

THE COMMONWEAL

The Official Journal of the Socialist League.

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WEEKLY; ONE PENNY.

NOTES ON NEWS.

THE agitation against the Coercion Bill is going on quite as briskly as might have been expected; but of course it is not the kind of opposition which will prevent a parliamentary majority from passing the Bill. Whether the Government will venture to put it in force when passed is another matter. The popular opposition, respectable as it is, does not seem to be of that volume and energy which implies a threat of consequences beyond the ballot-box; and as to the vote, the agitation is discounted by the Tories because they know that a very large proportion of the agitators have not got it, in spite of the assertion of our "light and leading" friend the *Spectator* that "every man has the vote or could have it if he would,"—an assertion, by the way, which those who do not know that estimable journal might suppose to be either a joke or a deliberate lie, but which I may assure our readers is made in good faith, and in the exercise of that curious fatuity which is the chief characteristic of that "official organ" of the Prigs.

This much may at least be said about the anti-coercion agitation (no doubt it has been said often already, but may well be said still oftener), that the wall which parted the Irish from the English democracy has been thrown down. Here at least, if no otherwise is, *union*—that kind of union which comes of men respecting each others' rights.

Nor should the Tories hug themselves too much on their majority. There are not lacking signs that the pendulum will swing Gladstone-wards at the next election. The defeat of the Unionists on the Birmingham Caucus, Mr. Trevelyan's anti-coercion letter, the "raising of Cain(e)" at Barrow, and so forth, are the kind of things that go before the fall of a big parliamentary majority. Of course it goes without saying that a great many Liberal M.P.'s—those chiefly who are not marked for office—will be bitterly disappointed at their success. If only the Irish would turn tail, and accept some "compromise," and then never be heard of again, how glad would these gentry be! Liberalism might then be purified of its last taint of reality.

The way in which the coercionist press tries to belittle the quite successful Easter Monday demonstration is a good example of the by-ways of party guidance. The *Standard* may be taken as the type of these optimists, or rather would-be optimists, whose fury betrays the fact that they are miserably disappointed with our success. One point is worth noting which is expressed in the following sentence in the *Standard*: "The preponderance in the huge crowd of the class which needs no oratory, honest or dishonest, to whet its animosity to law and order was a sinister symptom." Now not even amidst its foaming-at-the-mouth-disappointment can the *Standard* pretend to take exception to the behaviour of the very orderly crowd of Easter Monday: it is agreed on all hands that there was an entire absence of the horse-play which generally winds up these Hyde Park demonstrations. So what the *Standard* means is that the revolutionists and their sympathisers were in the majority there; and the whole coercionist press makes a handle of this fact against the Gladstonites.

Well, well! times are changed, it seems, since the last Hyde Park demonstration which I attended—the Franchise one—where the banner of the Labour Emancipation League was destroyed, and our comrade John Burns hustled by a Radical mob, because he had said a few words of blasphemy against Mr. John Bright. Would the Easter Monday crowd have hustled any one who had taken the trouble to call in question the infallibility of the Quaker pope?

It is much to be hoped that all friends of freedom will rally to our meeting in Hyde Park on the 24th, to sympathise with the Northumbrian Miners. A stronger case for sympathy and help could scarcely be put before the public, as the readers of *Commonweal* must already have noted. It would be shame to us in London indeed if working men here were to allow the political prize-fight to absorb all their attention, when such worthy men as these are suffering so unworthily, and struggling so hard against the tyranny of our idiotic system of sham society.

The *Pall Mall Gazette*, while it has done good service in some directions is certainly curiously inconsistent. It has most vigorously sustained the battle against coercion in Ireland, and apparently is prepared

to go on doing so; nevertheless in the very same issue which contains an attack (most justly deserved) on Mr. Chamberlain for his newly-developed love of the fairly complete form of "freedom of contract" known as the Crimes Bill, contains also a letter, printed with all the honours and obviously with editorial approval, from Madame de Novikoff, the acknowledged agent for quite the completest form of coercion yet known in this world—the modern Government of Russia. This is really rather too grotesque.

On the other hand I read in the *Daily News* that the whole Russian press condemns the Coercion Act!!! It really is too quaint.

Mr. Baggallay asked Mr. Labouchere if he was prepared to repeat in the House his saying in Hyde Park that the policy of the Government was one of the ruffianism of Bill Sykes. "Beyond all question," quoth Mr. Labouchere. This is a pleasant hearing, after the usual explanations and eating of words which are the custom of the House. But then Mr. Labouchere has been always careful to show that he is not a fool; as careful as most M.P.'s are to show the contrary—though certainly they need not labour hard at that business.

Apropos of this subject, Mr. Conybeare should learn to understand that a man should not be too greedy of humble-pie if he wishes to retain any respect from those who in any way profess to be fighting the popular cause. Explanation on the top of apology is—Well, we really want Sam Weller to characterise this excess in the banquet of humility!

WILLIAM MORRIS.

SOCIALIST CAMPAIGN IN THE NORTH.

FOR some weeks the readers of the *Commonweal* have been informed of the progress of Socialism in Northumberland—how we have been holding large meetings in Newcastle and in the villages in the neighbourhood, and how eagerly the people have bought pamphlets and papers that they might study our doctrines at their leisure. In order to bring the agitation to a point it was resolved to hold a demonstration in the centre of the colliery district and to put resolutions to the meeting pledging the men to adopt the principles of Socialism. On the morning of Easter Monday the Socialist missionaries from London proceeded from Newcastle to the colliery villages, and addressed meetings and organised the processions. At every one of these places they were received in the most hearty manner. One thing was very striking—namely, that the strongest supporters of Socialism were usually the most respected men in the villages. It is usual for Cockney journalists to call our supporters a pack of lazy discontented ne'er-do-weels; but the press here admit that we have got hold of the very best of the people. After the local meetings were over, the processions were formed and the march began. In many cases from six to eight miles had to be travelled to reach the meeting-place. Fortunately the weather was of the most favourable kind, and the fresh air and bands prevented the marches being tedious. At the meeting-place, which was a field lent by a kindly farmer, Mr. Hardman, the Socialist League had a representative distributing broadcast the manifesto of their Strike Committee, which was eagerly read by the men. At about two o'clock the processions came in sight; from all points of the compass the banners were seen floating in the air, and the sound of the miners' bands greeted the ear. Some four or five constables put in an appearance, but they looked rather sheepish. They felt, no doubt, that they were a little out of place, as it was hard to see what five policemen could have done against ten thousand determined men. A large waggon was borrowed from a neighbouring farm, and this served as platform. It was immediately boarded by a troop of reporters, who pretty nigh took up all the room. Fielding was appointed chairman, and as soon as he stood up the meeting became quiet and attentive, in which state it remained until its close. An amusing incident however took place with regard to the reporters. The crowd did not know who the army of eminently respectably-dressed men were who were in the waggon beside the speakers. But the moment Fielding opened, out came the note-books, and the reporting business got under weigh. The crowd stopped the proceedings to turn the reporters out. On these gentlemen remonstrating, the spokesman of the crowd stated that the reason they wanted them out of it was because they gave in bogus reports; but he said if the reporters would faithfully promise to give a full and accurate report, or none at all, they would let them

remain. This the reporters agreed to, but only in the case of the *Newcastle Chronicle* was it fairly kept. Fielding then read the resolutions. The first was expressing sympathy with the miners on strike; the second was pledging the men at the meeting to organise themselves to assume collective possession of the land and capital of the country; the last was an anti-coercion resolution.

Comrade Mahon told the men that the workers in other parts of England did not know of the brave struggle the miners of Northumberland were maintaining against the robbers of labour. If the same thing had been going on in Ireland, the country would have rung from one end to the other with the tale of the miners' wrongs. But, he said, the representatives of labour, instead of standing up for their electors, were merely obeying the orders of the wire-pullers, and never uttering one vigorous protest against the unjust demands of the employers. The meeting cheered most heartily when he said that no one need be afraid of Socialism who was willing to work. Only lazy, idle, thriftless drones need feel afraid.

Morris told the men that he did not consider the life they were leading to be life at all in the proper sense of the word. He wanted to see men really full of spirit and vigour, rejoicing in life and fearing death; whereas to-day most people are on the whole rather glad when their end comes. "Rebel you must, or you will die slaves, and your children will call you craven cowards for allowing them to be born into a world so full of tyranny and wrong!"

H. M. Hyndman, in advising the people to pledge themselves to the principle of Socialism, pointed out how impossible it was for any permanent benefit to result from a merely local strike. What would a strike of all miners in Britain mean? It would mean that the capitalist dogs would have to surrender, and that the people would arrange the terms; but now these local strikes merely crippled the funds of the trade organisations, and allowed the mine-owners to work off their surplus stock at increased prices.

A. K. Donald, as in a sense representing the Scottish miners, was very heartily received. In the course of a telling speech, delivered in stentorian tones that were heard by all the vast assemblage, he ridiculed the idea that they were to be satisfied with a few shillings increase in sixty years. They should insist on having the full fruits of their labour, and never rest till every honest worker was secured a decent livelihood. The misery endured by the workmen under the present system was a scandal to the community and a shame to themselves. The idle, wasteful, and vicious drones were exalted, while the hard-working and necessary part of society was degraded and ground into the mire. The mine-owners and landlords were amusing themselves in the gambling-hells of Paris, London, and Berlin on the stolen proceeds of the pitman's toil. The poverty of the poor was caused by the robbery of them carried on by the rich. The wives and daughters of the workers could hardly get sufficient food or decent clothing, while the frivolous and stupid ladies of high society were pampered and bedecked and loaded down with the costly apparel provided from the earnings of the working class. There must be no compromise with this infamous system. The workers must be organised for the overthrow of the tyrannical and thieving system. Cunning and craft and cultured blackguardism must be torn from the place of honour it now occupied, and skill, industry, and honest useful labour revered as the only qualities which should raise a man in the esteem of his fellows.

Loud and repeated cheers greeted the conclusion of Donald's speech. Mahon then moved a resolution condemning coercion. He said it was no use protesting or declaring indignation against this repeated attempt to put down freedom of speech and combination amongst the Irish workers. When the law tried to shut men's mouths and keep them from organising against tyranny, it was time to cry "down with the law, and damn the law." He hoped the Irish would rise in forcible rebellion against coercion.

Hyndman seconded the resolution, and pointed out that the Socialists were consistent in opposing Tory coercion, as they had also opposed Liberal coercion. The landlords and capitalists on both sides of the Channel supported each other, and the workers must combine in a similar manner.

After a resolution had been passed against the employment of women and girls about the mines, the proceedings ended.

In spite of the enormous size of the crowd, the utmost silence was maintained, and the speeches listened to with eager attention. While Morris was speaking he observed some policemen, whom he proceeded to chaff rather unmercifully. He also gave them some very sensible advice. The blue-coats beat an undignified retreat, amid the ironical applause of the meeting. It will surprise our London comrades, however, to know that at this enormous gathering five policemen, and an inspector in a comfortable gig, were the only representatives of law and order. The meeting lasted two hours. The resolutions were all carried with but one dissentient, and the meeting ended with three tremendous cheers for the Social Revolution.

Morris, Donald, and Mahon at once hurried off to the other side of the Tyne, where they addressed a large crowd at Ryton Willows. Comrade Field, once a member of the Hammersmith Branch of the Socialist League, turned up here and made an excellent speech.

This demonstration has now established the power of Socialism in the North. The papers have all had to admit the overwhelming success of the meeting and the great unanimity of the assent given to the Socialist doctrines. The organising arrangements were all planned and carried out by comrade Mahon, the cost being a few shillings under £3. A new victory for the Cause in a fresh part of the country.

D. M.

SOUTH PLACE DEBATES.

(Concluded from p. 127.)

SIDNEY WEBB and Dr. T. B. Napier were the third disputants, the proposition to wrestle with being: "That the main principles of Socialism are founded on, and in accordance with, modern economic science."

Sidney Webb said the ground of debate would be principles and not places, and remarked that some Socialists will not care much about economic principles; which brought out some noisy "hear, hears," upon which he scored neatly by saying the "hear, hearers" are the very people who give themselves away,—which is true. He then ran over the names of some of those, from Robert Owen, who have been Socialists ex political economists. "Ran over," I may say, is here no mere mode of expression, for Webb is an exceedingly rapid speaker, but withal very clear. By his rapidity of speaking, closeness of argument, and ready and apt quotation, he covered more various ground and more completely filled his bill than any of the whole eight debaters. He avowed himself a Malthusian, but one who says that the question of population of itself will not in the long run affect the question of Rent. As to controlling all means of production, he claimed to have "all the economists with him, down to the ground." By quotations from Prof. Sidgwick, Cliffe, Leslie, Cairnes, and a particularly strong passage from Mill written in 1865, he claimed to have proved that the whole professors of political economy were on the side of Socialism, which is to-day "only making the principles known to the masses."

Dr. Napier began with the usual admission of being quite at one with Mr. Webb in his sympathy with the workers, and then rolled off a wonderful mixture about Stewart Headlam, General Booth, and Mr. Hyndman. I had noticed while Webb was speaking the Dr. had several times put his hand to his forehead and gazed across the table as if dazed by the job he had in front when his time to reply came. I am sure something happened to him while listening to Webb which drove out all he had intended to say and gave his mind a new direction. Dr. Napier positively never once dealt with the text put before him. I thought Corrie Grant quite enough off his base, but Dr. Napier, by devoting almost the whole of his first twenty minutes to an examination of the results of the introduction of a new machine into the boot trade, and the position of the man who has saved up £4000, quite surpassed all previous efforts in how not to debate a certain text. Dr. N. was quite dramatic in his representation of the cutting up of profits between the capitalist and the worker. There was an excess of interruption by the audience, but addressing so many of his remarks in the form of questions, the Dr. fairly laid himself open to interruption. He made much of frightening away capital, and also by excess of State interference weakening the self-reliance of the workers. He warned the workers against too many Trafalgar Square meetings and church parades, and strongly urged Mrs. Besant's 'Law of Population,' and technical education, free if possible. He made the somewhat bold assertion that Socialists hate statistics.

Webb, in his reply, mentioned that his antagonist seemed to have forgotten that there was a certain proposition to debate, for he had in no one point dealt with it. As to co-operation, of which slight mention had been made, he quoted from Cairnes to show how much that would do. "Individualists," said Webb, "must wake up from the delusion as to orthodox political economy being on their side—it is quite the reverse."

Napier began his second heat by admitting Rent to be a monopoly. He then flew off at a tangent, going into a tirade against the present mal-administration in high places. He admitted the existence of many glaring inequalities, but insisted we must deal with them as practical men, and not be led away by such halfpenny phrases as "all wealth being due to labour."

The last proposition to be discussed was, "That State interference with, and control of, industry is inevitable, and will be advantageous to the community." H. H. Champion to affirm; Wordsworth Donisthorpe, of the Liberty and Property Defence League, to deny. Champion began by an appeal for quiet attention; "he was there to advance and urge certain arguments, not to make any demonstration of force or suggest any such by the amount of noise which part of the audience might be able to make." As to first part of the proposition, there was little need to deal at any length with that. As to the next part, that it has done good and will do more, as abstract questions are best examined by concrete examples, he put the case of two farms belonging to one landlord; one farmer by offering higher rent drives out the other; the remaining farmer gets for himself a bigger income than he had before, the landlord gets a bigger income than he had before, but one farmer and some labourers are driven out of employ, and less food is produced to the community. He dealt with the Cobden Club free-trade fallacy, that cheapness of production is an unmixed good. Champion seemed to me to devote too much time to discussing what his opponent was going to say, which is decidedly a weak line.

Mr. Donisthorpe admitted that to some extent his antagonist was right in his historical sketch *re* growth of Socialism; but he said "Armies have grown immensely during the last ten years; is Mr. Champion prepared to admit that militarism is a growing feeling among the mass, or that it is any reason for satisfaction?" He raised a laugh by saying Adam was born just exactly five thousand nine hundred and sixty-five years and three weeks ago,—at least, three hundred years ago people had to believe this statement. That was Socialism! Men have been ordered as to how they should dress, eat, drink, sleep, wash, etc., etc.; and on some one putting a question for details, he promptly referred the enquirer to Leviticus and Deuteronomy. He had a *droll*

cut at Test Acts and vaccination in saying that no one can enter the post-office or the army without accepting State disease at the point of the State lancet, and founded on the objection to this an argument that to add to such State interference would be only to add to present trouble. Tendency, he urged, was very much what the enquirer made it; the Socialist found the tendency to Socialism, the Individualist found the reverse; "each wish was father to the thought." Mr. Champion had mentioned that good had been done by the State interfering with house-farmers; he (Donisthorpe) would submit that the Torrens' Act being followed by six amending Acts proved something not as the Socialist suggested. Such enterprises as the Peabody proved private effort the better agent. Whereat some uproar and denial as to the working class being better housed than in the past. Mr. Champion had urged the case of the Factory and Mines Regulation Acts; he (Donisthorpe) did not believe that any body of men to-day would put children of tender years to such work—"if so, the sooner the country goes to the devil the better." He then gave a cleverly garbled examination of the growth of trades' unions, insisting that if the men had trusted wholly to themselves they would have been better off to-day; but they allowed, invited, accepted State interference, which spoilt the job. Some of which is true, but all of which wanted careful analysis, which I am sorry Champion did not give. Mr. Donisthorpe said he had worked in a mine (some naughty sceptics up-stairs smiled out quite loudly and sarcastically), and "that it was much better to work in a mine with all its much-talked-of dangers, so as to earn a good dinner, than stay at home and starve." He did not stay to examine the statement that the dangers have to be accepted too often with starvation. He dealt in the same fashion with seafaring and its dangers. He made very much of a certain deputation *re* the Mines Acts some years ago, when it was stated those Acts had saved sixty lives from accident and starved 60,000 by reason of want of employ.

Champion began his second speech by a sharp and well-deserved rebuke to those infernal nuisances the people who will carry on the supplementary debate which is the curse of almost all these meetings. Is chivalry quite dead? What would have been thought if in the olden days of the lists each champion (no pun meant) had been liable to assault from a lot of bystanders? H. H. scored one when he wondered what would have been the result to Mr. Donisthorpe had he been brought up as thousands of London children are, and had been compelled to *constantly* work in a mine. He seemed on rather weak ground when he drew an illustration from old Greek society with its chattel-slaves. As to Mr. D.'s argument that private effort has done and will do most good as to housing the workers, he showed that where a company desired to raise capital, but meant to keep the dividend down to five per cent., capital came in very slowly, while to float a new gun company, with a chance of twenty per cent., capital flowed in.

Mr. Donisthorpe, in the concluding speech, allowed that the motive-power behind individualism to be a refined species of selfishness, self-interest. According to Mr. D., "Socialism spreads as new classes come into power; it is a pandering for popularity on the part of each new body of rulers." But the principal reason for the spread of Socialism is, "that there is always a lazy lot of weaklings who believe they will have a better chance if things are better conditioned." I should have thought myself that to be better conditioned was simply giving all a better chance, and didn't want much debating. Labour, he concluded by saying, had really done what the old alchemists were always trying and talking about—turned everything into gold. Therefore "to labour" was the only thing to do. He forgot to say who was to enjoy the fruits of the labour, which was the point in dispute.

Just a few words to conclude. If this series has proved anything, it has proved Socialists have nothing to lose by constant discussion. I am anxious to be as impartial as one mind possibly can be—absolute impartiality is an absolute impossibility—but I feel forced to say that as defenders of a system of society the Individualists just dealt with made a very sorry show. I feel certain there are Socialists who, for purposes of debate, would be able to make a better defence of Individualism than was made by any one of its champions above named. Positively in listening to them—especially Grant and Napier—it seemed they were put up, not to show the strength of the position, but how ridiculous, how monstrous the attempt to defend the present social conditions really is. Then ever and anon this satisfaction is broken into by the recollection that these men have reason to say they have not been able to do their best, because of the noisy interruption they have to endure from possibly well-meaning but certainly ill-advised critics, friendly or the reverse; for there *are* some of both, and both debaters have to endure the annoyance—the Socialist least, no doubt. It is time to make a strong protest on this point. A debate is on a different footing to a lecture; even then interpolated remarks are very unfair. A debate is almost exactly paralleled as I have done above by the suggestion of two knights, and the field should be totally left to them for the time being. A long, carefully worked out chain of argument, each link well made and depending on its fellow, is just as badly spoilt by a burst of applause as by the reverse, when it prevents the speaker proceeding or the audience hearing. Again, thought is an exceedingly tricky sprite, and a speaker must be immensely strong in controlling his thoughts if in the midst of a sustained argument he have a new series of thought-pictures conjured up by some hasty interpolation and yet continue his first intended line; there are not many who can do this without weakening. Further, sixty minutes for two speakers allows no time to waste in gas, platitude, and noise. It is unfair to those who have to teach and those who wish to learn. "O! reform it."

THOMAS SHORE, jun.

"SOCIALISM OR MONOPOLY?"

WE have before us an Italian work on the general subject of Socialism ('Socialismo o Monopolio?'—3s., published by the author), by F. S. Merlino. There is not much latter-day Italian writing treating the subject from a historic standpoint, which lack should render this volume all the more welcome to those who are desirous of pursuing their study below the surface of flowery sentimentalism or street-corner rhetoric. The author of this work begins by giving a sketch of the growth of Monopoly, which is short but comprehensive, and very ably written. He glances at the primitive communities of ancient times, and the remains and traces of the same in the village-life of various countries—the Swiss *allmends*, the Russian *mir*, the *townlands* of the Hebrides. "The road," says the writer, "which has led the human family from community of goods to monopoly is paved through out with violence and rapine. With all peoples and at all epochs the great promoters of monopoly are *conquest* in the external relations of tribes and folks, and in their internal relations *usurpation*," instancing the success of Athenian commercial enterprise and the Roman conquest that followed on its ruin; their highest development and in their realisation their decay. He reviews shortly the growth of feudalism in England, the monopoly of land, which is followed "hard upon," and naturally, by monopoly of land-products and all goods; for, as he says, when at the usurpation of the barons, the general right survived to the disinherited people of enjoying the use of common lands and common woods, this right was supposed to remain to them at the time of the abolition of feudal property; "but the peasant lacking tools and other necessary means of cultivation, the ex-baron, now become absolute and irresponsible possessor of the soil, takes from him, for a mere nothing, his possession grown useless." Mentioning the gold-discoveries and the feverous and factitious impetus given to commerce thereby, the institution of national or popular banks in England, France, and Italy at the end of the seventeenth century, the writer describes the substitution of the "Grande Industrie" for the "Petite Industrie" in the beginning of this century, and says in closing his review of the past of Monopoly, "The machine and the wage-worker complete the chain of property and crown the edifice of monopoly, imparting to industry that movement whose intensity and rapidity weakens it to-day, and allow the capitalist to accumulate enormous gains in some few hours and then to suspend the process of production." After pointing out that "economic science had at its birth at the end of the last century the well defined aim of discovering means to obviate the evils of monopoly," its first high priests and students writing in all good faith and honesty, the writer proceeds to review modern economy, with its fallacies of free trade, free contract, and the like, private enterprise and monopoly in agriculture, means of transport, finance, and so forth. He likens society to-day to a beleaguered city, in which we are forced to buy all goods at three-fold, four-fold, ten-fold their cost. This is the case certainly with many things (as the necessaries of life, house-shelter, and many foods), but with numerous goods—quasi-luxuries, the new-coined "necessaries" of a flash civilisation—there is a certain deceptive halo of cheapness which quite takes in the ignorant, who vaunt the "progress" of social life (a lamentable progress indeed!), and unfortunately are incapable of watching the progress that exists in truth. The short descriptive chapter on the "Theory of Monopolism" is plain and clear, though perhaps wanting in detail. It is summarised on the first page: "Monopoly is born, not of the simple appropriation of the products of nature, or of the difference of utility between goods, and of productivity of labour, but is born of the right which a man arrogates to himself to dispose of natural products, specified or otherwise, under the form of extracting by this means a profit on the labour of others." In one of the "Fallacies of the Economists," however, I am bound to say that I see no fallacy, but a truth—namely, in the definition of Rent. Rent is the difference in productivity between the best yielding land and the worst, to put it shortly and roughly. But the difference between rent to-day and in a Socialist state of society is that whereas now the proprietor of the superior land gains from the greater productivity of his land, in a reasonably ordered community this surplus will go into the stores of the community, and thus maintain economic equilibrium. Rent of this sort, in countries where the quality of the soil varies, must always be—though, it may be, only implicitly. In giving us an outline of a possible Socialist organisation, he dwells upon the importance of immediate labour-combination the day after the fighting days of the Revolution, laying stress upon the influence for good or bad that the speedy or tardy reintegration of the factors of labour will have upon the character of the social change.

We regret that Signor Merlino has not touched upon the ethical side of Socialism, having given us so clear and able a general view in a much condensed form of its economics. The ethics of Socialism are too much ignored by most expounders of its doctrines. For all this omission, Signor Merlino has very successfully done his work of laying before his compatriots a clear and simple exposition of the ills of Capitalism and the benefits of Socialism; while we may add that there is nothing throughout his writing to ruffle the temper of the most rabid anti-Anarchist of us all.

M. M.

AMSTERDAM, April 13.—Taking advantage of the festivities in celebration of the King of Holland's seventieth birthday, a deputation from the Universal Suffrage Union had an audience of King William, and presented a petition praying his Majesty to pardon M. Domela Nieuwenhuis, who was condemned in June last to a year's solitary confinement for insulting, the king. The petition sets forth that M. Nieuwenhuis is seriously ill.



"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 in a general manner expressing the views of the League as a body, except it be so explicitly declared by the Editors.

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Periodicals received during the week ending Wednesday April 20.

ENGLAND	Boston—Woman's Journal	HOLLAND
Justice	Liberty	Hague—Recht voor Allen
Jus	Denver (Col.) Labor Inquirer	SWITZERLAND
Norwich—Daylight	New Haven (Conn.) Workmen's Advocate	Zurich—Sozial Demokrat
Londoner Arbeiter-Zeitung	Chicago (Ill.)—Knights of Labor	ITALY
Cotton Factory Times	Vorbote	Milan—Il Fascio Operaio
Glasgow—Pioneer	Labor Enquirer	Turin—Il Muratore
Yorkshire Free Press	Albina (Oreg.)—Weekly Courier	Naples—Humanitas
Die Autonomie	Salem (Oreg.) Advance-Thought	SPAIN
Anarchist	Detroit (Mich.)—The Advance	Madrid—El Socialista
Worker's Friend	and Labor Leaf	Cadiz—El Socialismo
INDIA	Cincinnati (O.) Unionist	PORTUGAL
Bankipore—Behar Herald	Fort Worth (Tex.)—South West	Lisbon—O Protesto Operario
Bombay Gazette	Douglasville (Ga.) Weekly View	AUSTRIA
Allahabad—People's Budget	Milwaukee (Wis.)—Volksblatt	Arbeiterstimme
SOUTH AUSTRALIA	Seattle (W.T.) Voice of the People	Vienna—Gleichheit
Adelaide—Our Commonwealth	FRANCE	HUNGARY
CANADA	Paris—Cri du Peuple (daily)	Arbeiter-Wochen-Chronik
Toronto—Labor Reformer	L'Insurge	BOHEMIA
UNITED STATES	La Revolution Cosmopolite	Jassy—Lupta
New York—Volkszeitung	Guise—Le Devoir	DENMARK
Freiheit	Lille—Le Travailleur	Social-Demokraten
John Swinton's Paper	BEELGIUM	
Der Sozialist	Liege—L'Avenir	
Truthseeker		

CONCERNING "JUSTICE."

PLATO and the ancients generally deemed the whole of morality to be summed up in the idea of Justice. And indeed, when looked at closely it will be seen that the notion of justice at least supplies the key-note of every ethical system. It is therefore on this notion of justice that the crucial question turns in debates between the advocates of modern Socialism and of modern Individualism respectively. The bourgeois idea of justice is crystallised in the notion of the absolute right of the individual to the possession and full control of such property as he has acquired without overt breach of the bourgeois law. To interfere with this right of his, to abolish his possession, is in bourgeois eyes the incarnation of injustice. The Socialist idea of justice is crystallised in the notion of the absolute right of the community to the possession and control (at least) of all wealth not intended for direct individual use. Hence the abolition of the individual possession and control of such property, or in other words, its confiscation, is the first expression of Socialist justice. Between possession and confiscation is a great gulf fixed, the gulf between the Bourgeois and the Socialist worlds. Well-meaning men seek to throw bridges over this gulf by schemes of compensation, abolition of inheritance, and the like. But the attempts, as we believe, even should they ever be carried out practically, will fall disastrously short of their mark, and be speedily engulfed between the precipitous shores they would unite. Nowhere can the phrase, "He that is not for us is against us," be more aptly applied than to the moral standpoint of modern Individualism and of modern Socialism. To the one individual possession is right and justice, and social confiscation is wrong and injustice; to the other, individual possession is wrong and injustice, and confiscation is right and justice. This is the real issue. Unless a man accept the last-named standpoint unreservedly, he has no right to call himself a Socialist. If he does accept it, he will seek the shortest and most direct road to the attainment of justice rather than any longer and more indirect ones, of which it is at best doubtful whether they will attain the end at all. For be it remembered the moment you tamper with the sacredness of private property, no matter how mildly, you surrender the conventional bourgeois principle of justice, while the moment you talk of compensation you surrender the Socialist principle of justice; for compensation can only be real if it is adequate, and can only be adequate if it counterbalances and thereby annuls the confiscation.

It is just, says the Individualist, for a man to do what he likes with his own. Good; but what is his own? The "own" of the Roman citizen of the republic included his slaves. These he could cut up to feed his lampreys if he liked, and he doubtless felt it "unjust" when

the emperors limited his right to the control of his own property, in this and similar ways, by sundry enactments which (to employ a modern phrase) "savoured of State Socialism." Again, the donkey is the costermonger's "own." But if the costermonger stimulates that donkey's flagging energies with a two-pronged fork, the modern State interferes and limits the control of the costermonger over his property. The costermonger perhaps thinks it unjust—"State-Socialistic," and the like; the humanitarian thinks it just, and is so far untrue to bourgeois principles. But, says the bourgeois advocate, this does not touch us; we only refer to the things which are products of industry and which can be, and have been, lawfully acquired. Now the right to property in human flesh is not admitted in the present day in any sense, and therefore it cannot be lawfully acquired. The property in assinine or other flesh is admitted, only with certain restrictions. Have a care, O bourgeois! You concede, then, that the concepts of "right" and "justice" as regards property have changed, for it was not always so. But no matter. It is just, you say, for a man to possess the product of his industry, or what he has acquired in a lawful manner, and to have the entire control of it. Good. But the feudal baron would not have thought it just to have been deprived of his "dues" taken from the industry of his villeins, whom he had acquired with his lands, lands obtained not by industry but by violence. At the sack of a town the mediæval knight would have thought it unjust had his lord, in accordance with nineteenth century notions of equity, magnanimously compelled him to surrender his booty to its original lawful owner. And the rest of the world would have agreed with him, owner included. The Frank who broke the vase at Soissons would not have appreciated the justice of Chlodwig any better had he sought to make him surrender it to the Romano-Gaul who had previously possessed it, and had presumably acquired it in a lawful manner, than he did when he wished to appropriate it himself. But these were bad men, you will say. And it is true that the principle of your middle-class Individualist conception of "justice" is opposed to the "justice" of these men, therefore to you they are bad.

So now, having shown by these one or two examples that justice was conceived differently in the past, we will trace the logical working out of your own true bourgeois conception—that of the right of every man to the full possession and control of wealth acquired by the industry of himself, or of others who have voluntarily given or bequeathed it to him. This conception of right or "justice" you have inscribed on your banner throughout your struggle with the ancient feudal hierarchy—those bold bad men who robbed the honest merchant, oppressed the tiller of the soil, despised the receiver of interest, laid onerous imposts on wares, etc. It was this that lay at the root of your struggle with the old territorial ecclesiasticism in the sixteenth century, with the king and noble in the seventeenth, with the *ancienne noblesse* of France in the eighteenth. Security of property to the personal possessor against the remnants of the ancient tribal communism and against the exactions of the feudal head whose power directly or indirectly grew out of it, has ever been your watchword, and is so to-day, even when you demand compensation for improvements and denounce the "unearned increment."¹ And at first you were perfectly sincere; your demand seemed the cry of an eternal "justice," a justice that was absolute in its nature and unalterable in its manifestations. "Wealth" did to a large extent belong to its immediate producer or to those who had acquired it directly from him by gift or bequest. The means of production were within the reach of all. Most of those that were so minded could earn wealth by their labour. All that seriously hindered them seemed the fetters of feudalism and semi-feudalism. On the land the peasant cultivated his own plot with his own implements; in the town the handicraftsman laboured primarily at least on his own account. What the one craved was freedom from the unjust exactions of his lord, and from the tolls and local imposts which obstructed the exchange of his produce. What the other craved was freedom, first from aristocratic custom, laws, and ordinances, and secondly, from the rules and regulations of the guilds—the umbilical cord which still united the new-born social organisation with the feudal order and privilege which was its parent. Even later and till some way into the manufacture period—the first form of capitalism—in spite of the exploitation which went on, the possibility for the vast majority of earning a tolerable livelihood, masked the retreat of truth from within the bourgeois citadel of justice and its occupation by lies. Even the working-classes, for the most part, assumed the "enemy" still to be feudalism, and held that middle-class "justice" was their "justice," that the complete possession and control of the product of industry was involved in the freedom of industry from local custom, and of trade from undue impositions, and nothing more.

We have referred to the evacuation by truth of the middle-class notion of justice. This is the point the middle-class advocate invariably ignores. He assumes that his principle, the right of the individual possessor to the full control of his lawfully acquired property, means the same thing now, has the same application now, as when wealth meant the direct product of the labour of the individual possessor, or of those from whom he had received it by gift or bequest. It does not occur to him that wealth in the modern capitalist world means something very different from this, that neither has this man sinned nor his father in its production, but that on the contrary the modern possessor and his father are alike innocent of having had any share in the process. If it be alleged that the modern capitalist's ancestor in some golden age of the past created by his personal industry the wealth which was embodied in instruments of production, we may well

¹ Just as if any portion of "rent" were earned.

call upon our bourgeois advocate to give us some chronological data on the subject, seeing that the most extended research has as yet failed to discover the primitive ancestral capitalist in question. Go back as we may, we discover nothing but essentially the self-same process as at present, though less in scope and intensity, the formation of capitals from unpaid labour, and their division by the scramble of competition, till we reach the feudal period, when status, serfdom, and forcible appropriation reign supreme. The old original capitalist who has rested from his labours, and whose works do follow him—creative, frugal, and laborious—he looms ever “backer and backer.” It is a beautiful conception this of the first capitalist, and only shows that poetry like hope springs eternal in the human breast—even the economical breast. Like Prester John and the Wandering Jew, he has a weird charm about him that almost makes one love him. But our reverence for an old legend must not blind us to historical fact. The real origin of modern capital is fully discussed by Marx in his chapter on the “so-called original accumulation.”

The contradiction between the assumption contained in his formula and the facts of modern life which he stupidly or designedly ignores, is proclaimed by the Socialist, who shows that the maintenance of private property in the means of production is in flagrant opposition to the concept of “Justice” with which he set out, since the former necessarily involves the workman’s deprivation of the greater part of the product of his labour, as otherwise such property would be of no value. The concept “Justice,” therefore, as meaning the right to the possession and control by the individual of the product of his labour has lost all meaning in modern times. But in the maintenance of the sham, of the assumption, that is, that the meaning remains what it was, lies the whole theoretical strength of the bourgeois position. The means of production are no longer in the hands of the producers, but in those of men or of syndicates who are usually entirely divorced from the process of production. Now the only use of means or instruments of production is to produce wealth and commodities. So that to the non-producers who possess them they are of no use whatever, *except*, and a very important *except* it is, *in so far as they compel others to labour under conditions which allow them only a fractional part of the product of their labour.* The only possible use of these means of production is, therefore, to violate the original bourgeois definition of “Justice.” This being so, that definition of “Justice” cannot be invoked as an excuse for gentle dealings with monopolists, whose retention of these instruments is a cause of injustice. For the removal of the cause of injustice cannot itself be unjust. But if it is not unjust it must be just. It is *just*, therefore, to confiscate all private property in the means of production, *i.e.*, in land or capital. *Q.E.D.*

Now, *Justice* being henceforth identified with *confiscation* and *injustice* with the rights of property, there remains only the question of “ways and means.” Our bourgeois apologist admitting as he must that the present possessors of land and capital *hold* possession of them simply by right of superior force, can hardly refuse to admit the right of the proletariat organised to that end to *take* possession of them by right of superior force. The only question remaining is how? And the only answer is how you can. Get what you can that tends in the right direction, by parliamentary means or otherwise, *bien entendu*, the right direction meaning that which curtails the capitalist’s power of exploitation. If you choose to ask further how one would like it, the reply so far as the present writer is concerned, one would like it to come as drastically as possible, as the moral effect of sudden expropriation would be much greater than that of any gradual process. But the sudden expropriation, in other words the revolutionary crisis, will have to be led up to by a series of non-revolutionary political acts, if past experience has anything to say in the matter. When that crisis comes the great act of confiscation will be the seal of the new era; then and not till then will the knell of Civilisation, with its rights of property and its class-society, be sounded; then and not till then will *Justice*—the *Justice* not of Civilisation but of Socialism—become the corner-stone of the social arch.

E. BELFORD BAX.

LITERARY NOTICES.

‘A Plea for Socialism,’ by J. L. Mahon (*Commonweal* Office, 16 pp. 1d.) advertised in another column, is a well-written and comprehensive exposition of our principles and aims. It is the substance of the addresses delivered by our comrade during his tour among the Northumberland miners, and should meet with ready sale.

‘Is Socialism Sound?’ (Progressive Publishing Company, Stonecutter Street, paper covers, 1s.) is a neat book of 150 pages, containing a verbatim report, revised by both disputants, of the four night’s debate between Annie Besant and G. W. Foote, held at the Hall of Science on Feb. 2, 9, 16, 23, this year. We expressed the hope some weeks ago that all “(cheers)” and so on would be left out; but regrettably enough all the partisan cries of either side appear duly set forth and the pages are studded with parentheses enclosing ejaculations which break up and spoil the speeches in print as they did in the hearing. Of the debate itself we can but say that both causes were well supported. Mrs. Besant was in admirable form throughout, and successively smashed the arguments adduced against her position, opening and closing the series with speeches of rare power and much beauty. Mr. Foote fought well what he must have felt was a losing battle. Altogether it makes a very readable and useful book, one that cannot fail to be of service.

ARRESTS IN ODESSA.—An Odessa telegram states that 260 arrests took place in that city on Easter Sunday, and that in one cellar five men and women were surprised in the act of filling bombs. They were arrested.

CORRESPONDENCE.

“SOME MISTAKES OF MOSES.”

SIR,—Our ancient friend Moses M’Gibbon is, it appears, not dead, as some of our Glasgow friends supposed. This is gratifying. After all, Socialism could ill afford to lose a person of such unconventional method as Moses. Our friend, it seems, has suddenly emerged from the seclusion to which he retired after a brief and visionary appearance before the public as a parliamentary candidate for the Falkirk Burghs over a year ago. He was too earnest a Socialist to contest the seat against a Whig lawyer, so, gracefully commending that gentleman as a “true Liberal,” he disappeared into the isolation to which providence has predestinated him. This of course was a mistake on Moses’ part—not the retiring, but the coming forward at all. The place of Moses’ recent revivification was at Newcastle, where a meeting was held by the local Socialists to determine whether they should join the Socialist League or the Social-Democratic Federation, or form a separate organisation of their own. What induced Moses to go there? What induced him to advise the people to affiliate with a body from which he virtuously severed himself only a year ago? O Moses! be sure your virtues will find you out! Burning with intense anxiety to champion the cause of the oppressed workers, Moses saw that the backs of the miners, over-burdened with labour and sorrow, might become fitting stepping-stones to the high altitude of membership of the Imperial Parliament. Dreading, therefore, above all things the non-parliamentary programme of the League, he heroically and disinterestedly made himself the apologist of the Federation. Here it was that Moses, in his zeal, fell into another “mistake”—for nobody outside one or two of his old comrades in the Federation would think of using a harsher term. Moses informed his audience, as he tells us in last week’s *Justice*, “that the Glasgow Branch of the Socialist League consisted of some half a dozen persons who did no work in propaganda.” How Moses was aware that there existed such a body at all as the Socialist League in Glasgow—not to speak of the S. D. F.—is somewhat of a mystery. That he did not know that there were more than “half a dozen” members in it is not then certainly to be wondered at. That Moses should deem—if he has any knowledge of the matter of which he speaks at all—that the holding of something like 170 open-air Socialist meetings, including one the largest open-air Socialist meeting ever held in Scotland, 60 indoor meetings, including one the largest Socialist indoor meeting ever held in Scotland, as well as being the principal speakers at 40 other meetings—all in the course of one year,—as “no work in propaganda,” only shows what an inordinate notion Moses has of the work “half a dozen” members should undertake.

The only other mistake of Moses to which I shall refer, and it concerns himself solely, is his notion that because the miners of Lanarkshire—on whom he has fixed a kindly eye—returned to Parliament an honest Whig, they are therefore likely to return a sham Socialist. The jingle of money in a trouser’s pocket can frequently accomplish much; but not always, and not all.

Glasgow.

J. BRUCE GLASIER.

EDINBURGH SOCIALISTS AND COERCION.

ON Wednesday evening, 13th inst., a meeting convened by the Edinburgh Socialists was held in the Good Templar Hall, High Street, to protest against the passing of the Coercion Bill. Mr. John Leslie occupied the chair, and there was a large attendance.

Mr. HENRY C. NOBLE intimated apologies from Mr. R. B. Cunningham Graham, M.P.; Mr. J. Shaw Maxwell; Mr. Wm. Simpson, of the Land Restoration League, Glasgow; and from Mr. John Fergusson, Glasgow. These gentlemen all expressed sympathy with the object of the meeting.

The CHAIRMAN said he thought that he could not better express the sentiment of every Socialist, and indeed every lover of freedom in the country, than by saying that they regarded the measure with a feeling of the utmost horror and detestation.

Mr. HENRY C. NOBLE moved—“That this meeting, being of opinion that the Coercion Bill is tyrannical, unjustifiable, and insulting to the Irish people, desires to record its solemn protest against the despotic action of the present Government, and it is further of opinion that the bill, if passed into law, will undoubtedly tend to widen the gulf between Great Britain and Ireland.” Speaking as a Radical, he thought the bill was not for the purpose of meeting but of making crimes, and its ultimate object was to strike a blow at freedom of speech, not merely in Ireland, but in Britain. The cause of Ireland was the cause of British democracy, and they could not too strongly resist the passing of such a violent Act. The time had arrived in the history of nations when any country that demanded power to govern itself had a perfect right to do so. What was legislative union compared with the wants and wishes of a nation? What was this superstition of empire compared with the aspirations and needs of a country?

Mr. THOMAS THOMSON seconded the motion. He said that the Socialists of Edinburgh had the hearty sympathy of the working-classes.

Mr. J. BRUCE GLASIER supported the motion. He said that “law and order” in Ireland had been created by landlords to protect their stolen property. He thought that the people of Ireland, who were suffering so greatly under the present system, were justified in using every means in their power to resist it.

Mr. JAMES ROBERTSON moved:—“That this meeting is of opinion force is no remedy for the state of Ireland, since its troubles spring to a large extent from the same economic causes the people are suffering from in Great Britain and elsewhere; but while, therefore, seeing no adequate cure for her wrongs in any merely political changes, we feel bound to assist Ireland in her present struggle against landlordism, as well as make common cause with her in resisting all attempts to interfere with the ordinary constitutional rights of British subjects in agitating for reform.”

Mr. WILLIAM BAILLIE seconded the motion.

The Rev. JOHN GLASSE said he supported this resolution not as a politician, but as a Socialist. In the past British rule in Ireland had been a complete failure, and what was wanted was Home Rule—not only for Ireland but for Scotland.

Mr. LAMOND moved: “That an expression of gratitude and sympathy be heartily accorded to the leaders of the Irish people for the ability and fidelity displayed by them in the cause of Ireland.”

Mr. MACMILLAN seconded the motion.

Mr. NOBLE then moved that a copy of the above resolutions be sent to Mr. Gladstone, M.P., Mr. Wallace, M.P., Mr. M’Ewan, M.P., and the secretaries of the Socialist League and Socialist Democratic Federation in London.

All the resolutions were unanimously adopted.

The meeting, which was of an enthusiastic character, was brought to a close by a vote of thanks to the chairman.—(Abridged from *Scottish Leader*.)

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.

WELSH MINERS' WAGES.

In this column a few weeks ago full details were given of the prices paid at the Welsh collieries. The statements then made, though perfectly accurate, are continually being challenged by persons who, and no wonder, find it difficult to believe that men can be found to follow such a dangerous and laborious occupation for such miserable wages. The meek and mild member for Morpeth (Mr. Burt) possibly to please the monopolists, has recently tried to make out that the Welsh miners get the magnificent sum of £1 per week. This is how one of the pitmen replies to this statement:

"The paper you sent me with a letter of Burt's in it, I have shown to several who were formerly union delegates, and they all say it is a lie, as the average wages are 2s. 6d. through Welsh mines."

I have received a bundle of pitmen's bills which fully bear out the statement in the foregoing extract. Below is a copy of a bill (name and date omitted for obvious reasons) showing the amount actually paid for seven weeks' work:

BLAENAVON COLLIERS' PAY.		7 Weeks to		KAY'S SLOPE.	
No.		Rate		Rate	
		£	s.	£	s.
Total Amount of Work	4	18	6	58	15
Balance to next pay	...	...	...	12	4
Rent	...	...	...	...	...
Coal	...	...	...	...	...
Stores	...	...	...	...	...
Candles	...	...	...	...	...
Powder	...	...	...	...	...
Doctor	...	1	...	...	...
Cash Advanced	...	...	...	...	...
Permanent Fund	...	...	...	...	...
Balance from last Pay	4	1	9	3d.	...
Top Coal	...	...	...	...	...
Bottom "	...	...	...	...	...
Mixed "	...	...	...	...	...
Allowance	...	...	...	...	...
Rubbish	...	...	...	...	...
Props	...	...	...	...	...
Heading	...	...	...	...	...
Timber	...	...	...	...	...
Days	...	...	...	...	...
Ripping Top, &c.	...	...	...	...	...
Tuning Stall	...	...	...	...	...
Posts	...	...	...	...	...
Timber	...	...	...	...	...
Days	...	...	...	...	...
Roads	...	...	...	...	...
Ripping Top, &c.	...	...	...	...	...
Airways	...	...	...	...	...
Days	...	...	...	...	...
Partings	...	...	...	...	...
Cogs	...	...	...	...	...
Bars	...	...	...	...	...
Per Cent. on	...	...	...	...	...

The above bill shows an average of 14s. This is with one exception the biggest pay out of a dozen. In the case of two working together, the highest total for seven weeks out of several bills is only £7 14s. 4d., out of which 1s. 8d. for doctor has to be deducted.

It is stated that a number of the miners employed at South Benwell Colliery in the Northumberland district gave in their notices last week. South Benwell is one of the collieries not in the Employers' Association, and the miners have continued at work. It is understood that they desire an advance of wages.

The Master Builders' Association of Toronto have sent a representative to England to advertise for masons, bricklayers, joiners, plasterers and painters. He is to guarantee five years' work. The trade society, however, send warning that trade is bad, hundreds connected with the building trade being out of work; and wages have recently been lowered. Advice to those about to emigrate—don't!

THE ASHTON WEAVERS.—Much dissatisfaction is expressed by some of the strikers because they have not been given their old places in the factories. At the termination of every strike, those who have taken a prominent part are carefully noted by the masters and punished accordingly. This accounts in a great measure for the half-hearted manner that men holding positions in factories enter on strikes. The certainty of life-punishment, if engaged in the same district, and the inability of the workers by their present feeble organisations to prevent this form of punishment naturally produces irresolution.

GREAT STRIKE IN THE BUILDING TRADE.—A strike has commenced in the building trades of Birmingham. Nearly 10,000 men are affected. The masters have given notice to reduce wages 1d. per hour, on the ground of the depressed condition of trade and competition. The notice affects the bricklayers, stonemasons, carpenters and joiners, and plasterers. At the present time about 1,000 men are out, and the strike is extending. There is talk of arbitration, but the men seem determined to stick to their demands. Now is the Birmingham comrades opportunity for propaganda. Suitable leaflets can be obtained at the offices of the Socialist League on application.

THE STRIKE IN THE NAIL TRADE AT ROWLEY.—The operatives in the employ of a firm of nail and rivet manufacturers in the Rowley district, who turned out on strike about a month ago against a reduction in wages, have resumed work. Mr. John Price found it impossible to collect sufficient funds to support them, and consequently the people were allowed to return

to work. The firm referred to continue paying 20 per cent. less than the 1879 list. It was reported on Saturday that underselling was going on in the Hales Owen and Bromsgrove districts, and unless this is checked the result, it is stated, will be that the nailmakers, who are at the present time suffering great hardships through scarcity of employment, will have to submit to the reduction, which will bring their wages down generally to 20 per cent. below the list framed in 1879.

THE NORTHUMBERLAND MINERS.—The Northumberland miners' strike is caused by the mineowners refusing to continue the sliding scale which has just expired. They want to enforce a reduction of 12½ per cent. on the grounds of increased cost of production. The miners have practically agreed to accept a new sliding scale if it can be proved to a board of arbitrators that the cost of production has increased; but the owners decline to accede to this reasonable request, which has convinced most fair-minded people that the mineowners know the pretext on which they found their demand for a reduction is a false one, and are aware if the facts were laid before arbitrators the decision would go against them. There are still some hopes that the strike will be successful, as the time for Baltic trade is just commencing, and the Northumberland owners cannot afford to have their pits closed much longer. They have threatened through the newspapers to open one or two mines to all who will come and work at the reduced terms; and to proceed and evict the strikers from their huts. It is generally believed that in this event formidable resistance will be made by the pitmen.—A. D.

AMERICA.

CHICAGO.—The 15,000 men in the iron rolling mills of Chicago and vicinity have gained an increase of 9 per cent. in pay and other concessions.

St. Louis, March 31.—The white and coloured barbers have combined to form a union.

A young bookbinder is in New York organising the "women of the streets" into a mutual benefit society that will render moral, medical, financial, and legal aid, and to assist those who are willing to return to the path of morality.

Although we hear many hard things said against "walking delegates" in general, not alone by outsiders, but from "wiseacres" in the Unions, it is an undeniable fact that the position of walking delegate is not a sinecure, and those members who are the loudest shouters for reform are the most difficult ones to be induced to accept the office. This accounts for the long tenure of office enjoyed by those holding said position. The abilities required are not only "pugnacity," but strong common sense, a good temper, and wise discretion in dealing with trade matters.—John Swinton's Paper.

A WELL-CONDUCTED STRIKE.—NEW YORK, April 2.—As was previously arranged by the men engaged upon the Equitable Building, New York, a strike was ordered on Wednesday owing to the employment of non-union men on the building. At the signal of the walking delegates the following number of men from each union left the building: Carpenters, 300; marble cutters, 120; marble cutters' helpers, 120; labourers, 75; plumbers, 40; steamfitters, 40; gasfitters, 15; gasfitters' assistants, 65; hardwood finishers, 85; polishers, 12. Total, 872. Their places cannot readily be filled, and there seems to be little doubt of a complete victory for the men.

EARLY COMMUNAL LIFE AND WHAT IT TEACHES.

(Continued from p. 123.)

THE villages are generally situated in the centre of their lands, the houses and gardens composing them are the hereditary property of the families, who upon removal have the right to take the house, which of course is a wooden one, with them, or with the consent of the heir to sell it to another family. The lands are divided into three concentric zones round the village, each zone being again divided into three large fields, according to the triennial arrangement of crops still universally practised in Russia. Each zone is divided into narrow strips varying from 16ft. to 32ft. wide, and from 600ft. to 2,600ft. long; several parcels are combined to make a share, care being taken that there be at least one in each zone and in each division of the rotation; the shares are made as equal as possible and drawn for by lot, any one who can prove that he has come off badly is put right from reserve land. This partition formerly took place every year or every three years, but recently the average time between the dates of redistribution has been about nine years.

As the various parcels are intermixed they all have to be cultivated at the same time, and devoted to the same crop. Generally, one-third is planted with rye, one-third with oats, and one-third lies fallow, forming three large fields in each zone; the time of sowing and harvest is determined by a general assembly of inhabitants.

The great ignorance of the peasants, owing to long serfdom and want of any proper education is a great barrier to progress: the system of agriculture practised is a very ancient and rude one, little manure is used, and none of the modern improvements are known. Nevertheless, were it not for the gross oppression of the nobility and government officials, the peasant's life would compare well in many respects with the rush and bustle of our life of enterprise and progress. Nor does one see why a good system of education, including a training in agriculture, should not remove the element of stagnation which undoubtedly there is in these otherwise happy communes.

As showing the strong instincts which people had in primitive times against private property in land, it is instructive to notice that upon the first settlement of tribes in a fixed abode there was no partition, each took what he wanted and used it as long as he liked. Yet, when population became less sparse and quarrels arose, they seem to have always acknowledged the right of the tribe to the eminent domain, and to have submitted to a system of periodic partition.

Such in the main has been the village life of Russia for ages, and such to a great extent it still is, though it seems that the individualistic forces are now commencing to work, helped on no doubt by the disintegrating force of government oppression; the young members of

the family are beginning to rebel against the despotic authority of the ancients, they do not care to be told whom and when to marry, and they like when they do marry to form a new home, living in a separate house. In many cases they are forcing a division of the land and other property, which the law allows when there is a majority of three-fourths in favour of it; so far this is generally found to be to the detriment of all.

Another very interesting example of the village commune system is to be found in Java. Rice is the staple food of the Javanese, and they cultivate it almost entirely on the communal principle; this is the more interesting as the cultivation of rice needs very extensive works of irrigation, canals and aqueducts have to be made to bring the water from the higher grounds to the rice fields, which must be surrounded by dykes to keep the requisite amount of water in. These works are carried out by the people under the instruction of the communal authorities, or of a surveyor of irrigations appointed by them, thus showing how extensive improvements can be carried out by communities without waiting to accumulate a large amount of capital, and having to pay interest on it perpetually afterwards. The rice fields are distributed each year much in the same way as was done in Russia; any one reclaiming waste land is allowed the exclusive use of it for a few years in addition to his share, it then passes to the community and is divided with the rest. The fields are usually made to yield a second crop of maize, tobacco, or some other quickly growing plant.

The same village communities have evidently existed all over India in ancient times, but are now only to be found in very remote districts, they have given way before European civilisation; community within the family still exists over the greater part of India, and important family meetings are often attended by relations as remote as fifth cousins.

Before leaving village communities and passing on to family communes, which form the next step in development, it will be well for us to look at our own country and see what evidence can be found here of these ancient customs. Those who live in towns have in that word the first piece of evidence we come to, for the word town means a hedge or fence, and was given at a time when the village alone was enclosed by a fence, each house with its orchard or garden being open to the neighbour's within the fence, and all the country outside being open for any one's cattle to graze upon. All the inhabitants had to assist at keeping up these fences, which were to protect the village and flax gardens from the cattle roaming at large without. The cultivated portion of the territory was divided into three parts, devoted to the same triennial rotation of crops as in Russia. Every proprietor had usually one or more lots in each of these divisions. These scattered lots evidently originated in the old periodic partition which we have seen elsewhere, but they had become private property before we can learn of them in history, though at the time we first begin to get authentic accounts they were still cultivated in the same way and devoted to the same crops.

In 'Doomsday Book' we find frequent mention of forests set apart to provide wood for the fences with which the two cultivated parts of land were temporarily surrounded. After the harvest had been gathered these fences were thrown down with great rejoicing on the feast of Lammas day, which was one of the chief festivals of the year, and was like a momentary return to primitive community. William Marshal, writing about the end of last century and the commencement of the present, says that very few centuries ago nearly the whole of the lands of England lay in an open and more or less commonable state. Each parish or township was considered as one large farm, though the tenantry were numerous. Round the village in which the tenants resided lay a few small enclosures or grass yards for rearing calves, and as baiting and nursery grounds for other farm stock. This was the common farmstead, which was placed as near the centre of the culturable lands as water and shelter would allow. Round the homestead lay a suite of arable lands for raising corn and pulse, and fodder and litter for the winter and spring months, while pastures for the milk cows were laid out on the outskirts of the arable lands; the steep and rough parts were left for firewood and timber, and for a common pasture for the more ordinary stock of the township, without any further stint than the other lands gave, namely, each could send on as many cattle or sheep as he was able to keep during the winter. The private lands in the township were laid out in plots of different qualities and situations, so that each owner might have his share of each quality of land. The whole was divided into three fields, according to the triennial arrangement of crops. Such is the account given by Marshal of England's land system a few hundred years ago. Sir Henry Maine confirms that evidence, and says that he has found many traces even now remaining of these early village communities. The turf-grown ridges which once divided the three fields are still to be seen in some places. Whatever doubt there may be as to the extent to which community of property was practised, this at least seems certain, that the Anglo-Saxon had ample land to supply his food, while the extensive common pastures enabled him to keep large herds, and the forests found him in timber and firewood, so that his first wants were abundantly supplied. The development from that time to this is a history of the confiscation of the people's rights, and we shall do well to remember this history when we are asked to give compensation for the land. It is outside my present subject to deal with this confiscation more in detail, we can realise it by comparing the present monopolised condition of the land with the picture of open commons given above.

RAYMOND UNWIN.

(To be continued.)

A CLOUD LIKE A MAN'S HAND.

A fierce drought wastes the land; no sign is given
To help the famine-stricken tribes that crowd
Round priests that cut themselves and cry aloud;
Sick unto death, men's weary eyes have striven
With scorching skies each morning, noon, and even:
Only the seer above with body bowed
Prays, and his servant sees a speck of cloud
Swim from the sea into the gaping heaven.

A strong wind stirs the stagnant air and hot,
And stormy music shakes the groves again;
The black cloud spreads, and spreads, and ceases not—
The lonely prophet has not prayed in vain.
O slavish king, prepare thy chariot—
There comes a sound of an abundant rain.

REGINALD A. BECKETT.

AUSTRALIAN INVESTMENTS.

In the *Daily Chronicle* of April 6th, under head of "Money Market," there appears the following paragraph:—"Inclusive of £17,949 brought forward the accounts of the Australian Mortgage Land and Finance Company, Limited, show an available balance of £119,376. From this sum a dividend of 20 per cent. is proposed, half which has already been distributed, leaving £27,376 undivided."

Perhaps this may only interest those folk who have "uninvested" capital, and are seeking 20 per cent., but we Socialists cannot pass it unnoticed. Here is great wealth created by the bone and sinew and brain of Australian workers being appropriated by the few persons who never, probably, earned one of the many meals they've eaten, calling themselves the Australian Mortgage Land and Finance Company, Limited. These people have "grabbed" the land, and now tax labour in Australia to the tune of £120,000 a year for the doubtful good they think they do as manipulators of credit. By legal chicanery and the fraud of interest they are enabled to absorb an amount of wealth which would keep 1,000 families in comfort.

Such facts as these may set intending emigrants thinking that they will escape few of the evils of the old country by settling in Australia, for the iron heel of capitalism grinds alike the factory slave, the Egyptian fellah, and the Australian workers.

No wonder some of our wealthy philanthropists of the Samuel Smith type are so anxious for emigration to be forwarded on a grand scale by the State; 20 per cent. explains a good many wonders, and 20 per cent. cannot be had unless population is planted out to make Australian land valuable.

P. C. WALKDEN.

THE SOCIALIST LEAGUE.

OFFICES: 13 FARRINGTON ROAD, E.C.

Annual Conference.—The Third Annual Conference of the Socialist League will be held at 13 Farringdon Road on Whitsunday, May 29th. Branches are particularly requested to attend to the following arrangements, if they wish to be represented at the Conference: (1) To at once send a return of their membership to the General Secretary. The representation will be based on this return. (2) Branches cannot be represented unless all monthly subscriptions are paid up to March 31 by May 1st.

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

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

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

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

BRANCH SUBSCRIPTIONS PAID.

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

THE NORWICH PRISONERS' AID FUND.

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

R. L. Allan, 2s. Christian Socialist Society, £1. Webb (two weeks), 2s. A Medical Student, 1s. For Mrs. Mowbray—A few Fabians, per Annie Besant (weekly), 10s.—£1, 15s. J. LANE, Treasurer.

STRIKE COMMITTEE.

Regent's Park, April 3, per Cantwell, 2s. 7d.; P. W., 2s.

T. BINNING, Treasurer.

"COMMONWEAL" PRINTING FUND.

E. B. B. (weekly), 1s. T. B. (two weeks), 1s. Hammersmith Branch (three weeks), £1, 10s. M. M. (two weeks), 2s. Ph. W., Treasurer, April 19.

HACKNEY FREE SPEECH DEFENCE FUND.—East London International Working Men's Educational Society, 6s. 6d. T. R. COOPER, Treasurer.

BRANCH REPORTS.

BLOOMSBURY.—Weiler gave a lecture last Thursday evening at the Communist Club. On Sunday at the Arches, 5s. was collected for the Provincial Fund, per T. E. W.

CLERKENWELL.—On Wednesday, April 13, a very successful anti-Coercion meeting was held by this Branch. J. Lane took the chair, and after a few preliminary remarks called upon Wm. Morris to propose resolution (which appeared in last week's *Commonweal*). This was seconded by H. A. Barker, and supported by T. E. Wardle, H. C. Doughty, Home Ruler; W. P. Walker and F. Baker, of the London Patriotic Club; and S. Mainwaring. The resolution was carried unanimously. Last Sunday evening, at 7.30, we held successful meeting on Clerkenwell Green, which was well-attended by local citizens. W. Blundell, T. Paylor (of the Leeds Branch), and T. Dalziel spoke. At the close we invited them to lecture-hall, at which an interesting paper was read by R. L. Allan, on "Men versus Money." Literature has sold well.—W. B. and T. E. W.

CROYDON.—Last Sunday, F. Verinder delivered an excellent lecture on "The Queen's Jubilee and the People's Jubilee." The difference between the old Hebrew "land nationalising" jubilee, and the present jubilee commemorating fifty years of monarchy and class government, was sharply defined, and a plea entered for keeping this jubilee something after the Jewish method. Mrs. Besant's lecture on the 6th inst. was a great success. She had the entire sympathy of her audience throughout. Over a quire of *Commonweal* sold, and a good collection made.—A. T.

HACKNEY.—Large and enthusiastic meeting was held at the Salmon and Ball on Sunday, Graham and Allman addressed the meeting. Fair sale of *Commonweal*.—G.

HOXTON.—Comrades Pope and Wade addressed large meetings Sunday morning and evening. At our hall, Eleanor Marx-Aveling lectured to a large audience on the "Working-classes of America." She specially urged the Socialists not to stand aloof from Radical clubs and other organisations, but to join them and fraternise with the members, and by these means induce them to enquire into Socialism.—E. P.

MERTON.—Last Sunday a good open-air meeting was held at the Plough Inn, Garrett, by comrades Bishop and Eden. Next Sunday at 11.30, same station, Hartison, Gregory, and Eden.

NORTH LONDON AND MARYLEBONE.—We held our usual meeting in Regent's Park on Sunday morning. Nicoll spoke to a good audience, and collected 1s. 3d. towards the Defence Fund. In Hyde Park in the afternoon, a tremendous crowd assembled, probably on the chance of seeing an affray with the police. Comrades Brooks and Wardle spoke. Police rather more orderly than last Sunday. Sale of literature good.—T. C.

EDINBURGH.—On Wednesday the 13th, a large meeting, convened by the Edinburgh Socialists, was held in Good Templars' Hall, to protest against the Coercion Bill. Fuller report given in another column. On Sunday, several members of the Socialist League and S.D.F. held a meeting with the miners of Rosewell, a village south of Edinburgh.—G.

GLASGOW.—On Friday evening an interesting meeting, organised by local friends of the League, was held at Lochwinnoch, a village about twenty miles from Glasgow, when Glasier lectured on "Socialism," Muirhead in the chair. The meeting was held in the Justice of Peace Hall, and there were over 100 present, a large number considering the size of the place. After the lecture an old man, the village Radical, tackled the lecturer on "how it was to be brought about," and a young man offered objections from the temperance standpoint. A good deal of literature was sold, and after the meeting the men were seen discussing the question in groups. On Sunday at midday, Glasier addressed a good audience at the Green; and in the evening in our rooms, arrangements were made for a forthcoming anti-Coercion meeting.

LEEDS.—On Sunday morning, April 17th, we commenced our open-air propaganda on Hunslet Moor. A. K. Donald and T. Maguire addressed a large and very attentive audience. Donald appealed for help for the Northumberland miners on strike, and notwithstanding the short week 10s. 7½d. was collected. Braithwaite proposed and Hill seconded the resolution adopted by the Socialist League re Coercion and the land question, printed in last week's *Commonweal*. This was carried unanimously with acclamation. In the evening, Maguire lectured at Bingley on "Man and the Community."—F. C.

NORWICH.—Mainwaring addressed a large meeting in the Market Place on Sunday afternoon. 3s. 6d. was collected for the Defence Fund. At seven o'clock, a meeting was held on the Agricultural Hall Plain. Mainwaring lectured in the Gordon Hall at eight on "The Cause of the People." The hall was well filled. Mainwaring spoke at some length, showing the fallacies of governments, and how a better state of society might be brought about by the workers themselves. The lecture was well received, and supported by comrades Morley and Crotch. Comrade Darley visited Mowbray at Ipswich Gaol on Saturday. He reports that Mowbray was looking very well and seemed pretty cheerful considering. Henderson we cannot report upon, he being visited by relatives; we have not heard any tidings of him. We received 13s. proceeds of a collection by the Rev. J. J. Gurney, Church of England. He intends doing the same, I believe, next Sunday, on behalf of our propaganda fund, at his church, and is expected to preach on "Christian Socialism." A public debate was held at

Gordon Hall on Monday evening, subject, "Ought Socialists to take part in Parliamentary Action?" Comrade Crotch led off in the affirmative, Slaughter took the negative.—A. S.

DUBLIN.—At the Working-men's Club, Wellington Quay, on Saturday evening, April 16th, in a discussion on the "Housing of the Working-classes," J. Loomery gave some interesting statistics with regard to the tenement house system in Dublin, and vigorously denounced the rapacity of the Artisans Dwellings Co., who pose as such philanthropic friends of the workers; J. Keegan described the condition of the dwellings of the poor in New York and other large American cities; Fitzpatrick repudiated all "tinkering reforms," and plainly showed that the root of the evil lay in the system of society that necessitated class distinctions. The speeches of all our comrades were well received. We are making a marked impression on the audiences at this club. On Sunday, April 17th, a meeting numbering over 5,000, was held at Harold's Cross Green. Speeches recommending the workers to combine were delivered by Hall, Killen, and Coffey. Fitzpatrick dealt unmercifully with the political fetish, and recommended international organisation. Thousands of Socialist leaflets distributed among the crowd were eagerly read.—O. K.

LECTURE DIARY.

London Branches.

Bloomsbury.—Communist Club, 49 Tottenham Street. On Thursday 21, at 8 o'clock, important Business Meeting. On Friday 22, 8.30, George Bernard Shaw, "The Meaning of Terms used by Socialists." Members, do attend.

Clerkenwell.—Hall of the Socialist League, 13 Farringdon Road, E.C. Sunday April 24, at 8.30 p.m. A debate will take place on the subject: "That individual ownership of private property should be maintained in its entirety." John Badcock, jun., of the "Party of Individual Liberty," will take the affirmative; H. Davis, Socialist League, the negative. Wednesday 27, at 8.30 p.m. T. E. Wardle, "Ireland."—Business Meeting of Members first Sunday in May at 7 sharp. Important Business.

Croydon.—Royal County House, West Croydon Station Yard. Sunday April 24, at 7.15 p.m. W. H. Utley, "Socialism and the Miners."

Hackney.—23 Audrey Street, Goldsmith Row. Club Room open every evening from 8 till 11. Business Meeting every Tuesday at 8.30. On Sunday Apr. 24, at 8.30 p.m. J. Lane, "The Different Schools of Socialist Thought."

Hammersmith.—Kelmescott House, Upper Mall, W. Sunday April 24, at 8 p.m. G. Brocher, "Colins and his Philosophical and Social System."

HOXTON (L. E. L.).—Club Room, 2 Crondall Street, New North Road. Sunday April 24, at 8 p.m. Frederick Verinder, "The Queen's Jubilee and the People's Jubilee." A Concert and Social Evening will be held on Saturday April 23, at 8 p.m.—admission free. Committee meeting on Friday April 29, at 8.30 p.m.

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

Mitcham.—Corner of Merton Lane and Fountain Place. Club Room open every evening from 7.30 till 11.

North London and Marylebone.—Members will please attend meeting on Friday April 29th, at 96 Judd Street, King's Cross, at 8 o'clock prompt.

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 7.30 p.m. to transact business. Class for the study of 'Das Capital' at 8.15. J. L. Mahon, of London, expected on May 1st. Particulars in local papers.

Glasgow.—Reading-room of the Branch, 84 John St., open from 10 a.m. till 10 p.m. daily. On Sunday, open-air meetings at the Green at 1 and 5 o'clock. In the evening, at our Rooms, Conference will take place regarding out-door summer propaganda.

Hamilton.—Branch meets every Thursday at 7.30 in Paton's Hall, Chapel Street.

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

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

Leicester.—Spiritualist Hall, Silver Street.

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

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

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

OPEN-AIR PROPAGANDA.

London—Sunday 24.

11.30...Hackney—"Salmon and Ball"....Allman, Flockton & Graham
11.30...Hammersmith—Beadon Rd.The Branch
11.30...Hoxton Church, Pitfield St.Pope & Wade
11.30...Hyde ParkWardle & Dalziel
11.30...Garrett—Plough InnThe Branch
11.30...Micheam Fair Green.....Kitz & Dalchon
11.30...Regent's Park.....Cantwell & Mainwaring
11.30...St. Pancras Arches.....W. H. Utley
12.15...Ditto.....Debate: Donald v. Rev. B. Woffendall
11.30...Walham Green.....The Branch
3 ...Hyde Park, Reformers' Tree.....Demonstration
7 ...Clerkenwell GreenThe Branch

Tuesday.

8...Euston Rd.—Ossulton Street...Cantwell & Donald
8...Broad Street, Soho.....T. E. Wardle & Bartlett

PROVINCES.—SUNDAY.

Norwich.—Ber Street Fountain, 10.45; Market Place at 3; Agricultural Hall Plain at 7.

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

Leicester.—Humberston Gate, 11 a.m.

A Board Brigade.

It is proposed to have a Board Brigade on Saturday, to advertise the Hyde Park meeting and sell *Commonweal*. Volunteers are requested to attend at the Offices early on that day.

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

"An injury of one is the concern of all."

THE NORTHUMBERLAND MINERS.

A MASS MEETING

will be held at the REFORMERS' TREE,

HYDE PARK,

On SUNDAY, APRIL 24, at 3 p.m.,

under the auspices of

THE SOCIALIST LEAGUE,

for the purpose of expressing sympathy with the Northumberland Miners in their resistance to the demands of their employers to further reduce their already starvation wage.

SPEAKERS:

EDWARD AVELING. H. A. BARKER.
A. K. DONALD. FRANK KITZ. J. LANE.
S. MAINWARING. WILLIAM MORRIS.
T. E. WARDLE.

Notice to Readers of the 'Commonweal.'

A CO-OPERATIVE STORE

has been started at the

OFFICES OF THE SOCIALIST LEAGUE,
13 FARRINGTON ROAD, E.C.,

and all Grocery articles can be had at current store prices, or where possible, under. All orders over 6s. will be delivered carriage paid. The Store will be open on Monday, Wednesday, and Saturday evenings after 8.30 p.m.

16 pages One Penny.

A PLEA FOR SOCIALISM,

By J. L. MAHON.

being an address delivered in the course of a campaign amongst the miners on strike in Northumberland.

Prices to Branches and parcels for sale or distribution,
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THE 'COMMONWEAL' for 1886

(Vol. II.)

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

Useful Work v. Useless Toil. By William Morris. . . . 1d.

Socialist League, 13 Farringdon Road, London, E.C.

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