL CLOSE.—Brookes lectured here last Sunday on "The Progress of Socialist Thought."

FERRDALE LIBERAL AND RADICAL CLUB, 35 Bedford Road, Brixton.—Thursday May 23, at 8.30, J. F. Oakeshott, "The True Radical Policy."

CLUB AUTONOME, 6 Windmill Street, Tottenham Court Road, W.—Sunday May 19, 8 p.m., a lecture by George Bonham, "Liberty versus Authority."

HACKNEY RADICAL CLUB, 5 The Grove, Mare Street, Hackney.—Monday May 20, at 8.30, George Bernard Shaw, "Practicable Land Nationalisation."

SOUTHWARK AND LAMBETH BRANCH S. D. F., New Nelson Assembly Rooms, 24 Lower Marsh, Lambeth.—Sunday May 19, at 8 p.m., Mrs. G. G. Schack, "How Women can Help the Socialist Movement." Tuesday 21, at 8, Rev. Stewart Headlam, "The Sins which cause Poverty."

LECTURE DIARY.

LONDON.

Clerkenwell.—Hall of the Socialist League, 13 Farringdon Road, E.C. (¼-minute from Farringdon Station, 1 minute from Holborn Viaduct). No lecture on Sunday May 19, as Branch will hold last meeting for receiving resolutions for Conference, at 7 p.m. sharp.

East London.—Crown Coffee Tavern, 2 Columbia Road, Hackney Road. Sunday May 19, Business Meeting at 7 o'clock sharp. H. Halliday Sparling, at 8 o'clock, "Rent, Profit, and Interest."

Hammersmith.—Kelmscott House, Upper Mall, W. Sunday May 19, at 8 p.m., A Lecture. Thursday May 23, at 7.30, Choir practice. Friday 24, at 8 p.m., French Class; at 9 sharp, Weekly Business Meeting; after business, a discussion.

Mitcham.—3 Clare Villas, Merton Road. Meets every Sunday, at 11 a.m. **North London.**—6 Windmill Street, Tottenham Court Rd. Meets every Friday evening at 8 o'clock.

Whitechapel and St. Georges in the East.—Branch meetings at International Club, 40 Berner Street, Commercial Road. J. Turner, organising secretary. On Wednesday May 22, lecture by H. H. Sparling, "The Evolved Cannibal."

PROVINCES.

Aberdeen.—Oddfellows' Small Hall, Crooked Lane.

Bradford.—Laycock's Temperance Hotel, Albion Court, Kirkgate. Tuesday at 7.30.

Glasgow.—84 John Street. Reading-room (Draughts, Chess, etc.) open 10 a.m. till 10 p.m. daily. Discussion Class on Thursday evenings at 8. French Class meets on Mondays at 8 p.m. Excursion on Saturday first to Renfrew; members meet in Rooms at 4.30.

Leeds.—Clarendon Buildings, Victoria Road and Front Row. Open every evening. Business meeting Saturdays at 8 p.m.

Leicester.—Hosiery Union Offices, 11a Millstone Lane. Fridays at 8 p.m.

Manchester.—Working Men's Educational Club, 122 Corporation Street.

Norwich.—Sunday, at 8, lecture in Gordon Hall. Tuesday, at 8.30, Members' meeting. Wednesday, at 8.30, Discussion Class. Monday, Thursday, and Friday, Hall open from 8.30. 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.

Yarmouth.—"Three Fishes" Coffee Tavern, North Howard Street. Business meeting every Tuesday evening. Eloquution Class at comrade Hadley's every Friday at 8 p.m. *Commonweal* sold by Mr. Houes, newsagent, George Street.

FRIENDS WILLING TO AID in forming Branches in the undermentioned places are asked to write to the addresses given: *Liverpool*—W. H. Chapman, Vegetarian Restaurant, 1 Chapman St. *Walworth and Camberwell*—3 Datchelor Place, Church Street, Camberwell Green. *Wimbledon and Merton*—F. Kitz, 3 Clare Villas, Merton Road. *Hoxton*—H. D. Morgan, 12 Basing Place, Kingsland Road. *Streatham*—J. Campbell, 98 Wellfield Road, Streatham.

OPEN-AIR PROPAGANDA.

SATURDAY 18.

8 Mile-end Waste..... Davis and Brookes

SUNDAY 19.

10.30..... Latimer Road Station.....Lynes sen. and Maughan
11.30..... Bethnal Green—Gibraltar WalkThe Branch
11.30..... "Canterbury Arms"—Kilburn RoadMainwaring
11.30..... Hammersmith—Beadon Road.....Hammersmith Branch
11.30..... Mitcham Fair GreenMrs. Schack
11.30..... Regent's ParkDavis
11.30..... Leman Street, ShadwellTurner and Nicoll
3.30..... Hyde Park.....Davis, Parker, Mrs. Lahr and Brookes
3.30..... Victoria ParkNicoll and Mrs. Schack
7 Clerkenwell GreenParker
7 Weltje Road, Ravenscourt ParkHammersmith Branch
7.30..... Mitcham Fair Green.....The Branch

TUESDAY 21.

8 Fulham—back of Walham Green Church The Branch.

THURSDAY 23.

8 Ossulton Street..... Nicoll.

FRIDAY 24.

8.15..... Hoxton Church..... McKenkie & Cores

PROVINCES.

Aberdeen.—Saturday: Castle Street, 7.30 p.m.

Edinburgh.—Sunday: Queen's Park, at 3.

Glasgow.—Sunday: Glasgow Green at 2 p.m.; Paisley Road at 5.30.

Leeds.—Sunday: Hunslet Moor, at 11 a.m.; Vicar's Croft, at 7 p.m.

Manchester.—Outdoor meetings every Sunday. Stevenson Square at 3 p.m.;

Viaduct, Chester Road, at 7.30.

Norwich.—Sunday: Bawburgh, at 11. Market Place, at 3.

Yarmouth.—Priory Plain, every Sunday at 11 and 3.

AUSTRALIAN SOCIALIST LEAGUE.

Sydney.—533 George Street. Lectures and debates every Sunday evening.

W. H. McNamara, Secretary.

Melbourne.—"Golden Fleece" Hotel, Russell Street. Lectures and debates every Sunday evening. J. A. Andrews, 18 Ophir Street, Richmond, Secy.

—W. Baillie, International Working-men's Club, 122 Corporation Street, corner of Hanover Street.

SCOTTISH LAND AND LABOUR LEAGUE.

Carnoustie.—Meets every Wednesday, at 8 p.m., in the Carnoustie Restaurant.

Dumdee.—Meetings every Sunday in Trades Hall, opposite Tay Bridge Station.

Edinburgh.—35 George IV. Bridge. Meetings for Discussion, Thursdays at 8.

Galaashiels.—J. Walker, 184 Glendinning Terrace, Secretary. **Gallatoun and Dysart** (Fife)—Meet every Tuesday at 7 p.m. in Gallatoun Public School. A. Paterson, 152 Rosslyn Street, Secretary. **Kilmarnock.**—Branch meets on every alternate Tuesday. H. M'Gill, 22 Gilmour Street, Secretary. **West Calder.**—Robert Lindsay, West Calder, Secretary.

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Offices: 6 Champlain Street, Detroit, Mich., U.S.A.

Subscription, 2 dols. 50 c. yearly.

Printed and Published by WILLIAM MORRIS and JOSEPH LANE at 13 Farringdon Road, London