

# THE COMMONWEAL

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WEEKLY; ONE PENNY.

## NOTES ON NEWS.

"It seems almost too monstrous to contend that self-defence is a crime; that organised resistance to organised exaction is an offence against the moral law." So says *United Ireland* in speaking of the Plan of Campaign.

But that contention, so fiercely made, has done great good. It has forced upon popular notice the question of "people v. privilege," and where that is debated who doubts the result?

The longer that the fight is carried on by the Government and their parasitic protegés against the people of Ireland, the further will it advance the revolution and the less battling will be left to be done "next time."

That the people are moving along may be seen by the reports of the Dublin unemployed demonstration. It is quite evident that the workmen who formed the deputation did not regard Home Rule as settling *everything*.

The only political event of the week worth any notice has been the Burnley election, which, although not so important as represented, is at least a good sign of the breaking-up of the unreasoning prejudice on which the Tories rode to victory at the last elections.

One of the worst parts of the modern commercial war-making for profit and the competition between nations, is the constant perversion of ingenuity in inventing new and still newer engines of destruction.

Every fresh rifle or heavy gun adopted by a nation means not only the enormous waste of labour in making the new arm, but also the absolute loss of all the labour once put into the older weapon.

Anyone of a speculative turn may profitably indulge it nowadays by trying to reckon out the exploitation represented by the expenditure upon re-arming the European armies.

The *Spectator* says: "A correspondent sends us the proposal of M. Albert Tachard for ensuring the safety of Egypt. It is to entrust the country to a Swedish, Belgian, or Swiss force, under the orders of an International Commission, which would keep back the Soudanese and put down internal rebellion, and then to retire. Our correspondent does not seem to detect the immorality of the proposal. It would arm the Pashas with the irresistible strength of civilisation. They could extort as they liked, secure that the European force would put down all resistance. Burke impeached Hastings for that very crime, and it is the one charge upon which he was entirely in the right. If we grant European strength to Asiatics, we must enforce obedience to European ideas." Would our contemporary or somebody explain what is the exact or approximate difference between the "morality" of European and Asiatic ideas? S.

I have seen more than once Mr. Jones, the manager of the London Co-operative Society, quoted as saying that capitalists will be glad to allow labour to use their money for nothing on the condition that the principal shall be secure. Here is another case (with a vengeance) of "Good wine given away for nothing—to-morrow"? Meantime will Mr. Jones explain how these too sanguine "capitalists" propose to live while they are neither buying victuals with their money or being paid for the use of it? Let us take, for instance, the poor-widow-small-shareholder of whom we have heard so much: will she send her money to a co-operative society and accompanied by a letter couched in such terms as these: "Kind gentlemen, I send you my little all, and trust that you may find it useful; to me it is no longer so, since I am told (and believe it) that people can now live without either working, begging, or stealing; therefore pray send me no dividend, but whatever profit you make of it by employing people to work and taking from them a part of what they produce, keep for yourselves with the blessing of the widow and the orphan." I wonder what her next letter would be like. W. M.

Levi Lawson's stockjobber sheet, the *Daily Telegraph*, had one of the most idiotic leading articles on Feb. 23rd, anent the German elections that was ever penned. Had Levi hired a street sponge pedlar to write it nothing more silly could have been the result. Berlin is said to be "a hot bed of anarchism" because it returns Socialists to repre-

sent it. This is much as if we were to say that Levi is an honest man because he puts quack advertisements in his paper. Some London workmen will have something to say about "the atrocities of the Communists" on the 17th inst., which will make the enlightened editor, who has the cheek to pose as the mouthpiece of English sentiment, shiver.

Another of Levi's hirelings feels indignant because certain Socialists kept their hats on in St. Paul's last Sunday. Surely it is well known that the Lord commanded the children of Israel to appear covered in his tabernacle, and when Levi goes to the synagogue he keeps on his cylinder. Why, then, this abominable hypocritical rant about the wickedness of men keeping their hats on in church? Because such rant pays as well as the quack advertisements. A. D.

## LAW AND ORDER IN GERMANY.

### THE ELECTIONS.

For several days all eyes have been turned to Germany. Peace or war was supposed to depend on the results of the elections. The anger of Bismarck, the man of blood and iron, was to be appeased at the ballot boxes, and the press is jubilant at the triumph of the Government. True the Government is sure of a majority for the Septennate. It may be true, too, that the Government will be able to secure a majority for most of its measures. But its majority may not be a permanent one. And above all, the triumphs of the Government will not disperse the war clouds of either the West or the East. Those clouds will become more dense, till the almost countless legions are flying at each others' throats. In Germany, as in the other European States, the throne and the altar make war on the people. The principle of absolutism is there arrayed against the liberties of the people. In the councils of the empire the principle of despotism rules supreme. The heaven-anointed emperor with his heaven-born chancellor are more powerful than the forty-seven millions of the German population. Many people cannot understand why the Germans, with manhood suffrage, cannot break the tyranny of both emperor and chancellor; why they cannot destroy the tyranny which there prevails. It was a favourite though a foolish saying of O'Connor, during the Chartist movement, that he did not fear the Crown so long as the power behind the throne was greater than the throne itself. But the throne is always and everywhere a danger, and allied, as it invariably is, to the altar, its power becomes almost irresistible. In Germany the power of the Crown does not depend on the German people. The chancellor and the ministers do not depend on the Reichstag. They are appointed by the emperor, and are responsible only to the emperor. Under such a system there is war between the throne and the people. It is a war of principle, and can end only by the extinction of Imperialism or the subjugation and degradation of the people. The struggle will be a severe one, though it may not be a long one. In Germany there is no question of ministerial responsibility, the emperor declaring (Jan. 8, 1882) his determination "to personally direct the policy of the Government."

In Germany as in other States, there are of course the same political parties, based upon the same class distinctions and of class interests. Nay, the political parties there are so sub-divided that it is difficult to say where party lines begin or where they end. But taking the two extremes of imperialism on the one hand and social-democracy on the other, all that lies between is mere political cant, political expediency, and political humbug. The German National Liberals are very much like Liberals everywhere, moderately revolutionary in relation to imperialism, but decidedly reactionary in relation to the mass of the population. Their great strength lies in their pandering to the mere national or patriotic feeling, so easily aroused among the unthinking of every class. They have gained largely by the election, while the New German or Free Trade Liberals have been nearly extinguished. The Socialists have also suffered, and no wonder. When we consider the warlike spirit evoked by the action of the Government, the language of Bismarck, of Moltke and others, with the campaign on the part of the official and semi-official press, the Government, in its desperation, accepting even the intervention of the Pope,—what wonder that the Government should have triumphed over all the more advanced sections of the population.

We must bear in mind, too, that Berlin and other great centres are

subject to what is termed the minor state of siege, where the police rule with a rod of iron and almost with unlimited power and authority. That is a matter that must never be lost sight of. Then with regard to the Socialist party, all the force of the Government was brought to bear against them. And not only the Government, but all the imperialist or patriotic parties too. Six of the Socialists returned are in prison. But the action of the Government has been mean as well as tyrannical. We read, from Berlin, Feb. 20: "The Socialists are displaying great energy and activity, but their work is of necessity done in the dark, in consequence of the repressive measures which the Government and the authorities are employing so unsparingly against them. Their leaders have been expelled from many places where they have come forward as candidates, their meetings dissolved, and the literature they have endeavoured to spread abroad confiscated." And that is "law and order" in Germany. Again, we read: "The police have been closely watching the printing offices, and the moment the Socialist manifestoes appear they are seized upon, either at the time of issue or subsequently when they arrive, sometimes in large bales, at the different railway stations, for distribution." What an example of "law and order"! What a splendid display of imperialism! What a grand manifestation of despotism! What a glorious recognition of the sacred rights of property! Yet, notwithstanding all this tyranny, all this despotism, and all this plunder on the part of the authorities, the Socialist vote shows a very large increase. Taking Berlin, the vote has gone up surprisingly. In 1871 it was only from two to three thousand; in 1874, 31,522; in 1884, 68,582; and in 1887, over 95,000. The total number of voters on the register is 314,000; the Socialist vote is therefore a very disturbing element amid the triumphs of the reaction.

In Berlin, the Socialist vote shows an increase of over 26,000 over that of 1884; and in Saxony, although all the seats have been lost, the Socialist vote has increased about 22,000. As showing the spirit evoked by the action of the Government, the press, etc., there was a tremendous vote recorded for the Government by a combination of all the other parties, giving an increase for the Government over the vote of 1884, of over 240,000 votes. And this in Saxony alone. And it was the same in other parts of the empire. But 60 second ballots have to take place, and in from twelve to sixteen of these Socialists are sure to be returned.

The people of Alsace-Lorraine have shared the same fate as the Socialists, in so far as the tyranny and compression of the authorities have gone. Threats, domiciliary visits, expulsions, suppression of newspapers, and imprisonments, all have been resorted to by the government of blood and iron. Yet the population of the annexed provinces refuse to be Germanised. Like the people of Ireland the Alsace-Lorrainers prefer to struggle and wait, and are resolved to resist the process of German absorption.

The German semi-official press complains that the Germans in America have sent funds and words of encouragement to their Socialist brothers at home. Also that French Socialists have sent words of sympathy to their down-trodden brothers in Germany. On this it exclaims, Socialism is international! Undoubtedly, it could not be Socialism worth the name if it were not international. But so too is imperialism, so too is despotism, so too is priestcraft. And when Bismarck invokes the aid of the Pope to crush his political opponents, the Socialists have a right not only to receive, but to invoke the help of the people of every clime to enable them to fight and ere long to crush the crowned Rascality which now rules supreme over forty-seven millions of people.

While every one must rejoice at the progress of the Social Democrats, we must not shut our eyes to the facts of history. Manhood suffrage may not always exist in the German Empire. France won manhood suffrage in 1848 (not to go back further), and lost it when it became dangerous to the "classes." Rome won manhood suffrage in 1848-9, and lost it by the intervention of the "Catholic Powers." Look at German history too in 1848-9. What was then won was very soon lost. The same in other States. And in Germany to-day manhood suffrage may be swept away. "Put not your trust in princes" is an old saying, and the same may be said to-day with regard to Parliamentary majorities.

To Socialism belongs the future. All the imperial scoundrelism in the world cannot prevent it. All the mercenary legions to-day at the command of the despots cannot long preserve the reign of triumphant Wrong. From the icy regions of St. Petersburg to the sunny plains of the South, the tyrants, steeped in crime, are trembling on their blood-stained thrones. But for Socialism to conquer the future, to win the final triumph, it must become more and more revolutionary. Not only must it war against imperialism, but every ism that is opposed to the principle of eternal right, of eternal justice. It must war not only against the despot on his throne of blood, but the tyranny of majorities, whether elected or not. It must war against the tyranny of the State as well as the tyranny of the Church. It must recognise the rights of the individual as supreme above all other considerations.

Socialism must also be international. The principle of usurpation is universal in its application. It is international. The alliance of the despots is nothing new. It exists to-day, and can only be combated by an alliance of the peoples. Our modern commercial system is also international. It is capable of universal application. Our modern financial system is international and organised, and supreme in all the States of Europe and America. And Labour too must become international, must be organised on an international basis ere it can triumph. It is, then, for the international Socialist revolution for which we must organise, for which we must struggle, and for which we

must fight. The present is the age of Might, the age of Cant, the age of Plunder. Let us inaugurate the age of Right, the age of Truth, the age of Equity. Success to the Revolution, social and universal.

J. SKETCHLEY.

## REFLECTIONS ON WINTER.

At this season well-fed indolence frequently finds excitement and pleasure, for when snow is on ground and ice o'er lake, in games and gambles it finds delight. But whether snow or ice be there, from its warm and comfortable drawing-room it can view with satisfaction its happy lot, and thank its stars for not being as other men are, cold, miserable, and hungry. The contrast is striking, even if it be not artistic between this picture and that of the miserable victims of landlord rapacity surveying the smouldered ruins of the mud-built hut they once called home—

"Ah! little think the gay licentious proud,  
Whom pleasure, power, and affluence surround,  
They who their thoughtless hours in giddy mirth,  
And wanton, often cruel riot waste,  
Ah! little think they, while they dance along,  
How many feel this very moment death,  
And all the sad variety of pain!  
How many sink in the devouring flood,  
Or more devouring flame! How many bleed  
By shameful variance betwixt Man and Man!  
How many pine in want, and dungeon glooms;  
Shut from the common air, and common use  
Of their own limbs! How many drink the cup  
Of baleful grief, or eat the bitter bread  
Of misery! Sore pierced by wintry winds  
How many shrink into the sordid hut  
Of cheerless poverty!"

These, the words of James Thomson, strikingly pourtray the selfish brutal indifference of the privileged class to the misery of the proletariat. The thousand joys with which luxury is surrounded render life one continuous whirl of pleasure; the thousand woes that are the workers make his life one unceasing round of hardship. How the keen wintry blast pierces through his thinly and oft ragged-clad body and strikes him cold and empty-stomached, and makes him wonder whether life be worth living! The snow-clad landscape, with ruddy-setting sun, hath to him no charms; he may burn in the sunshine and freeze in the cold, that hollow-headed pomp and pride may shield its gentle head. But 'tis the bloody sweat of the toiler, the slave of indolence, that smooths its way. The lot of the toiler in winter is hard indeed, doubly hard, for then his misery intensifies, and work and food are harder to get than in the warmer seasons. Frozen out, no work, no bread. No matter how much he desires to work and to live by his labour, unless his masters allow him to, he cannot, must not, but must remain what he is, a starved and wretched being. Even when his masters do will that he shall work, he must do so that he may create for them more wealth and for himself only a little food. To what depths of degradation and misery does the inordinate greed and abominable selfishness of privilege consign the larger part of mankind! It has been asserted by some pious and reforming persons, that though privilege be greedy and selfish, the fact that it is so is a good thing for the workers, because it supplies millions of them with employment. To work hard and eat little of the good things of life is the lot of the most fortunate of the workers to-day; to work little, if at all, and eat much, that of privilege.

Winter to the poor is a veritable hell without the fire, and the wonder is that they do not oftener resort to acts of violence in order that they may satisfy their wants. Hungry men seldom, if ever, reason—it would be strange if they did; and to expect an unnatural law will check their desire to satisfy their natural wants, and make them view with equanimity their miserable condition, is foolish and ridiculously absurd. They want food, and in winter above all seasons, plenty of it. It is no use to tell them to wait for better times, till summer comes or trade revives; they must have food or die. Many a hungry-bellied, anxious father tramps the streets to-day in search of work, that he may feed the hope-gone and woe-become wife and children he has left behind in cold and miserable hovel. And this in a period of progress marked more than any other by man's triumph over the forces of nature; marked in that it gives or should give him greater comfort, and take from out of life much of its sting. But despite this increased power over nature, despite the comparative ease with which the wants of man may be satisfied, the struggle for existence has become harder and the means of subsistence scarcer, so far as the worker is concerned.

But he is growing discontented with society as it is, and the recent riots in Scotland and elsewhere show this in manner unmistakable. Coercive laws, the weapon of a corrupt and rotten society, may be used to crush out the discontent, but its spirit is ever burning, and burn it will and must with greater intensity as time passes on, though coercion be used to stifle it. There are some persons who think that it is possible to prevent the spreading of discontent by quoting statistics designed to prove that the position of the worker is a good one. Statistics can be concocted to prove anything, but they will never convince the starving worker that he is well fed, or that his patched garments are good clothes. They may, however, rid the minds of the comfortable classes of the uneasiness occasioned by the fear that their enjoyment would be curtailed were the proletariat so terribly hard up and ill-used. But figures cannot alter facts. Then let comfort and privilege open their eyes, or they may be painfully opened for them. The worker is opening his, and is beginning to see that neither anti-

quated political shibboleths or gradual and imperceptible reforms avail him anything. The erstwhile champions of the workers interests may not like the aspect things are assuming, but whether they do or no, their combined efforts to hoodwink the worker, to blind him to his real interests, will prove abortive.

bleak, cold, and desolate is the outlook for thousands of our fellows to-day: would to wintry winds they could say with Tell, "Blow on, this is the land of liberty."  
HENRY A. BARKER.

### SOCIALISM IN THE PROVINCES.

THE "Sheffield Socialists" is an independent local society, which by steady work in the propaganda has achieved wonders. On Monday February 21 new premises were opened in Scotland Street, one of the busiest thoroughfares in the town. A large shop serves the double purpose of coffee-house (the Commonwealth Café) and lecture hall. The lecture hall holds about 200 people, and is comfortably fitted up. At the opening meeting Edward Carpenter presided, and reviewed the history of the Socialist agitation in Sheffield. I gave an account of the progress of Socialism in the provinces, and was followed by Maguire from Leeds, who gave a short exposition of Socialism. Comrade Furniss then spoke. He was the first preacher of Communist principles in Sheffield, and is held in high esteem. He is also one of a small Communist group which works and lives in community at a place near Sheffield. They have had a couple of quarries for some years, and have now also taken to agricultural work, their first attempts at farming being aided by a bit of land placed at their disposal by Ruskin. The little community works in the greatest harmony, and the members are not at all narrow in their views, Furniss especially working for the Cause on broad revolutionary lines as well as practising such part of its principles as is possible under the present system. The next speaker was the Rev. Chas. Peach, Unitarian minister. He roused a good deal of enthusiasm by his frank comments on a brother minister who had been attacking Socialism from his pulpit. It seems that a lecture on "The Path to Socialism" which I had given a week previously had roused the wrath of the Rev. Mr. Bland, and led him into making statements about Socialism which no doubt were more the result of ignorance than malice. Several Socialist songs were sung during the meeting. The room was crowded, and the people very enthusiastic. The Sheffield Socialists have now splendid opportunities of making headway with the propaganda, and in Sheffield there is certainly room for it. A more disfigured and disreputable looking town never existed. No wonder old Ruskin rails at it. Its ugliest features, too, are carefully arranged, just to impress the stranger, at the entrances to the town, particularly round the railway stations. The ugliest prospect in all the world is a view from a bridge in Leeds, but next to this stands grimy, sordid Sheffield, with its narrow, steep, slimy streets, abominable buildings, waste-ground spots glaring here and there like great sores, and endless infernal clatter and din of machinery. Heaven never smiles on Sheffield because it never gets a chance—a dense cloud of dirty smoke always intervening. Of course the inhabitants are proud of their town: let us hope their pride will lead them to revolutionise it.

The propaganda in Leeds, Bradford, and the surrounding districts goes on steadily and hopefully. The conditions make the work very difficult, and the pecuniary resources are very small; but in spite of these disadvantages a good deal of progress is being made. We had a very pleasant and business-like gathering of the members of the Leeds and Bradford Branches on Saturday February 19. On Sunday morning a meeting was held at Vicars Croft, in Leeds. This place is the customary resort of the town talkers, and like such places generally, is not very hopeful. In the afternoon a useful open-air meeting was held in Bradford, and at night I addressed a meeting of workmen at Bingley. The Bingley audience was very good, and it seems a hopeful place if it can be persistently worked. On Tuesday night a second open-air meeting was held at Bingley; and on Wednesday night a second open-air meeting at Bradford finished the series. The Branches in Yorkshire are doing excellent work with their limited means. In Leeds they are trying to secure premises for a permanent office and club-room, and it is to be hoped they will soon succeed. The members of the Branch, however, are all workmen, and many of them very ill off. Any of our friends who have a subscription to spare could not put it to a better propagandist use than to forward it to the secretary of the Leeds Branch.  
J. L. MAHON.

February 28.

It is not true that capital and labour compete in fair and open field, any more than it is true that an iron-clad war vessel, with heavy ordnance, would compete in fair field with a wooden frigate, equipped with the material in use thirty years ago. Capital is gold-plated, and carries too many guns for unprotected labour. The intelligent capitalist makes the laws affecting master and servant, which the uneducated labourer must obey, but has no effective voice to alter. The capitalist does combine, and has combined, and the result of this combination has been an unfair appropriation of the divisible fund.—C. Bradlaugh, 'Labour's Prayer.'

WEALTH-CREATORS.—Wherefore is it, then, that the creators of all wealth are the poor? That poor man and labourer, which is wealth-creator, are synonymous terms? That those whose labour first causes the earth to yield its produce, and then converts that produce into every necessary, every comfort, every convenience, every luxury, and every means of enjoyment, and yet, though thus consuming next to nothing of all the riches they create, and still continuing to create riches, still continue to be, proverbially, the poor? . . . The distress of the labouring classes is a phrase so commonly in use that we hear it without surprise; yet, when translated into the language of literal truth, what a strange anomaly does it convey—the poverty of the creators of riches!—Mrs. London.

### TO ARMS! TO ARMS!

THE cry be "War"; who talks of peace?  
Be scorn and pity on his name  
Who strikes not with us to release  
His hearth from dread—his land from shame.  
From spire to spire the shout be caught;  
Clash back fierce peals of wild alarms;  
What ho! a battle must be fought;  
Up, all men, up! to arms! to arms!

Ha! where's the foe? And do you ask?  
O blind and foolish! O thrice blind!  
Awake! arise! not hard the task  
A host in every street to find.  
Hark! hear their murmurs! how my thought  
Their muttered wrath—their hate alarms!  
What ho! a battle must be fought;  
Up, all men, up! to arms! to arms!

In brutish ignorance, squalid want,  
In savage filth, in godless crime,  
In cursings that for vengeance pant,  
And hate and hate and bide their time,  
We front a host that scares my thought  
With boding fears and wild alarms.  
What ho! a battle must be fought;  
Up, all men, up! to arms! to arms!

Woe to the land whose cry is "peace",  
When peace's hour is gone and past;  
Woe! woe! in storm and wreck shall cease  
The dotting dreams that could not last;  
"Too late—too late!" my trembling thought  
That oft-heard cry, with dread, alarms;  
What ho! a battle must be fought;  
Up, all men, up! to arms! to arms!

Up, all men, to the true men's ranks,  
To do the work that must be done;  
To earn the eternal future's thanks,  
Of all our ills, to leave not one!  
Crime, ignorance, want, despair, no thought  
Of sloth, while one our age alarms;  
What ho! a battle must be fought;  
Up, all men, up! to arms! to arms!

W. C. BENNETT.

### CHURCH PARADES.

THE "parade" at St. Paul's, on Sunday, was certainly a success from the point of view of the promoters. It was a demonstration, and an effective one in a sense. But the propriety of church parades is a question upon which divergent opinions may be, and are, held by Socialists. On the one hand, it is argued that any sort of "demonstration," irrespective of its importance or character, is productive of good. On the other hand, there are those who, like myself, fail to see the special gain in inducing a body of 100, or 150 men to waste a fine Sunday morning, on which useful Socialist meetings might be held, within the four walls of a church. Surely there should be either one of two things. If it is intended to "demonstrate" against the present organisation of society through that "religion" (so-called) which holds such a prominent place in it, then the only logical procedure would be to go in such force to the "place of worship" selected, as to be able to supplant the parson and convert the quondam "service" into a Socialist meeting. But to proceed to church with the determination to "sit out" the morning performance with all the air of devout worshippers, I must confess seems to me to be a somewhat aimless proceeding. I do not think the logical alternative referred to would be worth its "candle" of subsequent prosecution, at least at present, so my opinion of "church parades" is "don't!" E. BELFORD BAX.

PLUNDER AND POVERTY.—"BRYANT AND MAY LIMITED.—According to the report for the year 1886, the net profits added to the balance brought forward were £82,943. From this has to be deducted the interim dividend at the rate of 17½ per cent. per annum, leaving available for distribution £47,943. The directors recommend a dividend for the second six months at the rate of 22½ per cent. per annum, carrying forward £2943. January 1887." Think of the poor wretches out of whose blood, tears and sweat, this monstrous profit has been drained! Is it "survival of the fittest" that capitalist vampires should fatten on the misery of the poor? Surely savagery and cannibalism were preferable to the civilised commercialism of to-day.—B.

The Marquis of Salisbury justifies the coercive measures of his Government in Ireland, because—he says with amusing audacity—"the Irish National League is an organised system of embezzlement." What does the Marquis call the gang of individuals to whom he belongs himself? Whence and how does he get his enormous revenue? This reminds us of the burglar who called the policeman who took the stolen goods from him a thief. Let the most noble and august Marquis be informed that the Irish National League is trying to stop embezzlement; and if the people of Ireland, as well as other countries—including our own colony—had only sufficient common-sense, Salisbury and the like vermin would have less audacity. A man that toils not is a thief or a beggar. Lord Salisbury does neither toil nor beg; ergo— Our Commonwealth (Adelaide).



"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.

**As all articles are signed, no special significance attaches to them because of their position in these pages. None to be taken as more than a general manner expressing the views of the League as a body, except it be so explicitly declared by the Editors.**

**Rejected MSS. only returned if a stamped directed envelope is forwarded with them.**

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### TO CORRESPONDENTS.

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

*Periodicals received during the week ending Wednesday March 2.*

Justice	ENGLAND	Toronto—Labor Reformer	CANADA	Milan—Il Fascio Operaio	ITALY
Jus		UNITED STATES		Turin—Il Muratore	
Norwich—Daylight		Freiheit		Naples—Humanitas	
Cotton Factory Times		Knights of Labor			
Glasgow—Pioneer		Denver (Col.) Labor Inquirer			
Freethinker		New Haven (Conn.)—Work-			
Worker's Friend		men's Advocate			
Lancaster Observer		Cincinnati (O.) Unionist			
Scotsman		Milwaukee (Wis.)—Volkshblatt			
Southport Guardian					
Carlisle Patriot					
Irish Times					
	INDIA				
Bankipore—Behar Herald					
	SOUTH AUSTRALIA				
Adelaide—Our Commonwealth					
	NEW SOUTH WALES.				
Sydney—The Globe					
Sydney Morning Herald					
	SOUTH AFRICA				
The Cape Argus					

### "SOCIAL EXPERIMENTS."

I WAS introduced a few months ago to a grey haired old man, as a "ralive Socialist," whereupon he told me that he had been an ardent Socialist as a young man, and still admired the theory, but experience had taught him that however good it might be as a theory, it was made impossible in practice by the weaknesses of human nature. When questioned as to how he had become so certain of this he went on to tell me that, as a young man, he had joined Robert Owen and his company, who formed themselves into a Socialist Society, but that it eventually broke down owing to the selfishness of the people and to the growth of petty jealousies among them. What he saw in that experiment had convinced him of the impossibility of putting Socialism into practice until there should be a complete change in human nature. This is but a typical instance of an idea which is very widespread, that Socialism has been tried and has failed, and that if we have a new form we ought to try it, and not ask the people to believe in our idea till we have proved it to be a success. I therefore think that a few words on the question of Social experiments may be of some use.

It will be convenient to divide our experiments into two groups; those which aim at forming separate communities, chiefly self-supporting, and those which aim at merely introducing some form of co-operation into a single branch of industry. Let us take the first group and see what answer we can give to the question so often asked, "Why can't you make a small society succeed on Socialist principles?" First, then, we must notice that no small society can be completely Socialistic while it is surrounded by a large world of competitive life; unless it is to go in for a perfectly simple life with very rude implements and very poor methods of production, it must of necessity be dependent upon the outside competitive world for a very large quantity of the goods it requires, and hence must itself do a large amount of work for the competitive market. This reason alone has seemed to many quite enough to foredoom to failure any attempt to form a community, unless religious enthusiasm and celibacy should be brought in to help. The next point I would notice is, that in a Socialist community the sharp and clever men would not be able to raise themselves above their fellows by large acquisitions of material wealth. This would be a very good thing, and in a completely Socialistic state of society would not seem at all a hardship; if they desired special respect and consideration from others they would turn to the more worthy way of obtaining it, namely, by doing something to deserve it. But in a small community surrounded by competitive life they would be constantly made discontented by seeing how much distinction they could get in the world out-

side, not by doing something worthy of it, but by the much easier way of using their sharpness to get wealth. Now, although Socialists do believe that human nature on the whole is good enough to make a happy communal life possible, if unnecessary temptations are taken away, still we do not think that it can stand the strain of any great amount of temptation to better self easily at the expense of the community, and therefore the fact of a society such as Owen's breaking up on account of the weakness of human nature does not prove that a complete state of Socialism or even Communism is impossible.

One other remark is often made on this matter about which something may be said, it is this: "If you Socialists, a body of picked men, considering yourselves intelligent above the average, all believing in your theories, and many of you really enthusiastic about them, if you cannot make a Socialist society succeed, how can you expect anything but failure when you come to have to deal with a society the majority of whom never think for themselves on any subject, and have no enthusiasm for your belief?" In answer to this I would venture to submit that the very fact of the Socialists being to some extent a picked body makes them the least fitted to form a happy community. In what way are we Socialists picked? Well, to be a Socialist nowadays a man must first have enough discontent with his surroundings to look for something better, hence we are a discontented lot. Now, a number of discontented people are not likely to live very happily together. A certain proportion of them in a community is most valuable to prevent a dull contentment with evil surroundings. Discontented people, like all others, have their work for which they are specially suited, but it is not to form happy communities. Again a Socialist must have considerable originality in thought, sufficient strength of will, and a good deal of reliance on his own opinion to embrace new ideas and disregard the authority by which the old claim his allegiance. Finally, he must have the bump of pugnacity somewhat largely developed, to enter on a contest with all the forces which are arrayed against him. Again I repeat that such men are exceedingly useful to fight for a new idea, or a fresh reform, and to prevent a society from remaining where it is by the mere force of its own inertia, but I very much doubt whether they are fitted to live by themselves in a small community. We are often disheartened by the apathy of men, but a community of men who all had their ideas, and were all bent on converting their neighbours, would be only a little better than the Kilkenny cats! These reasons, I think, are enough to justify us in refusing to start a small sample society of Socialism.

We next come to the group experiments with a more confined aim, co-operative societies or associated homes. The more thorough-going co-operators have hoped that their efforts would lead on to a condition of universal co-operation or Socialism, but unfortunately too many of their rank and file value chiefly the advantages which they themselves get from their society at present. It has been hoped by some that they would be able to turn all manufactories into co-operative works, gradually, and then by a federation of all these works under some communal control to bring about Socialism. This is all very good if it can be done, but I fear it is hopeless. Co-operative production has shown already where its weakness lies. There does not seem to be any difficulty in producing good articles, it is only when they have to be sold in a competitive market that the difficulty arises; in other words, co-operative production setting out to destroy competition is prevented from getting a fair start by the effect of the competitive surrounding. I cannot here go exhaustively into the difficulties of co-operative production, but will hope in a future article to prove more fully my general statement that co-operative production shows no signs of succeeding in the attempt to make all industry co-operative instead of competitive. Hence we must not look to it to solve the social question. I now come to the last point upon which I want to say a few words. That is about the Socialists' attitude towards various kinds of social experiments. I have already expressed pretty strongly in the *Commonweal* my objection to wasting time on mere palliative measures, but these social experiments are rather a different question. In times of great movement in social matters, such as we are now passing through, there are sure to be many experiments tried. I think we are sometimes too ready to believe that anything which does not quite agree with us is set going on purpose to deceive the people. Now I am more inclined to look upon all these experiments as our valuable allies, and am sure they will help to prepare for a more complete change when we are in a position to make one. I do not mean that we out-and-out Socialists should leave our propaganda work to make experiments; by no means, our work is clear, we have to make people Socialists; but then there are many who do not see quite with us, and if they will only make experiments we ought to be very glad of such valuable allies. Most of us, of course, know that any system of communal work and enjoyment can only be practicable when the majority of the people wish for that sort of life; no system of Socialism can possibly work when a great number of the people prefer the excitement and gambling of a competitive life. Now, where it seems to me these experiments are of the greatest use, is in spreading abroad a spirit of community, in teaching, if only a few, how to work and live more on a co-operative basis. If these experiments can effect this much, they will be doing so great a work that we should be fools to throw cold water on them, even if we do not spare any time to help them.

Those who are teaching the working-women to combine and co-operate, though they are not likely to improve their lot materially or over a wide area, are still making it possible for Socialism to come in its due time by educating the people and spreading the sentiment of community amongst them. Another advantage of all co-operative

societies in country districts is that they are about the only means of propaganda likely to do much good. If every country district had a small communist society, such as exists near one of the northern towns, there would soon be a body of opinion in the country to support us even greater than there is in the towns. Such a society not only educates the members and those who come in contact with it in communal work and life, but is a centre of propaganda more adapted to the needs of the country than a branch of a society would be. To convert country people, one must live with them and spend a good deal of time on the process, gradually educating them to new ideas by constant conversations and explanations, they are not so readily converted by a speech or two as the towns people.

To sum up I would say let all who are firmly convinced in their minds that nothing but Socialism will really confer lasting benefit on the people do their best in whatever ways are open to them to convince as many more as possible. But when we see others who are not so firmly convinced and who may still hope to do something by co-operative experiments, let us rejoice that they are really helping on the cause by educating the people and spreading the spirit of brotherhood abroad, and are making it easier for the great revolution which will realize our dream of a society based on mutual helpfulness.

RAYMOND UNWIN.

FOR OPINION'S SAKE.

Edward Leggatt, a carman, has been discharged from his employment because of his being a Socialist. His employer, J. Davis, bedding manufacturer of High Street, Whitechapel, had no fault whatsoever to find with him as to the way he discharged his duties, and until he discovered that Leggatt was a Socialist he was well satisfied with him. He now regards the man who holds views sympathetic with his class as an extraordinarily dangerous individual. Mr. Davis is prepared to give a good character to Leggatt, but he declines to employ a man who may stir up discontent among his fellow-workers.

We are constantly told to be moderate, not to preach the gospel of revenge, but it will be difficult indeed to persuade men to be moderate who not only have been robbed in the most abominable fashion, but who from the very moment that they hold opinions which might bring about a better state of society are persecuted and forced to join the ranks of the starvation army.

OUR IMPRISONED COMRADES.

C. W. Mowbray and Fred Henderson, of the Socialist League, sentenced at Norwich Assizes, Jan. 20, to nine and four months' imprisonment respectively. Jas. Allman of the Socialist League, sentenced at Worship Street on Feb. 21, to one month for "obstruction."

During the week several meetings have been held in London and elsewhere on behalf of our Norwich comrades. Some of the London Branches of the S. D. F. have also waited upon their local M.P.'s to try and get questions asked in Parliament upon the case.

On Saturday a very successful concert took place at the Club Morgenröthe, Princes Square, in aid of the Prisoners Fund.

THE "THRIFT" DODGE.

Frances Willard says "the central idea of the labour question is, not so much how to obtain higher wages as to make the most of the wages already received." This profound assertion lets the disturbed Christian millionaire employer down very lightly again, after the digs and hits labour agitators, Knights of Labour, "ignorant discontented working-men," etc., have given him, and is very soothing to his troubled soul. After all, then it is a matter not worth mentioning, how great or how small a proportion of the results of labour the producer gets, the central idea; the key to the problem is how the labourer uses the pittance that is granted him. The "disturbed Christian millionaire employer" may grind wages down to microscopic proportions if the employé will but use his microscopic share properly and judiciously, the question is settled, there is no labour question. The troublesome fact, that over two million men earn no wages whatever, and thousands of children are being transformed into dwarfs, demons, and idiots at starvation wages, can be pushed to one side for the present, it is presumed. Only get rid of agitation by putting the working-man at his wits end how to live on less than he does now, and the trouble is over. And so the apologists go on, year after year, and find many followers. And every reason but the right one is eloquently urged as the cause of poverty. Anything that will throw the blame on the miserable victims themselves, and allow the easy-living to go placidly on in the old way that has always worked so well for them, is submitted to the people. Anything but to say outright, "the people are robbed, the privileged classes are stealing their wealth from the producers of it." What the poor man does with the little that is left him cuts very little figure in true economics. We want the stealing stopped!—LIZZIE M. SWANK in *Knights of Labour*.

A CRAVEN RULER.—Dispatches state that the Czar of Russia is exceedingly afraid of the Nihilists, and lives in constant dread. Now this is really too bad. The Nihilists should not be too severe in their persecution of this unfortunate man. What though he does send thousands of their friends and loved ones to the mines of Siberia and the dungeons of the Neva? What though he does tear fathers from their children, wives from their husbands, separate brothers and sisters, murder, pillage, and destroy? What though his minions maim, torture, and outrage helpless prisoners of either sex, and commit the foulest crimes in his name? He must not be annoyed. His nerves must not be disturbed. He must live the life of ease though all his subjects may bow their heads in agony and grief. The craven coward! Let him tremble in his luxury. The curses of his people should ring in his ears, mingling their harsh notes with the cries of his victims, until madness or reason gain the victory over his terror-stricken mind. He deserves no sympathy. Brutal in his life, he deserves the fate of a brute. Sentiment is wasted in such a cause as he represents. Let him but do justice, and our comrades will render justice unto him. Until he does, the struggle will go on to the bitter end, and history furnishes abundant facts from which to predict the inevitable result.—*The Avant-Courier*.

THE SCOTTISH MINERS—GREAT SOCIALIST DEMONSTRATION IN EDINBURGH.

ON Sunday afternoon a demonstration organised by the Edinburgh Branches of the Socialist League and the Social-Democratic Federation took place in the Queen's Park, to express sympathy with the Scottish Miners. The *Scottish Leader*, which gives an excellent report of over four columns, says: "Not for many a day have the green slopes of Arthur's Seat been so packed with people—certainly not since the memorable demonstration in 1885, when Scotiand spoke its last decisive word for Reform, and so enfranchised the agricultural labourer. . . . There were some thousands of the best class of working men; crowds of miners from the Lothians, with close-cropped hair and faces washed as clean as a generation's encrustation of grime would permit. The rough element was entirely wanting." There were three platforms, at which stirring speeches were made by several comrades belonging to the League and the S. D. F., as well as by Mr. W. Small, secretary of the Lanark Miners' Association, Mr. Bulloch, President of the Mid and East Lothian Miners' Association, and others. A sympathetic telegram was received from Mr. Cunningham Graham, M.P., apologising for his absence. "At each platform there were two resolutions proposed, seconded, and adopted by acclamation. The first set forth, 'That this meeting of the workers of Edinburgh and district hereby expresses its hearty sympathy with the miners, their wives and children, in their present sufferings, and wishes full and speedy success to the resolute and determined effort now being made to obtain an advance in wages, shorter hours, and improved conditions; and that it condemns the attitude of the masters as unreasonable, grossly selfish, and unjust.' The next was: 'That this meeting is of opinion that the cause of all those who work for wages is one and the same, and that the present struggle is only one incident in the world-wide conflict between the labourer and the capitalist; and that not until the land, mines, and machinery, and all means of production and distribution, are held and used by the workers for the common benefit, can that conflict cease, and a secure and happier social system be attained.' In order fully to appreciate the meaning of these resolutions, it is to be borne in mind that in Scotland alone there are between 60,000 and 70,000 miners, of whom about 30,000 are located in Lanarkshire, the remainder hailing principally from Ayrshire, Fifeshire, and the Lothians. In Lanarkshire the men have returned to their work, discontented, and in Ayrshire the 7000 miners on strike have been recommended to go back to the pit 'in the meantime,' and pending the result of the forthcoming Conference. It is more than hinted—and the tone of the speakers bore out the inference—that should that Conference fail, a national strike will ensue. In the west country wages have fallen as low as 3s. per day, while in the east the rate varies from 3s. 9d. to 3s. 11d., for eleven days' work in the fortnight. It was pointed out that a miner, while he got only 4½d. or 6d. for raising a ton of coal, paid 6s. to his master for it at the pit-mouth if he wanted to give warmth to his family; that the fines and charges imposed upon him in a day were often more than the total amount of his earnings; and that the net result of all this was starvation to the men and unlimited wealth to the masters, who, in many cases, spent their ill-gotten gains abroad in gambling, or at home in luxury. 'In fact,' said one speaker from the west, 'unless the miners have their grievances redressed, they are determined to make a desperate movement which will shake Scotland from one end to the other.' This observation evoked general cheers. Another speaker—he was from the home counties—averred that there was 'not a stone in the houses of the master miners but had been sealed together by the blood and muscle of the slaving miners.' When the speaking came to an end shortly after four o'clock, the great crowd melted as quietly as it had formed. Before it dispersed, however, and throughout the afternoon, collection-boxes were carried round, into which sympathising persons dropped, chiefly in pence, nearly £12. This sum, it is understood, will be handed over to the Scottish Miners' Federation, whose headquarters are at Glasgow, to form the nucleus of a strike fund, in view of what may happen in a not distant future."

The Skye Crofters have been released and quietly smuggled back to their homes, so as to avoid a demonstration. They have several weeks of their two months' imprisonment yet to run.

THE BLANTYRE RIOTS.—Six more men have been arrested, charged with being concerned in the riots. They have all been committed to prison with the exception of one, who was liberated on account of his youth.

About 500 men engaged in Palmers' Shipbuilding Yard, Jarrow, turned out on strike against an obnoxious overseer—"a ninepenny Jack," as Henry George calls them. The men held a meeting; sent a deputation to the heads of the firm; and resumed work on the understanding that the obnoxious individual was to be removed.

Mr. Gosselin, the Secretary of Legation at Brussels, reports that "a scheme is now on foot for exporting to England the smokeless Charleroi coal, which, the promoters consider, may compete profitably with the Cardiff coal in the London market." It is also interesting to know that the Belgian colliers have resolved, or rather the Socialists of Ghent who lead them have resolved, to declare a general strike towards the end of March. Both sides are now busy preparing for the struggle.

Not among trades'-unionists alone is the pressure of "industrial depression" felt, but also in the ranks of unorganised labour the hunger-competition flourishes. Some idea of the dearth of employment at the present moment may be gathered from the fact that there are 1000 applicants for the post of head-porter to the Hon. Society of Lincoln's Inn. The salary is £150 per annum, with rooms in the historic gateway in Chancery Lane, and among the applicants are many former officers of the army and civil service, as also professional men.

The first Printer's Union of which any record can be found was formed in London in 1810, its object being "to correct irregularities and to bring the modes of charge from custom and precedent into one point of view, in order to their being better understood by all concerned."

Organised labour not only seeks to emancipate woman from wage slavery, but it aims to clothe her with the right of suffrage. The Knights of Labour so declared in their recent Convention at Richmond. A meeting of women suffragists the other day adopted the usual whereas and raised its plaintive voice against the oppression of the sex, but made no allusion to the action at Richmond. It must be inferred therefrom that the professional equal suffragist doesn't want to be "emancipated" unless it is handed to her on a silver platter by the kid gloved gentry.—*Labour Signal, Indianapolis*.

## THE LABOUR STRUGGLE.

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

### BRITAIN.

The miners of Lanarkshire have been compelled through dire want to resume work on masters' terms, which are, that a Conference of masters and men take place in a few days. It is, however, almost certain that if the masters' terms are unfavourable the entire miners of Scotland will come out on strike simultaneously.

A mass meeting of miners of districts adjoining Glasgow was held on Glasgow Green on Wednesday afternoon last week. Some 500 miners were present. Cunninghame Graham, M.P., Mr. Small, J. Bruce Glasier, and others, addressed the meeting. A resolution pledging the miners to maintain the struggle against the despotism of Capitalism was carried with great enthusiasm.

**TO PRISON FOR "INTIMIDATING."**—At Sunderland, on the 18th inst., thirteen men were charged with intimidation at the glassworks of Messrs. Greener and Sons. The firm had employed men from Gateshead, the local men having refused to work on the Monday. The works were invaded by the defendants and other men, and taken possession of, and the managers of the departments assaulted. Four of the defendants were sent to gaol for three months, four fined £5 and costs, or six months' imprisonment, and the remainder bound over to keep the peace for six calendar months.

At a Conference of the West Lancashire miners held at Wigan, the following resolution was passed:—"That this Conference views with much dissatisfaction the replies received from the employers as to an advance in wages. That in consequence of the refusal to grant the increase, and the employers' objection to the miners' scheme of restriction—viz., to commence winding coal at seven in the morning—this Conference hereby decides to recommend the miners of Lancashire to give fourteen days' notice to work five days per week, and eight hours per day, after the 14th of March, believing this to be the only way of improving trade."

**WHY BE TRANSPORTED?**—The chainmakers' strike in the Midlands still continues. Lieutenant Smith and Colonel Stewart (late of the Afghan Boundary Commission) have visited the district, and addressed the men on the importance of State-directed emigration by sending families to the Colonies, and supporting them for the first twelve months. It was decided to send a petition to Parliament in favour of such a movement. It was pointed out that if such a Bill were passed, hundreds of families would leave the Black Country for the Colonies. The chainmakers' grievances have been very clearly put before the public by the *Sunday Chronicle*, and the articles are reprinted in a small pamphlet, which can be had of Mr. R. Juggins, of Darlaston, the Secretary of the Nut and Bolt Makers' Association. To talk of State-aided emigration to these people is more than a crime.—K.

**STAFFORD.**—The strike at Messrs. Elley's has ended most disastrously, the men having gone in on the master's terms. They will have to "last" and prepare for the heeling-machine six dozen pairs of boots a-week in order to earn 27s. and 30s., and this amount of work cannot be done. Very few of the men were even trades-unionists; "scabs" were being brought from Northampton to fill their places; and reluctantly the fight had to be given up. It is by such hard lessons as this that the workers are being taught that Socialism alone can arm them against the oppression of the capitalist. Next week the Women's Jubilee Offering collection commences and the half-starved workman (or his wife) will be cajoled and intimidated into subscribing. An advertisement has appeared in a local paper, the *Chronicle*, advising the women to give nothing, and this has considerably roused the ire of some of our local magnates. A large number of leaflets of a similar character have also been circulated by several local Socialists in the various shoe-factories, and it is hoped that the number of names if not of subscriptions will be appreciably diminished by these efforts.—X.

**DUBLIN UNEMPLOYED.**—On Monday 21st Feb. a large demonstration of the unemployed took place here. About 12 o'clock, several hundred men assembled in Beresford Place, most of whom appeared to be furnished with copies of a proclamation issued by the Irish section of the Socialist League. No speeches were made, but after waiting half-an-hour, the word was passed "To the Mansion House," and the crowd started off to interview the Lord Mayor. Along the route the shopkeepers and other inhabitants of Sackville, Westmoreland, and other streets, were much astonished and alarmed at the unusual sight. Reaching the Mansion House, they found that the Lord Mayor was at a corporation meeting, and so followed him to the City Hall. When they found him, they got nothing for their pains but "soft words which butter no parsnips," and the very doubtful advice to visit the Castle. The crowd wandered helplessly about Cork Hill and Parliament Street for an hour or two groaning at the authorities and police, and then slunk away to their "homes." Some day, doubtless, the workers will learn the value of "self-help" and cease fooling around after mayors or magnates of any kind.

**LABOUR STATISTICS.**—It seems that the circulars issued from the Board of Trade to employers asking them to state particulars of the wages paid to workers is causing dissatisfaction. The masters object to giving particulars and would rather have the averages made up for employers' associations accepted. It is doubtful if the collection of wage statistics can be complete and reliable enough to repay the trouble; and it is beyond doubt that the masters will instinctively hinder every attempt to get together a fair statement. Many of the largest firms have point-blank refused to fill in the forms (see *Industrial Review*, Feb. 19). After all this matters little; it is impossible to estimate the amount of robbery of labour under the present system. The idea that the statistics would be useful in settling disputes was absurd from the first. Only a person of child-like ignorance of political economy can imagine that any statement of facts, figures, or arguments, will keep employers from screwing wages down to the lowest point. M.P.'s seem crazed on "inquiries" and the collection of information which they never make much use of. The passing of Mr. Bradlaugh's resolution, like the appointment of the Commission on the Dwellings of the Poor, was evidently only a party manoeuvre out of which no good is ever likely to come.—J. L. M.

**THE NORTHUMBRELAND MINERS.**—Votes of confidence in the miners' officials having been passed by the required number, the officers retain office. An appeal for funds has been made. As the expenses are very heavy and the fund not large, it is hoped that all workers will send subscriptions. Collecting cards are issued, and can be obtained at the offices of the Miners' Association, Ricton Place, Newcastle, where all subscriptions should be sent. It is necessary to inform the public that it is their duty, when they give, to

see that the money is sent to the right quarter, as some persons are about collecting for themselves. At a public meeting of the working people of Alnwick the following resolution was carried unanimously:—"That this meeting, having heard Mr. Grocock's statement of the position of the miners in regard to the strike, hereby expresses its sympathy with them in their struggle against the reduction of wages, and agrees to the best of their ability to support the miners, so long as no fair and equitable settlement of the dispute can be obtained." At a largely attended meeting of the Washington Lodge of the Durham Miner's Association, on Wednesday week, it was unanimously carried to support the Northumberland miners by subscribing 6d. per man each fortnight as long as the strike continues. The engineers and miners at Victoria Garesfield Colliery, we are informed, will subscribe 1s. a fortnight per man and 6d. each boy, to the Northumberland miners so long as their strike lasts. A circular has been issued by Mr. W. Crawford, M.P., on behalf of the Miners' National Union of Great Britain, appealing for aid for the miners on strike.

### AUSTRALIA.

The Trades and Labour Council of Adelaide, South Australia are progressing. They have adopted *Our Commonwealth* as the "Official Gazette of the Trades and Labour Council and Affiliated Trades Unions," with the excellent motto: "They are slaves who will not dare, all wrongs to right, all rights to share." Mr. T. Kean has been appointed editor of the official part of the paper under the sub-title "The Trades Unionist." Unionists everywhere will cordially concur with our contemporary in hoping "that this union will be but the beginning of a stronger federation which by-and-by will embrace the whole working community, excepting only the mischief-workers."

"It cannot be too forcibly impressed upon all trades unionists that the simple fact of being a member of a trades union is not all that is required. That is but the beginning of our work; our ultimate aim, the goal which we are striving for is yet far away. To analyse some of our social troubles and to seek for the remedy will be the Trades Unionist's duty." So writes Mr. Kean in his introductory address. "Social troubles" in that paradise for the workers according to the emigration agents and their patrons! How our colonial brothers must envy us Londoners who have no "social troubles," so leaving the members of the Trades' Council free to attend luncheons, levees, jubilee celebrations, etc., in order to show to an admiring world that princes, peers, landlords, capitalists, bishops and workers, all form but one great united happy family in this great and glorious, etc., etc.

The Adelaide Trades and Labour Council are working hard to give practical shape to a resolution, agreed to unanimously at the Trades Congress, in regard to co-operation, not "as the end of all our desires"; but as "a step towards freeing the workers from the shackles that now enthrall them." It appears that some coopers had been discharged because they refused to leave the Coopers' Society. It is therefore proposed to make the cooping trade a test case and funds are being subscribed for this purpose.

An anti-immigration demonstration, organised by the Trades and Labour Council of New South Wales, took place in Sydney on the 16th January. About thirty trade-societies marched with their banners through the main streets to the Domain, where several speakers addressed the crowd, and a resolution declaring the system of State Aid to immigration to be detrimental to the interest of the working classes, was carried.

**STRIKES IN AUSTRALIA.**—SYDNEY, Jan. 19.—The New South Wales miners are "out" at several places. At Illawarra the company tried to bring the strike to an end by importing "blacklegs," but the strikers "bailed-up" the train at Bulli, and their wives so worked upon the blacklegs' feelings that with one accord they refused to proceed, and returned whence they came.

There is no truth in the rumour that the Mount Keira men have resolved to resume work on the employers' terms; the men are confident of winning the day. Seven blacklegs who arrived by yesterday morning's boat were forcibly seized by the men and compelled to return to Sydney. There was great excitement at the colliery yesterday evening, and Mr. Turner, the police magistrate at Wollongong, went over to read the Riot Act, if necessary. Police have been summoned to Mount Keira from every part of the district.

The Mount Pleasant colliery knocked off work at 3 o'clock yesterday. One hundred and fifty blacklegs, armed with revolvers, marched, led by Mr. Lahiff, the manager at Mount Pleasant, over to Mount Keira, and are now posted on the high flat ground overlooking the colliery. The Keira men are resolved to resist the arrival of the blacklegs. The action of the manager, marching with armed men to Mount Keira yesterday, is strongly condemned. Many of the Mount Pleasant blacklegs are Italians, and it is alleged to be criminal in the extreme to allow such hot-blooded men revolvers and to take them to the scene of probable disorder.

A great meeting was held at the cross roads near Wollongong at 11 o'clock this morning, to consider the question of carrying firearms by blacklegs. It is thought that the matter should be brought under the notice of Parliament, as serious riots, and probably loss of life, are apprehended as a consequence of this foolish action.

A dispute has also arisen amongst the miners at Lambton owing to the Associated Masters having refused a demand of the men that the front shift should be worked. The men in the back shift did not respond to the call to work yesterday, and a letter was then sent to the miners' secretary at Lambton, dismissing them. About 700 men are thus thrown out of employment, and great excitement exists in the locality.

A great strike is also on at the Prospect Reservoir. Large numbers of police are on the spot, but apparently without being required. Labour matters are very bad all over these colonies.

### FRANCE.

**MARSEILLES.**—About a hundred Italian workers in the "Mediterranean" sugar refineries have declared themselves on strike, having been dissatisfied with an overseer whose dismissal they demanded, and demanded in vain. There has been no disturbance.

**BESSEGES.**—Revolutionary placards are, we hear, posted up on the walls of Besseges, containing menaces of death against priests, bourgeois, bankers, and exploiters in general, and winding up with "Vive la Guillotine!" If these hysteric effusions are genuine, we can but pity the half-starved, hopeless creatures, driven to desperation by their state, their eyes seeing everything in the colour of blood, their minds capable of constructing no plan of release—nothing except a brute-like "revenge" on those who are their immediate or apparent oppressors, and have probably, in the intolerable network in which we are all alike entangled, become so involuntarily and through no "crime" of their own.

**SAINT ETIENNE.**—Last week was held here the National Congress of French Miners, a few days after that of the Belgian Miners. The scheme which is laid before Parliament on the regulation of work in the mines was discussed at length, the amendments of Basly being all carried, and finally a counter resolution passed. To end up with, a resolution was passed declaring the adherence of the Congress to the Labour Federation of French Syndicates lately established at the Congress of Lyons. When the Congress had finished sitting a large public meeting was held under the auspices of the Miners' Federation, among those there present being the Socialist members of Parliament Basly and Camelinat, besides numerous other members and political men.

**ALGERIA.**

For some time past the labour-organisation in Algeria has been gradually developing in a satisfactory manner; working-men's syndicates are being formed everywhere, and shortly there is to be held at Constantine a Labour Congress which will discuss social questions and social ills and their remedies.

**ITALY.**

**FINALE EMILIA (Liguria).**—The strike of labourers here is still proceeding, maintained by the *esprit de corps* and rigorous self-denial of the strikers. The contractors have tried to get hands from the neighbourhood, but find to their cost a strong sense of fraternity among the other workers.

**ALESSANDRIA.**—The employés at the "Borsalina" hat-factory here are on strike because the capitalist day by day decreases the salaries, so that while a few years back the men made 35 or 40 lire, they now find it difficult to shake the strikers by dismissing their wives and sisters from the establishment.

**RAVENNA.**—The electoral committees of Ravenna and Forlì, as interpreters of the popular sentiment of Romagna have decided to present for the fourth time the candidature of Amilcare Cipriani, other candidates being withdrawn in his favour. It is of course melancholy to confess to an utter failure, involving as it does the prolonged imprisonment of this energetic revolutionist; but a failure it is, and naturally so; and surely at "the fourth time of asking" it is time to give up the struggle, however much it may irk Cipriani's friends to do so.

Italian revolutionary journals enjoy but a precarious existence, living, as it were, from hand to mouth. The fourth issue of *Humanitas*, an Anarchist publication of Naples, has been sequestered, "in consequence of its writings provocative of class-hatred in all countries," this being the second time already in its youthful existence. A long life and a merry one to this plucky little publication! At Ancona also, we hear, Nos. 4, 5, and 6 of the *Paria* have been seized upon. For all that, says *Humanitas*, this journal will still be maintained, and will continue its publications more busily than ever.

**SPAIN.**

**MADRID.**—The number of unemployed in this city is always increasing. The eight-hour movement is always and ever in agitation—whatever it may be worth.

**VALENCIA.**—The strike of "typos" here is still continued; subscriptions are opened to help them, and we are told there is every hope of success for the strikers.

**GRANADA.**—The tanners here have demanded of their master an eight hours' working day, considering the laborious and very unhealthy nature of the work. The demand, courteously—alas! humbly—worded, was carried to the office by four delegates, who were *not* courteously received. The men of the factory are on strike in consequence.

**BARCELONA.**—The weavers at D. Pablo Salvador's factory have struck, owing to his increasing the number of cloths without increasing the price thereof—a little piece of arithmetic which the ingenious "master of men" is very apt to indulge in, openly or covertly. The little game "becomes monotonous" and the hands strike. (Some day this metaphorical image of industrial slang will cease to be an image merely, and the hand *will* strike, and the blow will be a very definite one, and fraught with meaning.)

**THE SOCIALIST LEAGUE.**

OFFICES: 13 FARRINGTON ROAD, E.C.

**NOTICE.**—All business matters relating to the Socialist League to be directed to the Secretary, H. A. Barker, 13 Farringdon Road, London, E.C.

**Bazaar and Concert.**—Distribution of prizes will take place at 6 o'clock on Saturday March 5; Concert at 8 o'clock. All monies and tickets must be returned by first post on that date or will not participate. J. LANE.

**Police Interference.**—This matter will be under discussion by Council at its next meeting, Monday March 14. All members interested in the matter are requested to attend.

**Outdoor Propaganda.**—A meeting of out-door speakers will be held on Saturday March 12th at 13 Farringdon Road, at 7 p.m., for the purpose of arranging the outdoor propaganda for forthcoming season. Speakers are asked to attend.

**Lessons in French.**—It has been thought advisable to start a class in the French language. Comrade Victor Dave has kindly volunteered his services as teacher. The first lesson will be given on Tuesday, March 1, at 8 p.m. All those desirous of joining the class are requested to send their names to the secretary, H. A. Barker, 13, Farringdon Road, E.C.

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

**Closing of Library.**—All members of the Socialist League and others who have borrowed books prior to Monday, February 21st, are earnestly requested to return same to Librarians on or before Monday, March 7th. Members are notified that unless this be complied with, Rule III. (relating to fines) must be enforced, and defaulting members suspended from Library-privileges. The Library will be re-opened on Monday, March 21st. (The Librarians will be pleased to acknowledge presents of Socialist books lately published).—LENA WARDLE and WM. BLUNDELL, Librarians.

**Branch Subscriptions Paid.**

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

**STRIKE COMMITTEE.**

V. D., 1s.; W., 1s.; P., 6d.; W. M., 1s T. BINNING, Treasurer.

**"COMMONWEAL" PRINTING FUND.**

T. B. (weekly), 6d.; W. B. (weekly), 6d.; E. B. B. (weekly), 1s.; Bloomsbury Branch (weekly), 5s. PH. W., Treasurer, March 1.

**THE NORWICH PRISONERS' AID FUND.**

Already acknowledged, £22, 14s. 7d.; Arthur, 6d.; E. Lacey, 2s.; Leeds Branch (weekly), 2s. 1; F. S., 1s.; Anon., 2s. 6d.; Birmingham Secular Club and Institute, per E. Burns, 6s. 9d.; Webb, 1s.; Mitcham Branch, 6s. 1d.; Hammersmith Branch, 3s. 3d.; Collected in Hyde Park, 10½d.; ditto, 2s. 6½d.; Collected by H. Watt and R. S. P. (Stafford), 9s. For Mrs. Mowbray—A few Fabians, by Annie Besant (weekly), 10s.—Total, £25, 2s. 1d. J. LANE, Treasurer.

<sup>1</sup> [This was received last week too late for acknowledgment in that issue of the paper. All monies received after noon on Tuesday will be acknowledged the following week.]

**BRANCH REPORTS.**

**BLOOMSBURY.**—A. K. Donald was elected secretary by this Branch at the business meeting on Friday, Feb. 25th. W. Utley was also elected for the vacant place on the Council, Chambers resigning.—L. W.

**CLERKENWELL.**—On Wednesday, Feb. 23, A. K. Donald addressed a good audience on the subject, "Scotch Miners." Good discussion followed, and the sum of 2s. 10d. collected for the Miners' Fund. On Sunday, Feb. 27th, W. B. Robertson lectured on "Production." Other meetings have been attended during the week by members of this Branch. Literature has sold fairly well. Branch members' meeting next Sunday, 7 p.m.—W. B. and T. E. W., secs.

**CROYDON.**—On Sunday, February 27th, H. Davis gave an address on "The Modern Trinity: Land, Labour, and Capital." Good audience and collection.—A. T., ast. sec.

**FULHAM.**—A large gathering of comrades and friends took place at Walham Green on Sunday morning, in the expectation of hearing a debate between Mr. Green, our usual courteous opponent here, and the Socialist speaker. In the enforced absence of the challenger, his place was supplied by a gentleman whose acquaintance with our views was quite as full and as accurate as, doubtless, Mr. Green's would have been. Sparring gave the Socialist position, and a brisk debate followed. We hope to meet Mr. Green here on another occasion.

**HACKNEY.**—On Sunday morning, we held a short meeting at the "Salmon and Ball" Flockton and Nicoll speaking. We then went to support Graham at the Broadway, London Fields. Graham and Nicoll spoke to the following resolution, which was carried unanimously: "That this meeting expresses its indignant protest against the unjust sentence passed on James Allman by Mr. Hannay for an alleged obstruction, and calls upon all workers to support the Socialists in their struggle for free speech." A large number of leaflets was distributed. In the evening, H. Graham lectured on "The Realisation of Socialism." Sale of literature increasing.—H. MATTHEWS, sec.

**HAMMERSMITH.**—On Sunday, Feb. 27th, Mrs. C. M. Wilson (Fabian) lectured on "Authority and Revolt." The Anarchist theory underlying an interesting discourse was criticised by comrades Beasley, Carruthers, Morris, and Radford, who were mainly concerned with the difficulty of finding how the every-day affairs of a community could be conducted without the rule of either majority or minority. It was decided to hold an annual meeting of members on Sunday, March 13th, at 6 p.m. Will members please note?

**MARLYBONE AND NORTH LONDON.**—Comrades Brooks, Cantwell, and Charles addressed a good meeting in Regent's Park. Faulkner lectured to a rather small audience in Cleveland Hall on "Law and War." In the afternoon, Mainwaring and Charles spoke to a large audience in Hyde Park. Sir Charles Warren seems to have taken it into his head also to interfere with public rights in the park, and had instructed some of his bullies to hustle the people listening to our speakers. He shall, however, find it will be difficult for him to put down free speech in the parks. Collected in Hyde Park for Mowbray and Henderson Fund, 2s. 6½d.—H. CHARLES, sec.

**MITCHAM.**—On Sunday evening, comrade Lane lectured on "The Different Schools of Socialist Thought." The audience seemed to be highly interested. A good discussion followed. One new member made.—S. G., sec.

**BRADFORD.**—On Sunday morning, Feb. 27, some of us attended a morning lecture, "Liberty v. Socialism," by Mr. W. Nelson, an Individualist, who showed a sad want of knowledge of the economic conditions of the working-classes, and an entire misconception of the aims of Socialism. Like many of our individualist opponents, he prepared for his hearers a gigantic State-Socialism bogey in order to knock it down again. Comrade Mitchell opposed the lecturer in a very effective manner. In the evening, G. A. Gaskel lectured at the "Exchange," City Road, on "Socialism v. Individualism," before a good audience. A lively discussion followed.—C. H., sec.

**EDINBURGH.**—On Monday, Feb. 21, in Free Tron Hall, Patrick Geddes gave his second lecture on "The Theory and Practice of Social Reform" to a good audience. Some of the Socialists present seemed to think that "reform" might be brought about with somewhat more rapidly than the lecturer indicated.—G.

**GLASGOW.**—On Saturday evening, in the Southern Christian Institute, comrade Daniel McCulloch gave a lecture on "Education," which he treated from a Socialist standpoint. The lecture was well received, and gave rise to a good discussion. On Sunday afternoon, J. C. McCutcheon, a friend from England, lectured to a large audience on the Jail Square on the "Duty of the People." In the evening in Hall, Carlton Place, McCutcheon took the place of Muirhead, and lectured on "England Arise," maintaining that the use of machinery was incompatible with a healthy and happy state of Society. The lecture excited much interest and discussion.—J. B. G.

**LANCASTER.**—Sharman lectured for us at the Athenæum on Tuesday night, on "Poverty, its Cause and its Cure." Cleverly criticised the accepted fables of teotalism, Malthusianism, Christism, competitive co-operation, etc., and gave some telling statistics about wages in the country, concluding by showing that until the People rose against their Haters they'd stay where they are—in their sty. Good and quite sympathetic audience, over which E. P. Hall presided.—LEONARD HALL, sec.

**LEEDS.**—On Saturday evening, the members of Branch met the Bradford comrades at the Newmarket Hotel, Bradford, to hear an address from comrade Mahon on the "Prospects of Socialism in the Provinces," and to make arrangements for the coming summer, when the Leeds, Bradford, and Bingley Branches are going to co-operate to further the Cause in Yorkshire. On Sunday morning at 11 a.m., Mahon addressed an open-air meeting in Vicar's Croft.—F. C., sec.

**NORWICH.**—On Sunday morning, good meeting at St. Mary's Plain. Glorious meeting in the Market Place at 3, kept it up two hours, 6,000 there without doubt. Three cheers were given for Henderson and Mowbray, also three ringing cheers given for the Social Revolution.—J. TOCHATTI.

LECTURE DIARY.

London Branches.

Bloomsbury.—Communist Club, 49 Tottenham Street. Friday March 4, at 8.30, Eleanor Marx-Aveling will lecture; and on Friday 11, H. H. Sparling. Clerkenwell.—Hall of the Socialist League, 13 Farringdon Road, E.C. Sunday, March 6, at 8.30 p.m., Laurence Gronlund, "Continental Socialism." Wednesday, March 9, at 8.30, A Lecture. See Lecture List in Pall Mall and Daily News.—Members' Business Meeting next Sunday at 7 p.m. Croydon.—Royal County House, West Croydon Station Yard. Sunday March 6, S. Mainwaring lectures.—Committee Meeting every Friday at 8 p.m. sharp, at Parker Road. Hackney.—23 Audrey Street, Goldsmith Row. Club Room open every evening from 8 till 11. Business Meeting every Tuesday at 8.30. Discussion Class Thursday evenings. On Sunday March 6, at 8.30, H. Davis, "The Modern Trinity: Land, Labour, and Capital." Hammersmith.—Kelmescott House, Upper Mall, W. Sunday March 6, at 8 p.m. A. K. Donald, "Political Economy from the Socialist Standpoint." Hoxton (L.E.L.).—New premises, 2 Crondel Street, New North Road, will be opened on Sunday, March 6, with a lecture by Wm. Morris, at 8 p.m. Subject: "How we Live, and How we Might Live." Merton.—11 Merton Terrace, High Street. Club Room open every evening. Committee every Thursday. Discussions held every Sunday morning at 11. Mitcham.—Corner of Merton Lane and Fountain Place. Club Room open every evening from 7.30 till 11. Sunday March 6, at 8.30. H. Hill, "Co-operation versus Competition."

Country Branches.

Bingley.—Coffee Tavern. Every Monday at 7.30 p.m. Birmingham.—Carr's Lane Coffee House. Every Monday evening, at 8. Bradford.—Morris's Dining Rooms, 114 City Road. Wednesdays, at 8. Edinburgh (Scottish Section).—4 Park Street. Meets every Thursday at 8 p.m. Reading Room and Library open every Wednesday evening, 8 till 10.—In Free Tron Hall, Monday March 7, at 8 o'clock, Edward Carpenter, M.A., "Civilisation, its Cause and Cure." March 14, William Morris. Admission 1s., 6d., and 3d. Fulham.—Address Sec., 34 May Street. Glasgow.—Reading-room of the Branch, 84 John St., open from 10 a.m. till 10 p.m. daily.—On Sunday, open-air meetings on Jail's Square at 1 and 5 o'clock. In the evening, at 7 o'clock, in Assembly Rooms, Bath Street, Edward Carpenter will lecture on "The Mammon-Worship of Five Per Cent." members earnestly requested to turn up. Hamilton.—Branch meets every Thursday at 7.30 in Paton's Hall, Chapel Street. Hull.—11 Princess Street, Sykes Street. Club Room open every evening. Lectures every Thursday and Sunday at 7 p.m. Lancaster.—Owing to some organised boycotting on the part of fat aldermen and magisterial trustees, we have no fixed meeting-place at present. Leicester.—Spiritualist Hall, Silver Street. Sunday Afternoon, at 2.45 p.m. J. Copeland, "Co-operation Criticised." Manchester.—145 Grey Mare Lane, Bradford, Manchester. Club and Reading Room open every evening 6 to 10 p.m. Lecture and discussion every Wednesday at 8 p.m. Norwich.—No. 6 St. Benedict St. Lecture and discussion every Sunday and Monday at 8 p.m. Reading-room open every day from 8.30 a.m. to 10 p.m. Oxford.—Temperance Hall, 25½ Pembroke Street. Thursdays, at 8.30 p.m.

Open-air Propaganda—Sunday 6.

11.30...Hackney—"Salmon and Ball".....The Branch
11.30...Hammersmith—Beadon Rd.....The Branch
11.30...Hoxton Church, Pitfield Street...The Branch
11.30...Regent's Park.....The Branch
11.30...St. Pancras Arches.....The Branch
11.30...Walham Green—Station.....The Branch
3.30...Hyde Park (near Marble Arch).....The Branch

PROVINCES.—SUNDAY.

Norwich.—St. Mary's Plain, 11; Market Place, 3.
Leeds.—Hunslet Moor, 11 a.m.; Vicar's Croft, 7 p.m.

Paris Commune Celebrations.

An International Celebration of the Paris Commune will be held at SOUTH PLACE CHAPEL on THURSDAY MARCH 17.

The Socialists of Nottingham combined intend to hold an International Celebration of the Paris Commune on Friday March 18. Tea will be served at 7 o'clock, and after that an Entertainment will be given, and Speeches delivered by Frenchmen and Englishmen, to conclude with a dance.

NORWICH.—The Commune will be commemorated by a large public meeting on March 19th, when Sparling and others will speak. Sparling will also lecture on "The Commune" on March 20th and 21st.

CLEVELAND HALL, 54 Cleveland Street (near Portland Road Station).—Sundays at 11.30 a.m. Mar. 6. "Authority and Revolt."

A Provincial Propagandist Tour.—Comrade Mahon's tour is now nearly ended. At present he is at Newcastle, and will report from there next week. After visiting Norwich and Ipswich, it is expected he will return to town again.

SOCIALIST LEAGUE LITERATURE.

- For Whom Shall We Vote? Addressed to the Working-men and Electors of Great Britain. 8pp. cr. 8vo. For distribution, 2s. per 100.
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