

THE COMMONWEAL

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WEEKLY; ONE PENNY.

NOTES ON NEWS.

THE Government have got through the first stage of this new coercion adventure with no very triumphant success, though only one Liberal Unionist voted for Mr. Morley's amendment; Mr. Bright in his new character of definite Tory voting for the government as a matter of course. There was nothing very remarkable in the debate that preceded the division. Mr. Gladstone spoke bold words enough as to the opposition which his party were prepared to make to the bill, and it is to be hoped that they will be made good; but one must see it done before one can be sure that it will be: meanwhile, of course, the Tories raise the cry of "obstruction"; as if it were not the business of any minority in the House of Commons to obstruct the passing of any measure that they thoroughly condemn.

A great part of Mr. Gladstone's elaborate speech was taken up with trying to prove that his coercion bill was quite a different thing, and put forward under quite different circumstances than this new measure; and the orthodox Liberal papers were in ecstasies over his success in this attempt. But a reasonable man would think this ingenuity wasted: the Coercion Act on one hand and the action of the National League on the other, are simply acts of war; and it was just the same thing when the Liberal Government passed their Coercion Act. To speak plainly, all this side of the debate *pro* and *con* was simple twaddle; the mere lawyer-like stupidity of never making an admission, which is a habit in Parliament, too. Really, Mr. Gladstone need not be ashamed of changing his mind with the example of Mr. Bright before him, who has become a Tory simply because he could not change his, when things were changing around him.

It would be refreshing to find somebody who would say, when challenged as to the relation of his present to his past opinion, "Yes; I did think that, but I have changed my opinion now," but that seems to be as rare a bird as the man that will say "Yes; I said so-and-so, and I meant it then and mean it now." And it would take a strong lantern to find a man in Parliament who could say either of those things.

As to Mr. Chamberlain, he seems determined to go deeper and deeper into the mire; and surely a man who had been away from the country for two years, and had not seen any newspapers during that time, if he happened on any of Mr. Chamberlain's present speeches, would be likely to say, "Pray what Chamberlain is that? Is it any relation to the Joseph Chamberlain who, when I left England, was going about the country making demi-semi-socialistic speeches?"

The thoughtful soul may, if it pleases, debate with itself whether the German or English people have scored in the game of flunkeydom by the last two exhibitions of that art, the celebration of the Kaiser's birthday, or the Queen's visit to Birmingham. Certainly, the German transaction was on the larger scale, and so more offensive, and there appears to have been an outpouring of sentiment on the occasion, not easy for a sane man to understand, if he chance not to belong to that parish; neither is the superannuated drill-sergeant who was worshipped by the German population—(What were all the Socialist voters about, by the way?)—a very worthy idol. Still, the man is a kind of a real king, and represents, at any rate, the memory of a set of desperate battles, and, 'tis said, does his joss-business of being seen with much assiduity, and his position altogether is not so preposterous as that of our own special joss, which does *not* do its business even of being seen (if that mattered at all), and cannot do anything else of a public kind without being called over the coals for it as an unconstitutional act.

Doubtless, also, a good deal of the enthusiasm at Berlin was of police creation, and it is to be thought that the Birmingham loyalty was more genuine of its kind, and at the bottom of it, probably, lay the hope of the quickening of business a little. Finally, when we take into consideration that Birmingham is a Radical town, I think the palm must be given to the English professors of flunkeydom; their faith is purer, and shines brighter through the wrappages of individual character, political creed, and other accidents than that of any other nation.

W. M.

In the April number of *Harper's Magazine* is an article on "Wages in Europe and America," the outcome of which seems to be in agree-

ment with our constant assertion that in all civilized countries, the workman is in much the same position. What slight differences there are between labour's position in different countries arise from an altered standard of living.

Everywhere the worker is pushed down as far as he can go, and kept down there as long as he will stay.

A letter in the *Spectator* well illustrates the unreasoning fatuity of the average bourgeois. The writer has been giving particulars of the terrible condition of the Austrian workers, and winds up by saying that we in London (Socialists) "have much to be thankful for."

Does he mean *workmen* when he says Socialists? And imply that so long as someone is worse off than ourselves, we should be unfaithfully happy; as no doubt *he* would be did he lose an eye, another losing both!

Or, are his words to be literally taken? In that case, he is decidedly illogical, being a bourgeois; for the only feature in the evil case of the Austrian workmen that can please a Socialist is their restiveness under it, and the conviction forced upon us that the capitalists of Austria and elsewhere are serving the revolution well by making their workers' lives intolerable.

H. H. S.

DESPOTISM AND NIHILISM IN RUSSIA.

THE world has once more been startled by another attempt at assassination. The despots are once more alarmed, and the press, as usual, calls for vengeance on the so-called miscreants who attempted to kill even an Emperor. That words of congratulation should be sent to the Emperor with lightning speed need not surprise any one. The same with regard to the blind fury of the hireling press of this and other countries. Yet, it would be best to look at the matter with greater calmness, and think well what the situation is. Let us deal first with the question on the ground of principle.

What is an Emperor? Simply a usurper. One who claims the right to rule in violation of the principle of equal liberty, in violation of the principle of eternal right, of eternal justice. Usurpation can never be the basis of legitimate authority. It can never command the respect of the thoughtful. It will never receive the respect of the free man or the free woman. Usurpation is the greatest of all crimes. Its very existence implies the assassination of the dignity, the liberty, and the independence of a whole people. It implies the degradation and slavery of millions of human beings. Usurpation is the basis of absolute despotism, of the most debasing tyranny. Where usurpation exists liberty is impossible. All the rights of the individual, the liberty of thought, of speech, of free association, are all sacrificed to the supremacy of the usurper. And what is a usurper? A despot, a tyrant, from principle. Behold him on his throne of blood, a rebel against the principle of eternal justice, a traitor to the principle of human brotherhood. He is at war with the people over whom he claims to rule. As a traitor to the holy principle of equal liberty, he is at war with humanity. As a traitor and a rebel he should be everywhere treated as an outlaw. Usurpation is despotism in all its naked deformity. None but slaves can tolerate it. None but sycophants can recognise it. None but courtiers can sing its praises. The glory of usurpation and the grandeur of its saturnalia depend on the plunder and the degradation of the people. And from the curse and scourge of usurpation the people are in duty bound, severally or collectively, to free themselves.

We read of the Imperialism of ancient Rome, and of the religious royalty of the middle ages; we have had the Imperialism of Napoleon the Great, and we have the Imperialism of the German Kaiser; but in the Imperialism of Russia we have the blasphemous claims of religious royalty and the naked rascality of political despotism. There the usurper rules supreme. His will is law. At his bidding ten thousand victims take their death march to Siberia. At his command a thousand men and women ascend the scaffold, martyrs for the holy principle of human liberty. Behold the Czar of all the Russians on his throne of blood and rapine, surrounded by his almost countless legions of mercenary cut-throats; behold him the traitor, the rebel, ever at war with the people over whom he claims to rule; at war with humanity, the only true sovereign. If the usurper be the anointed of

heaven, let heaven protect him. As a rebel against the law of eternal right he deserves no protection from the law.

But the conspirators. Who and what are they? All the truest, the wisest, the bravest, of all classes of Russian society. In a dispatch from St. Petersburg, dated March 12, and quoted in the *Standard* of March 17, we read of the widespread dissatisfaction that exists amongst all classes in the Russian Empire—military, officials, nobles, workmen, and peasants. "These malcontents," it is said, "do not, strictly speaking, belong to the Nihilist or Terrorist party, but they almost involuntarily promote the objects of the active revolutionists, and their number is so great that the gaps caused by executions or arrests, are immediately filled up." We are also told "the number of officers, non-commissioned officers, and military pupils recently arrested for conspiracy, not only at St. Petersburg, but in many other garrisons, is very great, far greater than is generally known, but still greater is the number of those who are equally guilty but have accidentally escaped detection."

In the *Standard* of March 24, we read, "Nihilism, too, in its original form, has, as I have often remarked, died out long ago; but the social revolutionary agitation which it exploited, and which still bears its name, still exists, and will exist as long as the autocratic government, against which its misdeeds are so terrible a protest." The St. Petersburg correspondent of the *Daily News*, March 25, referring to the attempts to get up a show of loyalty in the universities, says: "Public opinion here and abroad is not, however, to be deceived by such artifices. It is really surprising to hear what is said about the state of the country in diplomatic circles. It might be supposed that the revolution so long dreaded is now on the eve of breaking out. I know that the foreign representatives have sent reports to their governments upon the actual state of Russia, and that these reports at all events are not of the brightest colours." On the same date we read that at Odessa, forty officers, some of high rank, had been arrested within a few days. March 26th we are told that ten more officers had been arrested at St. Petersburg. We read that Gatschina is like a regular fortress, with a powerful garrison and hundreds of spies and police. And this is holy Russia!

It may be said that these men are rebels, but they already embrace the best and the truest of every class. Call them rebels if you will; but such rebels are the salt of the earth and the glory of the human race. Place them by the side of the arch-rebel, the arch-usurper, on his blood-stained throne. Behold him, a usurper by birth, a despot from principle, a tyrant in the worst sense of the word, upholding all that is iniquitous, all that is villainous, all that is barbarous, brutal, and corrupt, the enemy of all that is pure and just, of all that tends to elevate the people, or that can raise them to dignity and liberty. Turn to the conspirators, so-called. Who are they? Men and women of all ranks and classes, from the highest noble to the artisans or the peasants. What is their aim? To free their country from the curse and scourge of a degrading despotism; from the tyranny and corruption which there prevail. To raise the great mass of the people, to free them from the thousand tyrannies and oppressions that degrade and enslave them; to make man and woman free—free as the air they breathe, free as the light of day.

But why do they not agitate in a legal manner; why do they not adopt legitimate means? No government, no authority that rests on usurpation can ever be legitimate. The decrees of tyrants can never be binding on a single human being. Nor can any authority be legitimate that does not rest on the freely expressed will of the great mass of the people. To enforce any decree against the will of the people is tyranny, and to impose a single tax without the consent of the people is an act of plunder. The usurper, then, is not only a rebel, but a criminal, a wholesale plunderer, and ought to be treated as such.

But how many men and women has the present Czar of all the Russias sent to Siberia, there to linger out a miserable existence? How many are rotting in Russian fortresses? How many has he sent to the scaffold, murdered in cold blood to prolong for a little while longer his reign as a despot and the slavery of the people? To combat such a system is the duty of every man, of every woman. When there is neither freedom of speech, nor of the press, nor free association, organisation on a large scale is impossible. Secret conspiracy is the only means, and to conspire the most sacred obligation. He who denies to the people their rights and liberties is a rebel against the people, and should be treated as such. And where the people are denied the right of free organisation, of free action, in the words of Suarez, "it is permitted to an individual to kill a tyrant, in virtue of the law of self-defence." And he adds, "For though the community does not command it, it is always to be understood that it wishes to be defended by every one of its citizens individually, and even by a stranger. Then, if no defence can be found excepting the death of the tyrant, it is permitted to every one to kill him." These words are clear and precise, and cannot be disputed. Take the following from our own Milton: "Since the king, or magistrate, holds his authority of the people, for their good, and not his own, then may the people, as oft as they shall judge it for the best, either choose him or reject him, retain him or depose him, though no tyrant, merely by the liberty and right of free born men, to be governed as seems to them best" (*Prose Works*). Let us not forget, too, that our own ancestors not only claimed the right to take up arms against a tyrant, in the person of Charles I., but to try him for treason against and send him to the grave headless.

But the right of a people to free themselves from tyranny and oppression has always been recognised, by insurrection if practicable, by any other means if necessary. Blackstone (*Ch. Royal Prerogative*), in speaking of the expulsion of James II., and the right of the people

to resort to insurrection when necessary, says: "Nor will they (the people) sacrifice their liberty by their adherence to those political maxims which were established to preserve it. In these or other circumstances, since law and history are silent, it becomes us to be silent also, leaving to future generations, whenever necessity or the safety of the whole may require it, the exertion of those inherent though latent powers of society, which no time, no constitution, no contract, can ever destroy or diminish." Many other English authorities might be given.

In dealing with the revolutionary movement in Russia, let us not forget the facts of our own history. Above all, let us take our stand on principle; and let us remember that it is the duty of every people to adopt any and every means, individually and collectively, to free themselves from the curse and scourge of a cruel and relentless despotism.

J. SKETCHLEY.

THE IMMORALITY OF INTEREST.

It is not probable that in modern times it has ever entered the head of one Christian in a thousand that to lend money at interest is intrinsically wrong, and denounced not only by the Socialists, but also most vigorously by the Christian Fathers, and condemned in no equivocal manner in the Bible. They know, of course, that usury was forbidden among the Jews, but ignorant of the meaning of the Scriptural term, imagine it has no modern counterpart, at least in this country.

It is written in Deuteronomy xxiii. 19, "Thou shalt not lend upon usury to thy brother; usury of money, usury of victuals, usury of anything that is lent upon usury," and similar divine commands are given in Levit. xxv. 35, 36, 37, and in Exodus xxii. 25. With regard to the meaning of the term, St. Ambrose says, "Many persons, evading the precepts of the law, when they give money to merchants, require the usury not in money, but take some of their goods in payment of the usury. Therefore, let them know what says the law; You shall not, it says, receive the usury of food, nor of anything else. The victuals is usury, the cloth is usury; whatever is added to the principal is usury—whatever name you give it, it is usury." St. Augustine also, on Psalm xxxvii. 26, says, "If you lend your money to a man from whom you expect more than you gave, not money alone but anything else, whether it be wheat, wine, oil, or any other article, if you expect to receive any more than you gave, you are an usurer, and in that respect reprehensible, not praiseworthy." St. Jerome too, on Ezekiel xvii. 10, 17, says, "Some persons imagine that usury obtains only in money; but the Scriptures, foreseeing this, have exploded every increase, so that you cannot receive more than you gave. Others likewise have the habit of receiving gifts of various descriptions for the usurious loans, not understanding that the Scriptures call usury also increase whatever that be, if they receive any more than they had given." Usury seems then to signify any kind of payment made for the loan of anything, and is therefore the generic term for rent, interest, and profit.

It is objected that the Jews were forbidden to exact usury from their brethren only, but were at liberty to charge it to strangers. Regarding this St. Thomas says, "To receive usury from strangers was not permitted as a lawful thing, but rather tolerated for avoiding a greater evil. This dispensation is not extended to Christians who are bound to consider all mankind as brethren, especially under the New Law to which they are called."

That Jesus of Nazareth himself looked upon the practice as iniquitous the whole tenor of his teaching proves. He even forbids it expressly in Luke vi. 34, "And if ye lend to them of whom ye hope to receive what thank have ye? for sinners also lend to sinners, to receive as much again. But love ye your enemies, and do good, and lend hoping for nothing again, and your reward shall be great, and ye shall be the children of the Highest: for he is kind unto the unthankful and to the evil." Nothing could be plainer, and the sincere, conscientious Christian, seeking to obey the precepts of his Master, and possessing sufficient independence and intellectual activity to impel him to examine the Scriptures for himself, can have no hesitation in denouncing the inconsistency and impiety of Christian interest-takers and profit-mongers. He would not dream, for a moment, of disregarding the whole spirit of Christ's teaching, by attempting to justify usury, and would be the first to point out the error of those who so eagerly seize on the parable of the talents as an excuse for the practice. The power of self-interest to blind men to all reason and truth is tremendous, and it is therefore not surprising that when self-interest is reinforced by a superstitious regard for custom, benevolent and ordinarily clear-sighted men should, in good faith, consider the parable as indisputable proof of the divine sanction. It is quite evident, however, that if the parable does sanction it, it belies the whole teaching and practice of Christ; but there can be no doubt it was only intended to picture in a striking manner the reward awaiting the believer who lays out his talents at spiritual usury, by feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, tending the sick and helpless, and caring for the widows and orphans.

So much for the *argumentum ad hominum* addressed to the professed Christian. But in the opinion of those of us who do not bow to the "authority" of the Biblical writers, and who are not inclined to admit their infallibility in ethical questions, the morality of the custom does not depend on the interpretation of Scripture. It can be shown that usury is an infringement of the law of justice, the result of the tyranny of the strong over the weak, and the great cause of poverty with its in-

numerable attendant evils. Whether usury be right or wrong, to it must be attributed the glaring social inequalities of the present time, for these are by no means commensurate with the difference in physical power, intellectual capacity, or moral quality of the members of the community. If usury be justifiable, our working millions must be abandoned to their hopeless struggle with poverty. If, on the other hand, they and their children are ever to have brighter or happier days, usury must be driven out of the world; that is the alternative. Fortunately we are provided by non-Socialists with an estimate of the burdens laid upon the workers by this ogre. According to Mundella the total annual income of the country, that is to say, the quantity of wealth produced each year is 1300 millions. This wealth is, of course, produced only by the workers, manual and mental, and what do these workers get? only 300 millions between them, at the highest estimate 500 millions! Making every allowance, for we have no need to exaggerate, more than one-half of the wealth produced by the workers is taken from them in the name of—usury. Facts like these surely point to usury as the principal cause of poverty. It is true that the poverty of some is due to personal vices, but it cannot be denied that the poverty of the great bulk of the population is caused by circumstances beyond the control of the individual, and by those circumstances mere tendencies in the individual are often developed into vices which would otherwise have lain dormant, so that some deduction again has to be made from the admission above stated as to personal vices. Certainly the individual lies helpless in the iron grip of usury.

We see at present the land and the capital without which the propertyless workers must starve, in the hands of a comparatively small number of the population. To gain access to this God's (sic) earth and to the instruments of production, to wit, the machinery, mills, factories, railways, etc., is of paramount importance to the workers, and accordingly they are obliged to apply to the holders of property for leave to use it. The workers have nothing (through no fault of their own, mind you); the capitalists and landowners everything. If, on being thus appealed to, the latter listened to the teaching of the great and noble minds of the past, and obeyed their generous and better nature prompting them to help their less fortunate brethren, they would hasten to share freely these necessaries of life and work with the unlucky ones, or at the very least lend them interest-free on condition of receiving payment for them by easy instalments. Instead, however, of answering their altruistic impulses they allow themselves to be swayed by their selfish and anti-social inclinations, and stifling all sympathy for their disinherited fellows lay upon them the yoke of slavery by a process euphemistically called "free contract." Free undoubtedly the workers are, only however to accept the terms of the propertied classes—or—starve.

The terms, too, are: that the workers keep in good order and well-conditioned their masters' land and instruments of work, renewing such of the latter as are worn out by use; that they give their masters all the wealth they produce over and above what is just necessary to maintain them efficient, machine-like toilers and enable them to bring up children to replace them when wrought out. On the one hand they have starvation staring them in the face and on the other that arch-fiend, Usury, standing sentry over the means of work, ready on behalf of his masters to call on the police and even the military to aid him in preventing the proletariat using these means except on the terms mentioned above. It seems as if the only moral law which can be appealed to in defence of usury is that one which declares that "might is right." Yet, after all, it is only the "force" of the superstitious notions the people themselves have about the rights of property which holds them enslaved thus. The moment they realise that they are being robbed daily and hourly in the name of private property, the police and military will be with them; for are not they too of the people?

J. H. S.

(To be continued.)

"THE LAST DAYS OF THE COMMUNE."

The following extracts are taken from an article by an eye-witness, J. B. Marsh, in the 'Gentleman's Magazine,' of July, 1871.

"The atrocities perpetrated upon the Communists—men and women—captured in the neighbourhood of the Rue de Rivoli were shocking. Women were stabbed in the back by soldiers to make them walk more quickly to the places where they were to be shot; and men fated to die were maltreated by soldiers and civilians. The attitude and demeanour of the men was heroic. They bore the insults and the taunts of the soldiers unmoved, and walked defiantly, as though they were going to meet a martyr's death. All the members of the National Guard with whom I conversed were mechanics or clerks; I saw but few of those vagabonds with whose faces and figures the illustrated papers have made us familiar; nor did I see any of those women whose fierceness and cruelty have been so often detailed in English newspapers. On the three days when the insurgents held possession of the First Arrondissement, I frequently saw women armed with revolvers and rifles, marching at the head of companies of armed men; but they were well-dressed, good-looking females, who appeared to be animated by a sense of patriotism. The appearance of a few of these women on the ramparts gave rise to the most exaggerated rumours as to their number. . . . The number of arrests made by the troops was considerably augmented by the police, who followed in their train. House to house visitation was then carried out in the most systematic manner, and hundreds of men and women dragged forth from hiding places. Many of the leading sympathisers with Communism were thus unearthed, and all who were recognised met with immediate execution. The course pursued by the soldiers was to conduct the condemned person to the nearest barricades and there shoot them, but

when one was not near the man or woman was led into the centre of the roadway and there put to death. In the Rue Richelieu was a barricade of formidable dimensions, which had a deep hole excavated in the front, the earth from which was used to face the barricade. At this spot upwards of forty men were put to death. In carrying out the executions, the soldiers in no single instance that I saw raised their rifles to their shoulders, but held them about the level of their knees and fired. The dead, both men and women, lay about the streets, in the squares, on the banks of the Seine, in every direction, until the insurrection was extinguished. Then they were collected in country carts and carried out of Paris, and what ultimately became of them I do not know. . . . But where are the innocent victims of these sad disasters? What has become of the children? The estimates of the number of dead and those made prisoners vary considerably, but according to some statements, there were 20,000 men and women killed in fight or executed between the 21st and 28th of May, and upwards of 40,000 men and women made prisoners. What has become of the thousands of little ones, suddenly deprived of one or both parents? The children were obtruded on the public gaze in every procession of prisoners during the days when fighting was going on in the streets of Paris. Among the sad sights of that terrible week, the saddest to my mind was the spectacle of whole families marching under an escort of soldiers to the nearest place of confinement. In scores of instances a little child too young to walk was carried by father or mother, and the innocent face contrasted strangely with the fierce countenances of the captors and captives. Nor was there anything more horrible than the torrent of oaths which the spectacle of a child carried in the arms drew forth from the people who were drawn together to see the prisoners pass. For the night following their capture the children were allowed to remain with their parents, but the following morning at daybreak they were separated."

WIMBLEDON AND MERTON NOTES.

In this happy hunting ground of the jerry-builder, whose hideous and insecure handiwork abounds on every side, we are surrounded with a population composed of retired profit-mongers, the clerk and shop-keeping element, and over-worked artisans and labourers. A large proportion of the latter have been tempted by puff advertisements to come and "live a little way out" and rent "those desirable residences," in which roofs leak, ceilings and walls crack, and doors refuse to shut, and which, when "to let," have tumbled down of their own accord. The retired profit-mongers occupy the best and most salubrious portions of Wimbledon Hill, Park, and Common, many portions of which they have "conserved" to their own especial benefit. But the true spirit of selfishness is best shown by the hideous walls erected around their "private" property recently, thus excluding the general public from enjoying some of the most magnificent views in the county of Surrey.

The aforesaid profit-mongers are very solicitous about their final destination hereafter, where, I opine, they think to have some more private property and enjoy the "music and light" all to themselves. Hence parsons and lay spouters, church, chapels, and mission-halls, are nearly as plentiful as the beer-shops and public-houses wherein the tired workmen seek their recreation with publicans and sinners.

The lot of the workmen in these distant suburbs is extremely hard; rising at 4 or 4.30 a.m. in order to catch a workmen's train, he arrives back at night too tired to partake of intellectual pleasures, and must needs seek the "pub" for change.

There is, however, another type, dear to the "master" and after his own heart, viz., the converted working man. He never complains of long hours and short pay. As one said at a local meeting, he would work for 10s. per week, conscious that the "Lord" would supply the deficiency and meet his wants. He regales himself with a pennyworth of gingerette, and takes delight in listening to discourses of converted burglars, prize-fighters, etc., whose "thoughts on awful subjects dwell—damnation and the dead."

Sir John Lubbock, in opening the Free Library here, gave an address upon the pleasure to be derived from the perusal of sterling books; and the Jubileists—of whom more anon—ask £200 to purchase more books for the library. But workmen who "come home in the even too tired and weary to stand" are not likely to benefit unless the institution is open on Sundays—sacrilegious thought.

The Jubileists held a meeting at the Drill Hall on 24th March, to discuss the proposals as to the due celebration of Jubilee by the funkeys and snobs of the neighbourhood. Amid a scene of the wildest disorder, comrade Harrison and myself put forward an amendment to the effect that the circumstances of the working classes does not warrant any jubilation because an old lady has received over £80,000,000 for fifty years of office. Comrades Eden and Dalchon also attempted to get a hearing, the audience energetically hooting and howling at both sides. "God save the Queen" as a finale was drowned in cat-calls, shouts, and hoarse bellowings. Thus have the loyal bigwigs squandered their money to provide the Socialists with an evening's entertainment. It was dimly understood that a resolution to provide almshouses was carried, but if so, as a local comrade said, the only recipients of such charity would be centenarians who had brought on confirmed curvature of the spine by continual kowtowing to the upholders of cant and hypocrisy.

F. KITZ.

How long will the people of this country feel under obligations to support any political party whose sole purpose in life is to "legislate" them out of their earnings?—*State Standard*.

THE RABBIT AND THE CROCODILE.—A FABLE.—A rabbit complained of hunger to the keeper of a menagerie; whereupon the keeper seized it and threw it into the tank with the crocodile, telling it to make a meal off the reptile. The rabbit protested, saying, "I fear that the conditions preclude the possibility of my obtaining a square meal," and requested to be removed. "Ah," said the keeper, "you have precisely as much right in that tank as the crocodile; therefore neither of you have any ground for complaint."—*America: The land of equal rights and opportunities.*—*Workmen's Advocate*.

PROGRESS.—When one thinks of the Greeks playing, praying, labouring, lecturing, dreaming, sculpturing, training, living everlastingly in the free wind and under the pure heavens, and then thinks that the chief issue of civilisation is to pack human beings in rooms like salt fish in a barrel, with never a sight of leaf or cloud, never a whisper of breeze or bird,—oh, the blessed blind men who talk of Progress! Progress, that gives four cubic feet of air apiece to its children, and calls the measurement Public Health!—*Ouida: Crispin, in 'Ariadne.'*



"HAVE YOU NOT HEARD HOW IT HAS GONE WITH MANY A CAUSE BEFORE NOW: FIRST, FEW MEN NEED 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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TO CORRESPONDENTS.

NOTICE TO ALL SOCIALISTIC NEWSPAPERS.—The *Commonweal* will be regularly sent to all Socialistic Contemporaries throughout the world, and it is hoped that they on their side will regularly provide the Socialist League with their papers.

Periodicals received during the week ending Wednesday March 30.

ENGLAND		BRUSSELS—L'Avant-Garde	
Justice	Boston—Woman's Journal	Liege—L'Avenir	Antwerp—De Werker
Jus	Liberty	Hague—Recht voor Allen	HOLLAND
Norwich—Daylight	Denver (Col.) Labor Inquirer	Zurich—Sozial Demokrat	SPAIN
Londoner Arbeiter-Zeitung	New Haven (Conn.)—Workmen's Advocate	Barcelona—Acracia	Madrid—El Socialista
Cotton Factory Times	St Louis (Mo.)—Altruist	Portugal	Voz do Operario
Worker's Friend	Chicago (Ill.)—Knights of Labor	AUSTRIA	Brunn—Volksfreund
Die Autonomie	Albina (Oreg.)—Weekly Courier	ROMANIA	Jassy—Lupta
Glasgow—Pioneer	Milwaukee (Wis.)—Volksblatt	SWEDEN	Stockholm—Social-Demokraten
INDIA	Detroit (Mich.)—The Advance and Labor Leaf	NORWAY	Kristiania—Social-Democraten
Bankipore—Behar Herald	Seattle (W.T.) Voice of the People		
Bombay Gazette	Newfoundland (Pa.)—La Torpille		
Madras—People's Friend	FRANCE		
SOUTH AUSTRALIA	Paris—Cri du Peuple (daily)		
Adelaide—Our Commonwealth	Le Socialiste		
UNITED STATES	Guise—Le Devoir		
New York—Freiheit	Lille—Le Travailleur		
John Swinton's Paper	BELGIUM		
Der Sozialist	Combat		
Truthseeker			

NORTHUMBRIAN NOTES.

THE strike is coming to a very critical stage. There is now considerable distress amongst the non-unionists, and the strike-pay last week was so low that even the unionists are feeling the pinch. The newspapers, relief committees, and the innumerable public advisers of the "pro bono publico" stamp are all entreating the miners to give in. The newspapers raised the cry of famine at least a week before it came, and their heart-rending accounts of the sufferings of the people are all profusely interspersed with arguments on the hopelessness of the miners' struggle. Not a word against the mine-owners or their host of swindling dealers and agents, who get more by the useless process of buying the coal cheap and selling it dear than the miners do for hewing it out of the bowels of the earth.

The good-intentioned people who run charity and relief committees, have an incomparable knack of making themselves a nuisance. People may be qualified to run a soup kitchen, or discharge the useful duties of scullery-maid, and yet be unable to grasp all the difficulties of one of the largest strikes of the present decade. But it is impossible to drive this into some people's heads. A relief committee is formed at Blyth. Its first act is to issue a memorial lamenting its inability to do its work, and praying the strikers to give in at any cost. Unsigned letters appear daily from people who know all about everything, prophesying failure for the strikers, and urging them to yield before they are beaten. Thus every influence is at work to force the men to give way.

It is impossible yet to say how the strike will end, or when it will end. The miners are hopeful and determined enough, but the force against them is very strong. The masters show an unbroken front, the pits are said to have been working at a loss, and the trade is ebbing away. Even when work is resumed, on whatever terms, the lot of the miners will be a very poor one indeed. Their wages were at starvation point. They will certainly go back discontented and bitter, and even if they win, the fight they have had to keep their position will tell heavily upon them, and make them more ready to take up the revolutionary movement.

The Socialists here, of course, have not in any way interfered in the dispute. We have denounced others for interfering; and preached and acted upon the principle that the miners best understood their own business, and that outsiders should interfere when they are asked, and not before. When the strike has begun, every friend of labour should do all in their power to make it a success. The Socialist plan is to

seize the advantage offered by the excitement of the strike and the leisure now enjoyed by the men, to spread our principles.

The miners are not getting the support from outside that they are entitled to. During the past week or fortnight things have greatly changed. The distress is now wide-spread and keen. There has been one or two disturbances on account of the black-legs going to work in the pits at one or two places. The women turned out and gave them a warm escort from the pit-mouths. No serious damage was done, however, and quietness has been restored.

The coal trade altogether is in a very bad condition, and likely to become worse. More pits are being worked than is at all necessary. Northumberland is one of the largest coal-producing places in the country, and yet if none of its pits were ever opened again, the coal trade would hardly feel the effect. When work is resumed, many pits will be working very short time indeed.

By the way, one statement in my letter last week was wrong. I had taken the figures from one place in stating the wages, instead of the average. The highest county average was 9s. 6d. (official statement, 9s.) in 1873. But a great many could get over the amount. In some cases 15s. could be taken, and I have spoken to a miner who remembers earning over £1; but this figure, of course, was rare.

During the last week the propaganda has gone on very well indeed. On Friday afternoon a large meeting was held in the Ashington Co-operative Hall. Addresses were given by Williams, Fielding, and myself. At night I had a debate with a clergyman at Bedlington Co-operative Hall. The place seats about 800 people, but over 1,200 were crammed into it. Every bit of standing ground was packed, and every available corner from the platform to the gallery was made use of. Several hundreds were unable to get in, and Fielding and Williams addressed them in the open air whilst the debate was going on. The feeling of the meeting was very decidedly in favour of Socialism.

Preparations for forming a North of England Socialist organisation are going forward. Next Saturday, a conference will be held in Newcastle, and miners from a number of the collieries and towns of Northumberland and Durham will attend. As members of the Socialist League and Social Democratic Federation have worked equally hard in the district, it would be unwise to force one organisation on to the exclusion of the other. At the same time, any rivalry would be fatal to both parties, and foolish on all grounds. Of course, the men who meet together must decide what is to be done. My own opinion is that a local society, say the North of England Socialist Federation should be formed and issue its own rules, etc. That both London parties and papers should be treated exactly alike, while no official connection should be formed with either. When the re-union and consolidation of the Socialist movement takes place, the local body could join the re-united forces. There might be a general gathering together before long, and in 1888 the United Socialists could hold their first conference in Newcastle-on-Tyne. 'Tis a consummation devoutly to be wished, if no principle were lost in the transaction.

Newcastle, March 28th.

J. L. MAHON.

WORKERS AND SHIRKERS.

SOCIETY is divided into two sections, and into two sections only; the workers and the shirkers. The former by manual labour or as brain-workers provide all things needful to man's physical and intellectual well-being. The latter is a useless class, and, unless frivolity and vice can be said to adorn society, its existence cannot be excused on the ground that it is ornamental, though that they are the sole adornment of society is the idea firmly implanted in the minds of the shirkers. Strange to say, the shirkers are the minority, and it is marvellous that they are able to sponge on the majority for free board and lodgings, and to get them, too, not with scorn and contempt, but with the servile adulation and respect of the workers. Books have been written "in praise of folly" and "in praise of drunkenness." It has not been necessary to write a book in praise of cunning, for on every lip is praise of that supreme cunning which enables one man to live upon the labour of another. Yet it will not be amiss to unmask the cunning now it has got the length that the shirkers are not satisfied to remain idle themselves but enforce the workers to idleness when they cannot toil to their profit. The workers are homeless, but must not build houses for themselves; they are ragged, but must not weave for themselves; they are hungry, but must not win from the soil food for themselves and for their children.

How is it done? The three card trick, the confidence dodge, all the ruses by which the black-leg gets a livelihood are but shallow artifices compared with the fraud upon the workers constantly practised by the shirkers. Force, of course, is an element in the matter, but the force is concealed as much as possible for fear the majority may take lesson from the minority, and by organisation meet force with force. This is the lesson the workers have to learn, which happily they are learning, so we will content ourselves with examining the fraud upon which the system is based. Let us look at the hocus-pocus of the thing. The "class" dodge is the one which has most successfully deluded the workers. The result of generations of good living and of abstinence from toil is that the shirkers have delicate limbs and shapely bodies, while excessive toil and hard living has scarred the features of the workers or made them

uncouth of figure. The workers have been defrauded of their share in the common inheritance, knowledge; schools, and universities founded for the people have been seized upon by the shirkers with the result that the minds, like the persons, of their sons and daughters have been adorned, while the workers have remained unlettered, or received only enough education to make them docile servants. Having in this way artificially created class, the shirkers point to the perfection, or what passes for it, of their own minds and persons and to the mental and physical grossness of the workers as a proof that these are pre-ordained hewers of wood, drawers of water, servitors to their class, and they blasphemously ascribe to the Deity these social inequalities, asserting that he has magnified the rich and set down the poor. Repeating the lie, the hirelings of the pulpit hurl damnation at any who shall dare revolt against that tyranny of the classes which they bless with a text. Grave lawyers, learned doctors, too, support the privileges of the classes. Awed by this show of wisdom, affrighted by these threats, the workers have bowed their heads to the yoke. Heavier and heavier it has grown, but the day draws near when it will be thrown off, and the absurd fiction of class forgotten in recognition of equality—

"Oldest of things, divine equality."

If the class trick has been successfully played off upon them, the workers have been gulled still more completely by the pretension of the shirkers to be the chosen inheritors of the earth. St. Peter may hold the keys of heaven and hell, but they pretend to hold the keys of earth, and will allow no one access to it unless first they pay to them the toll called rent. The notion of private property in land, upon which all of us must live, is as repugnant to common sense as individual proprietorship in the air, which all of us must breathe; but the production of a parchment sheet setting forth that certain acres of the common soil had been given or sold to A. B. and his descendants for ever by some one who had no right whatever either to give or to sell them, has been taken as sufficient title to ownership of that which no man can own—the land. One questions whether they are not sheep in men's guise who permit themselves to be huddled in towns and cities, starved in slums and alleys, that a whole county may be turned into deer-forests and grouse-moors, or that huge estates may rear pheasants and hares, providing sport for the shirkers instead of bread for the workers. Such submission is sheepish, it is not human. But the shirkers are not satisfied with laying claim to the land. Whatever wealth is produced by the workers in excess of subsistence wages, is seized upon by them as interest and profit, tolls which they levy for permission accorded the workers to use to-day the capital which they (the workers) created yesterday. And this pretension of the shirkers to the ownership of the land and the capital—capital the creation of the workers—has so imposed upon the latter that they grovel before the shirkers in gratitude for their kindness in allowing them to till their soil, increase their capital, employ their machinery, without which permission it seems to them they would not be able to get even that scanty fare for which they sweat out their lives. And this brings us to the flimsiest of all excuses for the existence of the shirkers—that they give work, that they encourage the arts and the sciences by consuming the wealth created by others, by purchasing the produce of other men's labour. This sophistry is too feeble for the insect mind, but man has accepted it. The bees with greater wisdom kill off the drones. "What is Jem doing?" "Nothing." "And what are you doing?" "Helping Jem." And so the busy shirkers, the lawyers, the bankers, the stockbrokers, the merchants, and all the flunkey class help the idle shirkers, all of them preying upon the workers, who must rid themselves of the whole pestilent horde. They must sweep the world clean of them before they can make of it once more a temple for man and God, instead of a den of thieves.

J. HUNTER WATTS.

THE CABMAN'S LOT IS NOT A HAPPY ONE.—A cab-driver in the employ of Mr. Knight was recently summoned for plying for hire off a licensed standing in Fleet Street. Police-Constable 450 gave evidence to seeing the defendant put up his hand to two gentlemen standing outside the Portugal Hotel, Fleet Street. Defendant said it was true he put up his hand, but he thought the two gentlemen hailed him, and he believed now that he was hailed. He could assure his worship that the cabman's lot in London was not a happy one. When he left home that morning there was no food in his house, and he was not able to leave his wife the means of getting any dinner for the children. Consequently, he was very anxious to get a fare, and seeing a gentleman hold up his hand he held up his, and drove to him as quickly as he could. Alderman Knill said he believed the constable's evidence, and fined defendant 2s. 6d. and costs.—A cabman in the service of Mr. Pearce was summoned for a similar offence. Constable Walton, 508, said he saw defendant at Chancery Lane hold up his hand to a lady, and at Middle Temple Lane hold up his hand to a gentleman. Defendant said he was a night cabman, and had been on the rank for nearly nine hours without a fare when this occurred. A boy came to him at a quarter to ten in the morning and said a gentleman was waiting by Middle Temple Lane for a cab. He drove up to the gentleman and found that he was waiting for an omnibus. He then drove away, but was stopped by the constable. He would swear that he did not hail a lady at all. Cabmen had great difficulty in earning a little money now, and in was very hard for them to be fined for trying to get a fare. Alderman Knill said as defendant had a clean license he would only order him to pay 2s. costs. Defendant: I have not 2s. in the world.—Cabmen may have children at home starving, or they may even be starving themselves; but the "law" will not allow them to "ply for hire," i.e., hold up one hand, within the "ancient precincts" of the City of London. This, too, is another instance of the honesty of our administrators of the law, and an illustration of the "order" produced by its application. Socialists are often asked by working men how, under Socialism, things would be arranged; as if, whatever arrangement obtained, things could be worse, or even as bad!

H. D.

What doth it profit a man to vote the regular party ticket, while his toes stick out of his boots and his hair seeks the skylight through his hat?—*Voice of Labour.*

CORRESPONDENCE.

SOCIALIST SUPERSTITIONS.

SIR,—I wish to notify to all who may be concerned the existence in the mind of the British Socialist party of two superstitions which I venture to think might be eliminated without disadvantage to the cause. I am aware that they are both of them founded on reason, but the originally reasonable and laudable sentiment has unhappily degenerated until it can only be described as above.

Superstition No. 1. The fact that in France party differences among Socialists are often mixed up with personal squabbles, and these squabbles often occupy a ludicrously prominent place in the party press, has given rise to the superstition that it is "bad form" for one section of the English party to criticise even in the most cool and impartial way the doings of another section with whom they have ever had serious differences. "Oh no, we never mention him, his name is never heard" is the present style of conducting Socialist papers. One section of the party may be doing useful work, although there might be many points in it amenable to criticism, but the organ of the other section does not wish to fully endorse every action of its rival, so in the end the news is absolutely passed over or dismissed in a short paragraph. On the whole, the result is suggestive of the treatment by the hero in 'Great Expectations,' of his whilom friend and associate, the errand-boy—"Don't know 'er." To my thinking, this sort of thing must look quite as silly to the independent outsider as the active recriminations of our Continental friends. Surely it is performing a useful function for one section of the party to criticise, in a friendly spirit, the tactics of another section. I maintain the continuance of this well-bred British humbug is a dereliction of the duty of a Socialist press, which ought to comment, favourably or adversely, on every event of party interest.

Superstition No. 2. Because Radicals and Secularists attach undue importance to the questions of the throne and the altar—otherwise expressed, the "monarchy" and "church and chapel"—there is an unwritten law that Socialists are to religiously taboo these subjects, as regards any direct attack. If a Socialist speaker in the course of his speech alludes in denunciatory language to the demoralising influence of a royal family and a court, he is frowned down by the "straiter" sort of his party as pandering to Radicalism. Now there is no one who would resent more than myself the wasting of too much energy in minor issues. But I really fail to see why we should not frankly join hands with Radicals or others when we can do so conscientiously as far as they go, at the same time pointing out to them the futility of attempting to destroy these subordinate evils while neglecting the basal economical question. The point here referred to is illustrated in the attitude of certain Puritanical Socialists who have looked askance at comrade Champion's anti-Jubilee fund, on the ground of its savouring of Radicalism. Now these people express their disgust in private at the Jubilee flunkeys, and yet fancy that in public they must talk with bated breath on all that concerns the queen and royal family. Verily, brethren, this also is humbug. If we mean to destroy the present social order, while directing our principal efforts to undermining the foundation, do not let us grudge a few bomb-shells to the superstructure.—Yours fraternally,

E. BELFORT BAX.

"BIRDS OF A FEATHER."

SIR,—The following few lines from Boston *Liberty* may be useful to some of our friends who in their anxiety to be considered "advanced" are very much in danger of becoming reactionists. "A new paper has been started in England, entitled *Justice*, 'a weekly organ of Individualism.' It represents the Liberty and Property Defence League, an organisation consisting principally of British noblemen and formed to resist over-legislation, maintain freedom of contract, and combat Socialism—an organisation, in short, which the State Socialists and the Communists dismiss with a sneer as bourgeois. Bourgeois or not, I find much in it that commands my warm approval. In fact, if it shall prove true to its principles, and if its propaganda is to be conducted on the strict line of liberty without mental reservations, all Anarchists must, I think, consider it a more valuable paper than any of the four principle Socialist journals of England—*Justice*, the *Commonweal*, the *Anarchist*, and *Freedom*." All the tall talk about Individual Liberty and Freedom simply means disunion, and tends to put off the real emancipation of Labour, which can only be accomplished by collective action as against the monopolists. It is not very easy to understand why the *Anarchist* is classed as a Socialist journal, except to discredit the others. By the way, only a few weeks ago some muddle-headed individual, writing to one of the American labour papers, actually grouped *Liberty* in a similar absurd fashion with some of the American Collectivist organs. I think it is time that a distinct issue was raised, so that there may be less danger of the unwary being led astray by "glittering generalities," meaning anything or nothing. The direct outcome of the Anarchist doctrine, however broad may be the sympathies of its advocates, at least under present conditions, must tell in favour of the monopolists. The workers, therefore, will do well to be very sceptical about this new-found fashionable rage for Freedom in certain quarters.

T. BINNING.

HENRY WARD BEECHER.

Once more the capitalist class has occasion to mourn the loss of one of its high priests. The man who so ably advocated the cause of the chattel-slave a quarter of a century ago, but who proved an enemy to the wage-slaves of the present generation, has passed away. We cannot even express that regret which might be accorded the memory of a high-minded and honest enemy. He had no personal interest in the perpetuation of negro slavery, while his fortunes were cast with the perpetuation of wage-slavery and exploiters of the wage-working people. Beecher is dead.—*Workmen's Advocate.*

He is the rascal who received 20,000 dollars per annum for preaching Christ's word to the poor, and he falsified his God by telling the people, not that no rich man should enter the kingdom of heaven, but that bread and water ought to content the poor. He stole the livery of heaven to serve the devil with. If there is any truth in the Christian religion, Henry Ward Beecher is now having brimstone and fire for breakfast, fire and brimstone for luncheon, and good brimstone and hot fire for supper. He would be glad of that water he urged upon the poor.—*Labor Enquirer.*

The female telegraphists in the General Post-office, Edinburgh, have very properly declined to subscribe to the Woman's Jubilee Offering.

THE LABOUR STRUGGLE.

This department is under the direction of the Strike Committee. Labour News and Contributions to the Fund should be sent to T. BINNING, at the Offices.

BRITAIN.

Apart from the miners' agitation, there is very little to record in regard to the Labour Struggle in Britain at present. There are, however, signs of the awakening of a new spirit amongst the workers; which will undoubtedly very materially alter the character of the labour movement in the near future. The following extract from a recent issue of the *Newcastle Chronicle* is very significant. A full report of the situation is given by our comrade Mahon in another column:

"INFLUENCE OF THE SOCIALIST AGITATION.—The other cause of the determination to hold out is the Socialist agitation in the district. The Socialist meetings afforded the advocates of the strike the very opportunity they wanted. Talk flowed freely there of the greed, dishonesty, and tyranny of the capitalists. The great object of the trading classes is to filch from the workers their earnings, and under the competitive system and with the aid of mechanical inventions, they succeed only too well. Who are the producers of wealth? The workers, of course. To whom should the wealth belong? To the workers, of course. Then what right have a lot of capitalists, who sit in their easy chairs, or walk about with their hands in their pockets all day, to demand a reduction of wages, or even to claim a share of the produce of any man's labour? They have no right, of course. Then the miners are not only engaged in a righteous struggle, but they are entitled to a much larger share of the good things of the world than they would receive even if no reduction in wages took place. Thus the sentiments of the miners found expression from public platforms, drooping spirits were revived, and the mass were inspired with a determination to wage war against that horrid creature, the capitalist. Should the Socialist organisation remain in existence it seems likely that in the future an agitation will accompany every great strike. Capitalists and trades' union leaders may therefore have to reckon in future with this new and awkward factor."

Notice for Newcastle and District.

After six weeks' propaganda in Northumberland and Durham by members of both London Socialist parties, it is felt that steps should be taken to form an organisation for Newcastle and district to carry on the good work already begun. There can be no doubt that the seeds of Socialism have fallen in fertile ground, and it only requires careful work and steady attention in forming a solid and harmonious Socialist party in the locality to make Socialism a power in the North. With a view to carrying out this idea, a Conference will be held on Saturday evening, April 2nd, at 7 o'clock prompt, at the North of England Café Co.'s Rooms, Mosley Street, Newcastle. All sympathisers with Socialism are invited to attend. The details of the arrangements for the county demonstration will be laid before the meeting, and all business will be ended in time to enable friends to catch the late trains from Newcastle.

AMERICA.

WORCESTER, MASS.—The great strike of the boot and shoe makers in Worcester, Spencer, Brookfield, and North Brookfield, which began with the posting of the "free shop" notices by the manufacturers, still continues. A striker who shouted "scab" at Heywood of Heywood's factory, was arrested and sentenced to three months in the House of Correction.

Some 1,200 Italians arrived at Castle Garden recently on the steamer 'Cheirbon.' This is the largest importation of cheap labourers made by one steamer for many years. With the Chinese on the West and foreign cheap labour generally on the East, honest labourers stand a mighty poor chance of maintaining living wages or anything else.—*John Swinton's Paper.*

PEORIA, ILL.—About 100 coloured coal miners arrived here to take the places of the strikers, who have now been out several weeks. They were waited upon by a committee of the strikers, who laid their side of the case before them. The new men had been deceived, as they were led to believe that there was no trouble here, but said their poverty would force them to work. Several white labourers went over to Wesley City, a big mining centre two miles from here, on the other side of the Illinois River, to go to work, but the strikers' wives got after them with broomsticks and kettles of hot water and drove them out of the place.

NEW SOUTH WALES.

SYDNEY, N.S.W., Feb. 3.—Nearly every trade in New South Wales has its union. The maritime bodies are the strongest both financially and numerically. Under this heading comes the Hunter River and Illawarra miners, Newcastle coal-trimmers, Sydney coal-lumpers, wharf labourers, seamen and firemen, cooks and stewards. Their past history can be but of little interest to you, but their present must be; and as a member of one of these unions it will be principally with them that I shall deal. The rest of the unions outside of those I have mentioned, with the exception of the brickmakers, are very small, and are affiliated to the Trades and Labour Council. Last year saw several large strikes. One was that of the Lambton miners, which lasted about six months and then ended in arbitration. They were well supported by the other societies, £1150 being paid out by the Seamen's Union alone. The next was that of the Brickmakers for the eight-hour day, and although not immediately successful, they were eventually, as it came into force on the first of January. The strike of to-day is that of the Illawarra Miners, four pits standing idle. It has now lasted about seven months, and the end seems as far off as ever. It is caused by a determined effort on the part of the colliery proprietors to reduce the wages by 2d. per ton. A party of 50 non-unionists went down in a steamer the other day to take the place of the men on strike. A train was in waiting on the jetty to take them up to the mines. They got aboard; the train started; but further up the line they found some 500 women and children assembled across the tracks. The engine stopped, and then a scene took place that beggars all description. One woman with a child in her arms threw herself under the wheels, declaring that death was preferable to starvation. They begged, entreated, and coaxed these men not to go to work. They held up their children in their arms, and pleaded with these men not to take the place of their husbands and sons, and thus take the bread out of their infants' mouths. They succeeded in their efforts, for the whole of these men went over to the side of the unionists. But it did no good, for the next batch that came were walked up to the mines between two rows of troopers and constables. The masters took care they didn't lose this lot. The Mount Kembla mine, where the dispute commenced, is owned by British capitalists, and their first tactics

was to order the men out of the company's houses, and to clear off the company's lands by a stipulated time or they would be prosecuted. The weather was not very propitious at the time, and the men with their wives and children had to camp out in the bush, under trees and rocks, in a vain endeavour to escape from the inclement weather. Many, if not all of them, at the present time are living either with their friends in the adjacent towns or in little "humpies" (temporary shelters) which they have run up; but these latter are necessarily of a fragile character, and as the floor consists of the bare earth, it is not very conducive to good health. This is the weapon which the landowning capitalist uses with such telling effect, turning his workmen with their families out of home into the bush and highways of the colony because they the workmen think they are justified in demanding an increase or resisting a reduction. I think nothing is more calculated to expose the co-operative delusion in this quarter of the globe than the following. Soon after the miners dispute commenced, some members of the Coal-Lumpers Association seceded from that body, formed a co-operative coal-discharging company in opposition to the stevedores. Nothing could be more pleasing to the capitalists. The Mount Kembla Co. immediately gave them a contract on condition that they gave a bond to work the coal from non-unionist ships. Previously the coal-lumpers would not discharge coal from ships unless manned by unionists. Neither would the Seamen's Union man ships destined to carry coal from mines worked by non-unionists. But the action of the co-operating seceders effectually crippled the other unions in their endeavour to assist the miners. Another event of great importance is the steadily increasing march of the British Indian Steamship Co. along the Australian coast. Your readers may think it matters but very little as to whether it is British or Australian capitalists that we have to contend against, but I can assure them it makes a great difference. By Australian capitalist I mean a person whose capital is centered wholly and solely in the colonies. In contention with such a person the workman may have a kind of a show; but in contention with the men who have only a portion of their money invested here, and who have concerns in other parts of the world bringing them in large dividends, and who can afford, therefore, to let their investments here realise nothing for an indefinite period. There is absolutely no chance for the workers. The British Indian, or Queensland Co., as it is called, has already bought out one colonial company, and I believe that in a very short time they will have a monopoly of the trade from Cape York to Cape Leeuwin. The capitalists are slowly but surely becoming consolidated; and this I take as a sign that in the near future they will make a determined stand and attempt to break the power of the unions; and if such a conflict should be waged with the old weapon; strikes and lock-outs alone, making it a test of endurance, the workmen, in my humble opinion, would go to the wall. That they must take a leaf from the book of their comrades in the old countries is the opinion of ANGLO-AUSTRALIAN.

FRANCE.

LYONS.—The Petavit firm has refused to keep to the tariff established by the Syndicate of Plumbers of Lyons, and has therefore been black-listed by the men. The Syndicate allows 4 francs per day for each man leaving the employment of the firm and who is without work. The principal items of the tariff which has been refused by the employer are—ten hours a-day at 65 centimes the hour; extra time, 80 c. the hour; night work, 1 fr. 30 the hour.

CHARLEVILLE (Ardennes).—The Labour Party in Ardennes is growing rapidly, and can count at the present time about fifteen groups of some importance. In the Meuse valley many of the workers are hard at it for 12 or 14 hours a-day, at a wage of 2 fr. 50 or 3 fr., and feel the pressure of the times most severely. It is time that Socialism took some hold on them, which it has done pretty strongly.

DUN-SUR-AURON (Cher).—The bakers of this town have struck, whereby the inhabitants are obliged to send carts off to Bourges for the bread necessary for their daily consumption. The excitement is caused greatly by the vote in the Chambre upon the corn-dues, which has made those here who are feeling the general pressure very indignant.

SAINT-ETIENNE.—Yet another explosion of fire-damp with fatal consequences is announced here in one of the pits belonging to the same company that owns the Chatelus pit. The accident is due to the use of blasting-powder, in spite of the well-known presence of fire-damp in large quantities. These economies of the mining companies, at the risk of such constantly recurring accidents, are really monstrous, and so apparent that even a ponderous state-legislation might feel itself bound to move in the matter.

VIERZON.—The strike of porcelain-makers came to an end this week, after lasting for about two months, and being characterised by the greatest determination, quiet and devoid of braggadocio on the part of the strikers. They finally came to an understanding—otherwise a compromise—with their exploiters. But we hear this truce has lasted but a short time; the masters have broken faith with them, and have coolly dismissed from their employment the principal members of the Syndicate or of the Strike Committee, after they had got the men back to work by promising not to "rake up by-gones" nor punish the strikers in anywise. The men are extremely indignant, and have formally renewed the strike, their anger being this time louder and more threatening in tone. The Justice of the Peace has been expostulating with the masters, but uselessly; they declare they mean to intimidate the workmen, at any risk.

BELGIUM.

LIEGE.—The puddlers at the iron-works of Sclessin are on strike on the grounds of insufficient wages. This news has produced a great impression on the bourgeois circles at Liège.

HAINA ST. PIERRE (HAINAULT).—A revolt took place last week among the workers employed in the coal-mines of Cronfestu. It seems that for a long time past they had been complaining of the irregularity in the payment of wages, until at last, tired of promises and temporising, they proceeded to the dwelling of the director and besieged it. They were fired upon by him but no one was hurt, and the crowd dispersed after relieving their feelings by destroying whatever they came across in their short visit to the house.

BRUSSELS, March 27.—An imposing demonstration took place at the Alcazar to-day in favour of granting an amnesty to the men condemned for participation in the riots during the strikes in March last. M. Crocq, a member of the Senate, presided, and the hall was crowded by an enthusiastic but orderly audience, consisting chiefly of persons belonging to the commercial class. After several speeches had been delivered by M. Volders, a Socialist, and others, a resolution was unanimously passed in favour of granting the amnesty. The meeting then dispersed.

SOIGNIES (HAINAULT).—A wide-spread strike of quarrymen in the Hainault, which has been expected for some time past, has now come to pass. It is a serious strike, as it comprises most of the workers in the quarries of the district. Revolts are feared, and the masters have received the safeguard of a battalion of the 2nd Infantry, another being expected to come in aid if any disturbance should take place. The number of strikers at present 1600, and will be further increased it is expected. A year since the quarrymen had formed a Co-operative Association or League, and for some time past they have been trying to enter into negotiations with the masters for higher wages and fairer terms; but the latter refused point-blank to treat with the delegates, and declared, naturally enough, that they would never give way before an association formed to resist them. Hence the strike.

MINE INSPECTORS.—The *Avant-Garde* says: "After each catastrophe in the coal-pits, the workers have the right to choose from among themselves inspectors who will pursue their task of inspection at the same time as the State engineers. But—the next day everything remains as it was. It is well known that the engineers do not pay their visits to the mines often enough, and, indeed, they have not the time, being occupied several days in the week by giving lectures in the mining schools, industrial schools, and in the universities.

AUSTRIA.

BRUNN, March 15.—The following extract from the *Wiener Abendpost*, a semi-official paper, given in its issue of January 26, is very remarkable: "We are terrified by the great number of the poor that claimed public relief in Vienna in the year 1885. This metropolis, with a population of 754,000 inhabitants, had 276,000 poor—more than one-third of the population. The expenses for this relief amounted to 6,568,000 florins; thus each of the poor received on an average 24 florins, a ridiculously small amount." Indeed a ridiculously small amount in money, but what a sum of misery and also of indignation and hatred against a society tolerating such a heart-rending situation. And especially as this situation grows worse from year to year, from day to day. What do our ruling classes do? Nothing; they dance on this volcano, not knowing, or not willing to know, that in this manner they breed up a revolutionary army, always ready to sweep off an infamous society, which endows the rich bandit with all they wish and which condemns the industrious worker, the great mass, to starvation and to be plundered by profit-greedy capitalists or brutal land-grabbers. But we certainly wrong our benevolent tyrants when we say that they do nothing. We have forgotten the newest sport they have applied themselves to, the pretentious quackery that is termed social reform; we have forgotten the labour-friendliness they manifest by their zealous hunts after Socialists. According to the report of the Prague State Procurator, in the year 1886 241 Socialists have been arrested in the province of Bohemia alone; all were brought to the Superior Heretic Court ad hoc in Prague, under the charge of being members of secret societies; 120 of them were condemned, the others acquitted. These ciphers speak more than large volumes on the mean system we must bear in this Central-European China, and justify at once the approaching political and social revolution, which among us will be without doubt more bloody than in other "civilised" countries.—F. S.

With such a despotism as that which Mr. Balfour proposes to make permanent in Ireland, no man fit to be free can hold any parley. He would be a slave at heart who, confronted by this devilish engine of injustice, had any other thought but one—How best can I destroy this tyranny, and overturn the despotism of the alien oppressor!—*Pall Mall Gazette*. "HEAR, HEAR!"

The Ipswich branch of the Amalgamated Society of Engineers, having been invited to send delegates to consider, with representatives of the Odd Fellows and Foresters, the arrangements for a procession on the occasion of the Queen's Jubilee, resolved that the subject should be "postponed till her Majesty's centenary."

MOTHERWELL AND THE ROYAL JUBILEE OFFERING.—The women's jubilee offering is not finding much favour in the Motherwell district. In one of the principal streets the collection amounted to 4½d., and in another the contribution was 9d. Considerable comment is being caused by the lady collectors calling at the houses of miners for subscriptions.

STRIKE OF TAILORS IN LIMERICK.—A number of tailors in the employment of the Limerick army clothing factory have struck work owing to a dispute with the managers of the factory. The strike has resulted in a lock-out on the part of the proprietors of the factory.

DUBLIN.—A Labour League has been started here for the purpose of organising the workers—skilled and unskilled—of the city, and for educating them so that they shall understand their social rights. The inaugural meeting, which was held on Thursday, March 24th, at 2, Bachelor's Walk, was very well attended, more than thirty being enrolled as members. John Cantwell was appointed secretary, and J. E. Masterson, treasurer.

FOREIGN COMPETITION.—On Friday, the 25th of March, the Wolverhampton Chamber of Commerce issued their annual report. They announce that in iron and metal goods competition is far keener than ever. Manufacturers give the palm to Germany, but Belgian and American competition is also severe, and to a lesser extent French likewise. American competition is particularly serious in locks in the colonial markets, and the German lock competition is exceedingly keen in England. The strain of this ever increasing foreign competition, added to competition at home, has now, it is declared, reduced iron and metal goods prices to an almost profitless level.

Free Speech Demonstration in Victoria Park.

A DEMONSTRATION was held in Victoria Park on Monday last, in the afternoon, under the auspices of the Hackney Branch of the Socialist League. The occasion of it was the release of James Allman, member of the Hackney Branch, from prison, after having undergone sentence of one month's imprisonment for causing a *legal*, i.e., technical obstruction at the corner of Audrey Street, Hackney Road, by causing persons to assemble for the purpose of hearing an address upon Socialism.

Morris, Scheu, Sparling, Barker, Lane, Manwaring, Davis, and James Allman addressed the meeting to emphatically uphold the right of Free Speech on grounds belonging to the public; and a motion protesting against police interference and legal chicanery directed against Socialists, on the false pretence of obstructing the highways, was carried unanimously. The meeting throughout was enthusiastic, and cheers of welcome were given our comrade Allman.

The proceedings closed with the singing of "The Starving Poor of Old England" by W. Blundell, the audience taking up chorus. H. A. B.

How the Rich provide the Poor with Work, and the Poor provide the Rich with Wealth.

In the Life of Robert Owen by A. J. Booth, his visit to Ireland in 1822 is described. At a great meeting the lord mayor of Dublin took the chair, and the Duke of Leinster, Archbishop Murray, and other great persons were present on the platform from which Owen explained his views. We seem to have gone backwards from those days, for it would be next to impossible now to find lords or bishops courageous enough to stand on the same platform with a Socialist, and to support by their presence any such views as those set forth by Owen at this Dublin meeting. The following are extracts partly from the speech made at this meeting by Owen, and partly from his Journal:

"It is a common mistake, arising from the confusion of ideas inseparable from the present erroneous system of society, to believe that the rich provide for the poor and working-classes; while, in fact, the poor and working-classes create all the wealth which the rich possess. The working-classes can provide abundance for themselves and be independent of any other class; but the rich, without the working-classes, would be the most helpless of human beings. The rich, so far from aiding the working-classes, actually prevent them from creating a supply of wealth that would be sufficient to preclude all from becoming poor: they prevent the working-classes from producing far more wealth for the rich than the rich now possess. And this they do in two ways: first, by withholding education from them, so that their intellectual and industrial powers remain undeveloped; and secondly, because they do not supply them with work. Now, it is a fact that cannot be gainsaid, that every man who is properly trained can raise from the ground far more than he requires for his own support; and the reason why the whole of the population is not thus productively employed is because the rich, who are in possession of the natural agents, will not turn them to use unless they can afterwards bring the goods they have produced to market, and there sell them for a profit. Thus at present the production of wealth is limited by the want of markets, and markets are limited by the want of a convenient circulating medium to represent the products of labour as soon as they are created, and to effect their ready exchange; or in other words, the industry of society is restrained by the existing artificial monied system. . . . Although few have money, all have labour-power; and it is labour, and not money, that produces wealth; constitute, therefore, labour the standard of exchange, and misery will cease for ever."

THE SOCIALIST LEAGUE.

OFFICES: 13 FARRINGTON ROAD, E.C.

Members' Monthly Meeting will be held at 13 Farringdon Road, E.C., on Monday first, April 4, at 9 p.m.

Annual Conference.—The Third Annual Conference of the Socialist League will be held at 13 Farringdon Road on Whitsunday, May 29th. Branches are particularly requested to attend to the following arrangements, if they wish to be represented at the Conference: (1) To at once send a return of their membership to the General Secretary. The representation will be based on this return. (2) Branches cannot be represented unless all monthly subscriptions are paid up to March 31 by May 1st. (3) Notices of motion, amendment to Rules, etc., must be sent in six weeks before the Conference—i.e., not later than April 18th. (4) Agenda Paper will be forwarded on May 2nd to Branches complying with these arrangements.

Lessons in French.—Comrade Victor Dave is now giving lessons in French at the offices of the League on Tuesday evenings, at 8 o'clock. The lessons are free to members, and those desirous of profiting by them should send their names at once to the secretary of the League.

Reports for "Commonweal."—Branch Secretaries are requested to make their reports as brief as possible, dealing with points of general interest as to the progress of the propaganda, rather than attempting to give the substance of the lectures, for which there is not space, even if it were otherwise desirable. Notices should be confined to purely business announcements and written separately. Reports and Notices should be addressed to the "Printer," and cannot be guaranteed insertion unless they reach the office by 2 p.m. on Tuesday.

Library.—The Library is now open to members of the Socialist League and affiliated bodies. Country Branches can have parcels of selected books by paying carriage to and fro. Rule III., relating to the renewal of books (each renewal representing fourteen days) must be rigidly adhered to. Books cannot be renewed more than twice. Members failing to comply with this Rule will be fined 1d. for every week that a volume is detained beyond the time at which its return is due. LIBRARY CATALOGUE, containing the Rules, 2d.

LENA WARDLE & WM. BLUNDELL, Librarians.

BRANCH SUBSCRIPTIONS PAID.

Birmingham, Hackney, Hull, Leeds, North London, to August 31. Manchester, Merton, Norwich, to October 31. Bradford, to November 30. Croydon, Hammersmith, Leicester, South London, to Dec. 31, 1886. Lancaster, to January 31. Bloomsbury, Clerkenwell, Walsall, to February 28. Hoxton (Labour Emancipation League), Oxford, to March 31, 1887.

STRIKE COMMITTEE.

Mr. Gostling, £3.; W. M., 1s.; P. W., 1s. T. BINNING, Treasurer.

"COMMONWEAL" PRINTING FUND.

Proceeds of Bazaar and Concert, £17, 4s. E. B. B. (two weeks), 2s. T. B. (two weeks), 1s. M. M. (two weeks), 2s. Hammersmith Branch (two weeks), £1. W. B.: sale of *Commonweal*, 1s.; weekly, 6d.—PH. W., Treasurer, March 29.

THE NORWICH PRISONERS' AID FUND.

C. W. Mowbray and Fred Henderson, of the Socialist League, were sentenced at the Norwich Assizes on Jan. 20 to nine and four months' imprisonment respectively. The costs of the trial amounted to £60, and Mowbray's wife and five children must be provided for during his imprisonment, so that at least £100 will be required. The treasurer of this fund therefore appeals to every one to give all the assistance he can.

Gleaner, 2s. 6d. D. Gostling, £9. Leeds Branch (two weeks), 4s. Edinburgh Branch, 10s. Marylebone Branch S.D.F., 5s. P. Webb, 1s. Lancaster Branch: A. J., 8s.; S. J. G., 2s. 6d. Arthur, 6d. For Mrs. Mowbray—A few Fabians, per Annie Eesant (weekly), 10s. J. LANE, Treasurer.

BRANCH REPORTS.

BLOOMSBURY.—On Thursday March 24, W. H. Utley lectured on "Money" to a fair audience.

CLERKENWELL.—On Wednesday, March 23, Edward Aveling gave a continuation of the subject, "Socialism in America," to a large and attentive audience; good discussion followed. On Sunday, March 27, B. Somerville gave his experiences of "Emigration." Literature has sold well.—W. B. and T. E. W.

CROYDON.—Last Sunday, Sydney Olivier delivered an address on "The Law of the Land," Graham Wallis in the chair. He pointed out the influence of the Roman law upon the national development, and contrasted it with the laws of Alfred, Ina, etc., which were mainly customs reduced to writing and codified. The spirit of the Roman law remains to-day in the "majesty of the law" now about to be vindicated in Ireland. On April 6th, Mrs. Besant will lecture at the Victoria Hall, Tamworth Road, on "Workers and Idlers."—A. T.

HACKNEY.—On Wednesday, March 23, we held a meeting at the Broadway, London Fields, H. Graham speaking. Last Saturday evening we held a very large meeting on Mile End Waste, comrade Hobbs making an effective maiden speech. H. Graham also spoke. On Sunday morning, a meeting was held at the Broadway, London Fields, and in the afternoon we also held a short meeting at the same place, addressed by comrades John Allman and Graham, afterwards proceeding to Victoria Park. See separate report. In the evening, our comrade Brocher lectured at the club-room on "The Familistere at Guise." The lecture was illustrated by diagrams, and was very interesting. Several questions were satisfactorily answered, and an interesting discussion followed. Comrade Brocher, by request of the members, sang "La Carmagnole" in French in splendid style.—M.

HOXTON.—We had a very interesting and instructive lecture by T. Shore on the "Poetry of Revolt," which was highly appreciated by a large audience. The lecture was followed by an animated discussion on the work of poets in helping to rouse the people from their apathy to some effort to better their condition.—E. P.

MERTON.—Bartlett and Kitz held an open-air meeting at Plough Inn, Garrett, on Sunday last. We shall adjourn our open-air work until after Easter Sunday, on which date we shall visit in a brake some of the London branches and clubs.—F. Kitz.

MITCHAM.—On Sunday evening in our club-room, F. Kitz lectured on the "Russian Revolutionary Party," to an attentive and sympathetic audience. Slight discussion followed. We are organising a committee of the Merton and Mitcham Branches to arrange for open-air propaganda on Mitcham Fair Green. We hope to have a good programme for the summer months, and also to further the sale of *Commonweal*. Our members are now most all at work, and we expect that they will now all work together to make up lost time.—S. G.

BRADFORD.—On Sunday, March 27th, P. Krapotkin delivered a lecture on "Socialism, its Growth and Modern Tendencies," at the Temperance Hall, before a crowded house, the number of those present were estimated to be about 1200, several hundred were unable to obtain admission. The lecture proved to be a thorough success, but want of space does not permit of details. After the lecture Krapotkin joined us at a tea, which we had provided for our Leeds and Bradford members and friends. In the evening we spent a couple of hours with comrade Krapotkin at the Newmarket Hotel, where a very interesting and instructive discussion took place, intermingled and finishing up with songs and recitations.—C. H.

GLASGOW.—Owing to the stormy weather no open-air meetings was held on Sunday at mid-day. In the afternoon comrade Glasier addressed a large and very attentive audience on Jail Square. In the evening in hall, Carlton Place, Daniel McCulloch lectured on "Education from a Socialist Standpoint." The lecturer in a vigorous style pointed out how entirely misdirected our present system of training the young was, and how they were pitchforked into trades without any regard to their inclination or ability. A discussion followed.

GRIMSBY.—Last Sunday, Blakelock and Eveleigh held an open-air meeting in the Freeman Street market place. Some opposition was offered and easily disposed of.—T.

HULL.—On Sunday, Shekell lectured on "Machinery and the Worker." A good discussion followed.—E. T.

LANCASTER.—On Sunday morning, Leonard Hall spoke to usual meeting on the quay about organisation and education. New club quarters at Sun Street. Always open, and revolutionary literature on the table.—L. Hall.

NORWICH.—We held a meeting in the Market Place on Sunday, addressed by comrades Crotch and Darley explaining the position of the workers. In the evening, comrade Slaughter gave a lecture on the subject, "Does the Worker get his fair share of the National Wealth?" which he explained in a very able manner. On Monday evening, a lecture on "India," by Slaughter. Collected for Defence Fund, 3s. 6d.

DUBLIN.—At the Working-men's Club, Wellington Quay, on Saturday evening, a debate was opened by Keegan on "The Social Position of the Working-classes during the last Fifty Years," in the course of which he showed that they had on the whole obtained but a very small share of the increased national wealth. An interesting discussion followed, Mullaby, Dublin Trades' Council, fairly bringing down the

house by describing the Knights of Labour, the Nihilists, and the Social Democrats of Germany as being the champions of the workers and the hope of the oppressed in their respective countries. The debate was adjourned until next Saturday night, when two or three Socialists will speak.

SHEFFIELD SOCIALISTS.—On Monday March 21st, at the Commonwealth Cafe, Scotland Street, T. Maguire addressed a very good audience, taking the "Current Objections to Socialism" for his subject. He dealt very clearly and forcibly with the many and varied objections, notably the dirty-work query, showing that the man who sweated large fortunes out of the lives of thousands of his fellows is the man who does the very dirtiest work, while the scavenger does the clean work and is really a benefactor. He dealt splendidly with the objection so often raised as to the incentive to improvement, showing how some men improve under almost insurmountable difficulties, how those difficulties would be removed, and how encouragement would take the place of obstacle. Finally he proved that only under a Socialist system can the fittest survive. A short discussion, after which a Socialist hymn was sung, and the meeting dispersed well pleased with the lecturer.—M. A. M.

LECTURE DIARY.

London Branches.

Bloomsbury.—Communist Club, 49 Tottenham Street.

Clerkenwell.—Hall of the Socialist League, 13 Farringdon Road, E.C. Sunday April 3. Branch Business Meeting at 7 p.m. prompt. Free Concert for members and friends at 8.30 p.m. Wednesday 6th, at 8.30. Eleanor Marx-Aveling, "Socialism in Europe and America."

Croydon.—Royal County House, West Croydon Station Yard. Sunday April 3, at 7.15 p.m. H. Charles, "Revolution or Reform."—Committee Meeting every Friday at 8 p.m. sharp, at Parker Road.

Hackney.—23 Audrey Street, Goldsmith Row. Club Room open every evening from 8 till 11. Business Meeting every Tuesday at 8.30. On Sunday April 3, at 8 p.m. A Lecture.

Hammersmith.—Kelmescott House, Upper Mall, W. Sunday April 3, at 8 p.m. W. B. Robertson, A Lecture.

Hoxton (L.E.L.).—New premises, 2 Crondall Street, New North Road. Sunday April 3, at 8 p.m. G. B. Shaw (Fabian), "Some Fallacies of Individualism."—Members Meeting on Friday April 8, at 8.30 p.m. Business: The forthcoming Conference of the Socialist League, appointment of delegate, etc.

Merton.—11 Merton Terrace, High Street. Club Room open every evening. Committee every Thursday. Discussions held every Sunday morning at 11.

Mitcham.—Corner of Merton Lane and Fountain Place. Club Room open every evening from 7.30 till 11. Sunday April 3, at 8.30. Harrison, "Land Robbery in England."

Country Branches.

Bingley.—Coffee Tavern. Every Monday at 7.30 p.m.

Birmingham.—Carr's Lane Coffee House. Every Monday evening, at 8.

Bradford.—Morris's Dining Rooms, 114 City Road. Wednesdays, at 8.

Edinburgh (Scottish Section).—4 Park Street. Meets every Thursday at 8 p.m. Reading Room and Library open every Wednesday evening, 8 till 10.—Next week W. Morris will lecture on "Monopoly." Particulars in local papers.

Glasgow.—Reading-room of the Branch, 84 John St., open from 10 a.m. till 10 p.m. daily. On Sunday, open-air meetings on Jail Square at 1 and 5 o'clock. In the evening at 7, in Waterloo Hall, William Morris will lecture on "True and False Society," Cunningham Graham, M.P., in the chair. Admission, 3d., 6d., and 1s. Other arrangements will be notified in the local press and at our rooms.

Hamilton.—Branch meets every Thursday at 7.30 in Paton's Hall, Chapel Street. William Morris will lecture during the week. The date and subject will be locally announced.

Hull.—11 Princess Street, Sykes Street. Lectures on Sunday at 7 p.m. April 3, "Internationalism." Thursday at 8 p.m., Political Economy Class.

Lancaster.—Addresses every Sunday morning on the Quay Jetty.

Leicester.—Spiritualist Hall, Silver Street. Saturday April 2, Thos. Barclay, "How to bring about the Social Commonwealth."

Manchester.—145 Grey Mare Lane, Bradford, Manchester. Club and Reading Room open every evening 6 to 10 p.m. Lecture and discussion every Wednesday at 8 p.m.

Norwich.—Gordon Hall, 5 Duke Street. Lectures and discussions every Sunday and Monday at 8 p.m. Reading-room open every evening. Meetings will be held on St. Mary's Plain at 11, Market Place at 3, Gordon Hall at 8.

Oxford.—Temperance Hall, 25½ Pembroke Street. Thursdays, at 8.30 p.m.

Open-air Propaganda—Sunday 3.

11.30...Hackney—"Salmon and Ball".....Davis
 11.30...Hammersmith—Beardon Rd.....The Branch
 11.30...Hoxton Church, Pitfield St...Barker & Wade
 11.30...Garrett—Plough Inn.....The Branch
 11.30...Regent's Park.....Wardle & Cantwell
 11.30...St. Pancras Arches.....W. Utley
 11.30...Walham Green.....The Branch
 3.30...Hyde Park.....Cantwell & Mainwaring

PROVINCES.—SUNDAY.

Norwich.—St. Mary's Plain, 11; Market Place, 3.

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

Leicester.—Humberston Gate, 11 a.m.

DUBLIN.—City of Dublin Working-men's Club, Wellington Quay. Saturday April 2, at 8.30 p.m., Adjourned Debate, "Has the position of the working-classes improved for the last fifty years?" Free discussion, open to all.

DUBLIN.—Irish Labour League, 2 Bachelors Walk, every Thursday at 8 p.m. Discussion on all subjects connected with the Labour Question. All interested are requested to attend.

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SOCIALIST LEAGUE LITERATURE.

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Organised Labour: The Duty of the Trades' Unions in Relation to Socialism. By Thomas Binning (London Society of Compositors). 1d.

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