

THE COMMONWEAL

The Official Journal of the Socialist League.

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WEEKLY; ONE PENNY.

NOTES ON NEWS.

THE Tory Government, it is generally said, has made a great mistake about the Privilege episode; even their own papers have blamed them for their conduct, and the whole country will endorse that blame. That may be, and certainly such are the tight places into which *stupid* lying leads most commonly. Yet after all the Tory Government is very strong against any mere constitutional attacks. It has a well-grounded confidence in the strength of party feeling, and the very common wish of the flunkey of all classes to vote for "the Gentlemanly Interest," like the innkeeper in 'Martin Chuzzlewit.' And the Liberal Unionists who hold the balance for it, are prepared to wade through any amount of dirt in defence of their "principles." The division on Mr. Gladstone's amendment moving the appointment of a select committee, and that in the teeth of the *Standard's* disapproval, shows that the Government has some reason for its recklessness, and that we shall have a Tory Government in for some time to come—a matter of small importance, since the alternative is a Liberal Government.

To return to the matter of questions in the House. Honourable members are more easily satisfied with the answers given than a believer in the benefits of Parliament would be likely to expect. Take for example Sir H. Holland's answer on May 7 about the flogging in the Hong Kong prison. Considering that we all know how little a Chinaman can live on, and also that of all scoundrelly oppressors the English colonial or crown-colony one is the vilest, does it not seem as if "the reduction of the diet, the existing scale of which was considered excessive"—prison diet excessive—O Lord!—meant an attempt to starve the prisoners to death? Yet the answer was accepted apparently as satisfactory—probably because the same thing is done here at home both in prison and out of it, and no one is called to account for it—not yet.

It doesn't, perhaps, much matter what a bishop says nowadays: yet if a bishop could have any moral sense at all, he might consider the extreme unfairness of telling lies in the pulpit, where he cannot be contradicted, as he might be at a public meeting. A bishop preaching at the Chapel Royal, Whitehall (not a bad place for lies, by the way), the other day, "urged that the logical conclusion of Socialist views would be the practical carrying out of the motto, 'I squeeze all things flat'"—in short, Mr. Bradlaugh's dull level of mediocrity. Now, there is plenty of Socialist literature for the bishop to read, and if he has read it he lied in his statement; if he has not he is an imposter for preaching on a subject of which he is ignorant. Let him take his choice of either horn of the dilemma.

Some of our Socialist friends may have noticed the attempt, which has already partially succeeded, to force the older universities to set up a new "Honour school"—i.e., a new school of competitive examination—in English literature, and may perhaps have wondered why it has been taken up so excitedly by part of the press. The reason is obvious to those who know something of the universities and the higher class of literary hacks: it means the pushing of a great new *job* for all the clan of the log-rollers in literature. The dishonest and conventional twaddle which has been poured on to the public on this subject is thus easily accounted for; as the professional and other hangers-on of capital have an innate sympathy for any one who is job-hunting. All the big-wigs who have written with such portentous solemnity on the neglect of English literature at the universities know perfectly well that English literature is a thing which can be *learned* but cannot be *taught*, as language and the sciences can be; but they will not interfere

with a poor job-hunter who wishes to feather his nest out of those institutions which our forefathers founded for the education of the *people*, but which, like all other expensive things, are now monopolised by the rich classes.

W. M.

COERCION FOR LONDON.

It may be thought that the patriots who are so eager for the unity of the British empire that they want to use artificial means to make it more specially uncomfortable to live in one part of it than it is elsewhere, are taking unnecessary trouble; that the coercionists are such enthusiasts in the art of coercion that they are hunting it when they have already got it.

It is true that there is a pleasure in making a special and blatant demonstration of success, but it is a pleasure that has to be paid for by the opposition that the attempt to make it stirs up. The wise are contented with having the substance and letting the shadow take care of itself, especially if they have to fight for the shadow when they have got the substance peaceably and easily.

One is compelled by recent events to look on the subject from this point of view. Ireland is to have an extra dose of coercion, but London has already got enough for all practical purposes. A Bill is being put forward and opposed, with great fervour on each side, which, when it becomes law, will enable any *two* magistrates in Ireland to sentence any one who is brought before them and whose looks they don't like to six months' imprisonment. In London, any *one* magistrate has already got that power, and is on occasion not ashamed to exercise it.

It is perhaps worth while to tell over again a short story of the manner in which the coercion machine in London is set a-going, as it can be done in so much fewer words than the Langworthy case.

One Sunday there were, as usual, Socialist meetings going on in Hyde Park near the Marble Arch, during and after which various salesmen were proposing, as usual, to sell Socialist papers outside the park (selling inside being forbidden). The police had for some time past hustled and bullied, and even run in, these Socialist salesmen, although the sellers of other newspapers were not interfered with. On the occasion in question, after the Socialist meetings were over, the crowd, much increased by the news of the high-handed proceedings on former Sundays, poured out through the gate close by, being as a matter of course largely composed of mere Sunday strollers attracted to the Socialist platform—non-combatants, most of them, in the battle of opinion between Socialism and Bourgeoisdom. Well, these people, who would else have gone about their business quietly, were immediately set upon by the police à la Donnybrook, and a rough-and-tumble ensued, of the kind which the timid citizen of to-day looks at with pleasure—from a window, and in which you may find yourself half-throttled on the way to the police-station without being conscious of what has led you to that expedition, otherwise than that a policeman tried to knock you down and that you tried to stand upright: such an entertainment being obviously a good occasion for any one of an inventive turn to exercise his capacity for romance as a police-court witness.

The result of this police battue was a pretty good bag, although the police acted rather as the foreigner in Leech's woodcuts, who shoots the foxes and the owls instead of the pheasants, and got hold of more of the above-mentioned non-combatants than Socialists. These "rioters" being brought up before Mr. de Rutzen, were prosecuted by the Government jackal Mr. Poland, the farcical nature of whose opening speech no one, now Dickens is dead—more's the pity—need attempt to render.¹ The farce was continued by various policemen giving what is facetiously called "evidence," and more accurately "swearing the leg off an iron pot"; and Mr. Rutzen, in virtue of his position, wound up with the grand joke of the whole entertainment by saying that since Mr. Poland did not press the case as one of riot, he would treat it as a mere assault on the police, and would be so kind as not to send the accused for trial, but would—fine them 10s. and caution them, thinks the unsuspecting "cultivated" person, rejoicing in the security of property and person in this civilised and "free" country. No—sentence them, two Socialists (one of whom had not been present in Hyde Park) and five non-Socialists, to six months' hard labour!

This was the end of the first act of the farce called "Justice" in this

¹ I don't know, though: the author of 'Cashel Byron,' though he wouldn't do it with the richness of Dickens, might deal with such a case—why doesn't he?

happy land: though such a finish of the Hyde Park Sunday saunter might well be looked on by the luckless persons who were rash enough to try it as a tolerable tragedy in its way.

However, the farce is not done yet. The convicted persons may appeal to a bench of magistrates—if they can. That is, if they have money, or friends with money; otherwise they must bear the six months' torture of an English jail as well as they can: even if they have been convicted of assaulting the police when they were miles from the spot.

Two of the Socialists, our friends Williams and Pole (which last was the absent man), appealed at once and found bail; and two of the non-Socialists subsequently appealed, one of whom, at least, found bail. The other three must lie in prison for six months, unless Mr. Matthews extends his "mercy" to them—(a lawyer's mercy!)

"But why didn't they also appeal?" says the well-to-do inhabitant of a "free" country. Because they must find bail for their appearance at Westminster on July 16th. Not so difficult, you think? Yes, but the bail *must be liable to the expenses of the appeal if it is rejected*, which in plain terms means that if an ordinary working-man is arbitrarily convicted by a magistrate and sentenced to such a terrible punishment as six months' hard labour, no matter how preposterous the behaviour of the magistrate may be, the working-man *cannot* appeal. The rich man can defend himself, the poor man *cannot*.

This is the meaning of there being the same law for rich and poor, of justice never being sold in this country, and the like damned hypocritical twaddle. Justice is *always* sold in this country.

The answers to questions asked in Parliament have enriched the farce with other good jokes. Mr. Matthews had the boundless impudence to declare again (for he has done it before) that he did not know what part the Government had taken in the prosecution—he is a useful article at the price certainly!

Mr. Stuart Wortley refined on the Jorkins business in a manner that shows his fitness for office in the most satisfactory manner, and in short, the answers to questions on this matter illustrate the great leading farce of Parliament as well as need be.

It would be unfair also to leave off without complimenting the so-called labour representatives on their "masterly inactivity" in this matter. Years ago, before the possibility almost of labour representatives was thought of, what an advantage their presence in the House would have been considered! What a row one would have thought such men would have made about such treatment as De Rutzen's of men of their own order!—and now, mum is the word. A London middle-class member, Mr. Pickersgill, and a Scotch landowner, Mr. Cunninghame Graham, have taken upon them the duty of Messrs. the Labour Representatives, who should have made the row—such a row that they ought by this time to be all sitting in the Clock Tower.

Space fails me as to the progress of the affair at Kennington, but it is all a part of this same Coercion Campaign; and no doubt it is well thought of by the magistrates to refuse protection to harmless citizens against hired roughs, since all Socialists are not athletes, and there is a double danger in carrying deadly weapons. The preposterous charge against a physically weak man, like our comrade Blackwell, of attacking the police violently, is seemingly the sort of thing that Socialists must expect to meet with at present.

In conclusion, grieved as we must all be at the torture to which innocent men are being subjected, no Socialist can help reflecting that these fools, Matthews, Poland, Warren, and Co., are doing good propagandist work for us. People generally have some idea of fair play, and the spectacle of such blatant injustice as has been recently exhibited, has to my certain knowledge moved to indignation people not particularly favourable to Socialism. It is still more important that the working-classes should have a further instance of what law means under our system—a cunning instrument for the oppression of the poor by the rich.

WILLIAM MORRIS.

THE IRISH QUESTION.

IV.—RENTS, ETC.

MANY people believe that the Land Act of 1881, to at least a great extent, solved the social problem of Ireland. And, indeed, it is difficult to convince them that such is not the case. It is generally thought that when a Bill becomes law that it must and does accomplish all the good predicted of it. But such is not the case. And this will be clearly seen when I come to deal with that measure and the decisions of the courts with regard to improvements.

Another difficulty arises with reference to valuations and rentals. Even Sir James Caird (p. 97) places the rental lower than the valuation. Whereas the rental is far above the valuation. Even King-Harman stated in the House of Commons a few days ago that the valuation settled in 1854 was 25 per cent. below the letting value of the land, the total valuation being stated at £10,182,681. Yet Sir James puts down the rental in 1857 at £8,747,000, and in 1875 at £9,293,000. At the latter date the rental was estimated at over £16,000,000, and in 1879-80 at over £17,000,000. In many cases the rents were more than three times the valuation. Take the following as an illustration, from county Kerry (*Standard*, Nov. 16, 1880):

Landlord.	Tenant.	Valuation.	Rental.
T. Taylor ...	Thomas Gain ...	£7 10 0	£27 0 0
	Phil. Foley ...	10 6 0	37 0 0
	M'Gowen & Sullivan ...	12 9 0	40 0 0
	Peter Leary ...	9 16 0	36 0 0
Four holdings ...		£40 1 0	£140 0 0

Take four more cases of the same date and same authority, Kerry county.

Landlord.	Tenant.	Valuation.	Rental.
E. H. Downing ...	F. Gain ...	£8 8 0	£27 0 0
Rev. G. Godfrey ...	J. Mansfield ...	53 0 0	130 0 0
R. Oldwell ...	P. Warren ...	7 10 0	22 0 0
"	T. Murphy ...	6 10 0	17 0 0
		£75 8 0	£196 0 0

The great rise in rents was from 1870 to 1879. In some cases the rents were more than doubled in seven or eight years. The following will illustrate this:

Parish.	Rental, 1872.	Rental, 1879.
East Ower ...	£57 7 6	£130 3 0
West Ower ...	57 7 6	133 5 0
Laragan ...	26 6 10	65 1 0
Warm Hole ...	28 7 5	62 0 0
Gurthmore ...	48 0 0	98 10 0
Five parishes	£219 9 3	£488 19 2

The *Freeman's* commissioner, in October 1879, gave a list of twelve holdings, the total of the old rent being £486, 15s., and the rents in 1879 being no less than £1158, 17s. 6d.—far above 100 per cent. increase.

But it will be said under the Land Act of 1881 all this has been altered. The evil has been modified, not removed. And when we come to the question of improvements this will be seen. Take also the following, from county Clare:

Clare Co.	Valuation.	Rent, 1879.
A ...	£32 0 0	£84 0 0
B ...	32 0 0	108 0 0
C ...	27 5 0	69 0 0
D ...	27 13 0	54 10 0
E ...	42 0 0	108 0 0
F ...	191 0 0	324 0 0
G ...	160 0 0	450 0 0
H ...	86 0 0	170 0 0
I ...	83 10 0	200 0 0
J ...	78 0 0	160 0 0
10	£759 8 0	£1727 10 0

In consequence of the severe depression in agriculture in 1879, and especially in Ireland, commissioners were sent out by almost every London daily paper, and from their reports samples of rack-renting might be given from every county of Ireland. As a rule, rents were high—double and treble the valuation in the south and the west, while in the north and the east they averaged from 30 to 40 per cent. above the valuation.

It is often contended that the judicial rents are the rents that really ought to be paid; but in most cases the rents as fixed are far above the valuation. Take the following eight cases on estates in Kerry:

Tenant.	Valuation.	Old Rent.	Judicial Rent.
T. O'Sullivan ...	£12 3 0	£20 0 0	£20 0 0
W. Potts ...	10 1 0	17 10 0	15 15 0
Eliza Sully ...	4 12 0	7 10 0	6 7 0
Catherine Coppey ...	16 10 0	30 12 0	25 15 0
John Coppey ...	10 15 0	17 4 0	17 4 0
Tim. Sugren ...	8 8 0	14 5 0	13 5 0

These are tenants of the noble Marquis of Lansdowne. In October 1884 forty-nine tenants of Lord Charles Beresford went to the court and had their rents judicially fixed, and the total reductions averaged 1s. each. We must bear in mind, too, that not one-third of the holdings have yet been dealt with. Taking the Parliamentary Return, 1881, of the different classes of holdings, we find the total 660,185 in number; and taking the return just issued, which brings up the operations of the Land Courts and Civil Bill Courts to March 31 of the present year, the total number of rents fixed was 90,088; the total number settled out of court, 90,134—total, 180,222, leaving over 479,000 yet to be dealt with. Again, out of a total number of applications to the courts, 137,810, 24,728 cases were dismissed, so that it is not every one who applies to the court that gets a judicial rent. Up to the close of 1885 it was calculated that the total reductions averaged about 12½ per cent.; and that the reductions last year averaged nearly 30 per cent.; and that the aggregate of reductions reached £600,000.

How is it then that the Act of 1881 has proved a failure? How is it that the hopes held out by Gladstone have not been realised, that the "Healy Clause" has proved a dead letter? Everything depended on the question of the ownership of the improvements. The Healy clause reads as follows (Sub-section 9 of Clause 8): "No rent shall be allowed or made payable in any proceedings under this Act in respect of improvements made by the tenant or his predecessors in title, and for which, in the opinion of the Court, the tenant or his predecessors in title shall not have been paid or otherwise compensated by the landlord or his predecessors in title." Gladstone, arguing on the great principle involved in the above sub-section in the House, Aug. 9, 1881, said: "The main ground on which I stand is that we do not recognise the principle of compensation by enjoyment for a certain length of time, either as respects the landlord or the tenant. It is much better that those who make the improvements should have the whole benefits of the improvements." A number of test cases were decided, and the decisions of the Courts finally gave the value of almost all the improvements to the landlords. From the *Standard* of October 14, 1881, I take the following as one of the test cases. The tenant claimed £710 as compensation for the following improvements:

For levelling 260 perches of fence, at 2s. per perch	... 26
For erecting 80 perches of fence at 4s. per perch	... 16
13 acres of land reclaimed at £12 per acre...	... 156
10 acres of waste land reclaimed at £5 per acre	... 50
50 perches of river filled in at 10s. per perch	... 25
50 perches of new river opened at 2s. per perch	... 5
Loads of sand per year, 50 years, at 2s. per load	... 300
Repairs of dwelling-house	... 40
Outhouses built, value...	... 80
Repairs of labourers' cottages	... 12
Total	... £710

Here was a clear case on which the Court acted, and a case in which the value of the improvements could be tested. What did the Court do? It awarded to the tenant £46, leaving to the landlord the balance of £664. The result of the test cases was that the Courts held that the improvements belonged to the landlord—

1. Where the tenants held under a lease.
2. Improvements made before the lease began.
3. Improvements made during the lease, except lands reclaimed and permanent buildings.
4. All improvements made before the Act of 1870.
5. The improvable capability of the soil.
6. All other improvements where the tenant has received 5 per cent. per annum on the money invested in said improvements.

It might here be asked, What remains for the tenant? Very little indeed. And yet the renegade Chamberlain tells the world that the Land Act of 1881 has secured to the people of Ireland benefits unknown to the tenants of any other part of the world.

Now what is the position to-day? We will not take the rental of 1879 at £17,000,000, the general estimate at that time, but at £16,000,000, and see how the matter stands. Let us take the reductions at £700,000 instead of £600,000:—

Year.	Valuation.	Rental.	Value of Crops.
1855	... £10,182,000	... £11,200,000	... £63,000,000
1881 (Jan.)	... 10,182,000	... 16,000,000	... 46,000,000
1885	... 10,182,000	... 15,400,000	... 35,000,000
1886	... 10,182,000	... 15,300,000	... 31,700,000

Here is the great economical problem. As rents have increased by millions the value of the crops has decreased by tens of millions. Take another view of the matter:—

Year.	Value of Crops.	Rental.	Proportion of Rent to Crops.
1855	... £63,000,000	... £11,200,000	... 17 per cent.
1881	... 46,000,000	... 16,000,000	... 38 per cent.
1885	... 35,000,000	... 15,400,000	... 46 per cent.
1886	... 31,700,000	... 15,300,000	... 47 per cent.

Take also the question of taxation. We must remember too that prior to the great famine of 1846-49, the population was over eight millions in Ireland:—

Year.	Population.	Taxation.	Taxation per head of Population.
1851	... 6,552,385	... £4,006,711	... £9 12 2
1861	... 5,798,564	... 6,420,378	... 1 2 1
1871	... 5,412,377	... 7,086,593	... 1 6 2
1885	... 4,962,693	... 7,755,000	... 1 11 3

Thus, as the population has decreased, and the value of the crops has decreased, partly through the fall of prices and partly through the lands being thrown out of cultivation, both rents and taxation have increased. As showing the extent to which lands are being thrown out of cultivation, it may be stated that, taking the agricultural returns, in 1877 over 294,000 acres were thrown out of cultivation and classed as waste land, and from 1876 to 1882 the total was 531,750 acres. And so it goes on from year to year.

No mere modification of tyranny can alter this state of things. Nothing but the entire destruction of landlordism will be of any use. Nothing but a thorough social revolution will accomplish that. The Irish difficulty hastens that revolution, and it is for the workers of England and Scotland, as well as of Ireland, to grasp hands and hasten that revolution, and to make it thorough, and, as far as possible, final.

J. SKETCHLEY.

We call attention to the atrocious sentence passed by the magistrate Bashby on the labourer Restell. The wife of the man flew at him "like a tiger," according to the evidence, and cut his lips open. Thereupon he struck her or pushed her away in self-defence. Penalty, six months' hard. It is stated that the sentence created great surprise in court, and the *Daily News* gives it a place apart among "severe sentences." We congratulate the "woman's rights" advocates on the progress they are making. Oppressed woman has the right of mutilation, it appears. The absolute power of life and death on the part of the wife is not yet perhaps formally acknowledged, but with "public sentiment" tending so strongly in that direction, it will doubtless come before long.—E. B. B.

MORE JUBILEE BOSH.—The Jubilee Committee of Nottingham, in their report to the Town Council, state that they have only been able to raise £453 as yet out of £1500 needed to carry out the arrangements for the 21st of June, and £200 of this have been given by the Race Committee. This is public money, as the racecourse belongs to the town and the Race Committee is appointed by the Town Council, and the £200 is profit from the course, etc. The committee state if more funds do not come in they cannot carry out all the arrangements, but they must have the demonstrations of children in the market place to sing loyal songs, etc., and band to play in different public places, and jubilee medals for the children; but if they cannot get enough money they will not be able to give the children their free meal or tea-party. How thoughtful for the children! This statement has done good, and disgusted many who would have sent their children but will not now.—T. P.

VIC MACHREE.

By T. HUGHES.

[THE following song, addressed to Queen Victoria on her accession, and embodying the arguments for repeal, was written by T. Hughes, one of the many brilliant journalists that Ireland has contributed to the London press. He was a member of the staff of the *Morning Chronicle*, and for some years its Spanish correspondent. He died in 1849. The song was for many years a great favourite, and will bear reprinting as part of the Jubilee poetry of the present year.]

O, the devil a wink I slept last night
For thinking of the Queen!
Sure a purtier by this blessed light
Was never seen.
'Twas Father Kearney from Killarney
Her piethur showed to me,—
My blessins on your purty face,
Vic Machree!

Her faytures all is like a doll,
So gentle and so nate,
If there's deception in her at all,
Faith, she's a chate.
She has such schoolin' in her rulin',
She holds bright larin's key,—
My blessins on your purty face,
Vic Machree!

There's Melbourne, Peel, and Wellington
Is doin' all they can;
But troth there's not a mother's son
She loves like Dan,
That glory of the Emerald Gim:
O, if 'twas only free,
How it would grace your diadem,
Vic Machree!

Don't mind the thievin' Parliament,
Whatever they say,
But the Liberator's speeches
Read at your tay.
'Tis they will introduce to you
Our case without a fee,—
O, read them at your coffee too,
Vic Machree!

'Tis there our wrongs are told in style,
And how we're fixed,
Since first they seized our own Green Isle
With Tory tricks.
And how they won't conceayde our rights,
Though Wellington and we
Like naygroes fought to guard your throne,
Vic Machree.

Now would you like the king of France
To ax you for to wear
A dingy blanket while you dance,
An' you so fair?
Or would you like the King of Spain,
Who is, I hear, a she,
Should make you pay her tailor's bills,
Vic Machree?

In troth you'd kick up, if they did,
A rumpus and a row,
An' your army and your navy, faith,
Would make them bow.
Now we must pay the souls to save
Of every Rapparee,
O, to Ould Nick the rint charge send,
Vic Machree!

There's two bad Houses near your nose
In ould Westminster,
O, can't you then be done with those,
My royal spinster?
We'd scorn to ax them,—so should you;
Then grant us for to see
Our Parliament at home again,
Vic Machree.

SOCIALISM IN SCOTLAND.

On Friday, April 29th, I went from Newcastle for a few days propaganda in the lowlands of Scotland. The first meeting held was on the following day at Paisley, where a good audience assembled, and were addressed by Glasier, of the Glasgow Branch, and myself. One or two gentlemen in the crowd took offence at a disrespectful remark of mine in reference to the upper class. After grumbling out their dissatisfaction for a while, they took a practical turn and rushed Glasier off the platform. A slight confusion ensued, but Glasier being a wily orator at once launched off in the most recklessly irrelevant manner into an eloquent eulogy on the virtues of Bruce and Wallace, and quite turned away the wrath of the cantankerous Scotchmen. After this the crowd grew much larger, and listened with great attention and evident sympathy to our remarks.

On Sunday afternoon, a most successful gathering of miners was held in the Quarries at Hamilton, to which I related the chief incidents of the Northumberland strike, and repeated the criticism of the North of England labour leaders, which I had previously made in Northumberland. As the Scotch papers have boycotted nearly all mention of the strike, the miners were greatly interested in the particulars which came to them as news.

On Sunday night about 1000 gathered in Jail Square, in Glasgow, although no meeting had been announced, and received the statement of Socialism with the greatest interest.

On Monday night several hundred people gathered in the East Meadows, Edinburgh, and listened with sympathy for the miners and hearty approval of Socialism. A good collection was afterwards made. On Tuesday night to a good attendance at the Free Tron Hall, Edinburgh, I spoke on "Socialist and Political Economy." This lecture being a statement of the economic principles of a Socialist Society, gave rise to a good deal of useful discussion. The Rev. John Glasse joined in with a telling speech on the necessity for international action, and the futility of struggling for mere reforms such as the abolition of royalties. He pressed upon the audience that the real evil was the principle of competition in social life, and that the working-class, while helping on all good movements, should allow no specialist agitation to overshadow this vital question.

In Leith Links on the Giants Brea, we had a splendid meeting called by the Edinburgh Branch of the Socialist League. A good collection was made for the miners of Northumberland, and the meeting separated with three hearty cheers for the Social Revolution.

J. L. MAHOX.

An old saying—"After the Lord Mayor's Show comes the dung-cart," has been about reversed in Skye. Mr. Chamberlain preceded Mr. Davitt.

SOCIALIST CONDEMNATION.—We hear that Baije, an active Socialist propagandist in Holland, has been condemned by bourgeois justice at The Hague to four months' imprisonment.

KNOWS ALL ABOUT IT.—The Pope is about to tell us all what he does not know about Socialism. Does any one suppose, for example, that the reverend father has ever read Karl Marx? Why no. No need to. God tells him personally all about it, don't he, Mr. P(owderly)?—*Labor Enquirer*.

HORDES OF IMMIGRANTS.—People enough to populate a small city have poured into New York from the steerages of the transatlantic steamers during the past week. Just 12,454 in exact numbers of big and little, old young, and middle-aged immigrants came to this port and the New World from Saturday night to Saturday night.—*New York Herald*, April 25.



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

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

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Periodicals received during the week ending Wednesday May 11.

ustice	ENGLAND	Chicago (Ill.)—Vorbote Knights of Labor Daily News	HOLLAND
Northwich—Daylight		Milwaukee (Wis.)—Volksblatt	Hague—Recht voor Allen
Londoner Arbeiter-Zeitung		Seattle (W.T.)—Voice of the People	ITALY
Worker's Friend		Cincinnati (O.)—Unionist	Milan—Il Fascio Operaio
Die Autonomie		Fort Worth (Tex.)—South West	Naples—Humanitas
INDIA		Paterson (N.J.)—Labor Standard	SPAIN
Bankipore—Behar Herald		Albina (Oreg.)—Weekly Courier	Madrid—El Socialista
UNITED STATES		Detroit (Mich.)—The Advance and Labor Leaf	AUSTRIA
New York—Freiheit		FRANCE	Arbeiterstimme
Truthseeker		Paris—Cri du Peuple (daily)	Brunn—Volksfreund
John Swinton's Paper		Le Reveille	HUNGARY
Der Sozialist		La Revolution Cosmopolite	Arbeiter-Wochen-Chronik
Leader		Guisse—Le Devoir	ROUMANIA
Sun		Lille—Le Travailleur	Jassy—Lupta
Boston—Woman's Journal		BELGIUM	SWEDEN
Liberty		Liege—L'Avenir	Stockholm—Social-Demokraten
Denver (Col.)—Labor Inquirer			NORWAY
			Kristiania—Social-Demokraten

VOLUNTARY CO-OPERATION.

In discussing Socialism one meets with a number of people who, while admitting the beauty of the Socialistic ideal, and even recognising the absolute justice of the confiscation that we advocate, yet look with horror on the confusion that will undoubtedly arise in the transition period, and turn for consolation to the tendency that is exhibiting itself towards profit-sharing and co-operation. "Let the new era develop in its own way," say they, "so that all this suffering which your sudden change would involve may be avoided." And in this way they hope to put off the evil day for their lives, and avoid the accusations of injustice and robbery that are hurled upon those who advocate confiscation of land and capital.

Such opponents are generally at least comfortably off themselves, and do not wish for any change except in a philanthropic way, so that they may ease their consciences and save their souls in their ideal paradise. They do considerable harm by preaching contentment, and hope in the progress that they say, and seem really to "think," the world is making on the old lines. It may safely be said of them that though they admit for argument's sake the beauty of Socialism, they have never really seen it, or they would not be content to wait whilst the way to the ideal was groped for by the people blindly struggling towards it under the bitter guidance of centuries of baffling experience.

Their notion for the evolution of democracy seems to be as follows. The working-classes must combine to demand from their employers some share (percentage, they suggest) of the net profits derived from their work, after their wages and all other expenses have been paid. Or better still, they must start businesses of their own, and work them on a co-operative system. How they are to get the necessary land or capital without confiscation is seldom suggested, unless it be by borrowing at interest. However, when they have in some mysterious way started their co-operative societies, they must go on to enlarge their scope—O wonderful!—by competition with the manufacturers who do not join them. In course of time (shall we say centuries!) the whole lump will be leavened, and the process will be complete without, argues your opponent, any of that misery and crime which a sudden confiscation of the means of production would be certain to cause, and without the injustice involved in the robbery of that property by which the landlord or man of business lives, and deprived of which he, being unable to labour, must either steal or starve.

Here at last we are distinctly at issue. For admitting even that it would be robbery to confiscate this private property which a few have got, and none can live without, does the individualist think to save his soul from the imputation of robbery because he suggests to the workers to get hold of the employer's capital by competition instead of confiscation? Is there not something which is called the goodwill of a business, which means the certainty of a minimum amount of custom, and

which the master can sell for money? And if this amount of custom belongs to the master, and is part of his realisable property, is it anything but robbery to take it from him against his will, even if you do it by competition instead of confiscation? The former is quite as unjust as the latter, and the competitive plan has the disadvantage of being more underhand, being cloaked by a show of legality and justice.

This answer should suggest itself even to one who would admit that confiscation would be robbery. But we Socialists, who admit no such thing, would say that we had rather see the exploiting class reduced by confiscation of their property to getting a living by plain (and what might be called in comparison *honest*) stealing, than allowed by an unjust possession of property to confiscate thousands of times more of the worker's produce than they would be able to get of it by such stealing. Such, however, would be rather the effect of *Competition*, which means "Ours and not Yours," not of Confiscation, which means "Ours and Yours," or literally, one purse for all.

And then further with regard to the relative amount of crime and suffering, under the two methods, Co-operative Evolution and Revolution. The evolutionist looks to the suffering of the exploiting class alone, and hopes to save them by taxing their property gradually, by means of the competition of co-operative societies. I confess I would sooner have my property confiscated right off at once. It cannot be anything but intense suffering, whatever the co-operative evolutionist may say, for a business man to see his living slowly but surely going from him ("robbed," as it is already beginning to be said, by co-operative societies), to have the weary failure protracted through months and years, to see his children sinking (as he believes) to degradation, and himself with no prospect but to end his life in the workhouse. Worse could not befall him in any way, and such misfortunes have frequently driven men to madness, or the "crime" of suicide. Confiscation, on the other hand, might be accompanied by a provision for the maintenance of those helpless beings who, being deprived of the property which had enervated them, would be unable to take their share in the labour necessary to keep them from starvation.

"Ah! but the bloodshed, and savage passions that will be called forth by a sudden change such as you wish to make!" Well, bloodshed there will be, no doubt, but the crime of it will rest on the shoulders of those who begin it, as the exploiters will do by taking up arms against the Right. And as for passions, though some will doubtless be "savage" enough, who can tell but what in the enthusiasm of struggling and fighting side by side in a noble cause, there may be engendered in the workers that glorious comradeship and solidarity which must be the foundation of the reign of Socialism and equality?

And is there nothing worse in this world than bloodshed and savage passions? Dante put into the lowest pit of hell those who injured others in cold-blooded passionless indifference for their own gain. To Socialists, the shedding of blood is nothing as compared to the cruelty that the capitalists would have to resort to in their competition with co-operative societies. Here is a field of suffering which your advocate of co-operative evolution ignores in his sympathy with the unhappy masters. But can we, can the working-classes afford to wait, to submit to perhaps centuries more of injustice and misery and premature death by the legal murder of physical exhaustion, with all sorts of degradation and the terrible monotony of joyless lives; shall we ignore all this in order that co-operative production may, in the course of the dim future, effect a change without the shedding of a drop of capitalist blood? Rather than this there will be twenty revolutions.

But, after all, it is only our opponent's notion of the tendency of the time that is wrong. For the nations will not wait for this, but will (if we Socialists do our duty and join hands together) effect their nationalisation of land and capital before the co-operative societies have well begun to work. Then whatever good has been done by co-operation will show itself, and those who have taken part in it will be among the first to fall into their places in the complete organisation of Socialist Society.

GEORGE STURT.

LITERARY NOTICES.

The Ethics of Social Reform (Reeves, 2d.) is a neatly-printed pamphlet by Maurice Adams, and is described as a paper read by him "at a meeting of the Fellowship of the New Life, London." It is thoughtful and well-written, full of matter, and states the moral and economic necessity for Socialism in a forcible manner. Its circulation among the unconverted cannot fail in having good results.

'Royal Paupers' (Progressive Publishing Co., 28 Stonecutter Street, E.C., 2d.) is the title of a vigorously-written pamphlet by G. W. Foote, being "a Radical's contribution to the Jubilee," and wherein is given many details of the cost of the queen and her large family, as well as other matter bearing upon royalty and hunkkeyism. Here is a sentence from Mr. Foote's pamphlet: "Thousands of men who have worked hard in their younger days for scanty wages, who have paid rates and taxes to support the State burdens, have eked out the sombre end of their lives in the Union and have been buried in a parish egg-box. They were called paupers, and so they were, for there is no disputing the fact. But are not they *worse* paupers who have never worked at all, who live on other people from the cradle to the grave, who add impudence to their dependence, and glory in their degradation?"

'A Lay Sermon on the land,' by J. Morrison Davidson (Reeves, 185 Fleet Street, E.C., 1d.) is a little tract against land monopoly. In it we get some quotations from the Bible and some very outspoken sentences from half-a-dozen of the saints, which Sir Charles Warren and his agents won't allow we Socialists to re-echo in the streets unmolested. The 'Lay Sermon' very much resembles the clerical article (even to the capital letters), an exception being found in its brevity. The author concludes with an appeal to Mr. Spurgeon to aid him in his endeavour "to convert the clergy of all denominations to Christianity," by allowing him to address them in his (Mr. Spurgeon's) Tabernacle.

W. B.

EARLY COMMUNAL LIFE AND WHAT IT TEACHES.

(Concluded from p. 147).

WE find the conflict between these two principles of Individualism and Socialism raging fiercely in our own time, and the reason is that we are living in one of those ages when the tendency which has been maintained for years is changing. For many generations in this country the individualistic element has been the rising one, and many very valuable results have come from its growth, which could have come in no other way so far as we know, but having risen at the expense of much that was good in the old communal customs, and having developed in itself many evils, the opposite tendency is already setting in. I need not spend time in proving this. Herbert Spencer has done so already, and has made a powerful and desperate effort to stem the rising tide. When we remember what the growth of society is, and how little man can do to influence the general tendencies of its development, one is inclined to wish that so able a man could have used his power in guiding the tendency, which he acknowledges to exist, into the path where it would do most good and least harm, for this it is within the power of man to do, instead of trying to turn back the torrent and make it run up hill, which is beyond the power of gods or men.

And after all if we have not faith enough in the guiding force of the universe, whatever we may call it, to believe that general tendency is for the best, it is little use our working at all!

However we will assume that general tendencies are on the whole for the best, and try to find out how we can modify or guide them for our good. We have seen that the development of individualism has allowed the social forces of production, which were first evolved in the communal ages, to be taken possession of by private men, and to be used for their good, according to the dictates of individual enterprise, regardless of the result to society in general. It is to this fact mainly, I think, that we must attribute the present change of general tendency, and this revival of social or communal influence will not have done its work until all the means of social production are again used, under the direction of society, for the common good, until the land becomes again the property of the people collectively, and is used to grow their food instead of finding rent for landlords, until all the other means of social production, whether machinery, buildings, or other forms of capital, are used to produce the goods which are necessary for the comfort, leisure, and happiness of all, instead of profits for a few.

Those who are afraid that this tendency will sweep away all that has been gained of freedom for the individual, will best prevent this by trying to guide it and guard against these dangers to oppose it, is simply to make the change more sudden and more sweeping when it does come. To try and stay the torrent by damming it back is but to prepare greater destruction when it throws down the obstacle; far wiser is it to prepare for it beforehand, and, leading it harmlessly along in channels made ready for it, to spread it over the fields to fertilise the ground.

There are some dangers in this revival of communal influence, and we will see how best they can be guarded against. In reviewing the old communal days, we were struck by the fact that the individual had no connection with the State to which he belonged, the unit of the large society, of the State, and even of the village community, was the family commune as represented by its head, the individual was in nearly all things subject to this head, and could not impress the least reflection of his own individuality on the society in which he lived. Here is one point in which there is little fear but that a great improvement will be made on the old communes, for whatever form society when organised will take it is pretty certain that it will be a society composed of individual units, in which we will hope each may be able to impress on the community his own individuality to the extent of its real power and value. This was impossible in the old days, because of the restraint under which the individual lived, it is impossible now because power and worth depend so much on the question of wealth.

There is one danger to the individual, and perhaps the greatest, arising out of the general unbelief and want of faith which characterises our times. We are too apt to think that things have been ordered badly, that necessary laws when obeyed still bring all sorts of evils upon us, and so we try to mend our evils by tinkering at them, and do not go to the cause and try to see whether there is not some law or general tendency which we are disregarding, and whether we are not accepting as laws evil customs which are purely of our own making. Had we more faith we should believe that if only the right laws of life and of society could be discovered and obeyed that we should not find them defective, but should find that a good and happy community would be the result. This habit of dealing only with effects is most strikingly illustrated by the way we deal with suffering and poverty. Had half the efforts which have been put forth to help the poor, cure the sick, and raise the fallen been directed against the causes of these evils, we should have seen a very different world around us. If our philanthropists would direct half as much energy towards removing the causes which are constantly creating poverty as they do towards helping the people after they have been crushed down into poverty, there would be some chance of permanently removing that stain on modern civilisation. If our doctors would insist upon the people being able to live in such conditions as to keep them healthy, instead of spending all their energy in curing them when they have

become ill, we should need no such tyrannical laws as the Vaccination Acts. The same may be said of all or nearly all the remedies we try, and the chief danger to individual liberty arises from this tendency to patch up bad laws and customs by arbitrary regulation of actions which should be left to the individual. There are many things which are in themselves evils but which cannot be attacked directly by State intervention without producing evils almost worse; they can only be successfully dealt with by striking at their causes. Such, I think, is the question of women's labour on the pit-banks, for example. There will be very few who will defend this class of labour as suitable for women, and yet for the State to pass a law that no women shall be employed on pit-bank or on any work which is not suitable for them, would produce probably much more misery than it would prevent. This question can only be dealt with by taking away the causes which force women to take to work of any sort, however unsuitable it may be. Legislation which aims at merely patching up a bad system not only produces often as much misery as it prevents, but serves to postpone the real grappling with the causes which can alone be of permanent good. Perhaps one of the chief uses of misery and evil in the world is to serve the same purpose in actual life that the *reductio ad absurdum* argument performs in logic—namely, to force us to correct our premises. The man who tries to cure evil by tinkering at it, without looking back to its cause, is little wiser than a man who might think to put a *reductio ad absurdum* argument right by making it look a little less absurd.

We shall be the more able to guard against the danger of the undue coercion of the individual by such laws as those hinted at, which undoubtedly existed more or less in all revival of social or communal influence, if we remember that all interferences with individual action which are of the nature of tinkering with effects instead of attacking causes are in principle bad, and are only justifiable as a temporary expedient, until the cause can be dealt with, and that as commonly employed to enable the question of cause to be shelved they are utterly without justification.

There is one fact which may give us great hope for the future, and it is interesting in its bearing on the course of development given above; it is the considerable growth of Anarchist opinion and sentiment which may be noticed amongst those who advocate the most complete socialisation of the means of production. That such teaching should be spreading amongst the Socialists of to-day is a most hopeful sign, and makes it easier to look forward with the confidence that those who are working for society to take control of the means of production are fully aware of the importance of leaving the individual free to develop to the full. It is also interesting as showing that when the present development of the social side of man shall have done its work, the force is already gathering which will correct any evils arising from too great suppression of individualism.

In so far, then, as we may be able to guide the course of development, the chief thing we must strive for is that all social forces and means of production shall be managed by society, and all individual forces shall as far as possible be left to the individual. One thing more. We must not think that laws and systems can be planned which will work in spite of the inclinations of a large mass of the people. Social movements are very largely the result of sentiment; and while the sentiment which rules three out of every five is that of individual enterprise with a strong dash of gambling, while men prefer the excitement of a competitive life, while they would rather live in misery with the chance of making wealth, almost too late to enjoy it, than live in quiet happiness, free from the excitement, and secure alike from wealth and poverty,—while this is the prevailing sentiment with a large mass of the people, it is useless to try and impose upon them any other system than the present. Much may be done gradually to change the sentiments of people. New ideas have that effect, and in many other ways, by example and so forth, it may be done, as well by the more mysterious and rapid influence which often accompanies new movements and changes the ideals and sentiments of whole peoples. Unlike some Socialists, I hope for great results in this direction from individual efforts, from men who try to practise common interests and to do useful work, from small societies for working co-operatively in farming and other branches of industry—in short, from all who, by living, in spite of the conditions, as far as possible in accordance with their ideal of life and society, are helping to spread the ideals and sentiments which will make our life in the future happier than it has been in the past.

I hope this little study of primitive property in the communal ages will help us to see what sentiments and customs are helpful to a peaceful and happy social life. By trying to practise and spread these sentiments we shall be greatly helping to bring such a social life out of dreamland into reality.

RAYMOND UNWIN.

And I, too, love peace; but not the peace of slavery.—*Danton*.

Nihilism is the righteous and honourable resistance of a people crushed under an iron rule. When "order reigns in Warsaw" it is a spiritual death. Nihilism is the last weapon of victims choked and manacled beyond all other resistance. It is crushed Humanity's only means of making the oppressors tremble. God means that unjust power shall be insecure, and every move of the giant, prostrate in chains, whether it be to lift a single dagger or stir a city's revolt, is a lesson in Justice. One might well tremble for the future of a race if such a despotism did exist without provoking the bloodiest resistance. I honour Nihilism, since it redeems human nature from the suspicion of being utterly vile, made up of heartless oppressors and contented slaves. Every line in our history, every interest of civilisation, bids us rejoice when the tyrant grows pale and the slave rebellious.—*Wendell Phillips*.

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. BIXNING, at the Offices.

BRITAIN.

The Worcester and South Staffordshire nail-makers have submitted to a reduction on their wages of 20 per cent.

The Scottish railway servants of all branches have held a meeting to form a union of railway servants throughout Scotland.

The South Wales coal trade continues in a most depressed condition. In the Rhondda Valley, miners are being discharged every week owing to want of orders.

THE SCOTTISH MINERS' JUBILEE POLICY.—It is quite a treat to hear of a trade union with a "policy." The Scottish miners have a jubilee policy which is stated under 21 heads and includes: An eight hour day; one holiday a week; a fortnight's holiday during the summer; and better union among the miners.

CLOSE OF THE GLASGOW JOINERS' STRIKE.—At a mass meeting of the Glasgow joiners, it was reported that the strike in the trade was closed, all the employers having adopted the standard wage, and the 115 men who came out on Saturday having obtained work. The meeting unanimously adopted a resolution expressing satisfaction at the settlement arrived at, and pledging the joiners to use every legitimate means to maintain the standard wage.

THE CHAIN-MAKERS.—Some of the masters in the chain-making at Cradley Heath have capitulated and the men have returned to work. We have received a number of communications respecting the chainmakers which reveal a state of things simply horrifying. We intend to send a commissioner into the district in the course of a few days to see if it is not possible to infuse a little vigour into these wretched slaves and rescue them from the clutches of the "goody-goody" harpies who are now humbugging them in the interest of the exploiters.

NORTHUMBRIA MINERS.—The strike has reached a culminating point. The masters have absolutely refused arbitration and insist on the "pound of flesh." The miner M.P.—now, with the rest of the officials on half-pay—headed the deputation, but the masters remained firm. At Blyth over 1000 miners have held a meeting and resolved to form a North of England Socialist Federation. There are a number of Socialists now at most of the collieries. The press generally attributes this to "the active Socialist propaganda that has been carried on during the strike." See "Northumbrian Notes," by our comrade Donald.

YORKSHIRE MINERS.—At a largely attended meeting of miners, held at Handsworth, near Sheffield, attended by the officials of the Yorkshire Miners' Association, to consider the strike at Fence Colliery, where the men have been on strike eight weeks, resisting a reduction of wages, it was unanimously resolved that the miners employed at Argreaves and Treeton Colliery (which together with Fence Colliery belongs to the Rother Vale Company) should, with the approval of the association, give notice to cease work. A thousand men and boys are affected.

THE STRIKE OF THE BELFAST SHIP-BUILDERS.—The dispute between the men employed in the local ship-building yards and the masters remain still unsettled, and there is not the slightest sign of an amicable arrangement being arrived at. The men are determined to hold out till a full concession of their rights has been made. At a mass meeting held in the Victoria Park, a strike committee was appointed, and several speakers spoke in the highest terms of praise of Mr. Sexton, M.P. for the West Division of Belfast, and his action in the House of Commons regarding the strike was eulogised by all. It is really a healthy sign, 6,000 Belfast ship-builders throwing old prejudices overboard, letting religion and politics take care of themselves, and sticking shoulder to shoulder for the rights of labour against capital.

A series of mass meetings of the Fife miners are being held for the purpose of considering the condition of the employed. At a meeting held at Hamilton, Mr. W. Small moved the following resolution: "As working miners, perceiving in the royalties on minerals and metals as exacted by private individuals a direct tax upon labour, robbing it of the reward of exertion, an obstacle to enterprise, injurious to native industry, and a violation of existing Scotch statute law, we would urge upon politicians and the Government to immediately introduce such measures as will secure the nationalisation of such resources, and thereby stimulate the expansion of trade, and relieve labour from the aggravation of an unjust impost and direct robbery." This was carried unanimously. A further resolution, urging that all miners' unions form a comprehensive federation to secure an amelioration and improvement amongst miners, was also adopted.

THE IRONWORKERS AND THE COERCION BILL.—About seventy delegates from all parts of the country where iron is manufactured have just held a conference in Manchester. It is ten years since a like national gathering was held. After the trade business was got through, and at the last day's sitting, a resolution was unanimously and enthusiastically passed against the Coercion Bill. Mr. Wm. Aucott (of Wednesbury) was in the chair, and the spokesmen of the men north and south (Messrs. James Capper, Walsall, and Edward Trow, Darlington) spoke warmly in favour of the following motion, which was ordered to be sent to the leaders of the Government, the Opposition, the Irish party, and the whip of the Labour party, by Mr. J. Graham Spencer, secretary of the conference: "That this conference of iron and steel-workers, representing 41,000 workmen of Great Britain, emphatically protests against the Crimes (Ireland) Bill now before Parliament, because it is unjust, unwarranted, and lamentably mischievous; and further, likely to be used against trades' unions in Great Britain."

THE LONDON POLICE.—Last Sunday afternoon, the police held a meeting in Hyde Park for the purpose of drawing public attention to their grievances. The meeting was of good size, and it was stated that it would have been much larger but for the fact that the bills convening it had been pulled down in the station-houses, and signs given that those who attended it would be marked men. A plucky cabman, who had been well supplied with facts, undertook the office of spokesman for the police, and in a racy speech exposed the chief grievances they labour under. Resolutions calling for reform were unanimously adopted. For some weeks past the police have been conducting a correspondence in the columns of the *Weekly Dispatch*, and some of the grievances ventilated there are almost beyond belief. Complaint is made of the mismanagement and the harsh military system of Sir Charles Warren, and "that there is a general feeling of discontent goes without saying." "Several are being continually reduced in rank (and pay) for periods varying from three months to eight years—simply for partaking

of a slight refreshment whilst on duty"—tea or beer makes no difference. "An Old Policeman" complains that "useless orders are issued by old soldiers, who know more about 'saluting by numbers,' or giving lectures on Palestine, than they do about police duty." "There are no less than fifty different orders referring to public carriages, and nearly double that number referring to dogs." "Promotion is, and always was, gained by favouritism," and the administration of the pension system requires radical alteration. One policeman says that the gloomy outlook and the numerous instances of gross injustice before them, is driving the men to study their own personal safety rather than the interests of the public; and another writes that unless redress be forthcoming, "ere long our commissioners may have the pleasing duty to perform of swearing in special and auxiliary constables." We earnestly hope the men will persevere with their agitation, and use every means to make it successful. It should not be forgotten—as we are sometimes inclined to forget—that the police belong to the ranks of the workers, have common interests with them, and their present agitation forms part of that Labour Struggle against the power of Capitalism which every true worker should aid.—W. B.

THREATENED STRIKE OF THE CONSTABULARY IN BELFAST.—Since the appointment of Mr. Cameron to the Town Inspectorship of Belfast from one cause or another great dissatisfaction has crept in among the men. They complain of being hampered in the discharge of their duties in the Orange districts of the town, by orders issued by the Town Inspector to the effect that the constables on duty in these districts are not to interfere with drunk or disorderly characters on the streets lest such interference might rouse the ire of the loyalist inhabitants and lead to disturbance. Now it appears Mr. Cameron, following Mr. McHardy's recommendations as one of the Commissioners appointed to inquire into the late riots, has intimated that in future each constable will be required to perform daily eight hours' regular duty. It must be understood that the constabulary stationed in Belfast, although not performing up to eight hours' daily of regular beat duty, are never free. When not on actual duty on the town they are as a rule confined to barracks, or obliged to do a variety of work such as the Irish constabulary in the ordinary sense are supposed to perform. In this way they have never what may be called a moment of their own. They are practically never off duty. The new system will impose upon them eight hours' beat duty instead of six, and when relieved in the ordinary course they will not yet be allowed to consider themselves at liberty. The men object to the new system as absolutely unjust. The constables are quite willing to perform eight hours' duty after the manner of the Dublin police, but they want to be paid as well as they are and to enjoy similar privileges. The Dublin constables when they have their number of hours performed are at liberty to dress in plain clothes and go where they will, and the Belfast men think they should be treated in the same way. Meetings of the men have already been held in protest against the new system, and if it is enforced without the privileges claimed being granted, it is probable there will be a general strike of the men, who declare it will be impossible to get constabulary to serve in Belfast on the terms proposed by the town inspector.

AMERICA.

A strike of 90,000 coalminers in Pennsylvania for an advance of ten per cent, in wages is said to be impending.

The machinists in all of the tube works in Western Pennsylvania have made a united demand for an advance of 50 per cent. for night-work, the increase to take effect from May 1. They wish to abolish night-work, so that more mechanics will be put on.

A convention will be held in Pittsburg on June 1, to complete the organisation of a National Machinists' Assembly of the Knights of Labour. Thirty local assemblies of machinists have voted to join the national organisation, and it will begin with over five thousand members.

NEW YORK.—The lock-out of the silversmiths still continues, with the Knights just as firm as ever. The chasers have discussed the opening of a co-operative factory, and a committee will report as to the outlay necessary. The reports sent broadcast that their places have been filled in untrue, as the firms are unable to obtain sufficient hands to take their places.

The great lock-out of stove-moulders is now enforced in nearly every city in the country in which the trade is prosecuted, and bears upon many thousands of men. It has reached Troy and Peekskill in this State, and it has also reached Philadelphia and other parts of Pennsylvania from the States farther west. The end of this vast struggle between capital and labour cannot be forecast.

FRANCE.

In view of the municipal elections at Paris, the Anarchist party have issued an abstentionist manifesto addressed to the workers of Paris, calling on them to reflect before going up to the voting-urns, maintaining that a workman's vote has for forty years been a very useless piece of possession to him, and will be to all eternity.

HISTORY OF THE "PRUD'HOMMES."—In the Middle Ages the term *prud'homes* (wise, or prudent men) was used for those citizens charged with directing the affairs of their commune. It is at the end of the thirteenth century, under the reign of Philippe-le-Bel, that one first sees traces of the institution of this body. In 1296 the Council of the City of Paris nominated for election 24 councillors, among whose duties were to be those of passing judgment of the "master-piece" which a man had to execute if desirous of entering into the freedom of a guild, of protecting journeymen and apprentices, visiting the shops, etc., etc. Here one sees the germ of the existing jurisdiction in this decree. The law of the 16th August 1790 relative to the creation of justices of the peace makes a great step in the matter. This law sets forth that at the chief town of a canton, besides the justice of the peace, there shall be "prud'homes assessors" who shall "overlook the payment of workmen's salaries and the fulfilment of engagements between masters and their workpeople." A decree of 1806 institutes at Lyons a first council of prud'homes for textile trades. . . . It is in Paris 1844, and later 1847, that four councils are created—one for the textile industry, one for metal work, a third for the chemical trade, and the fourth for miscellaneous industries.—*Cri du Peuple*.

BELGIUM.

MARCHIENNE-AU-PONT.—At the commune of Marchienne last Sunday, the society of Socialist ironworkers held a meeting to discuss the organisation of the workers and the rôle of women under Socialism. The meeting was naturally well attended by the women, who were much interested in the speech of the delegate from Brussels on that portion of the evening's discussion. An immediate general strike in Belgium was then discussed for and against with much eagerness.

CORRESPONDENCE.

THE CHARITY ORGANISATION SOCIETY.

Sir,—This C. O. S. issues "private and confidential" documents, defamations of people's characters. A specimen of which I have before me abounds in falsehoods. The *Charity Record* of Dec. 16 last, denounces it as "a snare to the rich, a curse to the poor, a disgrace to humanity and a mockery to religion." We some of us propose to hold some public meetings and invite the press to report them and this Charity Organisation Society to be present and show if it be a benefit to society and entitled to use the word "charity," or if they be base impostors as the *Charity Record* suggests. No doubt many of your readers know something about them and if they will write me a line in the first instance with some information, I shall be much obliged to them, either so that it may be read publicly or that notice of any meetings may be sent to them.

F. JOHNSON, *hon. sec.*

National Refuge Harbours Society, 17 Parliament St.

NORTHUMBRIAN NOTES.

On Friday, May 6th, very unpleasant news was circulated in the colliery district, to the effect that some men had broken off from the strike and had commenced work at the reduced terms. Whether this will be allowed to proceed without the strikers taking measures to give the traitors a lesson remains yet to be seen. It is the Doctor Pit, Bedlington, where this has occurred. The men are beginning to realise that had they had an organisation that included all colliery workers, engineers as well as hewers, the strike would probably not have been required, and even if it had, it would have been over in a week. The engineers have not behaved well; simply because they were afraid of their employment they declined to allow their brethren to win. Arrangements would have been made by the Miners' Union to prevent the mine-owners dismissing the engineers, had they struck, by making such action on the part of the owners a cause for a further strike. It has been suggested that the miners here should introduce the American system of boycotting. If the miners were to make up their minds to hold no communication with the masters' men, very soon these latter individuals would act with the majority of the workmen. If the workpeople are to have the victory this is the policy that must be adopted. In the case of mining there is invariably required several men to work incessantly at pumping the water out of the pits. If the owners knew that in the case of a dispute their engineers would stop working, they would think twice before engaging in a dispute with the men. No one can dare say that the mine owners in Northumberland could have anything too severe done to them; for on this occasion the men have struck work to prevent their wages being reduced below subsistence point, so they are justified in using any means in bringing their oppressors to terms.

The Socialist propaganda has continued to be carried on vigorously. The men are as interested as ever, and are joining the local organisation in large numbers. The most persistent opponents we meet are the teetotallers. They are very numerous about here, and are as bigoted as usual. It seems impossible for them to get into their heads that it is more important for the workers to prevent the monopolists of the means of labour taking two-thirds of their earnings every year, than to give up consuming a little alcohol, the value of which in a lifetime does not on the average amount to £50. They forget too that working-men teetotallers are seldom very well off, and that drunken capitalists very often are. It is a great pity that temperance advocates should calmly assume that every person is a drunkard that they are speaking to, spending the greater part of his earnings in alcohol; but in Northumberland as elsewhere they assume that as an axiom. The difference between normal and abnormal consumption of liquor cannot be discerned by them.

At the usual meeting of the Socialistic Discussion Society, I opened the evening with an address on "Socialism and Politics" according to request. The discussion was of an interesting character, and showed that Newcastle Socialists are without exception strongly in favour of political action. The only gentleman present who disapproved of political action was the chairman, an Individualist and ardent admirer of Herbert Spencer.

On Sunday, a good meeting was held on the Sandhill, Newcastle. In the afternoon, with the assistance of Mr. Stevens, a well-known local labour speaker, meetings were held in North Shields and South Shields. Mr Hearne, of North Shields, told me that ever since comrade Chambers held meetings on the Quayside several months ago, Socialism has been the main topic of discussion. The Branch which was then started will be revived, and carried on in future more efficiently. The meeting at South Shields market-place was very satisfactory, and resulted in several members being made. Meetings have been arranged at both places for next Sunday.

A. K. DONALD.

THE DEPENDENCY OF THE WORKERS.—It is as sensible to say that a hen cannot herself lay enough eggs for a sitting, but is dependent upon her master who is daily taking them from her, as to say that the workers are dependent on the idlers for the means of livelihood. The workers are dependent so long they allow the idlers to take all the surplus of their work and no longer.

Socialism proposes that machinery shall do the world's work, and that the whole people shall own such machinery, and reap the full benefit thereof, individually and collectively, not as at present, when machinery is owned only by wealthy individuals and corporations and operated to the degradation of the human machines who attend them.

SPECIAL NOTICE.

In the next issue of the *Commonweal* will be published the first instalment of

A WRITTEN DEBATE

BETWEEN MR. C. BRADLAUGH AND E. BELFORT BAX.

SUBJECT:

"Will Socialism Benefit the English People?"

Affirmative: E. BELFORT BAX. Negative: Mr. C. BRADLAUGH.

Those desirous of obtaining copies of the *Commonweal* containing Debate will do well to give their orders early, as sets will not be kept in stock.

In the same Issue,

A DIALOGUE (By WILLIAM MORRIS) will be commenced, entitled

"The Reward of Labour."

Persons: AN EARNEST ENQUIRER; AN EAST-END WEAVER; A WEST-END LANDOWNER.

Branch Secretaries, Newsagents, and others are specially directed to note foregoing announcement.

THE SOCIALIST LEAGUE.

OFFICES: 13 FARRINGTON ROAD, E.C.

Annual Conference.—The Third Annual Conference of the Socialist League will be held at 13 Farringdon Road on Whitsunday, May 29th. A cold luncheon and a tea will be provided for delegates and others (luncheon, 1s.; tea, 6d.). All who intend to take advantage of the arrangement are requested to send in their names to the Catering Committee at 13 Farringdon Road.

Branch Secretaries and the Agenda.—The Agenda forwarded to Branches must be returned without delay to the General Secretary.

Commonweal Selling Brigade.—Volunteers wanted for Saturday May 21, to attend Anti-Coercion Demonstration in Victoria Park. Secretary will be glad to receive the names of those willing to undertake this work.

Co-operative Store.—The Committee attend at the offices at 8.30 p.m. on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Saturdays. See advertisement on last page.

Lessons in French.—On Tuesday evening at 8 o'clock. The lessons are free to members.

Library.—The Library is open to members of the Socialist League and affiliated bodies. LIBRARY CATALOGUE, containing the Rules, 2d. LENA WARDLE and W. BLUNDELL are the Librarians.

Bound Volumes of 'COMMONWEAL' for 1886 can now be had. Price 5s. 6d.

BRANCH SUBSCRIPTIONS PAID.

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

THE NORWICH PRISONERS' AID FUND.

Webb, 1s. Collected by Miss Faulkner, £1, 6s. 3d. A Medical Student (2nd donation), 1s. Arthur, 6d. For Mrs. Mowbray—A few Fabians, per Annie Besant (weekly), 10s.; Donation, per A. Besant, 2s. 6d.—Total, £2, 1s. 3d.

J. LANE, Treasurer.

STRIKE COMMITTEE.

P. W., 1s. T. BINNING, Treasurer

"COMMONWEAL" PRINTING FUND.

E. B. B. (weekly), 1s. T. B. (weekly), 6d. W. B. (two weeks), 1s. M. M. (four weeks), 4s. PH. W., Treasurer, May 10.

Henderson Help Fund.—W. B., 2s. 6d. Walsall Branch, 2s.

Northumberland Miners—

"Northumberland Miners' Mutual Confident Association, 17 Picton Place, Newcastle-on-Tyne, 7th May, 1887. Received from Socialist League, London, towards men locked-out, the sum of £1, 1s. 7d.—John H. Scott, treasurer." Per A. K. Donald, £3, 10s. Total, £4, 11s. 7d.

BRANCH REPORTS.

BLOOMSBURY.—A business meeting was held on Thursday evening, at which the agenda paper of the Conference was discussed, and comrades Eleanor Marx-Aveling and A. K. Donald were elected delegates for the branch.

CLERKENWELL.—On Wednesday, May 4, H. H. Sparling addressed a fair audience on "The Iron Law of Wages." On Sunday, May 8, J. Lane lectured on "Different Schools of Socialist Thought."—W. B. and T. E. W.

HOXTON.—Very successful outdoor meetings morning and evening, addressed by comrades Barker and Pope. Inside, Barker gave a very interesting lecture on "Socialism the Necessary Outcome of the Present System;" good discussion.

MERTON AND MITCHAM.—We held our usual open-air meetings on Sunday. Sale of *Commonweal* fair. The local Tory press is showing our growth by its virulent abuse. They display their "British love of fair play" by inserting scurrilous lying letters against us, and refusing replies. We are forming a committee to conduct the summer campaign all over the district.—F. K.

NORTH LONDON AND MARYLEBONE.—On Sunday morning, at Regents' Park, a good meeting was addressed by Cantwell, Brookes, and Wardle; some slight opposition was offered. At Hyde Park in the afternoon, the meeting was addressed by Brookes, Mainwaring, and Dalchow. The unusual phenomenon of a meeting of policemen to call attention to various grievances in regard to fines, pensions, reductions, etc., somewhat diminished our audience.—H. B.

EDINBURGH.—On Tuesday, May 3, J. L. Mahon lectured in the Free Tron Hall, and on the following evening he addressed a large meeting in Leith Links. On Thursday, Rev. John Glasse addressed a meeting of miners in Dalkeith. On Saturday, several of our members, with Mahon as speaker, had a meeting with miners at Loanhead. On Sunday afternoon, Glasier, Tukey, and Gilray spoke in Queen's Park, and in the evening in East Meadows, Mahon and others addressed a large meeting. Mahon spoke at Dalkeith last Monday. Fair sale of literature.—J. G.

GLASGOW.—On Sunday, J. L. Mahon addressed a very large concourse of people on the Green. In his speech he gave an account of the Northumberland miners on strike. Muirhead, Curran, and Warrington also addressed the meeting, and 6s. 8d. was collected on behalf of the miners. At four o'clock, comrade Arch McLaren gave a lecture to the Home Government Branch of the National League on "Socialism," which was very favourably received. This, the largest branch of the National League in Britain, is deeply leavened with Socialism, many of the members being avowed Socialists. In the evening a meeting of members was held in our rooms, when the resolutions to be submitted at the forthcoming Conference were discussed, and the instructions to Glasgow delegate finally determined.

HAMILTON.—On Thursday evening, J. L. Mahon addressed a large audience, chiefly of miners, at the New Cross. Comrades McMunn and Glasier also spoke.

LEEDS.—Last Sunday morning this Branch held a very good open-air meeting on Hunslet Moor. Comrades Hill, Maguire, and Bland (Bradford Branch) were the speakers. At the close of the meeting a quire of *Commonweal* and twenty pamphlets were sold. In the afternoon we met the members of the Bradford and Bingley Branches at Parker's Temperance Hotel, Leeds, where we had tea together. After tea the business of the forthcoming Conference was discussed.

NORWICH.—On Sunday morning, members of this Branch went to hear the Rev. Stewart Headlam on "Socialism" at St. John's de Sepulchre Church. After the service a short meeting was held outside. We then marched to the prison where comrade Henderson is lying, singing outside the prison walls "No Master," then gave three hearty cheers for him. In the afternoon a very large meeting was held in the Market-place, chair taken by comrade Crotch; the Rev. Stewart Headlam spoke for a considerable time upon the existing poverty of to-day, and advocating what the workers should do in order to remove this evil; the rev. gentleman was accorded a hearty welcome. A collection was made for the miners amounting to 5s. A meeting was held at 7 on the Agricultural Hall Plain. In the Gordon Hall, Slaughter gave various sketches of the Russian Revolutionary Party, especially commenting upon Kropotkin's career. Monday evening, Kropotkin lectured in the Victoria Hall. Meetings were held at Diss, addressed by Darley and Morley, and meeting at Wymondham by three comrades. On Monday next will be the release of comrade Fred Henderson, when we shall accord him a hearty welcome. In the evening a public welcome tea will be held in the Gordon Hall.—A. S.

WALSALL.—On Saturday, J. Richards and H. Sanders addressed a large audience in the Market-place. Literature eagerly taken up and inquiries made, which we hope will result in increased membership.

LECHLADE.—On Monday, May 2nd, H. H. Sparling addressed a meeting principally of agricultural labourers, at the Swan Inn, Lechlade, Oxfordshire, on "Socialism and Co-operation," showing how far the two movements were related to one another, and how hopeless it was by mere co-operation to attempt more than to make wages go farther for awhile, and thus temporarily ameliorate the worker's condition. The lecture was attentively listened to and much applauded, most of the audience taking literature for distribution, and pledging themselves to assist in the propaganda to the utmost of their ability.—M. M.

PAISLEY.—On Friday evening, comrades Mahon and Glasier proceeded to Paisley with the view of forming a Branch of the League there. An open-air meeting was held on County Square, and afterwards in the Dyers' Hall. Mahon gave a lecture on "The Aims and Methods of Socialism," which was listened to with great attention and evident sympathy. At the close several questions were asked. Comrades Glasier and McCulloch (S.D.F.) also addressed the meeting. Names were then given in to form a Branch.

SOCIALIST UNION (NOTTINGHAM SECTION).—The rooms we tried to get for club-room, etc., we have been unable to get. We could have one if we would not hold Sunday meetings. We are now on the track of other rooms, and hope to succeed in getting one during the week, we shall then be able to push the movement forward with better success. Meetings addressed by Peacock, Proctor, and Wane, were held in Sentiont Market Sunday morning, and Great Market in the evening. Collection towards furnishing our club-room, morning 1s. 6d., evening 5s. 3d. Some slight opposition was shown at night, but was easily disposed of. The meeting was very attentive and enthusiastic. Next Sunday evening a collection will be made at our meeting on behalf of the Northumberland miners, when lectures will be delivered on the Labour Struggle.—T. P.

LECTURE DIARY.

London Branches.

Bloomsbury.—Communist Club, 49 Tottenham Street. On Thursday May 12, at 8.30, the 'Socialist Catechism' will be discussed. On May 19, Dr. E. Aveling will lecture—subject, "Radicalism and Socialism."

Clerkenwell.—Hall of the Socialist League, 13 Farringdon Road, E.C. Sunday May 15, at 8.30 p.m. George Bernard Shaw, "The Rent of Ability." Wednesday 18, at 8.30. Thomas Dalziel, "Proto Socialism."

Croydon.—Royal County House, West Croydon Station Yard. Sunday May 15, at 7.15 p.m. A Lecture.

Hackney.—23 Audrey Street, Goldsmith Row. Club Room open every evening from 8 till 11.30. Business Meeting every Tuesday at 8.30. On Sunday May 15, at 8.30 p.m. H. A. Barker, "Socialism the Necessary Outcome of the Present System of Society."

Hammersmith.—Kelmescott House, Upper Mall, W. Sunday May 15, at 8 p.m. A Lecture.

Hoxton (L.E.L.).—2 Crondall Street, New North Rd. Club Room open on Monday, Wednesday, and Saturday evenings from 8 till 11. Singing Class every Wednesday at 8.30. A Literary Class on Friday 13, at 8.30—first part of Joynes's Catechism. On Sunday May 15, at 8 p.m. W. H. Campbell (C.S.S.), "Justice before Charity." Committee Meeting on Friday May 20, at 8.30 p.m. Members requested to attend: important business.

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.

North London.—Communications to H. Bartlett, sec., 13 Farringdon Road, E.C.

Country Branches.

Birley.—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 7.30 p.m. to transact business. Class for the study of 'Das Capital' at 8.30.

Glasgow.—Reading-room of the Branch, 84 John St., open from 10 a.m. till 10 p.m. daily. On Sunday evening at 7, in our Rooms, a discussion will take place on "How to work for the Revolution." Arch. McLaren will introduce the subject. Wednesday, Choir Practice at 8 o'clock. See open-air meetings.

Hamilton.—Paton's Hall, Chapel Street. On Thursday first, at 7.30, Dan. Kelly will lecture on "The Land Question."

Hull.—Address all communications to E. Teesdale, 20 Shakspeare Street.

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

Leicester.—Office of Hosiery Union, Horsefair Street. Fridays at 8 p.m.

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

Norwich.—Gordon Hall, 5 Duke Street. Free Lectures every Sunday and Monday at 8 p.m. Reading-room open every evening. Open-air meetings see below.

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

OPEN-AIR PROPAGANDA.

LONDON—Sunday 15.

11.30...Hackney—Salmon and Ball Westwood
11.30...Hammersmith—Beadon Rd. The Branch
11.30...Hoxton Church, Pitfield St. Wade & Pope
11.30...Garrett—Plough Inn Kitz
11.30...Mitcham Fair Green The Branch
11.30...Regent's Park H. H. Sparling
11.30...St. Pancras Arches Bartlett
11.30...Walham Green The Branch
3 ...Hyde Park Davis
7 ...Clerkenwell Green T. J. Dalziel

Tuesday.

8...Broad Street, Soho W. H. Utley

Wednesday.

7.30...Broadway, London Fields Flockton

Thursday.

8 ...Hoxton, Pitfield Street The Branch

PROVINCES.

Glasgow.—Sunday: The Green, at 1 o'clock; George's Square, at 5 o'clock.

Leeds.—Sunday: Hunslet Moor, 11; Vicar's Croft, 7.

Norwich.—Sunday: Market Place at 3; Agricultural Hall Plain at 7.

PAISLEY.—Open-air meeting on County Square at 7 o'clock. At 8 o'clock, in the Dyers' Hall, J. Bruce Glasier will lecture on "The Prophecy of Socialism."

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.

Notice to Readers of the 'Commonweal'

A CO-OPERATIVE STORE

has been started at the
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13 FARRINGTON ROAD, E.C.,

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SOCIALIST LEAGUE LITERATURE.

- The Manifesto of the Socialist League.** Annotated by E. Belfort Bax and William Morris. An exposition of the principles on which the League is founded. . . . 1d.
- Chants for Socialists.** By William Morris. . . . 1d.
- The Labour Question from the Socialist Standpoint.** By William Morris. . . . 1d.
- Organised Labour: The Duty of the Trades' Unions in Relation to Socialism.** By Thomas Binning (London Society of Compositors). . . . 1d.
- Useful Work v. Useless Toil.** By William Morris. . . . 1d.
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