

THE COMMONWEAL

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WEEKLY; ONE PENNY.

NOTES ON NEWS.

THE police have been at it again, and this time, as they have been bearing false witness not against "revolutionaries" or persons who happened to be mixed up with them, but against ordinary citizens not guilty *à priori* of the crime of "demonstrating," they have got into trouble, and the public prosecutor is to look into the matter. Couldn't he go a few weeks backward and look into the cases of the "rioters" of the past winter?

In all soberness, the attention which has been paid to Mr. Montagu Williams' scolding of the police brings out the cowardly injustice of society towards the victims of the raid on free speech into yet stronger relief than before. To judge by the tone of the press about this affair, one would suppose that no accusations had ever been made against the police, that the whole public are perfectly satisfied that their evidence against Harrison and Ellis and dozens of others was admitted to be spotlessly true, and that everybody "run in" for anything (or for nothing) connected with Trafalgar Square was even himself persuaded that he had received a perfectly fair trial. Surely no hypocrisy has ever come anywhere near the Pharisaism of modern bourgeois England!

I get papers from candidates for the vestry shoved into my door at times, besides the voting paper. Some of the former are droll. One candidate appears to me to be at least frank; he says he shall consider it one of his principal duties to see that the contracts are given to persons in the neighbourhood, or words to that effect. The same gentleman says that he will do his best to see that those unfortunate persons who are in need of relief shall, as far as possible, be treated with a fair amount of comfort and consideration. Here is qualification with a vengeance!

The economics of some of our leading papers are wonderful indeed. The *Daily News*, for instance, says, quoting Major Roe about work at Birmingham: "The use of power-driven machinery is daily increasing, with the result of increased output and the substitution of women and youths for the skilled artisan; on the other hand, the men are more than compensated by the increased demand for them in the manufacture of tools and machinery." Which must clearly mean, if it means anything, that the manufacturer, having got rid of human labour at one end of the process, uses up all the displaced labour at the other end, and has besides saddled himself with machinery which he has had to pay for and cannot use, and that he does this without compulsion. On the whole, it is easier to believe that the *Daily News* gets its minor leader-writers from Colney Hatch than to believe this.

Indeed, this explanation gathers credibility as one reads further where the writer, having informed us in the first-quoted passage that women and boys are being substituted for skilled artisans, goes on to tell us that it is said that the days of unskilled labour are numbered. With a leer in his eye and a straw or two and a peacock's feather in his hair, he finishes by drawing a moral for us, the often-told tale that all is for the best in this best possible of worlds, wherein the capitalist can still make a profit out of other people's labour. "Thanks to the Education Act, the condition of the working classes is better than it used to be; they spend both their wages and their leisure better than of old. Technical instruction and sober diligence will be the salvation of many a British industry." Yes; but he means the salvation of much British capital. Make technical education so common that it is no longer of any market value, thinks the capitalist, and then we shall be able to get the skilled workman at the cost of the unskilled; let every workman (that is employed) work two hours a day more than he does now,

and it will put so much the more into our pockets, as we shall pay the same for the twelve hours as we do now for the ten. This is the way to safeguard British industry against foreign competition.

Yet education, technical instruction, and sober industry are good things—so good that it is grievous indeed to see them made use of to "cheapen labour," that is, to make legal stealing safer and more profitable. However, let us have courage; education is a dangerous gift to give to slaves. What does our author from Colney Hatch think will be the result (if we should come to it, and we *are* coming to it) of a class of skilled artisans unemployed, or reduced to the ranks, and at the same time "educated" by book-learning as well as suffering? No men, surely, have ever set themselves more busily to sow the wind for the harvest of the whirlwind than our anti-Socialist "Liberal" capitalists.

W. M.

So there has actually been a plot against Mr. Balfour discovered, after all this time of coercion. Of course no sane man believes in any possible utility resulting from the use of dynamite after the manner of the American Fenian. But surely the terms of moral indignation in which the fact was chronicled by certain journalistic advocates of Home Rule partakes of the nature of "cant." Most of these journalists profess to believe in the accuracy of Mr. Blunt's charges against Mr. Balfour. Mr. Balfour on this assumption has tried to kill his political adversaries, the American Fenians do the like, only perhaps more mercifully. The only difference otherwise is that Mr. Balfour is within the law in doing what he does and acts indeed as the representative of the law, whereas the American dynamiters are without the law. But if they, being without the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, it would hardly seem that any special moral blame attaches to them—at least from the point of view of a law-abiding journalist. The American Fenian might surely say to Mr. Balfour and his friends, "How can you, possessed of such magnificence at home (i.e., for purposes of coercion)—gaols, plank beds, cells 7 feet by 10, etc., etc.—envy me a humble can of dynamite?"

Freedom according to the conceptions of the modern capitalists is admirably illustrated by the proposals of the syndicate of London bankers and merchants relative to the affairs of Morocco. According to the views of those persons, Morocco is to be compelled to receive European shoddy and to "open itself up" by telegraphs and railways, on pain of forfeiting its "integrity"—that is, of being dismembered by the European band of harpies. The Moors don't want the shoddy goods, or the telegraphs or the railways; but no matter, they *must* expend their substance on things they don't want and had much rather do without, for the benefit of the enterprising European capitalist, commercial and industrial, the first of whom wants to force his wares, and the second to start mining and other operations, at the expense of the unfortunate native. Even the *Daily News* is impressed with the ironical nature of "independence" on such terms.

E. B. B.

Canterbury is doubtful just now whether to laugh or cry over the alteration in its police arrangements. Among the exposures that moral-miracles have made of themselves, no scandals have come to light much worse than those of that ancient town. As a consequence the superintendent has resigned, a constable been dismissed, another degraded, and the city police will be abolished. In future Canterbury will be policed by the county constabulary, and its inhabitants are by no means sure that they will be better off.

It looks like a retrograde step on the part of the municipality, this

giving up of its own police; but probably, as things now are, the blue lambs would be much the same under whatever authority they nominally were.

The *Star* quite rightly calls upon every Radical member to back up Mr. Labouchere in attacking the vote of £5,000 for robes and insignia of Knights, Companions, and other officers of the various orders of knighthood. "If it please grown men to indulge in these puerilities, no hard-hearted person will object to their doing so. But that overburdened taxpayers should be asked to pay for such tomfoolery is such a monstrous impertinence that it is surprising that it should be left to Radicals alone to oppose it."

If there were any meaning in these things beyond mere snobbery—if they really were public rewards for public benefits—folk would pay for them without grumbling; but the futile stupidity of a minister paying for a political service by an "honour" out of the people's pocket is enough to move laughter in—hell!

A LETTER FROM INDIA.

A RATHER remarkable Report upon Taxation has recently been published by the Government of Bombay. For the eight years ending 1886 a License Tax upon Trades had been levied—professions and Government servants being exempt—the maximum which any one party or firm had to pay was £20 and the minimum £1. Below I give the total amounts which had been levied for the years 1878, 1881, and 1885—

Year.	Country.	Bombay City.	Total.
1878	£93,000	£35,000	£128,000
1881	87,000	39,000	126,000
1885	81,000	42,000	123,000

It will be seen that the collections from the country districts steadily declined; those in Bombay just as steadily rose; while the total collections for town and districts uniformly decreased. The complete list shows for each year a uniform progression downwards and upwards in such respective column. As the population of the Presidency is less than 20 millions, the tax amounts to an average all over of one penny per head. It shows that the cultivators and those dependent upon them are becoming impoverished, that the urban population (three-fourths of a million), consisting of merchants and the whole class of middlemen, are getting richer, but that the town and country together are not improving in material prosperity under the aegis of British rule.

In 1886 an income-tax of 2½ per cent. was imposed by the then Secretary of State for India, Lord Randolph Churchill, to help to make good the deficit caused by the frantic policy of preparing to fight Russia by means of frontier railways in the mountains of Beluchistan and Afghanistan. This income-tax is levied upon trades, professions, and government officials, all incomes below £50 per annum being exempt. This tax produced in the Bombay Presidency £300,000 only, equivalent to an average tax per head of the population of 3½d. The laws upon which our civilisation is based favour the accumulation of money by the rich, who by means of usury in its many ramifications make the poor their slaves. The course of British government in India is no exception to this rule. The above Government report most instructively shows that in the country districts the money-lenders—i.e., those who live by lending money to the cultivators to pay the Government land-rent, or by lending them grain for seed and sustenance—pay more than one-half the income-tax of the country, the proportion varying from three-fourths as the maximum to one-third as the minimum in thirteen principal collectorates. The average tax paid by the money-lender in the country is £2, 10s., while in Bombay it is double this amount. These figures will greatly tend to confirm the opinion, so strongly urged by Mr. Hyndman, that India is becoming the poorer under British rule.

You may perhaps remember Sir Lepel Griffin, who last year stumped England as a parliamentary candidate of the Jingo class, and greatly offended Americans by the irreverent remarks he expressed upon the types of civilisation rampant in the States. As a sign of the times, it is worth while to quote some portions of the speech he recently made at the investiture by one of the Indian Jubilee princelings of the insignia of the Most Eminent Order of the Indian Empire.

"The Rajah is rich, but after all, admiration for wealth, apart from its power to do good, is the attribute of slaves. The G.C.S.I. is granted, like the Garter in England, for reasons altogether apart from merit or virtue. Its insignia may be worn upon the breast of an illustrious prince or by a useless debauchee and tyrant. The old order changes, yielding place to the new. The idea of Divine Right, repudiated by the sentiment of civilised Europe, has taken refuge with barbarism in Russia and in the native states of Asia; but the time is coming when it will have to leave these last strongholds. The past history of the world has belonged to princes and slavery; the future is for the people and for freedom. The time will come when the enlightened judgment of humanity will no longer tolerate the idle, cruel, and sensual prince who looks upon his people as objects of plunder, and neglects every obligation which he should fulfil. In the new world which is coming, there will be no place for rulers such as these, who will disappear before advancing civilisation as wolves and tigers retire from the cultivated plains to the jungle. The only princes whom the conscience of the world will tolerate are those who rule on principles of enlightened virtue, and whose security will be found in the good will of the people."

The reading of this speech fairly took away my breath; it was so

unexpected, and, considering the quarter from which it emanated, so good. It shows that the principles of Socialism are spreading fast, when one so highly placed would give utterance to such ultra-Radical doctrines. "Princes and slavery are to go; the future is for the people and freedom." My thoughts immediately went home; I compared Warren to a tiger, and the upholders of law and order in Ireland to wolves. It is time you drove them into the jungle for good and all.
Bombay, March 16th. D. GOSTLING.

Note.—The above figures are given in pounds sterling for the convenience of English readers. The currency of the country is in rupees. These used to be worth 2s. each, and are calculated at that rate in the above table, but their current value is now only 1s. 4d., consequent upon the action of the goldbugs of Europe.

REVOLUTIONARY CALENDAR.

WEEK ENDING APRIL 21, 1888.

15	Sun.	1836. George Engel born. 1881. Judicial murder of A. F. Jelliboff, S. L. Perofskaja, W. Kibalchich, T. Mikhayloff, and N. Rissakoff.
16	Mon.	1790. Benj. Franklin died. 1866. Karakazoff's attempt upon Alexander III. 1871. Hyde Park Demonstration of Fraternity with Commune.
17	Tues.	1884. Bradlaugh and Hyndman debate. 1885. Colombian murder of rebels.
18	Wed.	1775. American War of Independence began.
19	Thur.	1772. Ricardo born. 1775. Battle of Lexington. 1868. Fenian trials. 1892. Charles Darwin died.
20	Fri.	1653. Cromwell dissolved "Rump" Parliament.
21	Sat.	1802. Louis Kossuth born. 1868. O'Farrell hung for attempt on Duke of Edinburgh. 1874. Wm. Carpenter died.

Benjamin Franklin.—Born January 17, 1706; died April 17, 1790; greatest of tramp printers, was a typical Yankee, for all that his father was an Englishman of later date than the great Puritan exodus, for his mother was of the most energetic New England stock. Although born in Boston, Franklin, like every genuine Yankee, considered the world his country and acted up to this idea. Like every true-bred Yankee also, Franklin was a thorough-paced Anarchist, devoting his whole life to breaking the fetters, political, social, and mental, which weigh down ignorant humanity. His method, however, was one of careful policy and gentle satire, his great defect being a woeful lack of the kind of courage which inspires the daring pioneer and the unflinching martyr. This defect sometimes induced him to give cowardly advice to bolder reformers, as his well-known counsel to Tom Paine (to suppress 'The Age of Reason') is an instance. Still it takes many sorts of people to move the world as well as to fill it, and no just critic can deny Franklin great praise as a true friend of humanity. The great lesson of his life is the dignity of productive labour. This has nothing to do with the present all-glorified opportunities of the humblest citizen (if only cunning rogue enough) to rise to the highest station through our cheating and thieving commercial system. Franklin was from first to last an almost god-like mechanic. The penniless printer of Philadelphia was courted as a conqueror at Versailles by the most gorgeous and proudest feudal Court the world has ever known, not because he was a successful stock-gambler or pork-factor, but because he had proved his superiority by giving much to mankind instead of taking much from them. He who had sought to chain the lightnings had used the lightning flashes of his own wit to snap the manacles of millions of his fellows. It is the fashion to deify Franklin as "worldly wise." We can well leave his lack of ethereal thoughts to the gospel-brokers. Humanitarians will be little apt to blame him for being only human. Carpers may deify him for not being a god; the kindly will like him the more for being only a man.—L. W.

Bradlaugh and Hyndman Debate.—At St. James's Hall, Piccadilly, Professor E. S. Beesly in the chair, a debate between Mr. Charles Bradlaugh and Mr. H. M. Hyndman. One of the most debatable matters which could possibly be debated would be, "Do Debates ever Settle the Debated Topic?" There are very few if any debates on record where a debater has been converted to his opponent's views. During the Corn Law agitation, Cobden and Hume and others debated in various parts of the country, but the result was sometimes breaking up the meeting with a row, sometimes a brass band appeared, and sometimes the adjournment to another night in an adjoining parish, when the corn duty champion would fail to turn up. A weapon to be very carefully called into use is the debate; a man may have the very best of cases to present to judge and jury, and by special and peculiar advantages possessed by the opposing counsel, make a very bad show. It is well known that some of the clearest thinkers and writers have been exceedingly bad speakers, and to work out a lucid connected argument at length and in detail is an impossibility to many a good logician. In all that goes to make a platform debater, Charles Bradlaugh has few equals to-day. Voice, clear and powerful enough to command even a mass such as St. James's Hall was crammed with; argument, in the main well planned out, but always with room to allow rough incidental hits over or under his adversary's guard, and not above using a sort of platform boomerang with which to dent a knock on the back of the head when he could break through his opponent's guard. It would be exceedingly interesting to know if any person in the vast crowd present was to any great extent changed in opinions by the speeches of the two debaters, certainly they were very little changed; the feelings of the meeting ran very high, and more than once there seemed danger of a storm. The Socialist was much handicapped, but made a gallant fight, and whether he or the Individualist was the most satisfied, and which of the two followings was most satisfied, is quite impossible to decide; there is this little fact which may be thought worth consideration, the Individualist seemed more than once to be very ill-tempered, which could not be said of the Socialist.—T. S.

Colombian Rebels.—The agreeable freedom from conventional restraints enjoyed by the Colombian authorities, enabled them to put in force an expedient that "I Warren" as yet finds beyond his reach. Selecting one hundred of the most conspicuous rebel prisoners, they took them on a steamer out into the bay flung them overboard and left them to drown.—S.

Fenian Trials.—Wm. and Timothy Desmond, Nicholas English, John O'Keefe, Michael Barrett, and Ann Justice, tried on April 20th at Old Bailey for murder of a woman named Hodgkinson, killed by the Clerkenwell explosion. Barrett was the only one found guilty, and he was sentenced to death. Hung on the 26th of May.—S.

the precious days of life in an attempt to "gain the whole world, and lose their own souls" by selling them for a bag of money, and the disgusting feeling of superiority.

But to the bishop all this is darkness. He has never looked in the eyes of the toil-worn men and women in the streets—never seen the patient suffering (sweet pastor, he thinks to preach patience to them!) written deep in the lines of their faces—has never longed to "pal on" to them, and go with them, and open all his heart to them. As long as his social inequality exists, it is impossible for an employer to be a real friend, faithful unto death, to the man he is making a profit of, and whom he must dismiss as soon as he ceases to pay. The highest friendship possible under such conditions is that eulogised by the bishop, of "cultivated people living in the East-end," and "women seeking to reclaim outcast sisters"—originally sacrificed to the pride of their superiority. It is a friendship of Condescension and Patronage, gratifying, of course, to the patronised! My Lord Bishop, "the devils and the worms thank you for your polite invitation, but regret that they are engaged!"

To me, no truth is truer than this: That far greater than any trivial "duty" of toil, or what not, every human creature on this earth has a right to develop his faculties to their utmost extent, and make the most of this mysterious life while it lasts. No impediment can be allowed here; but before this right all class distinctions, all claims of property, all laws and Acts of Parliament, and all religions, vanish into insignificance: they fade away, and leave man lord of the universe, in his own right. Those who know that they are travelling this road find life opening out before them in endless beauty, and in place of the selfish solitude left behind, they feel themselves surrounded on all sides by their own equals, journeying on towards the same great goal of Freedom, in which brotherhood with all shall be the greatest joy of life.

The bishop, of course, wound up his sermon with some first-rate soft-soap for Royalty, wrapped up in the very best *Daily Telegraphese*—calculated to make the editor of the *Daily Levy* sit up. Probably, however, he and the bishop are "friends" typical of the time when Jew and Gentile "lie down together" (read what meaning you like for the verb), united in that "one hope of their calling"—to make money.

GEORGE STURT.

MANCHESTER AND SALFORD TRADES COUNCIL AND THE MANCHESTER CORPORATION.

The Manchester and Salford Trades Council has under consideration the question of corporations contracting themselves out of the provisions of the Employers Liability Act, with special reference to a recent case affecting one of the employes of the Manchester Corporation, and at a numerously attended meeting of representatives of the various trades throughout the district, Mr. Ashton of the Beamers, Twisters, and Drawers' Society in the chair, the following resolution was unanimously adopted: "That the Manchester and Salford Trades Council had learned with regret, from the reports of a recent case, that the Manchester Corporation had evaded its responsibility under the Employers' Liability Act for accidents happening to workmen in its employ by arranging with an insurance company to take over its liability in such cases, and the Council, representing many thousand ratepayers, considered that such a course was calculated to lessen the care which the Corporation ought to feel bound to take to prevent the occurrence of accidents, and that if the business of the various departments were properly conducted, it was a loss to the ratepayers to spend their money in insuring against accidents." Mr. H. R. Slatter (Typographical Society), in moving the adoption of the above resolution, strongly condemned the action of the Manchester Corporation in contracting themselves out of the Act. He considered that the Act was not so much framed to give compensation to injured workmen as it was to make employers more careful in preventing accidents, and seeing a recent case had been decided against one of the Manchester Corporation employes on a technical objection, he considered it reflected great discredit upon a Corporation representing a place of such magnitude as Manchester that they should place themselves in the hands of an insurance company who were devoid of all scruples in availing themselves of technical objections to withhold payment of compensation in such cases as the one he had referred to. A long and animated discussion followed, in which the course of action taken by the Manchester Corporation with reference to the Employers' Liability Act was condemned in the strongest terms. Mr. Clarke (Gold-beaters' Society) said he thought it was the duty of the Council to show the Corporation that they as ratepayers were not afraid of the responsibility the Act imposed, and that they were determined these responsibilities should not be evaded by those who represented them on the City Council. On the motion of Mr. Waters (Typographical Association), seconded by Mr. Quinn (Amalgamated Society of Tailors), it was resolved that a copy of the above resolution be sent to the mayor, aldermen, and councillors of Manchester, and to each trades council throughout the United Kingdom; also that a deputation be appointed to wait upon the mayor and lay the case before him, and the deputation was appointed to consist of George D. Kelly (secretary, Trades Council), Mr. H. R. Slatter (Typographical Association), and Mr. J. Jenkins (Bakers' Society), with instructions to urge upon the mayor the desirability of the Corporation meeting its responsibilities directly, and not by contracting itself out of the Act of Parliament. The secretary was also instructed to obtain if possible an approximate return of the number of Corporations and private concerns who had contracted themselves out of the Act.

We have been suffering for a century from an acute outbreak of individualism, unchecked by the old restraints, and invested with almost a religious sanction by a certain soul-less school of writers.—*Prof. H. S. Foxwell.*

The first and indispensable step towards any serious amendment of the labourer's lot is that he should be, in one way or another, lifted out of the groove in which he at present works, and placed in a position compatible with his becoming a sharer in equal proportion with others in the general advantages arising from industrial progress.—*Prof. Cairnes, 'Political Economy.'*

"The Tables Turned" in America.

A FEW weeks ago there was an attempt made to produce "The Tables Turned" in Concordia Hall, New York City, by some members of the American section of the Socialistic Labor Party and District Assembly No. 10 of the Progressive Labour Party for the benefit of their organization. All the internal troubles had been adjusted and the actors had learned their parts when, at half-past six of the evening on which the play was to have been performed, the city police discovered that the hall had no theatrical license. Nothing could be done, and although the boards of the stage still reeked with the steps of ribald dancers, and although a variety troupe performed on the following night and on Sunday night of the same week, those dangerous Socialists were compelled to postpone the production of their play. Had they been half-naked society ladies endeavouring to buy clothes for the half-naked little Kickapoos, it would assuredly have been different. Such performances are given many times a winter without a license; but as these people only happened to be fairly well-dressed Socialists trying to help clothe the less poetic poor in our midst, an obsolete law had to be dragged from its hole for their extinction.

Fortunately a dance had been arranged to follow the play, so that the audience were not entirely disappointed, and, taking their oppression good-naturedly, spent a pleasant evening chatting and dancing with their friends.

Nothing daunted, the committee immediately set about the work of securing a licensed theatre for the production of their play. Soon the Roumania was secured, and the regular troupe kindly consented to perform a little farce as a prelude. No sooner was this known than one of our police captains went to the proprietor of the theatre and, in their usual manly manner, told him that if that play was performed in his theatre, "he would see next year that that theatre did not get a license." I suppose it was an understood clause that sufficient greasing might fix matters a little.

However, we have a Mayor who takes such a paternal interest in the affairs of the "children" under him, and is such a lover of the working man—a big iron manufacturer—that the committee thought it might be a good chance for him to show his intense desire to put down all sorts of official abuse in the city, so went to him in order to state their case. They were received by "his honour" most graciously, who told them that he had no objection to their performing their little play, provided only it was not *immoral*; that he knew William Morris, and he was a nice fellow, but a little crazy; that he had not ordered the police captain to make his threat, and they were to pay no attention to him, but to go ahead and produce their play, and if the owner of the theatre refused to let them have the house, to *sue him for breach of contract*.

So I suppose it must be one of the inalienable rights of police captains to threaten wherever they choose, and if the threat stands in your way of liberty, you can *sue* the victim of the threat. I don't know how they settled it with the police captain—soaped him, perhaps; but at any rate the play was performed on Thursday evening, March 15th. The cast was:—

Judge Larrett	...	...	...	A. ROSENBERG.
District Attorney Bellows	...	...	...	TOM BLYM.
Jake Harp	...	...	...	L. WEISS.
Captain Williams	...	...	...	J. EAGAN.
Officer Neverenough	...	...	...	W. HINTZE.
Mary Pinch	...	...	...	LIZZIE FEHL.
Lawrence Freeman	...	...	...	L. GRONLUND.
Ed. Graham	...	...	...	E. GOLDSMITH.
Bishop Harigam	...	...	...	CHAS. KEEGAM.
Maya Lewitt	...	...	...	S. E. SHEVITCH.
George Henry	...	...	...	J. BORDOLLO.
Clerk of Court	...	...	...	L. ARNHEIM.

On the whole, the performance was a very creditable one for amateurs, though, of course, they showed, as all amateurs do, that they were not used to the stage. The "stick" of the ordinary amateur performance was entirely wanting.

The make-up in several cases, noticeably Captain Williams, District-Attorney Fellows and Henry George, were decidedly good and very like. Rather the best performances were those of Bellows, Neverenough, and Mary Pinch. But criticisms of the play or players are not to the point, as I wished merely to let you know what a free country this is anyhow, and how beautifully our "reform" politicians protect the interests of the "people."

I often think with Carlyle that a monarch is not so bad, after all, as a demagogue, though I do not see that it is necessary to accept with him the monarch as perfection, but rather aim at the destruction of both these evils in the interests of individual liberty.

FREDERIC A. C. PERRINO.

Continental Hotel, Nevah, New Jersey,
March 20th, 1888.

THE LABOUR STRUGGLE.

BRITAIN.

The workpeople at Messrs. Oram & Son's woollen mills, Chesham, are being discharged as their looms come empty.

The new Self Help Company at Buryale has started work with the loom and shed lately belonging to Mr. J. H. Whitaker.

In consequence of bad trade only about 70 looms out of 546 velvet looms, which Messrs. Wrigley and Schofield's Chesham cotton mill contains, are now running.

The Northern Spinning and Weaving Mill, Belfast, one of the most extensive linen concerns in the north of Ireland, was offered for sale by public auction on Friday last. Nearly 1,000 operatives will be thrown out of employment.

DISCHARGES AT SHEERNESS.—Instructions have been issued by the Admiralty for a reduction in the Chief Constructor's Department at Sheerness Dockyard. Owing to the slackness of the work in the repairing department, it has been found necessary to serve notices for the discharge of a party of shipwrights.

WAGES IN GOVERNMENT DOCKYARDS.—The return upon the number of men employed in the dockyards, and the wages paid, which has been prepared on the motion of Lord Randolph Churchill, shows that while salaries have increased some 25 per cent. wages have decreased, and the work done has been less. About 21,760 men were employed in 1886-7, and the wages paid amount to £2,473,080.

COTTON SPINNERS.—The Council of the Operative Spinners' Association in the Oldham district, have made an application to the Committee of the Master Spinners' Association for an advance of five per cent in the wages of all spinners and twiners in the Oldham district. A joint meeting of the committees will be held on an early date to consider the question, which is one of great importance, as three-fourths of the wages paid in the medium and coarse trade are regulated by the Oldham district.

THE LOCKMAKERS' STRIKE AT WILLENHALL.—The strike of lockmakers at Messrs. Payton and Co.'s factory, Walsall Street, Willenhall, has terminated—so far as the men are concerned—successfully. During the nine weeks the men were out of employment the sum of £188 5s. 9d. was contributed by other working men of the town and district, making a weekly average of £19 16s. 1d. The expenses, consisting of the printing of balance-sheets, etc., came to £8 8s. 10d., leaving an available balance of £160 15s. 11d., which has been distributed to the strike hands, who now take the opportunity of thanking all who have contributed to the funds. The men have found employment at other factories in the town.

FEDERATE! FEDERATE!—A strike of twiners has just been settled in the Oldham district which shows the necessity of wider organisation amongst the various branches of the cotton industry. The negotiations nearly fell through on the point of discharging the men who took the places of the twiners on strike. Now if there were a treaty between the three great amalgamated unions of cardroom workers, spinners, and weavers, to withdraw the whole of their members from any mill employing interlopers in any department in case of strike, the traitors would be effectually squelched and the employers more easily brought to terms. A glimmering of this fact appears to have dawned upon the Oldham Spinners, which, it is to be hoped, will lead to the question of federation being earnestly considered.

FELT HAT TRIMMERS AND WOOL-FORMERS' ASSOCIATION.—A branch of this society is now formed at Bury. The subscriptions are 2d., 3d., and 4d. per week for the following benefits: Loss by fire, out of work, lock-outs, unjustifiable discharge from employment, superannuation, and a sum of money at death. At the inaugural meeting Mr. Wilde, the secretary, stated that during the past eighteen months branches were established at Denton, Hyde, Stockport, and Bredbury; and other hatting centres contemplated following the example set them. The number of members was now near upon 1200, and it was intended soon to start a weekly trade journal to defend the interests of the workers in the silk and felt hat trade throughout the United Kingdom.

PROTEST AGAINST OVERTIME.—The annual report of the Ironfounders' Society, just issued, shows that the income was £46,259 and the expenditure £41,661, leaving a balance in hand at the close of the year of £10,381. The average of unemployed during the year was a proportion of 13 per cent. of the membership. The society numbers 11,713 members. The iron trade is stated to have been very bad for the last four years, and regret is expressed by the executive of the society that improvements in machinery and appliances should always be the means of throwing workmen on the list of the unemployed. The report speaks very strongly on the question of systematic overtime, as it is thought that if this were done away with employment would be found for a large number of men who are now idle.

FEMALE LABOUR IN CENTRAL LONDON.—Mr. Lakeman's Report shows the absurdity of the present mode of investigating and reporting upon labour matters by persons who have no practical acquaintance with the subject. His statements as to City skilled labour are utterly misleading to those who are ignorant, and disgusting to the workers who know how far from the truth are the rose-coloured pictures he draws of machinists earning 20s. to 38s. per week, and "smart little women" making a dozen bonnets per day at 1s. 6d. per bonnet, etc. And then we are informed on the authority of that sublimated Sims, Mr. Besant, that "for really first-class work there is both demand and handsome pay." (!) What an insult to the thousands of clever women who are forced to sell themselves for from 12s. to 15s. per week to the Maples, the Morleys, the Marshall and Snellgroves, *et hoc genus omnia*.

DISPUTE AT THE RICHMOND IRON WORKS, NEAR GREAT BRIDGE.—The puddlers employed at these works have for some time been accustomed to heat their furnaces with slack instead of coals, a method which, while it confers pecuniary benefit upon the employers, places the workman at great disadvantage, inasmuch as it necessitates extra work and longer hours. Puddlers employed at other works receive extra remuneration for working slack. The employes at the Richmond gave notice on Saturday for an advance. This the employer refuses to concede, and the work has been closed the whole of the week. A deputation waited on the master on Friday, but no terms were arrived at. A number of the men met at Great Bridge on Saturday morning. They assert that if they resume work at the terms they last received, it will militate against workmen at other places. A number of them seem determined not to commence work unless some

concession is made. Their representative has visited Mr. Capper to obtain his advice in reference to the matter.

THE REPORT OF THE CHIEF INSPECTOR OF FACTORIES.—The Report just issued shows a marked improvement in the administration of the Factory Acts over past years; but there is still much to be done in certain districts, such as Salford, Burnley, Halifax, Huddersfield, etc.—especially the latter district, where the employers have hitherto had things pretty much all their own way both in the mills and on the bench. The total number of informations laid throughout the kingdom was 2,778, under 29 different heads. Of these no less than 1,447 were for employing children, young persons, or women, before or after the legal hour, or during meal times. Another 342 were for employing the same class of hands during legal holidays, whilst the employment of young persons without a certificate of fitness furnished 449. It will thus be seen that these four heads supply the great bulk of the cases. The total number of convictions was 2,142, of cases withdrawn on payment of costs 560, and 76 were dismissed. For the year before the figures were—Informations laid, 1,635; convictions, 1,432; withdrawn on payment of costs, 172; and dismissed, 31. It will thus be seen that the figures for 1887 show a most substantial increase on 1886, whilst in the last named year they were double what they were in 1885.

THE PAYMENT OF THE MINERS' M.P.'S.—The result of the ballot among the Northumberland miners as to whether the salaries of Messrs. Burt and Fenwick, M.P.'s, should be any longer paid out of the funds of the Miners' Union, has been made known. It was as follows:—For continuing payment of the salaries, 4,591; against, 4,291; majority for payment, 292; total number of votes, 8,890. On the last occasion the number voting in favour was 3,387; against, 4,806; or a majority against of 1,419. This time, 8,890 votes have in all been recorded, or an increase of 697 votes over the total number in September. A local paper says: "The miners manifest surprisingly little interest in the subject of their members' salaries. A large portion of them do not seem to care whether the vote is taken at all, while many of them maintain that a fuller discussion of the subject is essential to a final settlement." There can be no doubt that since the propagandá of Socialism amongst the miners, a quite different train of thought and hope has taken hold of many. The undisguised and stupid attacks of the "men in office" on the principles and propagandá of Socialism, has done much to bring about their own downfall, for the result of the ballot must be taken as a crushing defeat of the M.P.'s. The *Newcastle Chronicle* says: "Mr. Burt seems to labour under the delusion that because no complaints were made at his meetings during the last elections, no discontent with his action exists. The only remark that need be made on this point is that it is unfortunate for himself, and perhaps for the cause of Labour Representation, that his friends have not kept him better informed of the currents of discontent among the miners."

GOVERNMENT CONTRACTS AND LONDON WORKMEN.—On Saturday afternoon the First Commissioner of Works (the Right Hon. D. Plunket, M.P.) received, at his offices in Whitehall Place a representative deputation of London workmen, to urge their grievances as to the present system of letting Government contracts. The deputation, which originated with the London United Trades Council of Carpenters and Joiners, was introduced by Mr. Henry Broadhurst, M.P., who said the main object of the deputation was to make complaint of the outcome of the arrangements for the repairs and maintenance of the different Government buildings, the contracts for which, he understood, were let from year to year for three years. The result of the system was that contracts were let at a price under which the contractor of necessity paid a 1d. and in some cases 1½d. per hour less than the current wages paid in the trade in the metropolitan district. It might be answered that the Government had nothing to do but to accept the lowest tender, provided that the work was fairly well done. But the discharge of the duties of the Department of Works was not done if the workmen's interests were so ignored. The workmen of London by the present system were sufferers in loss of wages to the extent of 8d. or 10d., and even in some cases 1s. a-day less than they would receive in other works. Mr. Dew (secretary of the London United Trades Council of Carpenters and Joiners) presented a memorial which urged upon the First Commissioner of Works the necessity of including a clause in all future contracts to the effect that all labour employed by the contractors within the London district on Government works should be of the best quality, and the standard rate of wages to be paid and the working hours to be in accordance with the rules and customs of the trades, and the total abolition of overtime; also that a clause be inserted to the effect that no portion of the work should be sub-let. In support of these proposals the deputation wished to point out how, for want of a similar clause to the one they had proposed being inserted in the contract for the new law courts, the contractor was able to bring cheap labour into London, and by so doing inflict a serious injury to many trades, and leading to sad disputes during the job. Mr. P. Weighill (Operative Stonemasons), Mr. Browning (Operative Plumbers), Mr. Otley (National Society of Plasterers), and Mr. G. Shipton (Amalgamated House Decorators and Painters), supported the memorial, and especially spoke of the sub-letting leading to sweating in various trades. Mr. Plunket made the usual official reply.

THE CRADLEY HEATH CHAINMAKERS.—The Cradley Heath and District Chainmakers' Association have drawn up the prospectus for the establishment of the Co-operative Society which has been the subject of discussion at the meetings of the operatives during the last few months. The name of the Society will be the Cradley Heath and District Chain Manufacturing Society, Limited. The president is Mr. T. Homer, and the secretary Mr. James Smith. The registered office will be in Upper High Street, Cradley Heath. The prospectus sets forth that the society is established with the object of carrying on the trade of chain manufacturing in all the various branches connected therewith, both wholesale and retail. It is pointed out that trade disputes occur so frequently through the competitive system, manufacturers continually trying to outdo one another in price, for which the workers have to suffer, makes it imperative on the workers to combine for protection, and manufacture their own goods and distribute them. The object of the promoters is to establish a co-operative chain works, in which shall co-operate all the factors necessary to ensure success, thereby making the interests of capital and labour identical, and ensuring to each workman a just share of the profits arising from joint work, and and to the capitalist a reasonable interest for his investment. It is proposed to raise the capital of the society in shares of £1 each, but each individual member will be required to hold not less than five to be entitled to vote. The shares will be payable at the following rate:—1s. as entrance fee on applying for admission, and 5s. per quarter following until the first share is paid up. Any person may, however, pay up his shares at a higher rate, or in full, or on application or allotment, if he so desire. The rate of

O'Farrell Hung.—On March 12, 1868, while the Duke of Edinburgh was at a picnic in Sydney, N.S.W., he was shot at and wounded by a man named O'Farrell, who after firing did not try to escape, but made a desperate resistance before he was arrested. He denied connection with the Fenian movement, but admitted being a sympathiser with it. March 26th he was tried at a special sitting of the Central Criminal Court, held at Darlinghurst. Hung there on April 21st.—S.

Death of Charles Darwin.—Charles Darwin, one of the greatest naturalists the world has yet seen, was born at Shrewsbury, February 12, 1809. He was the son of Robert Waring Darwin, who was the son of Erasmus Darwin who wrote verse and books on natural history. Erasmus Darwin, perhaps unwittingly, was a believer in the doctrine, that great wits jump, for very much of his work was bold generalisation and speculation without the solid foundation of experiment that has placed the grandson's name so high. That there should be mention of Charles Darwin's life and work in our Revolutionary Calendar is very right and proper, for the work with which he is credited in the minds of most readers is of the most revolutionary character possible for any man to conceive of. According to Grant Allen's somewhat warm biography of Darwin in the 'English Worthies Series,' the very stars seem to have fought to make Charles Darwin great. The French Revolution and Waterloo trouble had all simmered down, and the world had nothing else to do but produce great minds. Lamarck, Malthus, Lyell, Owen Humboldt, Hooker, Lewes, Spencer, Wallace, and Huxley are all on board together, either just doing something important or just getting ready. Allen does not mention the whereabouts of Samuel Butler, author of 'Erewhon' at this juncture, but it is just a trifle strange that one of the same name should have been Darwin's schoolmaster at the Shrewsbury Grammar School; from there he went to Edinburgh, and thence to Christ's College, Cambridge. Here he became much indebted to one of the well-known botanists of that time, Professor Henslow, who must have had considerable influence on Darwin's turn to natural history. On December 27, 1831, Darwin left England on her Majesty's ship *Beagle*, and did not return till 1836. His book, 'The Voyage of the *Beagle*,' is his reward of that trip. It is not possible within space at command to present anything like a fair digest of what Charles Darwin really did, and what it is claimed that he did, but there may be this said, that he deserves the sympathy of every supporter of unpopular causes if only for the storm of abuse which was showered upon him for his 'Origin of Species,' 1859. The 'Descent of Man,' 1871, was somewhat more tamely received, but still the theologians were too bitter to please the author, and it must with shame be written that Charles Darwin has considerably minimised his own work by mental cowardice which his life-long studies should have made him superior too. As he has effected an immense revolution in thought and method in scientific study, it was perhaps fitting that an immense revolution should take place in thought of him, and that this occurred is proved that one of the most virulently assailed by persons of this age is buried in Westminster Abbey. I have mentioned somewhere in the calendar Samuel Butler's 'Erewhon,' as a hint of yet another revolution which may come about in connection with Darwin. I may suggest that food for much thought will be found in Butler's 'Evolution Old and New,' Hardwick and Boyne, 1879.—T. S.

Death of William Carpenter.—William Carpenter, who died in Colebrooke Row, Islington, London, N., on April 21, 1874, was the son of a tradesman who lived in St. James, Westminster. William was born in 1797, and was with the very slightest of education started on his working life as errand-boy to a bookbinder in Finsbury, to whom he was later on bound apprentice. Here he became acquainted with William Greenfield, the self-taught but scholarly editor of Bagster's 'Polyglott Bibles'; the result of the intimacy was that Carpenter by hard study was able to acquire the knowledge of several languages, ancient and modern, and later on was able with Greenfield to issue a monthly publication called 'Critica Biblica.' In 1825, Carpenter produced in three volumes the 'Scientia Biblica,' dedicated to George IV., whose librarian, Dr. Sumner, had read the proof sheets. Besides these, Carpenter produced a long list of similar Scriptural works, sufficient to have secured him an honourable position in literature, but for us his name is interesting in his political and social writings, which of themselves make a tolerable life's work. Biographies of John Milton and William Cobbett; a 'History of the French Revolution,' a 'Report of the Trial of Charles Southwell for Blasphemy, 1842,' 'Address to the Working Classes on the Reform Bill, 1831,' 'Elector's Manual,' 'The Political Text-Book,' 'The Unemployed,' 'The People's Book, their Chartered Rights and Practical Wrongs,' 'Peagee for the People,' also 'Political Letters and Pamphlets, published for the avowed purpose of trying with the Government the question of law—whether all publications containing news or intelligence, however limited in quantity or irregularly issued, are liable to the imposition of the stamp duty of fourpence.' This series is dated from October 9, 1830, to May 14, 1831, and in my copy is followed by 'A Report of the Trial of William Carpenter in the Court of Exchequer, on Saturday, May 14, 1831, for publishing a number of political letters and pamphlets charged to be newspapers, within the meaning of the Acts of Parliament.' He was condemned in fines amounting to £120. These 'Letters' are addressed to various persons, the opening one being to the Duke of Wellington. It is an 8vo of 32 pages, 25 pages being the letter proper, signed I am my lord Duke the King's loyal subject, William Carpenter. In the letter he gives the whole of the news of the day, home and foreign; a postscript follows, and then market reports and advertisements. The market reports opening. The following my lord Duke is the, etc., etc. The rest of the letters are all in quarto, generally 16 pages, with a symbolical wood-cut engraving at title heading, the engraving not being much in favour of the powers that be. He took some share in the Chartist agitation, being editor of one of their journals bearing the title of *The Charter*.—T. S.

MID LANARK AND SOCIALISM.—The following questions were put to the Liberal candidates in Mid Lanark by comrades: Will Mr. M'Liver go in for total abolition of the house of landlords and bishops, nationalisation of all lands and minerals—the natural resources of the State—and the abolition of all monopolies, by promoting such laws as shall finally extinguish robbery of labour by capital? Mr. M'Liver says he has risen to independent means by his own industry: can he instance any man whose fortune is not the result of profits either directly from the labours of men, women, and children, or from the productions of exploited labour?—G. M'L.

"BEST WALLSEND."—Mr. Ellis Lever, the Manchester coal merchant, who exposed the Hunter frauds, declares that there is an imposition practised upon the people of London in connection with the coal trade which is less justifiable than the coal tax. Many London merchants, he says, describe the coal they sell as "Wallsend" or "Best Wallsend," and so obtain a price which the quality does not warrant. He fearlessly asserts that no real Wallsend coal has been sent to or sold in London during the last 40 years, although it is advertised daily. The name "Wallsend" is used with no other object than to deceive and mislead, and he thinks the Legislature should interfere, if the Trade Marks Act does not apply to coal. Parliament has made it an offence to sell margarine as butter. The attention of the House of Commons has also been directed to the sale of American cheese which contains animal fat and of American meat as English. If these transactions are fraudulent, then the sale of coal as Wallsend which is not Wallsend must be placed in the same category, and should be made illegal. *Jes* is dead or would object to "hampering enterprise."

STRIKING THE ROCK.

"Speak to the rock." He smote it with his rod,
Crying "ye rebels!" All the people shrank
From wrath so rare in him: howbeit they drank,
Fiercely forgetful; and their children trod
The Promised Land, crossing the stream dry-shod;
While his swift eye once from the mountain bank
Swept that sweet scene, and into darkness sank,
Who mingled curses with the words of God.

Now when the people murmur as of old,
Fate sends us forth their wanted lives to save,
And will accomplish all it hath foretold:
Yet, for one wilful blow when factions rave,
Our lives may lose the beauty we behold,
Our glory find an undiscovered grave.

REGINALD A. BECKET

TO THE WAGE-SLAVE.

'Tis the dog's to live and the dog's to die
At the heels of a master—not man's!
Yet this is the portion of you and I,
O brothers of mine, and you ask not why!

'Tis the dog's to whimper and whine for the bone
Which is flung from his master's board;
And 'tis our's to beg of the haughty drone
For leave to labour that he may own.

Is it thus we must sneak through the byeways of life,
Without leaving a trace behind,
Of a word or a blow 'gainst the wrongs which are rife,
Or a part how'er small in the turmoil and strife

A thousand years answer a thousand times No!
In the deeds of their bravest men;
Whose hands laid the wrong and the wrong-doer
Whose thoughts are the torches the centuries show.

'Tis the man's to be masterless, fetterless, free!
The slave's 'neath the whip to crouch down,
And none is so foully misshapen as he
That sits idly passive where wrong-doings be!

T. MAGU

OVERTIME IN GOVERNMENT ESTABLISHMENTS.

In the House of Commons on Friday, on the motion to go into Committee of Supply, Mr. Baumann rose to move, "That, in the present condition of the labour market, it is expedient, with a view to giving employment to a greater number of workmen, to discontinue the practice of working overtime in Government yards and factories, so far as may be done without injury to the public service." The condition of the labour market and the sources of employment were not only a theme for the leader-writer, he philosopher, or statistician, but constituted for the politician—the unhappy drudge of destiny—a problem of extreme importance at the present time. Our statesmanship, like Mrs. Jellaby's philanthropy, was telescopic in its range. Mrs. Jellaby, hon. members would remember, was so occupied with the Carribbee Indians as to allow her children to wallow in the gutter and her husband to go into the bankruptcy court. He could not help thinking the condition of our own artisans was a subject of as much importance as the squabbles of the Egyptian royal family, the Canadian fisheries, or the duties of that interesting person the royal ratcatcher. It was computed that there were at the present time 7,000,000 adult male workers in the three kingdoms, and according to the hon. member for the Rhondda Valley (Mr. Abraham), there were 900,000 workmen out of employment and 6,000,000 worked on an average nine hours a day. If these were reduced to eight hours the immediate effect would be the absorption of 750,000 out of the 900,000 unemployed. Taking average overtime at 12 hours per week, which was a little less than was worked at Woolwich and Enfield in 1885, this would give employment to 1,500,000. The Government employed at Woolwich and Enfield alone over 10,000 men every week, and at the five great dockyards 21,000 hands per year. It was therefore a matter of special solicitude to see what attitude they took in this matter of overtime. From a Parliamentary return for 1885-6, he found that of the 10,254 men employed at Woolwich and Enfield, 7,760 worked an average of 12½ hours per week overtime for 37 weeks out of 52, making a total amount of overtime of 4,832,950 hours, which if distributed among fresh men, would have given employment to over 1,500 for the 52 weeks at 60 hours a week. Every five men working overtime kept out a sixth man. It might be said the sixth man was an unskilled labourer, and that the skilled labourer was not there; but, as a matter of fact, the skilled labourer of the country was now largely living out of unemployed benefit funds. There was a great gulf between the artisan earning 40s. or 50s. a week and your Trafalgar Square rioter. He wanted to prove to the House from statistical tables that highly skilled artisans of the same category as those working overtime were waiting for employment in the streets and about the factories, and were living on the unemployed benefit funds of the trade unions. In the Engineers' Society 7.4 per cent. of the members were on the Unemployed Benefit Fund; in the Amalgamated Society of Carpenters and Joiners, 7.8 per cent.; of Steam-Engine Makers, 5.8; of the Iron-founders, 13.9; of the Boiler-makers and Iron Shipbuilders no less than 22.2; of the Pattern-makers, 9.6; and of the Associated Blacksmiths, 14.4 per cent. This was a splendid record of the fight made by trade unionists against the want of employment, but they could not for ever bear such a strain. Having argued that payment for overtime was extravagance, the hon. member remarked that a country like England with an overstocked labour-market must be prepared either to bring about a more general distribution of wages and employment, or to face a very large increase in the pauper and criminal classes.



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.

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J. R. (Cloverbank, Glasgow)—Fabian Tract No. 5, and the Land Restoration and Free Land Leagues will give you full information on the point you mention. J. S. (Birmingham).—Article received—will be used next week. AUSTRALIAN—The Radical office is New Lambton Road, Hamilton, N.S.W. Its annual subscription is (for England) 8s., and it is quite the best advanced paper in your native clime.

Periodicals received during the week ending Wednesday April 11.

ENGLAND Christian Socialist Die Autonomie Justice Leaflet Newspaper London—Freie Presse Labour Tribune Norwich—Daylight Our Corner Personal Rights Journal Railway Review Worker's Friend	NEW SOUTH WALES Hamilton—Radical IRELAND Bankers—Debat Herald UNITED STATES People New York—Der Sozialist Volkzeitung Social Science Jewish Volkszeitung Boston—Woman's Journal Libertas Chicago—Labor Enquirer Vorboten Chicago (Ill.)—Knights of Labor Denver (Col.)—Labor Enquirer	DETROIT —Der Arme Teufel Fort Worth (Tex.)—South West Hammon (N.J.)—Credit Foncier Milwaukee (Wis.)—Volkblatt N Haven—Workmen's Advocate Paterson (N.J.)—Labor Standard Providence (R.I.)—The People St. Louis (Mo.)—Die Parole San Francisco Arbeiter-Zeitung Coast Seaman's Journal Free thought San Francisco (Cal) The People	FRANCE Paris—Cri du Peuple (daily) La Revolte Le Coup de Feu Journal du Peuple Nimes—L'Emancipation Lille—Le Travailleur Guisse—Le Duvair HOLLAND Hague—Recht voor Allen BELGIUM Ghent—Vooruit Liege—L'Avenir SWITZERLAND Przedsturt Zurich—Sozial Demokrat	ITALY Gazetta Operaia Milan—Il Fascio Operaio Marsala—La Nuova Eta Cremona—La Faccia Rome—L'Emancipazione SPAIN El Productor Madrid—El Socialista Cadix—El Socialismo GERMANY Berlin—Volks Tribune AUSTRIA Arbeiterstimme Brunn—Volkshof Vienna—Gleichheit HUNGARY Arbeiter-Wochen-Chronik ROUMANIA Municipal Vutocare DENMARK Social-Demokraten SWEDEN Stockholm, Social-Demokraten Malmo—Arbetet NORWAY Kristiania—Social-Demokraten
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IN PRAISE OF EQUALITY.

AMONG all the gush that has been poured out over the death of the German Emperor, not the least noticeable is that sermon which the Bishop of Peterborough preached before the royal family, in the Chapel Royal at Whitehall. The discourse took the form of a eulogium on the beauty of existing social distinctions between mankind, so that the Pall Mall Gazette, in a brief notice of it on the 12th March, heads the article "In Praise of Inequality in Brotherhood."

Taking his text from Corinthians 1, chap. xii., the bishop dwelt strongly on St. Paul's comparison of the church to a human body, which, though one body, consists of many members of various functions. The comparison is rather a favourite one with those whose interest it is to uphold social distinctions; a notable instance of its use being that in Shakespeare's 'Coriolanus.' But although the bishop did not (let us hope), as another we have heard of, mis-quote Scripture for his cause, he entirely mis-read it and attributed to the apostle a meaning that the text by no means bears out. For he has chosen to understand the passage as referring to inequality of gifts; whereas St. Paul speaks, not of inequality, but of dissimilarity—a vastly different thing. Indeed, the apostle, in his second epistle to the same people, makes a strong point of equality. He says plainly, "For I mean not that other men be eased and ye burdened. But by an equality, that now at this time your abundance may be a supply for their want, that their abundance also may be a supply for your want; that there may be equality." However, we are not concerned here with St. Paul, but with the bishop, who, regardless of the apostle's reputation for consistency, has chosen to make him figure as a champion of inequality. The Church, which is supposed to comprise all Christians, is compared to a body, whose different members have different functions. If we take the divisions as Shakespeare gives them, we shall get the working-classes for the "hands" as they are so often called, or for the feet, whilst the "upper" classes represent the belly. (I cannot think that the simile holds good here, since all the parts of the body are supposed to perform some function "some more essential, some less so," and I am unaware of any essential function whatever being performed by the aristocracy, who would be more accurately

compared to some foul cancerous growth, draining all the strength of the body and rendering skilful surgery necessary. The distribution to the different members of the social body is carried on by the class of overworked shopmen, who get poorly fed enough. However, we need not quarrel with Shakespeare's decision in the matter; but must object to any special honour or consideration being shown to the wealthy in their capacity of disordered stomach.) Now in a healthy body the main function of the organ in question is to distribute to each member, healthy, sufficient food, bringing glad life to the minutest part of the system. In such a body what comparison can there be between the various members, or how can one be said to be better than another? "Each has its own life movement intelligence, and ridiculous epithets." One tries in vain to imagine any basis on which to found an argument of Inequality.

Not so, however, in our "Society" to-day. Here we see the upper classes absorbing all that the "hands" provide, without performing their own work of distribution; the legs tremble and totter under their load; the "hands" hang helpless—useless; the nation has become a very Falstaff (who had not seen for years the knees which supported him, any more than our bishops know aught of the "brethren" on whose labour they live); requiring an enormous belt (of social laws and distinctions of inequality) to prevent its becoming a spectacle of shame before all the world.

And this is the body that the bishop finds so admirable,—such a constitution, this British Constitution of ours! Altogether in such capital order! And yet I fancy that the Founder of Christianity would repudiate with indignation the title, so often given him by the clergy, of Head to such a body. He, despised and rejected by the priests, the friend of outcasts and sinners, the teacher of Equality, who would have us "call no man master";—no! he can have no part in this abomination. Let us rather call it a headless body, one of Victor Hugo's devil-fish, with its eyes in its belly, and so be quit of the simile; hoping that when next his lordship tackles this subject, he will tell us which he considers more and which less essential of the different members of the body of society, and whether, if bishops represent the heart, for instance, it is well that they should be enclosed in such a fat-bed of luxury.

But after all, the bishop is not quite satisfied. He admits that the brotherhood of those who profess Christianity is not altogether a success, and that this is owing to "inequality in the distribution of this world's gifts; wealth, rank, intellect, peace to some, and toil, poverty, weariness to the rest." He also recognises the antagonism, the class-war, that is beginning between these two divisions of mankind; and he asks, "Have we, ministers of Christ, no help to offer?" Apparently, the ministers of Christ have not; the evils being due, in the bishop's opinion, to the curious way in which the Almighty has made us. For, do what we can, he tells us, "the same social inequalities would still exist, for they are founded on physical inequalities which must always exist." Are we to believe, then, that Lord Clanricarde, being physically unequal to supporting himself, is to remain socially superior to the labourers whose lives are being ruined by his exactions? The bishop forgets that it is possible, and may be advisable, to cut down the ivy which is strangling the oak that supports it. His only suggestion is to teach the rich the "gospel of self-denial" (a tough job he will find it—like training the ivy to stand by itself), whilst "to the poor we must preach the gospel of patience."

But though the brotherhood of the Church is imperfect, nothing else can succeed so well, says the bishop. "You can tell all men they are brothers, but you have no power to create the brotherhood. Your brotherhood is phrase, ours is a fact; it is a living principle." Yes, indeed; to some of us it looks like the "getting-a-living" principle of Judas Iscariot, each dipping his own hand into the dish. But perhaps this is not to be wondered at, considering the low utilitarian ideal that has been held up to the world by the bishops and clergy for so many years. So long as the realisation of products is made the chief aim of human existence, so long as we count the coal of more importance than the miners who dig it, and the corn of more importance than the labourers who harvest it, so long will some system of inequality and slavery be necessary to attain the end required. But when we recognise that "the Life is more than meat," when we understand that men should not live to work, but work to live, and that not perhaps till our few needs are satisfied and the work is put aside can true Life, free, happy, and beautiful, begin to exist,—then we shall find that friendship, deep and true, for all, is altogether desirable, and that nothing can be more delightful than to be surrounded everywhere by Equals with whom to share the Joy of Life.

Is the thing too distant? Is it too much to hope that the day will dawn, when men, weary of this long struggle for existence, shall meet and say: "Working against one another, each trying to get his head above the others, our life has become a burden too heavy to be borne. Together, we could produce plenty of food, firing, shelter, and clothes to satisfy all our needs without half the labour and with none of the anxiety, that now wears away our lives. Those who are unfortunate, we will help; and as long as we can produce anything to share amongst us we will be happy together, and never know want any more, nor any more waste our time in care and distress for things which are so easily acquired." It is the reasonable, common-sense thing to do; and I for one feel certain that, whether it be in five, or fifty, or five hundred years (it depends largely upon ourselves, how long), the time will surely come when men shall at last learn the folly and misery of this swinish scramble, which the bishop of Peterborough vainly hopes to varnish and polish till we imagine it genuine brotherhood; and once having tasted the joy of equality, they will ever afterwards be slow to spend

dividend on share capital shall be £5 per cent. per annum, and in case the state of business does not permit this amount to be paid, the deficit shall be a first charge on the subsequent profits, but without interest. Not less than 10 per cent. of the profits shall be carried to reserve until this fund amounts to 10 per cent. of the capital. It is provided that the net profits, after providing for charges of depreciation, dividend capital, and the formation of a reserve fund, shall be dealt with as follows:— (1) Such sum as the committee may authorise shall be applied for the promotion and encouragement of inventions by the members of the society, to be used for its benefit, also for the reward of special services rendered to the society. (2) The remainder shall be divided among the workers proportionately to the amounts they have respectively received as wages during the period to which the division relates, and shall be accumulated and allotted from time to time as often as they amount in any case to one fully paid-up share. It is proposed to pay all wages by the recognised list of the district, and that shareholders and their children have the first chance of working in the concern, if they are thoroughly competent to do the work required. The promoters state that they do not expect at all times they will be able to show a profit over and above the £5 per cent. paid to capital, but they reasonably say that when such periods of depression come they will ask the workers to consider how the charges on the society can best be met by a curtailment of the working expense. By this means they believe that the wages may be regulated according to the requirements of the trade, and a sliding scale be established which shall be fair alike to employers and workers. Some little delay has arisen in the issue of the prospectus to the public, in consequence of a decision of the Association to alter one of the rules, already registered, enabling them to trade also as general hardware manufacturers, which will embrace all the smaller and kindred industries of the district.

The Mother Grundy school of labour reformers say that the interests of capital and labour are identical, and that there should be no conflict. This calls to mind the story of the lion and lamb, the lion was so distressed about the lamb that he ate him simply to keep him from freezing to death.—*Knights of Labour.*

Whenever the working classes make demands for legislative measures they are invariably met by the cry from certain quarters that it is paternalism. The plaintive wail is raised that the people are losing their sturdy independence and self-reliance, and learning to look rather to government for relief for all ills. It is really too bad that the masses think about utilising the government for their benefit. If they would but only live on their "sturdy independence" and leave the government to, and its power prostituted for the benefit of, a certain select class, then all would be well and no fears might be entertained of the possible dangers of paternalism. Now, self-reliance and "sturdy independence" are admirable qualities, but after an unpaternal government has parcelled out the natural resources and public properties to a favoured few the masses will find it a difficult matter to make a living even with "sturdy independence" to aid them.—*South West.*

MR. BAUMANN, M.P., AND THE OVERTIME DEBATE.—"To the Editor of the *Pall Mall Gazette*.—SIR,—In the not unkindly notice of my speech on Friday which a 'Looker-on' contributes to your Saturday's issue, he says, as a proof that I am still in the nursery as regards labour questions, that I referred to Mr. Burnett as 'Mr. Burnand.' If I did so it was the merest slip of the tongue, as I am perfectly familiar both with Mr. Burnett's name and his works. One other remark I should like to be allowed to make in your columns. I was quite aware that systematic overtime had been discontinued in the Government dockyards of late; but I wanted to elicit a pledge from the Government that it would not be revived in the future (except under pressure of necessity), which I more or less succeeded in obtaining. But your 'Looker-on' very truly said that I made the motion a peg on which to hang a discussion about the distribution of employment and the length of working hours generally. There is no subject of more interest and importance to the working classes; it is the only labour question that has been raised in the present Parliament. Never mind by whom the question was raised, whether by a Radical or a Tory, by a front bencher or by one whom the *Star* so truly describes as 'an utterly insignificant personality.' There was the question; but where were 'the representatives of labour'? The motion had been on the paper for four weeks; yet of the so-called labour representatives only two took the trouble to turn up, and of those two neither took the trouble to speak.—Your obedient servant, ARTHUR A. BAUMANN, 44, Hyde Park Square, W., April 8th."

A RUSSIAN "COMMUNE."

A work just published in Paris, entitled "La Russe Sectaire," by M. Taskin, contains some curious information concerning the various sects, religious and political, to be found throughout the empire of the Colossus of the North. One of the most numerous and widespread is that known as the Doukhobors, whose fundamental dogma is the negation of all religious ceremony or pomp, and the adoration of God "by the spirit and truth of the Creator, which everybody bears in his own heart." Man, they say, carries God in himself when he seeks to attain the ideal of goodness, simplicity, and honesty. This idea that God does not exist as an independent Being, but that He subsists in the human soul, has inspired the sect with a profound respect for human nature. They open and close their meetings by bowing reverentially to one another, and they explain this movement by saying that in so doing they do homage to the divinity with which every man is possessed. The consequence of this omnipresence of God is that all men are equal, all are sinners, and all susceptible of perfection. Wealth and poverty are an anomaly and an injustice, and there can be no servants or masters, no chiefs or subjects. Equality is carried to the extent of denying the obedience of children to their parents, and consequently paternal authority is *nil*. Women enjoy the same rights as men. Marriage is the union of two free and independent beings, founded by love and mutual agreement, and can be broken at the will of either party. All constraint is prohibited. No authority, whether in temporal or spiritual concerns, is recognised. Every person obeys only his own conscience. All the affairs of the community are arranged in a general assembly. Strange to say, this singular society, although based on the negation of all authority, works relatively well. The moral level of it is said to be superior to that of the neighbouring Orthodox population. The members are more active, more thriving, and healthier. Crime is unknown among them; quarrels are rare, and always end in reconciliation. Mutual assistance is universally practised. In short, the Doukhobory appear to be the very ideal of society dreamt of by Louise Michel and her disciples.—*Pall Mall Gazette.*

THE SOCIALIST LEAGUE.

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

Branch Subscriptions Paid.—1887: Hastings, Nottingham, Pelsall—North-Bradford, Croydon, Glasgow, Ipswich, Leeds, Merton, North London, Norwich—to end of March. Edinburgh—to end of May. Mitcham—to end of July. Walsall—to end of August. Hull—to end of September. Bloomsbury, Waltham Green, Wednesbury—to end of October. —1888.—Marylebone—to end of January. Hammersmith, Leicester—to end of February. Acton, Hackney, Hoxton (L.E.L.), Oxford, Clerkenwell—to end of March. Mile-end—to end of April.

Annual Conference.—The Fourth Annual Conference of the Socialist League will be held at 13 Farringdon Road, on Whit-Sunday, May 20. The attention of Branches is particularly referred to (1) Rule V, on the subject of the annual conference, pp. 3 and 4 of Constitution and Rules; and (2) that all branches wishing to be represented at the Conference must pay their subscription up to the 31st March by May 1st.

"COMMONWEAL" PRINTING FUND.

For April 7 and 14—C. J. F., 5s. W. B., 6d. Photograph, £1. K. F., 2s. Langley, 4s. P. W., 1s. Oxford Branch, 4s.

REPORTS.

ACTON.—Sunday morning at 11.30 we held our usual meeting, not a very large one owing to the wretched weather. R. C. Smith opened with a good explanation of Socialism, Tochetti and Maughan supporting. Two new members made.—J. T.

BLOOMSBURY.—On Thursday last, Mark Manley gave an interesting lecture on "How to Advance Socialism." Slight discussion. On Friday a large meeting, presided over by our comrade Donald, was held in the St. Pancras Vestry Hall to further the election of the two Socialist candidates, Bartlett and Clothier, to the Board of Guardians of St. Pancras. Speakers: Mrs. Hicks, Alfred Hicks (S.D.F.), Bartlett, and Chambers. On Sunday, a meeting at St. Pancras Archway was addressed by Donald and Bartlett; "No Master" and "The Starving Poor" were sung, Parker leading the singing.—W. W. B.

CLERKENWELL.—On Sunday, April 8, business meeting held, when financial business and open-air propaganda was discussed. It was decided to commence open-air work on the Green next Sunday, April 15, at 7.30 p.m.; the more active members of the branch are requested to come and help.—B.

MILE END AND BETHNAL GREEN.—Last Sunday, Mainwaring and Davis addressed a good meeting in Victoria Park. We intend to carry on the meetings at this station through the summer. We have also secured the spacious hall at the Mile End Radical Club, 108, Bridge Street, Mile End, for the branch meetings.—H. D.

STAMFORD HILL.—A good meeting was held here on Sunday evening by Morgan and Parker. Some opposition was offered by J. Williams (an anti-Socialist lecturer), who promised to attend the meetings in future; lively times may, therefore, be expected.—P.

GLASGOW.—At five o'clock on Sunday evening, the banner of Socialism was again unfurled and the Cause of the people vindicated by comrade Glasier at Paisley Road Toll, in an able speech of an hour and a half's duration. Another good meeting was held in Infirmary Square at 7.30, and was addressed by Downie and Glasier, several people at the close signified their intention of joining our branch and assisting to carry on the good work.—S. D.

LEEDS.—Since last report we have had several outdoor meetings, and Maguire has lectured to the Halifax Branch of the Irish N.L. On Easter Monday, we met our Bradford and Huddersfield comrades at Bradford, Tarn (Birmingham) and Teesdale (Hull) also put in an appearance. Future propaganda was discussed, with a view to our common action in outlying districts. The remainder of the evening was devoted to amusement.—P.

NORWICH.—Owing to weather we were not able to hold meetings last Sunday morning; in afternoon a large meeting assembled in the Market Place, addressed by Mowbray; in evening another good meeting held in Market Place by branch. At Gordon Hall, Mowbray lectured on Socialism.—S.

SOUTH SUSSEX.—A debate on "Society and the Individual" was held at the Bexhill Mutual Improvement Association Rooms on Thursday night, a good audience present. Mr. Detprose and Leonard Hall were the principals, and several others followed. A resolution in favour of the Socialist was unanimously carried amid great excitement.

WALSALL.—No indoor meeting last Monday owing to Easter holidays. On Saturday the usual open-air meeting was held on The Bridge, a good audience listening to an excellent speech by Sanders. A few "Fair Traders" offered slight opposition, and advantage was taken of this to show the utter inadequacy of their remedy to permanently benefit the workers.—J. T. D.

L.E.L. CLUB AND INSTITUTE.—On Sunday evening this institution was opened with every sign of success. The inaugural address explanatory of objects, etc., was delivered by H. A. Barker. This was followed by speeches from A. K. Donald, F. Henderson, J. Pope, H. Davis, and others. The remainder of the evening was pleasantly occupied with songs and recitals. Socialists living this end of London are invited to join.

BALL'S POND RADICAL CLUB.—On Thursday evening last, W. Morris, H. H. Sparling, A. K. Donald, and H. A. Barker occupied the platform of the above club, and gave an exposition of Socialism as advocated by the Socialist League.

ON SATURDAY, APRIL 14th, 1888,

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Beginning at 8 P.M. sharp.

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"A FALSE START," COMEDY BY JULIAN STURGIS. (MRS. RADFORD, ERNEST RADFORD, and MAY MORRIS.)

In addition to these the following have kindly consented: Daisy Scheu, Mr Tochetti, Mathilde Andignoux, G. Brocher, Prof. Follini, etc., etc.

Admission by Programme, Threepence.

LECTURE DIARY.

LONDON.

Acton.—17 High Street, Acton, W. (adjoining Purnell's Dining Rooms). Sunday at 8 p.m.
Bloomsbury.—Communist Club, 49 Tottenham Street, Tottenham Court Road. Thursday April 12, at 8.30, a lecture by T. J. Dalziel.
Clerkenwell.—Hall of the Socialist League, 13 Farringdon Rd., E.C. Business meeting every Sunday at 7. Sunday April 15, at 8.30, W. J. Ramsey. Wed. 18, 8.30, H. Davis, "The Progress of Events."

PROVINCES.

Aberdeen (Scottish Section).—Sunday night meetings in Baker Street Hall, at 6. Secretary, J. Leatham, 15 St. Nicholas Street.
Birmingham.—Summer Row Coffee House.
Bradford.—Morris's Dining Rooms, 114 City Road. Wednesdays, at 8.
Carnoustie (Scottish Section: Forfarshire).—Meeting every Tuesday, at 8 p.m., in the Carnoustie Restaurant. H. M'Cluskey, Millar Street, Seely.
Cowdenbeath (Scot. Sec).—J. Duncan, 30 Arthur Pl., sec Dundee (Scot. Sect.).—Meetings every Sunday in the Trades Hall, opposite Tay Bridge Station.

OPEN-AIR PROPAGANDA.

LONDON—Sunday 15.

11 ... Acton—the Steyne The Branch
11 ... Turnham Green—Front Common... Ham'smith
11.30... Hackney—Salmon and Ball Mainwaring
11.30... Hoxton Church, Pitfield St. Davis
11.30... Merton—Haydons Road The Branch
11.30... Mitcham Fair Green Parker
11.30... Regent's Park Brookes
11.30... St. Pancras Arches Donald
11.30... Walham Green Turner
3 ... Victoria Park Davis & Mainwaring
3.30... Hyde Park Brookes
7 ... Acton—Friory Acton Branch
7.30... Clerkenwell Green Blundell
7.30... Stamford Hill Barker

Tuesday.

8 ... Mile-end Waste Mainwaring
PROVINCES.

Leeds.—Sunday: Vicar's Croft, at 11 a.m.
Norwich.—Sunday: New Catton near the Church, at 11.30; Ber Street Fountain at 11.45; Market Place at 3 and 7.30.

MILE-END BRANCH.—William Morris will lecture on Tuesday 17, 8.30, at the Working Men's Radical Club, 108 Bridge Street, Burdett Road.

On Thursday April 12, a discussion will be opened by Dr. Merlino, subject "Is Anarchy the logical outcome of Socialism?" at the Hall of the Socialist League, 13 Farringdon Road.

JUNIOR SOCIALIST EDUCATIONAL SOCIETY.—The next meeting of this Society will take place at 64 Chancery Lane, on Saturday April 14, when Mrs. Aveling will read a paper on "Women." Members and friends only. 8 o'clock sharp.

THE LAW AND LIBERTY LEAGUE hold a Dramatic and Musical evening in the Athenaeum Hall, 73 Tottenham Court Road, on Wednesday April 18, in aid of the funds of the League. Tickets 6d., 1s., and 2s. 6d.

SHEFFIELD.—Hall of Science, Rotherham Street.—J. Sketchley will deliver two lectures at the above hall, April 15, as follows: At 3 p.m., "The Theory of Malthus—Is it True?" At 7 p.m., "What is the Basis of Legitimate Authority."

Mrs. Wardle will supply Branch Subscription Cards at 9d. per doz. Leaflet Press, Cursitor street.

SOCIALIST CO-OPERATIVE FEDERATION.—Meeting at Commonweal Office, 13 Farringdon Road, on Sunday April 15, at 3.30 p.m.

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WANTED—Cheap, perfect: 'Anarchismis Clootz, l'Orateur du genre humain; par Georges Avenel.' 2 vols. 8vo. This book was given during 1885 to subscribers to Le Question Sociale (Paris, monthly) as a special prize. Address: T. S., care of H.H. Sparring, Commonweal Office.

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