

THE COMMONWEAL

The Official Journal of the Socialist League.

VOL. 3.—No. 62.

SATURDAY, MARCH 19, 1887.

WEEKLY; ONE PENNY.

POLITICAL NOTES.

THE past few days have brought about a change in the political atmosphere, which may perhaps have startled some persons; but it is not difficult to explain. The Government placed between the devil and the deep sea, have been screwing up their hearts for a Coercion Bill. This seems at first sight a simple and natural proceeding for a Tory Government, a thing which everybody would expect from them. But to pass an effective measure of coercion against such a solid opposition as the Irish nation offer to it, and to carry it out when passed, is an adventure which needs the courage of the past ages or of the future—the aristocratic period or the revolutionary one. The age of political farce in which we are now living in England cannot deal consciously with tragedy, though the actors in it can sit and watch many a farcical tragedy go on before their eyes calmly enough. In fact, the Government swaggers coercion boldly enough but doesn't mean it; all the more as it has no shadow of a Strafford to carry out the policy of "thorough."

Meantime, the "Liberal Unionists" are preparing for a "new departure." Mr. Trevelyan has practically declared himself reconverted to Gladstonian policy, and the greater portion of his party will follow him, since the course of events of late has convinced them the cat is going to jump in the Home Rule direction. Some of the most sanguine of the Liberal prophets are even speculating on the return of Lord Hartington, and have already discounted that of Mr. Chamberlain, whose position, if he does return, would be a rather curious one for a sensitive man, until the lapse of time—say three weeks—shall have reinstated him in his old position of an infallible leader of the democratic party.

The Tory Government then are beaten, and the only question is how they will take their beating, whether they will on the one hand judiciously determine to do nothing, in which case they may yet have a longish lease of life before them, as it is a matter of course that the Liberal party "united" or disunited can have no wish to come in again yet awhile, to accept the responsibility of making peace with the Irish by passing a compromise Home Rule Bill—a somewhat delicate operation.

Or possibly they will ride for a fall by bringing in a fierce Coercion Bill without any hope of passing it, and back this by the promise of a Land Bill to follow it, which the report of the Commission gives them an opportunity of doing. This would give them the chance of appealing to the country with law-and-order in one hand and "remedy" (of the well used delusive kind) in the other; and it is not all so sure, in spite of the Liberal rejoicings now on hand, that they would be beaten in a general election. Yet if they (the Tories) win, what next? And how would they deal with a still unpacified Ireland? And what would their Land Bill amount to? These are questions which they will have to answer if they succeed, although they will certainly forget them deliberately till the moment for answering them comes.

Nor if the United Liberal Party comes in again will its position be either an easy or a triumphant one. The Home Rule Bill must be a compromise, and as such will be accepted by the Irish only as a lever to bring about the full accomplishment of their aspirations. But even before the half measure of Home Rule is gained the underlying question of land and livelihood in Ireland will have to be faced; a question which involves that of the land and livelihood elsewhere. This fact does enlighten a little even the dastardly short-sightedness of Parliamentary politics, as may be noticed in Lord Salisbury's last speech, in which he had the impudence to impugn the patriotism of the Irish, because they have found out that they cannot separate the cause of self-government from that of the livelihood of the people.

Though perhaps he really was saying what he thought on this occasion; for naturally to a Tory the mere *superstition* of nationality is a more important matter than the *reality* of the necessity of dealing with the sufferings of an industrious and honest population.

This necessity will be the Nemesis that will presently overtake not only the Tories and the Whigs but the Liberals and Radicals also; unless those last named will face the real difficulty. When Home Rule has been gained and the party question has been laid, we shall then see if the sympathy now so widely expressed for the cottars of Glen-

beigh and elsewhere in Ireland was genuine or not. If it is not extended to the dwellers in the Wiltshire village and the London slum, and if the same kind of remedies are not proposed for these latter as for the Irish cottars, it will be proved to have been a mere piece of party clap-trap got up for the occasion. We need not fear but that the occasion will be afforded for such practical sympathy: the Irish question will help to sow the seed of revolution throughout the British islands.

To be sure if the Whigs, Tories and Liberals had any foresight or any courage they would have united to stamp it out this time as they have done before. The Unionist Liberals were wise in their generation when they turned on Gladstone; they are now in coming under his wing again going to exhibit themselves as fools and cowards as well as reactionists.

Happily it always happens so in revolutions; the nearer the time comes for the defeat of reaction, the more pressing its necessities grow, the more the courage of the reactionists fails them, because they begin to be conscious that their cause has become a mere mass of found-out lies and helpless hypocrisies.

W. M.

WHY WE CELEBRATE THE COMMUNE OF PARIS.

THE "moons and the days" have brought us round again to the anniversary of the greatest tragedy of modern times, the Commune of Paris of 1871, and with it the recurring duty for all Socialists of celebrating it both enthusiastically and intelligently. By this time the blatant slanders with which the temporarily unsuccessful cause was assailed when the event was yet fresh in men's minds have sunk into the dull gulf of lies, hypocritical concealments, and false deductions, which is called bourgeois history, or have become a dim but deeply rooted superstition in the minds of those who have information enough to have heard of the Commune, and ignorance enough to accept the bourgeois legend of it as history.

Once more it is our duty to raise the whole story out of this poisonous gloom and bring it to the light of day, so that on the one hand those who are not yet touched by Socialism may learn that there was a principle which animated those who defended revolutionary Paris against the mingled dregs of the woeful period of the Second Empire, and that that principle is still alive to-day in the hearts of many thousands of workers throughout civilisation, and year by year and day by day is growing in strength and in the hold it has of the disinherited masses of our false society; and on the other hand that we Socialists may soberly note what went on in this story, and may take both warning and encouragement from its events. I have heard it said, and by good Socialists too, that it is a mistake to commemorate a defeat; but it seems to me that this means looking not at this event only, but at all history in too narrow a way. The Commune of Paris is but one link in the struggle which has gone on through all history of the oppressed against the oppressors; and without all the defeats of past times we should now have no hope of the final victory. Neither are we yet sufficiently removed in time from the events to judge how far it was even possible to avoid the open conflict at the time, or to appreciate the question as to what would have become of the revolutionary cause if Paris had tamely yielded itself up to the perfidy of Thiers and his allies. One thing, on the other hand, we are sure of, that this great tragedy has definitely and irrevocably elevated the cause of Socialism to all those who are prepared to look on the cause seriously, and refuse to admit the possibility of ultimate defeat. For I say solemnly and deliberately that if it happens to those of us now living to take part in such another tragedy it will be rather well for them than ill for them. Truly it is harder to live for a cause than to die for it, and it injures a man's dignity and self-respect to be always making noisy professions of devotion to a cause before the field is stricken, on which he is to fight in the body. But with the chance of bodily sacrifice close a-head there come also times of trial which either raise a man to the due tragic pitch or cast him aside as a useless and empty vapourer. To use a transparent metaphor, on the march to the field of battle there are plenty of opportunities for the faint-hearted to fall out of the ranks, and many will do so whose courage and devotion were neither doubted by others nor by themselves while the day of actual battle was far distant. So such times of trial are good because they are times of trial; and we may well think that few indeed of those

who fell sixteen years ago, who exposed themselves to death and wounds at all adventure, were mere accidental braggarts caught in the trap. Of those whose names are well known this was far from being the case, and who can doubt that the nameless multitude who died so heroically had sacrificed day by day other things than life, before it came to that?

Furthermore, it must surely be rather more than doubtful to all thoughtful men if the mere exercise of every-day and civil virtues, even when directed towards the social end, will suffice to draw the world out of its present misery and confusion. Consider the enormous mass of people so degraded by their circumstances that they can scarcely understand any hope for their redemption that can be put before them in peaceful and constitutional times. Yet these are the very people for whom we are working; and are they to have no hand in the work, then? It is to be once more according to the degrading Positivist motto, "everything for you, nothing by you?" Meanwhile in these people, unless we Socialists are all wrong, there are seeds of manly and social feeling, capable of large development; and surely when the time comes that their hope will be made manifest, as it was in the time of the Commune, and will lie before them for their hands to take, they will then have part in the work indeed, and by the act of doing so will at once raise themselves out of the slough of degradation into which our false society has cast them and in which it keeps them. The revolution itself will raise those for whom the revolution must be made. Their newborn hope translated into action will develop their human and social qualities, and the struggle itself will fit them to receive the benefits of the new life which revolution will make possible for them. It is for boldly seizing the opportunity offered for thus elevating the mass of the workers into heroism that we now celebrate the men of the Commune of Paris. True they failed in conquering immediate material freedom for the people, but they quickened and strengthened the ideas of freedom by their courageous action and made our hope of to-day possible; and if to-day any one doubts that they were fighting for the emancipation of labour, their enemies at the time had no doubt about the matter. They saw in them no mere political opponents, but "enemies of society," people who could not live in the same world with them, because the basis of their ideas of life was different—to wit, humanity, not property. This was why the fall of the Commune was celebrated by such hecatombs sacrificed to the bourgeois god, Mammon; by such a riot of blood and cruelty on the part of the conquerors as quite literally has no parallel in modern times. And it is by that same token that we honour them as the foundation-stone of the new world that is to be.

WILLIAM MORRIS.

CRIMINAL LAW UNDER SOCIALISM.

(Concluded from p. 82.)

If we consider now the order of heinousness in the respective classes of crimes enumerated, we must admit that the first, those against property, since they spring directly from a rotten economic condition, must be regarded as (barring specially aggravating circumstances) the most entitled to consideration. It will be scarcely necessary, however, to controvert the absurd notion put forward by a certain section of Anarchists, that the mere individual appropriation of the property of other individuals, or in plain language theft (such as that practised by the Anarchist heroes, Stellmacher and Duval), has anything whatever to do with Socialism, and the expropriation it advocates. On the contrary, Socialism deprecates robbery in all its forms. The mere change of individual possession of property does not affect the matter in the least. One can very well exonerate the poor man who steals to satisfy his wants; but when a man who has merely satisfied a personal desire of his own at the expense of another person, seeks to cover this individual act with the mantle of principle, an element of hypocrisy enters into the case which tends considerably to exacerbate our opinion of him. Let him steal if he will, but not as an act of devotion to any cause. This, however, by the way. The fact remains that theft and its allied offences are the immediate result of current economic conditions. It is natural that men should seek to obtain the necessaries and comforts of life, legitimately if economic conditions allow them, if not, illegitimately.

The second class of offences named, those connected with sexual matters, from rape downwards, may be viewed from two or three different sides, and are complicated in ways which render the subject difficult of discussion in a journal—well, not exactly intended for "family reading;" for to that level I trust the *Commonweal* will never sink—but for promiscuous circulation between the sexes. Here, as in the last case, viz., of theft or robbery, we must be careful in considering such offences, to eliminate the element of brutality or personal injury which may sometimes accompany them, from the offence itself. For the rest I confine myself to remarking that this class also, though not so obviously as the last, springs from an instinct legitimate in itself, but which has been suppressed or distorted. The opinions of most, even enlightened people, on such matters are, however, so largely coloured by the unconscious survival in their minds of sentiment derived from old theological and theosophical views of the universe, that they are not of much value. This is partly the reason, I take it, why the ordinary good-natured bourgeois who can complacently pass by on the other side, after casting a careless look on the most fendish and organised cruelty in satisfaction of the economic craving—*gain*, is galvanised into a frenzy of indignation at some sporadic case of real or supposed ill-usage perpetrated in satisfaction of some *bizarre* form

of the animal craving—*lust*. Until people can be got to discuss this subject in the white light of physiological and pathological investigation, rather than the dim religious gloom of theosophical emotion, but little progress will be effected towards a due appreciation of the character of the offences referred to.¹

The two last orders of crime named differ from the preceding, in that they do not have even a basis in natural or social instinct as such. A brutal assault or malicious injury (*i.e.*, one not inflicted in self-defence or under immediate and strong provocation) is purely and simply inhuman—criminal without having any direct palliation in the facts of economic conditions, like crimes against property, or in physiological and (possibly) economic conditions combined, like sexual crimes. Brutality and cruelty so far outweigh in enormity the two last as to seem almost to swallow them up. For instance, in cases of robbery or rape with violence, it is the personal violence accompanying the substantive crimes which naturally excites one's resentment most; and properly so, although it is the latter of which the bourgeois law primarily takes cognisance. Any crime causing bodily injury or suffering must surely, in the absence of specially palliative circumstances, be regarded as the most deserving of condemnation at the hands of society.

The same may be said of false accusation of crime, an offence which is now classed together with others much less serious, under the absurd name of Perjury, the idea being that its gravamen consists not in the injury done to the innocent but in its insult to the majesty of the law. The unperverted sense could scarcely conceive of any crime more monstrous than this,² and yet it is one which is frequently passed over lightly, with the view possibly of not discouraging prosecutions and thereby injuring the legal interest. By being classed under the head of perjury, moreover, it sounds less infamous than it really is, mere perjury being a thing recognised and practised in the best social circles, where the co-respondent in a divorce case who has been committing adultery swears he hasn't, as a mere matter of form.

It seems to us that all the serious offences with which any society would have to deal at present may be grouped under the classes named. Of course there are special orders of offences (such as bigamy) which belong essentially to it and to it alone, and with which we have not dealt. According to one view of the matter, crime may properly be defined as an action proscribed by law, and hence may or may not be immoral, since many of the most laudable actions have been, and are, proscribed by law. But in the foregoing I have confined myself to such crime as would be universally admitted to be directly anti-social—for, of course, it is with such only that the administration of a Socialist commonwealth could be concerned.

What has been said, we should mention, touches only the new society, conceived as having already passed through the transitional period of revolutionary crisis, during which, the one aim of Socialism being the victory of the revolutionary principle, any means which would be conducive to that end would of necessity be adopted. For example, the death-penalty, the *systematic maintenance* of which as an institution is one of the most outwardly repulsive features of the criminal code of civilisation, would probably have to be held to, as the temporary measure of a revolutionary crisis.

And now a final word on the charge of sentimentalism commonly brought against those who object to the repression of crime by organised brutality. It is clear that the distinction between sentiment and sentimentalism in this connection (which has hitherto been conceived as one of degree merely) has been shifted progressively since the sense of horror at the infliction of pain first came prominently to the fore. What in the seventeenth century would have been complacently admitted as a necessity for the repression of crime would now be regarded with loathing (real or feigned) by the most determined supporter of "deterrent" punishments. The notion that there is any fixed point at which justifiable sentiment ends and sentimentalism begins is therefore plainly absurd. But that the distinction has a meaning I am not disposed to deny; although I do not believe it to consist in any question of degree. Sentimentalism is, as I take it, not excessive but *illogical sentiment*—that is, *unequally distributed sentiment*. Where there is a strong sensibility to the feelings of one class or body of persons and a comparative callousness to the feelings of other classes under like circumstances—there, I think, we have *sentimentalism*. And the tendency of the modern bourgeois treatment of crime is precisely in the direction of such sentimentalism.

In the Middle Ages "benefit of clergy" might be claimed by offenders who could read and write, such "benefit" consisting in exemption from the ordinary punishment for the offence. In the modern world all such wicked and unenlightened distinctions are abolished. The law nowadays makes no distinction of persons between men. True; but it makes distinctions between *men* and *women*; and where *law* draws no distinction, *practice* does. "Benefit of clergy" is superseded by "benefit of sex." Not only are all the more brutal features of "penal discipline" still practised on men abolished as regards women, but the

¹ It is a curious circumstance, as illustrating the change of men's view of offences, that an ordinary indecent assault which in the Middle Ages, in Chaucer's time for instance, would have been regarded as a species of rude joke, should now be deemed the most serious of crimes.

² The same applies to *chantage*, which is the attempt to make personal capital out of the knowledge of some misdeed of another, by threats of disclosure. If anything would justify the taking of life it is surely this; and one of the greatest artistic blunders Charles Dickens ever made was in the attempt to awaken sympathy in the reader for such a scoundrel as Tigg, when going to meet his well-deserved doom at the hands of his victim. That Jonas Chuzzlewit, who inflicted it, was a villain himself does not alter the matter so far as Tigg is concerned.

chances of prosecution, of conviction, and if convicted, of heavy sentences, are at least a hundred to one in favour of women. Of course we know that the principle of equality between the sexes, as understood in the present day, demands this, and has been, and is, continually pushing legislation forward in this direction. Unless the social upheaval obliterates current lines of progress beforehand, we may yet live to see "equality between the sexes" realised in laws, whereby no female may be prosecuted for any offence whatever, the nearest male relation being substituted, and where the quiet London wayfarer in a lonely street will be in as dangerous a position as the "unprotected male" in the railway-carriage with a lone woman is now. Of course, any one that points this out is not treated seriously. The sentiment is still on the ascendant, and will have (as things go) to work out its own absurdity by its very excess before it begins to dawn upon the average British intellect that the distinction between the cohorts of Ormuzd and Ahriman is not invariably based on sex—and that persons who would legislate on this assumption are not quite fit to be at large. Meanwhile Ormiston Chant, Garrett Anderson, and Co., will probably have the opportunity of celebrating, in after-dinner speeches, new triumphs of the sexual inequality they have at heart.

In concluding these remarks, we would again point out the truth more than once alluded to in the course of them, that with the establishment of a classless society—a society based on labour for all, leisure for all, and culture for all, through the concentration of its whole productive and distributive capital in its own hands as embodied in its administration—that in such a society crime, and therefore the mode of dealing with crime, must tend to lose its present significance and to become "rudimentary." This is obvious as regards crimes against property and all such as are directly traceable to the present constitution of society. It is none the less true, in the long run, of the rest, which are only indirectly traceable to it. Given a class bred in squalor, and that class is bound to develop a certain number of individuals in whom the dead-level swamp of coarseness inseparable from squalor will overflow into criminal brutality. Given a community in which business capacity is identified with ability to beggar one's neighbour ruthlessly under the name of competition, and where temptation offers you will have (1) direct appropriation by individuals of the property of other individuals—or, theft; and (2) criminal law made use of to subserve private ends—or, briefly expressed, perjury.

But the best illustration of the truth in question is afforded by the relative preponderance of crime in the propertied and unpropertied classes of modern civilisation. From what section is the so-called criminal class recruited but from what Marx has termed the "reserve army of industry"? And is not this the class the precarious conditions of whose existence are continually driving its members to isolated criminal acts, until they become habituated to a life of crime? And yet this reserve army of industry is a necessity of capitalistic production. On the other hand, can crime (in the sense of this article) be said to be common among any section of the well-to-do classes? We have here and there sporadic instances which are commented upon as something remarkable, as showing the depravity of human nature, it is true, but no one can say it is common. If, then, we see an habitual absence of crime in one class, and its habitual presence in another class, both living in the same age and in local proximity, both breathing the pestilential moral atmosphere of the Christian civilisation of these latter days, and differing only in the material circumstances of their life, and the results immediately flowing from these, what stronger evidence can we have of the ultimate dependence of crime on economic condition,—and I may add in conclusion, what greater earnest of the complete disappearance of crime in that future when generations of social morality shall have created human beings, compared with whom the crimeless bourgeois of to-day is but as the brute beast?

E. BELFORD BAX.

LITERARY NOTICES.

The *Revista Italiana* for this month contains among other matters an able article on the "Two Utopias" by N. Colajanni, and some descriptive notes on the late Socialist trial at Milan by F. Turati.

We have received from Turin the first numbers of a little monthly publication called the "Workman's Propagandist Library," which from its form and price should be of some service in spreading ideas among the labouring class. The writings would, however, answer the end in view more effectively if the style were less florid. The March issue consists of an account of the Paris Commune of 1871.

M. M.

'Ounces of Prevention.' By T. M. Cavan, M.P. (Harper. New York. 25 cents.) This pamphlet would be of some use, doubtless, were not its advice so emphatically of the "take hold of a guinea-pig's tail" order. A large part of it is taken up with denunciation of the "devil of worry" which takes such firm hold of most men to-day. The mingled material anxiety and mental self-analysis which go toward making up this worry are not to be got rid of by argument or medicine. They are the inevitable outcome of the economic and social conditions of a bankrupt and decaying civilisation.

W. N. Armfield of Cairns Road, Battersea Rise, S.W., has issued a broadsheet which he styles "The Humanitarian Socialist Tribute to the year of Jubilee" and in which he advocates municipal reform and the establishment of a labour-note currency. These and kindred schemes require too many buts to be discussed profitably on the basis of the present system. Social evils are like the Deevs slain by the Persian hero. Kill the chief (monopoly) and all die, but cut down all the minor ones and they spring up again and again revived by their leader's power.

S.

COAL STRIKE IN BELGIUM.—MONS, March 10.—A strike has broken out in the Borinage district affecting about 2,400 miners employed in the collieries at Quaregnon, Paturages, and Wasmes.

HOW CHAINS ARE FORGED AT CRADLEY HEATH.

Colonel C. E. Stewart, late Assistant-Commissioner in the Afghan Boundary Commission, writes to the *St. James's Gazette* as follows:

"On arrival at Cradley Heath, which is a poor-looking village in Staffordshire, we found at least 2000 chain-makers assembled in a large wooden building which had been lent by the Salvation Army for the meeting. On entering, the sight that met our view was a sad one. The greater portion of the assembly was composed of men; though some hundreds of women were present, many with babies in their arms. Such pale wan faces among the women and children! while even the men looked pinched, with hunger. In spite of the hungry look, they were cheerful, and tried to make the best of a very hard lot. While waiting for the proceedings to commence they sang several of Moody and Sankey's hymns in a very effective manner, under the leadership of a Salvationist. After the business connected with our association was finished, I asked for information about chain-making and the strike then going on, and was told by Mr. T. Homer, the Chain-makers' Secretary, and others, the following facts connected with their industry. The work is piecework, the men generally taking the iron to their homes to manufacture, though some masters have it made up on their own premises; but even then the work is paid by the piece. A man working sixty hours in the week, and taking no half-holiday on Saturday, can in that time make 7 cwt. of chain, of 3/4 in. diameter, for which he receives at the rate of from 1s. 8d. to 1s. 10d. per cwt. Even at the higher figure of 1s. 10d. per hundredweight, this would amount to 12s. 10d. Out of this he has to pay a boy as blower 3s. a-week, also to pay 3s. 6d. for the small coil called 'breeze' necessarily used in working up this amount of iron, and 1s. has to be expended in carrying the materials to the master's place of business. This leaves 5s. 4d. as the full wages of a man for hard blacksmith's work for a week of sixty hours. If two men work together, a blower can be hired between them, to whom each man pays 2s.; and under these circumstances the net earnings of an able man would amount to 6s. 4d. a-week. If 8 cwt. of chain were made in the week the earnings would amount to a little more; but few men can make this quantity, and that not regularly every week, so 6s. 4d. may be considered the full wages that it is possible for an industrious and good workman to earn in a week.

"When the father of a family can by his utmost exertions only earn the above sum it becomes necessary that his wife and daughters, if he have any, should earn their own keep, and women work at the forge at chain-making in very large numbers. Working at a forge with men does not seem an occupation fitted for women and girls, and the evil effects of this work upon them, both morally and physically, are very evident. One woman showed me her hand, which was covered with immense hard corns produced by the constant use of the hammer during so many hours a day, and said should women do work that hurt them like that. The moral results of young men and young women working together at the hot forges often in the scantiest attire, is also lamentable. I have heard sad tales of women forging chains up to a very short period of their confinement. For sixty hours' hard work, only fit for a strong man, those poor women receive about 3s. 6d. clear, after paying for breeze and share of blower's wages. Imagine a wage of 3s. 6d. for a week of such toil.

"At last this state of affairs could be endured no longer, the chain-makers struck for an increase of wages. Several of the most important masters approved of the strike, and I understand some actually contribute money. Much help is being given by the Nut and Boltmakers' Association, whose secretary, Mr. Juggins, was present at the meeting. Other associations are also helping. As there are 2,000 chain-makers on strike, and these men and women have many depending on them, the whole number who have been rendered utterly destitute by this strike is about 8,000. They have no union of their own, so it is necessary to raise a considerable sum to give even a little help weekly. They say they worked hard and starved, and now they play and starve. This is the twenty-ninth week of the strike, and the sums that have been collected only allow of four quarter loaves, worth 1s. 4d., and 1s. being paid to each family weekly—making a total of 2s. 4d. per family, consisting of a man, his wife, and one child. If there are more children, a very small increase is given; but the whole sum in bread and money given to a family of ten persons is only 4s.

"These chain-makers ask that a hard-working and efficient man should be able to earn about 14s. a week and a woman 7s.; though they think if the man earned as much as 14s. he could keep his family decently and the women would not be obliged to work at the forges. I was shown a chain such as is used to put over the back of a cart-horse and hold up the shafts. The workmen are paid 1 1/2d. for making these chains; cost of iron, galvanising, etc., about 5 1/2d.; total cost, 7d. But they are sold in retail shops at about 5s. each. The chain-makers ask that out of this enormous profit a little more than 1 1/2d. should go to them."

[The only "remedies" that can be thought of by the gallant Colonel, or the "influential journal" to which he writes, are voluntary almsgiving and State-directed emigration. But, why should cruel injustice have the offensiveness of "charity" superadded, and where in the wide world can chain-makers emigrate to and find employment?—Eds.]

On the 7th a meeting of chainmakers was held in the Salvation Army barracks, Cradley Heath. Mr. Thomas Homer, who presided, pointed out that they had completed the thirtieth week of the strike, and had entered upon the thirty-first. They had not yet gained the victory, and it required the operatives to manifest the greatest determination to have the list prices. On the 9th another meeting was held in the New Connexion Schools, Cradley Heath. Mr. T. Homer presided, and stated that those who were out on strike were very badly off; many of them hardly knew how to exist from one day to another. Poverty amongst them was increasing daily, but he hoped that the present state of things would not last long. The landlords had been very merciful towards them, and not a single case had come under his notice where they had levied a distraint for rent. It was stated that some of the masters were still practising the vile truck system, and refused to give the men orders without they agreed to buy gleads of them. He pointed out that they had played the summer out and the winter the same, and nearly played the summer in again, and he said if things did not alter they would be obliged to call the whole trade out again. It was resolved to continue the strike. On the 11th another meeting was held in the same place, Mr. Homer again presiding. The chairman laid stress on the fact that there was every indication of a better state of trade, and as the warehouses were entirely empty, it only remained for them to be firm in order to achieve a victory. It was decided to continue the strike.

As long as there is competition, liberty is impossible.—Louis Blanc.



"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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TO CORRESPONDENTS.

NOTICE TO ALL SOCIALISTIC NEWSPAPERS.—The *Commonweal* will be regularly sent to all Socialistic Contemporaries throughout the world, and it is hoped that they on their side will regularly provide the Socialist League with their papers. CAPITALIST—May be pronounced either as *cap-italist* or *ca-pit-alist*. The former is the more correct etymologically, and the latter in accordance with the English custom of accentuating the antepenultimate.

Periodicals received during the week ending Wednesday March 16.

ENGLAND		NEW YORK—Volkszeitung Freiheit		ITALY	
Justice		John Swinton's Paper		Milan—Il Fascio Operaio	
Norwich—Daylight		Boston—Woman's Journal		Naples—Humanitas	
Cotton Factory Times		Liberty		Brescia—Lo Sperimentale	
Worker's Friend		Denver (Col.) Labor Inquirer		Lugo—Revista Italiana	
Londoner Arbeiter-Zeitung		New Haven (Conn.)—Workmen's Advocate		SWITZERLAND	
Die Autonomie		Cincinnati (O.) Unionist		Zurich—Sozial Demokrat	
Leicester—Countryman		Milwaukee (Wis.)—Volksblatt		SPAIN	
Southport—Visiter		Detroit (Mich.)—The Advance and Labor Leaf		Madrid—El Socialista	
Standard		Seattle (W.T.) Voice of the People		AUSTRIA	
To-Day		FRANCE		Vienna—Gleichheit	
Dublin—Evening Telegraph		Paris—Cri du Peuple (daily)		ROMANIA	
Anarchist		Le Revolte		Jassy—Lupta	
INDIA		HOLLAND		Revista Sociala	
Bankipore—Behar Herald		Hague—Recht voor Allen		DENMARK	
SOUTH AUSTRALIA		BELGIUM		Social-Demokraten	
Adelaide—Our Commonwealth		Brussels—L'Avant-Garde		SWEDEN	
CANADA		Liege—L'Avenir		Stockholm—Social-Demokraten	
Toronto—Labor Reformer		Antwerp—De Werker		NORWAY	
UNITED STATES				Kristiania—Social-Demokraten	
Knights of Labor					

A REVOLUTIONARY COMPANY.

I HAVE lying on my desk before me the prospectus of a new company which is about to be floated, bearing the title of the "Grant Envelope Machine Company." Since the pernicious doctrines circulated amongst the classes in this way, form a constantly increasing menace to society, it would be well if we were occasionally to look into them, in order that when the opportunity arrives we may be able to deal with the prime movers in the way that they deserve.

The prospectus in question, after stating the all important information as to amount of capital required, etc., and the names of the directors (amongst whom are Walter James Waterlow, and Sidney Austin Grant, of Hutton Garden), and other officers, makes the following statement of the objects of the company: "This company has been formed to acquire and develop for Great Britain, France, Germany, Austro-Hungary, etc., all the patent rights of the Grant Rotary Envelope Machine, an important and remarkable mechanical invention, and one which will certainly revolutionise the envelope trade." Of course, as no doubt the reader has often heard, no man proposes a revolution, unless he is likely to gain by it; and the prime movers in a revolutionary movement are always credited with being especially mercenary. This prospectus fully bears out that view. "The directors propose to sell the machine at remunerative profits with an annual royalty, and it is believed that the sales will be sufficient to enable this company within a comparatively short period to pay dividends of from fifteen to twenty per cent. to the shareholders, and to provide bonuses equal to the whole amount paid to the vendors." Fifteen per cent. on £75,000 (the capital of the company) or £11,250 per annum is what the shareholders hope to make by this nice little scheme for causing a revolution in the envelope trade. The Irish M.P.'s were not long ago accused of spending the money collected in support of their League in riot and debauchery in London; one would like to see how far such will be the case with the promoters of this company. But one could forgive them somewhat, if they proposed to do anything really practical and for the benefit of the people. That, however, is not what they want; they intend to be merely sitting at the receipt of custom, to tax the unfortunate dupes who get into their power, and to leave others to do all the work. "The company does not propose to have any manufactory of its own for making the machines, as they will be made on reasonable terms by the present manufacturers of that class of machinery." This shows plainly that instead of meaning any

real good to the community at large, their real desire is to forestall the public in these "reasonable terms," and get a living out of the people by putting a tax on envelopes. For, though of course envelopes will be cheaper, the action of this company will merely prevent the people from getting them as cheap as they ought. We shall now get for a shilling envelopes that formerly cost fourteen pence, but were it not for these shareholders we should get them for tenpence instead of a shilling.

This will be the effect of this "revolution" on the buyers of envelopes. And now what about its effect on the makers of them, the actual workers? The new machine, we are told, will turn out as many envelopes per hour as three of the old form. The workers, therefore, ought not to have to work more than a third of their present hours, and this would indeed be a boon to them; but, unhappily, the revolutionist shareholders do not seem to have contemplated any such thing, for the prospectus naively remarks: "The daily capacity of one 'Grant Machine' of ten hours, at nominal speed, is 100,000." Of course, if the makers are to keep on three times as fast as before, one-third of their number will be able to do all the work, and this is what the shareholders anticipate in speaking of a ten hours' working-day. They mean, though they do not care to point it out in plain words, that two-thirds of the present work-people employed in this trade will be unnecessary, and they will expect the capitalist to pay them 20 per cent. more than the real value of his machine, in consideration of having enabled him to rob two-thirds of his employes of the means of life and pocket their wages for himself.

Suppose, then, that this takes place, and these people lose their employment! What, oh most excellent directors, are you going to do for these, whose means of self support you have assisted another to take, so that you may get your 20 per cent.? Your prospectus, I see, has made no provision for that. Do you begin to talk about competition, and supply and demand, and the struggle for existence? Remember, that two can play at that last game. You say that they can emigrate, or go to the workhouse, where the public may keep them? Yes, capitalist, they can do these things, no doubt; and they can do other things besides. Revolutions are not to be monopolised, like machines; and your revolution in the envelope trade may revolve too far, till you are crushed instead of raised aloft by fortune's wheel. You will take the risk of that, you think, for the sake of 20 per cent.? The odds, observe, are all against you, and we play for life or death.

However, it is little use arguing with swindlers and gamblers; they are never convinced. And so the thing will go on, and the men will lose their work; and as times get harder the unemployed will become more dangerous, and East-end landlords have increasing difficulty to get their 20 per cent. or so in the shape of rents. Whereupon these shareholders, and others like them, having brought about their "revolution," and being anxious to prevent the affair from revolving further, begin to think that it would be a good thing if the public would look to their duty, and help the poor whose wages these particular gentry have got in their pockets, so that they may keep quiet and pay their rent. It is not hard to get round the Lord Mayor, and a hiring bishop or two, and then a public meeting does the job. A Mansion House Fund, or Relief Works whereby public improvements can be done cheap is the result, and our shareholder in the envelope machine company subscribes a hundred pounds. It looks well in print; and doesn't his servant, the bishop, teach him in the words of the hymn:

"Whatever, Lord, we lend to thee,
Repaid a thousand times will be,
Therefore we gladly give to thee," etc.?

Who can tell but this may be the best investment of all? At any rate it is expedient and charitable.

And now, oh shareholder, let us see what your charity amounts to. You have perhaps invested £2,000 in this precious scheme (best not ask how you got it to invest), and you realise your 15 per cent.; that is to say £300 per annum, or enough to keep three families; nay, probably it did support as many again till your "revolution in the envelope trade" diverted it from their pockets into yours. And now you return to them £100 once, out of the £300 that you get every year. Is this what your bishop calls feeding the hungry, to starve three men for your own profit, and then toss back the share of one to divide between them and keep them quiet? Is this your notion of clothing the naked, to strip half-a-dozen and then give back to them enough to pay you again the rent you charge them for their home? Truly it is time the day of reckoning came, when it shall be said to you with authority, "Depart, all ye workers of iniquity!"

You hypocrites! And this is how you have thought to hedge between God and Mammon! You have solved the problem, have you, with the help of your bishops and pastors, and contrive now to make good investments for this world and better for the next? "Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can you escape the damnation of hell!"
G. S.

On Friday, March 4, the House of Lords indulged in a pleasant little chat upon jury-packing, mention of which was, of course, carefully avoided by "intelligent editors" as much as possible. Lords Fitzgerald, Bramwell, and Ashbourne were agreed that jury-packing was not jury-packing, "but simply the due care which the authorities, who select the juries, are bound to take not to include men who are under prejudice or under any influence to decide otherwise than according to the evidence." Lord Bramwell showed that it was quite commonly done in England, and the whole course of the conversation went to prove the Socialist allegation that "law" is only an instrument in the hand of the robber-caste, and is duly administered to their benefit alone.—S.

THE CURSE OF SECRET DIPLOMACY.

IN dealing with the subject of secret diplomacy we must dismiss from our minds all bias in favour of the wisdom and integrity of English statesmen, or prejudice against those of other countries. We must endeavour "to see ourselves as others see us." We must remember, too, that neither laws nor institutions are too sacred for examination; that nothing is too holy for investigation; and that when the air is filled with rumours of coming wars and of alliances and combinations among European states, let us not forget that secret diplomacy is the rule with all the states of Europe—a system by which peoples are bought or sold like flocks of geese.

As in 1876, '77, and '78, England is supposed to be hostile to Russia. Let us not be deceived. The English aristocracy have never yet proved to be hostile to the government of that country. But as we may be drawn into hostile demonstrations, just as we have been in the past, let us see what lessons the past contains for our guidance in the present and future; and as we have to bear the curse and scourge of secret diplomacy, let us see a little of its doings in the last few years.

We all remember the diplomatic proceedings that preceded the Russo-Turkish war of 1877-8. During 1876-7 and the early part of 1878, most people believed the English were determined on fighting Russia and on saving Turkey. How the people were deceived let the following facts show. During the discussions among the Great Powers that preceded the war, the English Government agreed to accept the terms and conditions contained in the Andrassy Note, but refused to accept the Berlin Memorandum. That was in May 1876; and as the latter differed but very little from the Andrassy Note, the English Government were much blamed for that opposition. Of course the people of England knew nothing of what the English Government was doing, yet most people thought that having a Conservative Government in, all was going on well. Still there were some who wanted to know what was being done, and as the months rolled on it was necessary for the Government to say something. On the 20th September of that year the late Disraeli went and addressed his constituents at Aylesbury; and in speaking of the refusal of England to accept the Berlin Memorandum, and their supposed inactivity, he said: "Well, we did propose some measures on our own part. My noble friend, Lord Derby, lost no time in laying down principles upon which we thought that the tranquillity of the East of Europe might be secured; that is, he laid down the principles on which we thought that the relations between the Porte and the Sultan's subjects could be established. These communications were occurring constantly between Her Majesty's Government and the other five Powers, from the moment we declined entering into the Berlin Memorandum, and gave our reasons for so declining. There were on the part of all the great Powers cordial attempts to act with us in every way which would bring about a satisfactory termination, but by no Power have we been met so cordially as by Russia." In the above the English premier stated distinctly that the English Government did not remain idle. That, through Lord Derby, they submitted to the Powers other propositions; that those propositions were frequently discussed by all the Powers interested; and that Russia gave them a most cordial consideration. Now would any one believe that the above account was not true; that there was not a word of truth in it? That the English Government did not put forth counter propositions, and that therefore no such discussions ever took place? Lord Derby knew nothing about the propositions he was said to have formulated. The Russian Government (Dispatch, Nov. 22) knew nothing either of the propositions or the discussion in reference to them; nor is there a word in the Blue Books respecting them. Then why was the speech made? To gull the English people. And they were gulled.

During the whole of 1876 and '77, the mass of the people believed the Government sincere in its professed hostility to Russia, and that England would never see Turkey crushed. The Russo-Turkish war began and continued month after month, but the English Government did not declare war against Russia. It is true millions of money were voted for war preparations, and we even brought black troops from India. But we did not go to war. Russia was gradually crushing Turkey; still the English did not help the Turk. The English people could not understand it. The Turkish Government at last became impatient, distrustful. But England did not fight Russia. Turkey became suspicious that all was not right; and on December 21, 1877, Musurus Pacha, Turkish Minister at London, called on Lord Derby at the Foreign Office to know whether the English Government meant to interfere on behalf of Turkey. At that time Turkey was straining every nerve to hold her own as far as possible, and in England people every day expected a declaration of war against Russia. Yet what was Lord Derby's reply to the Turkish Minister? In a Dispatch of Lord Derby's to Mr. Layard, our Minister at Constantinople, dated Foreign Office, Dec. 21, 1877, Lord Derby said (par. 2): "As his Excellency referred more than once to the possibility of English intervention, I thought it right to repeat the warning which I had frequently before given, namely, that no such intervention was to be expected, but that Her Majesty's Government would adhere to the conditions of neutrality which they had laid down." There was no mistaking this declaration of the English Government. Yet the Turkish Government could not believe that England had determined to abandon her to her fate. On Jan. 12, 1878, the Turkish Minister made a last effort. He again appealed to the English Government; and Lord Derby, in a dispatch of the same date, addressed to Mr. Layard (par. 2), said, in reply to the enquiry of the Turkish Minister whether the English

Government would not assist the Porte: "I said that I feared not; that, as I had told him from the beginning, we were not prepared to give military assistance to Turkey." And all this time the people foolishly believed the Government were determined not to let Turkey be lost.

But worse remains to be told. Not only were the Government gulling the English people; not only were they deceiving the Turkish Government; but at the very moment they were spending millions in war preparations, they were hand and glove with Russia. Take the following as one piece of evidence. On Dec. 14, 1877, the Turkish Minister called on Lord Derby at the Foreign Office, and enquired if the English Government knew anything of the conditions of peace Russia intended to impose upon Turkey. Lord Derby declared they did not (dispatch to Mr. Layard, same date, par. 2). Mark well the above date. Now would any one for a moment believe, after Lord Derby's denial, that the English Government did know what those conditions were to be? Would any one think it possible that in the June previous the Russian Government, sure of the sympathy of the English Government, had communicated to them the very conditions to be imposed upon Turkey when peace did come? Yet such was actually the case. During the whole of the six months from June 1877, and at the very moment Lord Derby declared to Musurus Pacha that he knew nothing of the intended conditions of peace, the Russian Memorandum containing those conditions was in the Foreign Office. And not only in the Foreign Office, but in the possession of every one of her Majesty's Ministers. When Lord Derby left the Foreign Office and Lord Salisbury became Foreign Secretary, the Conservatives pretended that only Lord Derby knew of those conditions. Mr. J. Mundella wrote to Lord Derby on the subject, and this is Lord Derby's reply: "23 St. James's, London, April 12, 1878. Dear Sir,—I thank you for your note of yesterday. The story of the Memorandum of June last containing the proposed Russian terms of peace having been kept back from the Cabinet is a ridiculous fiction. It was in the hands of my colleagues within a few hours of its being placed in mine," etc. Nor was that Memorandum made public till Feb. 1878, and after we had given the Turkish Minister a final answer that we should not fight Russia.

When Turkey found how she had been deceived by England, she accepted the Russian terms of peace as contained in the Memorandum above referred to. These were embodied in the Treaty of San Stefano, March 26. On April 1, Lord Salisbury sent forth his flaming dispatch, that her Majesty's Government would never agree to the terms of that treaty, pointing out the various conditions one by one, all of which her Majesty's Government would resist. On May 30, the same Lord Salisbury signed a secret Agreement with Count Schouvaloff, Russian Minister at St. James's, agreeing, not only that Russia should have all she wanted, but that at the Congress (of Berlin) about to assemble the English plenipotentiaries should stand by and support those of Russia. That was followed by another secret agreement with Turkey, whom we were still deceiving, and by which we obtained Cyprus.

But it may be asked, did not the English plenipotentiaries at the Berlin Congress save the Turkish Empire? No. On the contrary, Turkey lost, through their action, far more than she would have lost by the Treaty of San Stefano. By the latter treaty she would have lost 78,550 square miles of territory and 4,539,000 of population. By the Treaty of Berlin she lost 95,588 square miles of territory and 5,382,000 of population. She therefore lost 17,038 square miles and 843,000 of population more than she would have lost by the former treaty. By the Treaty of San Stefano Austria would not have been aggrandised at the expense of Turkey. But by the direct action of the English plenipotentiaries Austria received no less than 28,125 square miles of territory and 1,061,000 of population. What a glorious peace with honour!

Take one other instance. During May 1876 there was a debate in the House of Commons on the Central Asian question, and on the 10th Disraeli said: "So far from being alarmed at the progress of Russia, he saw no reason why Russia should not conquer Tartary as England had conquered India." Two days later he received, through Lord Loftus, our ambassador at St. Petersburg, the thanks of the Russian Government for his candid defence of Russian interests in Asia.

Such is the work of secret diplomacy. A disgrace to the age and a curse to the world. Is it strange that England should be distrusted, and condemned as the hypocrite of nations? May the coming social revolution free us from this curse and scourge!

J. SKETCHLEY.

HOSTILITY TO THE JUBILEE CELEBRATION IN SOUTH WALES.—The movement in South Wales for celebrating the Queen's Jubilee is, says the Central News, in many directions meeting with absolute failure. The mention of her Majesty's name was received with groans and hisses at a public meeting at Llanelly on Saturday, and an amendment to the effect that no local celebration should be made was carried by a large majority. On Monday, a deputation waited upon the Neath Town Council, urging that body to carry out the wishes of a public meeting recently held with reference to the local celebration, but the corporation resolved to take no action in the matter, and refused to vote the requisite funds. The jubilee committee at Cardiff, on Monday evening, decided to proceed no further with the movement in that town unless the corporation consented to vote a larger sum of money for the purpose, and a letter was received from the Cardiff Trades' Council, which had been invited to co-operate, stating that it could not recommend the trades "to do anything in the shape of servile admiration of a well-paid servant of the State."

The best gifts of life—leisure and liberty—they are the twin genii that the poor can never see.—*Quida*.

THE LABOUR STRUGGLE.

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

BRITAIN.

A National Conference of Ironworkers is to take place at Manchester shortly. The conference will be thoroughly representative, and important questions affecting the iron industry will be discussed. Manchester Socialists ought to be on the alert.

THE MINERS RIOTS.—Several men, charged with theft at the Coatbridge riots, after having been in prison 28 days, were discharged with an "admonition." The sheriff remarked that there was now no chance of the riots being renewed, and the solicitor for the men gave them excellent characters.

THREATENED STRIKE OF WELSH MINERS.—Notices have been posted up by the miners at most of the Ruabon and Wrexham collieries, demanding an advance of 10 per cent. in wages, to commence by March 14. It is believed that the men will propose a reduction of their hours of labour to eight per day, and also a reduction in the price they pay for coal for their own use.

THE STRIKE AT ABERDEEN.—The strike at Broadford Linen Works, Aberdeen, terminated on the 10th, when the whole of the employés resumed work at the old rate of wages. The works were closed for a week, 2500 persons being thrown idle. The demand of the workers was that their pay be increased at the rate of 5 per cent.

REDUCTION OF WAGES.—Notice has been given of a reduction of wages at the Rother Vale Colliery Company. The men refuse to accept, and 220 men and boys will come out on strike at the expiration of the fourteen days' notice.—The whole of the men employed by the Clay Cross Colliery Company have also received notice of a reduction, which they will resist.—The building employés of Birmingham intend making a stand against a further reduction of wages. The books of the Society show a decrease in the number of men unemployed. A proposed reduction was successfully resisted at Gateshead and Newcastle-on-Tyne.

RAWTENSTALL.—CRIBBING TIME.—At a certain weaving shed in this district it is no uncommon thing to run thirty minutes per day over and above the time prescribed by law, and the extent to which this abominable practice is carried on in this district is making the law a dead letter. At the above mentioned shed, the engineer was remonstrated with by the owner for not running more overtime, whereupon the engineer replied that he thought that half an hour per day is sufficient. The weavers have also to take the waste and fetch the weft during the breakfast time, thus again curtailing the time allowed for meals.

WALSALL.—The committee appointed at the pit's-head conference at Walsall on the 20th ult., to draw up notices to present to the employers for an advance of miners' wages, met at Walsall on March 9. It was found that the necessity for the Carnock Chase miners to give notice had been obviated for the present at least by their employers having agreed to an interview with the representatives of the men at Birmingham on the 17th inst. Dissatisfaction was expressed at the course taken by the employers in the other parts of the district in refusing to meet deputations from the men officially, and it was decided that a circular should be sent to all the employers in the districts, asking them to meet deputations at as early a date as possible, with a view to an amicable settlement. It was also decided to appoint a deputation to wait upon such employers.

MINERS' WAGES.—A conference between the Lanarkshire coal-masters and miners has been held at Glasgow. The masters proposed a sliding scale, the pits to be open twelve days a fortnight, and no workman to interfere with others regarding the amount of work done. The delegates of the men replied they would rather starve than accept these conditions. They demanded an advance of sixpence unconditionally before considering a sliding scale. The conference thus terminated without result.—At a conference between the Airdrie, Slamannan, and Bathgate coal-masters and men, the masters offered the immediate advance of sixpence on condition that the men work eleven days per fortnight and eight hours daily; fourteen days notice mutually before strikes, lock-outs, and reduction or advance of wages, and a mutual arrangement of the sliding scale. The men accepted the conditions. Notices have been posted by the miners at most of the collieries in the Ruabon and Wrexham districts demanding an advance of 10 per cent. in wages, to commence by March 14. A general stand-out is feared.

It appears that the strike in the Northumberland coal trade is complicated by the dual nature of the coal in the county, pits being hard and soft, steam and household, on even the same collieries. At the Walker Colliery the men have sent a resolution to the miners' executive, asking that they try to secure an interview between the owners and miners of soft or house-coal collieries in the county, with a view of having the difference settled and work resumed in these pits. It is generally admitted that the rate of wages in Durham ought to govern those of the soft-coal collieries in Northumberland, seeing that the latter compete in the same market as the house-coal coals of Durham. It is understood that efforts will be made by the executive in the direction indicated by the men. Thus an important section of the industry in this vast district will be affected, and this may influence the duration of the whole strike. Steam collieries are much more numerous and extensive throughout Northumberland, and here the miners preserve an attitude of dogged determination, and the coalmasters have given no sign of further movement. Many of the men are in favour of referring the dispute to arbitration.

NOTTINGHAM.—STRIKE OF OMNIBUS CONDUCTORS.—The residents of Sherwood and Sherwood-Rise were last Saturday morning put to considerable inconvenience by the non-appearance of the late Nottingham General Omnibus Company's vehicles. Those who have patronised that company in preference to the Tramway Company were disappointed seriously. Their accustomed carriages were absent from the road during the first hours of running. The reason was discovered later on, when it appeared that the conductors had refused to work. They did this as a protest against the course the official liquidator of the company adopted towards them. He had recently prosecuted and convicted two of their number for stealing small sums of money they received as fares, and they considered it harsh and unreasonable, theirs being a very hard case, they having to work fourteen hours a day, without intermission, or any kind of relief for meal times, for 10s. per week. In the course of the day some of the conductors were induced to return to their work, and a few of the omnibuses were got on to the road. There was great excitement along the road, those who went to work being hoisted. All the old hands were turned away two weeks ago, and the men on strike are a new lot. Starvation or 10s.: free contract.—J. P.

THE "SWEATING" SYSTEM.

A meeting convened by the London Tailors' Machinists' Society took place on Saturday night at the School-rooms, Brick Lane, Bethnal Green, for the purpose of "explaining and condemning the sweating system." Mr. W. Thompson occupied the chair. Mr. L. Lyons pointed out that the evils of "sweating," which caused the workers to labour from six or seven o'clock in the morning until ten or eleven o'clock at night, did not end there, because the neighbourhoods in which the system was carried on became crowded, and rents accordingly rose. One of the chief causes of the miseries produced by sweating was, he considered, the teaching of men only a divisional part of their trade, which left them, in consequence of their ignorance of its other details, victims to the sweater. Resolutions were eventually carried to the effect that the sweating system inflicted serious injury physically, morally, and socially upon the workers, and that the Government should appoint a Royal Commission to enquire into it; and that the present staff of factory-inspectors in East London was insufficient, and that six more, including two women, should be appointed to overlook the tailoring trade.

The Dublin *Evening Telegraph* of March 10 has a striking article on the subject of "sweating," giving details as to the manner in which it is carried on, and the extent to which it prevails in Dublin. It is stated that one-sixth of the whole tailoring work is performed by sweaters, that every Dublin tailor employs some, and in many cases where the work is said to be done on the premises a few men are kept only partially employed as a blind. As an instance of the way in which "the middleman 'sweats' gold-dust from his wretched underlings, just as the Jews used to 'sweat' gold-dust from the current gold coin of the realm," a case is cited where "one particular master sweater occupies a country house himself, and gives employment to fifteen or twenty sweaters in making trousers alone. The master sweater or middleman receives from the tailor so much more than the wages which he pays to the sweaters that he does not require to do any of the manual work himself." The Amalgamated Society of Tailors have done all they can to oppose the system, but the evil has now become too great for them to deal with; and as the writer of the article very pertinently observes, "when authorities on hygienic matters and some of our leading Dublin physicians have condemned the system as being a source of contagion to the public and of degradation to the workers, it is to the interest of society that some remedy should be devised, if not to remove the evil, at least to lessen the danger."

"TRUCKING."

The miners have long been complaining about infringements of the Truck Act, which it was alleged is still rampant in Scotland. In order that some authoritative statement on the subject might be obtained, the Home Department of the Government instructed Mr. Redgrave, chief inspector of factories, to visit the districts where "trucking" was alleged to be carried on, and make a report. His report has just been issued, and we are bound to say that it reveals a state of things of which we had no conception. Speaking of Scotland, and especially of Lanarkshire, it appears that whilst the men are commonly paid fortnightly, or monthly, there are still numerous cases where they are only paid eight, and in some cases four times a-year. We can well understand what an opening this system will give for trucking. The men want something to be going on with, and one way of granting it is by giving the men advances, or, as we call it, "sub," and charging interest for the money. Mr. Redgrave obtained the actual rates of seventeen collieries, at which it ranged from sixpence in the pound to one shilling for twelve. As the collieries generally pay fortnightly, this would be for about one week. One colliery manager was good enough to supply further particulars, from which it appeared that their average "sub" during the fortnight reached £40. This was all deducted from the hard-earned wages of the men each pay day, along with the interest. For a year this latter item came to £43, 6s. 8d. for the use of £40 for about a week in each fortnight, so that the colliery proprietor received over 200 per cent., to say nothing of the fact that the men had already earned the money on which interest was paid. Then deductions are made for rent, medical attendance, for sharpening tools (picks), and other matters. Some of the employers also have stores, which their men are not compelled (?) to deal at, but there is no objection to them doing so if they please. Perhaps the best view of this system is given by what is called a "pay line." This is a pay sheet, on one side of which is marked the quantity of coal got, the rate of pay, and the amount due. On the other is printed the heads of the various items which may have to be deducted, and the balance, if any, is then paid over to the workman. In order that we may not be accused of exaggeration, we give the list of possible deductions, which are grouped under the following heads: Rent, poor and other rates, gas, coal, store supplies, house repairs, surgeon, school, reading-room, cash advances, chimney-sweeping, under-hand. It will thus be seen that where this system is in force the collier is not supposed to be able to attend to any of the duties of civilised life. We question if the old Lancashire cotton lords ever did anything like this. The list we have given does not (as some others do) include anything for pick-sharpening; but it appears that in a colliery employing 400 men the profit to the employers on this business reaches £140, 4s. per annum.—*Cotton Factory Times*.

SCOTTISH MINERS AND THEIR MASTERS.

The much talked-of Conference between the Lanarkshire miners and their masters took place in Glasgow last week. As it had been rumoured that the masters intended to submit, as a condition of their granting an advance of 6d. per day, various rules and regulations of an objectionable character, the delegates were instructed to discuss only the question of wages, and to entertain no other proposals until the stipulated advance of 6d. per day was conceded.

On the first day of the Conference the men stated their demand. The masters replied that they could not grant any advance unless better arrangements as to future work were agreed to by the men. The delegates stated that until the advance was first granted they could not discuss other points. The meeting was therefore adjourned for three days to enable the delegates to consult with their constituents.

On Friday the conference was resumed, when it was ascertained that the miners had unanimously instructed their delegates to adhere to their original demand. The masters then put forward an ultimatum to the following effect: "That the men must keep the pits working six days a week instead of five days as at present, that they must agree to give a fortnight's notice of strikes or holidays, and that no workmen shall interfere with a fellow-workman regarding the amount of work done by him." The delegates

expressed surprise at the despotic character of these rules. One of them stated that rather than accept any of these stipulations he would fight to the last drop of his blood. Robert Steele, Motherwell, in a ringing speech, condemned the proposals, and announced the determination of the delegates to withdraw.

The resolute and manly attitude taken up by the Lanarkshire miners' delegates, is one of the pleasantest incidents in the recent labour struggle. That they and their constituents should agree rather to lose the advance of 6d., to obtain which they recently suffered so much, than accept conditions that would destroy their union and place them under the heel of their masters, is a hopeful sign indeed. I cannot help saying that the Lanarkshire miners have in their present conflict with their masters shown a spirit of resolute resistance and determination to assert the claims of labour, that does them great credit and gives their Socialist sponsors some reason to feel proud of them.

A conference also took place on Friday between the Airdrie and Slammanan miners and their masters. The miners' delegates in this case did not display nearly so much manly independence as did their Lanarkshire brethren. They agreed to recommend their constituents to accept a modification of their masters' terms, namely, that they work eleven days a fortnight or give fourteen days' notice of cessation of work, and adopt a sliding scale, on which conditions the masters were willing to grant an advance of 6d. per day.

At a meeting of the Scottish Federation of Miners held in Glasgow on Saturday, a resolution was passed approving the conduct of the Lanarkshire delegates, and recommending the men not to accept the master's terms. The conference also recommended that a national strike be organised to compel the masters to concede an advance of wages.

J. B. GLASIER.

WITH THE NORTHUMBERLAND MINERS.

The miners of Northumberland are taking to Socialism in splendid style. Last week, with the co-operation of J. E. Williams and J. Hunter Watts, I addressed over a dozen meetings. Nearly all the centres of the colliery districts in Northumberland have been visited, and on every occasion the meetings have been most successful. The miners come in great crowds, and are very enthusiastic. The most encouraging and significant thing about the situation is that mere Radicalism and the ordinary lame-footed movement no longer satisfies the miners. They are ripe for a really revolutionary movement, and will soon be organised into one. The grumbling and general dissatisfaction with Burt and his like is very open and general. Of course no personal attack upon these gentlemen has been made by the Socialist speakers. The weakness of their principles and the folly of their present action gives plenty of ground for comment. Our strong and telling point has been, not that they have professed principles which they have not acted up to, but that their highest aims, if fully realised, would be of little, if any, use. The miners see this; they have learnt it by bitter experience; and they are anxious for new and more spirited methods and more definite and thorough-going plans.

For next week we have issued a plan of campaign with eleven meetings, several at towns adjoining Newcastle, but chiefly at the collieries. On Sunday last Williams and I went to South Shields and had a very good meeting. We have arranged to go to North and South Shields next Sunday. The change in the weather has been a drawback, as many collieries have nothing in the way of a decent-sized meeting-place. The co-operative halls are very convenient, but, as yet, not very plentiful. We generally take them when they are to be had if the weather is at all unfavourable. Our smallest meetings amongst the miners number 400 to 500, and we often have audiences of 1500 and 2000. Sometimes the village parson or the village doctor turns out to watch and criticise; but they are always civil, for Socialism is exceedingly popular now, and not to be treated with disrespect. Northumbrian parsons, on the whole, are rather nice fellows. They are a little more able and much more genial than most.

I cannot say much of the strike itself this week; but later on I shall have some very rough-edged things indeed to say about it, and things connected with it.

34 Albert Street, Shieldfield, Newcastle.

J. L. MAHON.

RELEASE OF CROFTERS.—At eight o'clock on Monday morning, six crofters from Kilmuir, Skye, who were sentenced by Lord Mure at the High Court of Justiciary, Edinburgh, last December, to three months' imprisonment for rioting and defacing a sheriff's officer in Skye, were liberated. They were received at the Edinburgh prison gates by about 100 sympathisers, who marched in procession to an hotel, where the crofters were entertained at breakfast, and afterwards presented with £1 each to help them to make their journey home.

CIVILISED SAVAGERY.—In a private letter from a friend in Madagascar comes the following account of the methods adopted by the French Government to "extend civilisation" in that island:—"In the *Madagascar Times* there is a fearful account of the French in their treatment of some of the tribes on the south-west coast. They send commission agents (natives) into the interior to inform the Bara (name of a tribe who live in the south) that they buy slaves, and five kilogramme of gunpowder are paid to the commission natives for each man brought to Tolia and sold. The Bara go about and catch whom they can and put a rope round their necks, and with their hands tied behind them these captives are brought to Tolia in gangs of six or seven every day and taken to the French and sold at a price. I enclose a list: 2 to 20 kegs of gunpowder, £2; 2 flint muskets, £1 4s.; 2 pieces of French blue cloth, 12s.; 3 4-gallon cooley pots, 8s.; 100 bullets, 100 flints, 100 brass nails, 2 bowls, 2 jugs, 2 knives, and 2 mirrors, £1; total, £5 4s. These slaves on arrival are untied and put in irons, and if the poor wretches say a word they are ill-used in a most shameful way, and some even die from the effects of this ill-treatment. They are afterwards sent to Nosi-Vey to work, in irons, until a vessel leaves for Reunion, when they are shipped, in irons, to that French Colony. Only a few days ago some twenty natives came to Tolia to sell tobacco to the traders. The poor men had come a long way, and the natives here were encouraged by the French to catch them. Seven were caught and sold here. Slavery is carried on openly and to a very great extent. The schooner 'Venus' on her last trip took thirty-three men and women from Nosi-Vey, and now we have a British brig, the 'Town of Liverpool,' which will leave at the end of this month, and will it is reported take a lot of slaves for the Reunion market. I believe by what I am told they fetch £30 to £40 per head. Good profit!"

The reformer labours for the future. His ruling passion is duty. He is not perplexed with the corroding calculations of interest or popularity. The statesman is necessarily a trimmer and a temporiser. He labours for the present, and secures the honours and huzzas of the hour.—*Joseph Cowen.*

CORRESPONDENCE.

THE AMBLESIDE RAILWAY BILL.

The Knoll, Ambleside, March 13.

May I add a few words to your note on Tom Muse's letter on this subject in yesterday's *Commonweal*, apropos of your statement that the proposed railway would lower wages?

By the introduction of thousands of men willing to work at fourpence per hour, into the district between Ambleside and Thirlmere, the Manchester Corporation Waterworks has already reduced the rate of wages paid to labouring men here by one halfpenny per hour. Of course the railway would reduce it further by bringing men seeking work from Kendal and the Lancashire towns, a result probably hoped for by those "employers of labour" who are so ardently desirous of "railway privileges."—Yours truly,

CHRISTINA D. HILLS.

THE SOCIALIST LEAGUE.

OFFICES: 13 FARRINGTON ROAD, E.C.

Lessons in French.—Comrade Victor Dave has kindly volunteered to give lessons in French at the offices of the League on Tuesday evenings, at 8 o'clock. The names of those desiring to join the class should be sent to the secretary.

Outdoor Propaganda.—The Council have passed the following resolution:—"That the speakers at Hyde Park invite the audience to keep within the railings so as not to obstruct the foot-paths; and that all members of the League attending such meetings be careful not to obstruct the foot-ways on such occasions."

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

Re-opening of Library.—On Monday, March 21st, the Library will be re-opened for the use of those members who are clear on the Library Record. It must be intimated that a large number of books are still out, and those members who are defaulters cannot use the Library until their books are returned. The Rule relating to a One Penny fine for each week for books kept over a fortnight must be enforced from March 21. A List of Books still out can be seen at 13, Farringdon Road. It is suggested by the Librarians that much confusion and delay will be prevented by each borrower purchasing the 'Library Catalogue,' price 2d. Subscriptions will be gladly acknowledged for the purchasing of new books, binding, etc., etc.

Received for Library Fund: G., 2d.; H. A. Barker, 3d.; E. Snelling, 1s.

LENA WARDLE & WM. BLUNDELL, Librarians.

BRANCH SUBSCRIPTIONS PAID.

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

STRIKE COMMITTEE.

Anon., £2, 10s.; V. D., 1s.

T. BINNING, Treasurer.

"COMMONWEAL" PRINTING FUND.

E. B. B. (weekly), 1s.; T. B. (weekly), 6d.; W. B. (weekly), 6d.; M. M. (three weeks), 3s. PH. W., Treasurer, March 15.

THE NORWICH PRISONERS' AID FUND.

Our comrade Mowbray, who has been sentenced to nine months' imprisonment, leaves his wife and five children totally unprovided for. The costs of the trial amounted to £60; this has to be paid and the wife and family of Mowbray provided for during his imprisonment. This means altogether at least £100. Henderson has received sentence of four months' imprisonment. You are earnestly appealed to, to give them all the assistance you can.

Already acknowledged, £27, 9s. 4d. Baker, 6d. R. M., 5s. Arthur, 6d. Oxford Branch (per C. J. F.), 10s. Croydon Branch (per Thorrington), 5s. 4d. Per Cantwell: Hyde Park, 2s. 1½d.; Regent's Park, 3s. 10½d. P. Webb, 1s. For Mrs. Mowbray—A few Fabians, per Annie Besant (weekly), 10s. Collected by Mrs. Taylor, 16s. 6d.—Total, £30, 4s. 2d. J. LANE, Treasurer.

BRANCH REPORTS.

CLERKENWELL.—On Wednesday, March 9, Thos. J. Dalziel lectured to a good audience on "The Happier Epoch," which was, in fact, Socialism as perfect as the lecturer could imagine it, although he did not suggest finality. After depicting the probable state of art, science, language, race, etc., that would be produced by the creation of less crude conditions, the lecturer wound up by answering a number of questions, but carefully avoided being drawn out as to the exact period which would elapse ere this "happier epoch" arrived. On Sunday, March 13th, a very interesting debate took place between T. E. Wardle and J. L. Lyons, L.P.D.L., the subject being "Has Socialism Caused the Present Distress?" Our friend Lyons maintained that it had, Wardle took the negative. After each had given their views on the question, the audience, which was a good one, certainly seemed in favour with the Socialist speaker. Literature has sold fairly well.—W. B. and T. E. W., secs.

CROYDON.—On Sunday evening, Thomas Shore delivered an address on "The Land Question according to the Poets." He read numerous extracts from Irish poetry, and from the poetry of Burns, Shelley, Byron, and others to show how great a part the question of landholding plays in much of our poetry.—A. T.

GARRETT AND SUMMERSTOWN.—Last Sunday, we held an open-air meeting at this station opposite the "Plough Inn." Attendance not so large as previous, owing to severe weather. *Commonweal* sold well. Comrades Eden, Harrison, and Kitz addressed the meeting. Three sergeants, one inspector, and one superintendent listened attentively to our exposition of Socialism, under which we gently explained to them they would be following the avocation they were evidently intended for, namely, cultivation of the soil, instead of stupidly gazing at a few people holding a meeting and trying to intimidate them.—F. KRTZ.

HACKNEY.—Last Sunday, a very large meeting at the "Salmon and Ball" was addressed by Westwood, Sparling, and Davis. We also held a meeting in the Broadway, London Fields, Graham and Flockton speaking. In the evening, W. Morris gave a very interesting lecture on "Monopoly." There was slight opposition from a railway working-man. Good sale of *Commonweal*.—H. M., sec.

HAMMERSMITH.—On Sunday, March 13, W. Clarke, of the Fabian Society, lecturing on "Fallacies of Emigration," pointed out while exports and imports to British possessions had increased from £86,926,424 in 1860, to £183,820,426 in 1883, and to foreign countries from £375,520,224 to £732,328,649 during same period, or more than doubled, the population, which in 1860 was 29,000,000, in 1883 was only 36,000,000. From these figures it was evident that although the population is increasing, the production of wealth is augmented at a still more rapid rate. The lecturer said that the production of wealth goes on fastest in the most thickly populated countries, and he justly characterised as absurd the proposal to increase wealth by diminishing the number of wealth producers.—W.

HOXTON.—On Sunday, March 13, A. K. Donald lectured on "Socialism and Political Economy" to a good audience, followed by a lively discussion. Four new members made.—E. P.

MITCHAM.—On Sunday evening, in our club-room, comrade Gregory lectured on "Socialism as it was, is, and will be." Much interest was shown, and the speaker concluded with an earnest appeal for organisation. Good discussion.—S. G.

EDINBURGH.—On Monday, March 7th, in Free Tron Hall, Edward Carpenter lectured to a good audience on "Modern Commerce." He maintained that modern commercialism tended to destroy the human basis of our relationship one to another, and to substitute the cash connection. A most animated discussion followed. One person seemed to think that the capitalist might be moralised, but the sense of the meeting was that nothing less than a complete change of the system would be any cure. Fair sale of literature.—G.

GLASGOW.—On Thursday, comrade Muirhead lectured on Socialism to an audience of over 100 persons at Bridge of Weir, the Free Church minister occupying the chair. The lecture was very favourably received, and gave rise to a good discussion. On Sunday afternoon, Glasier gave a lecture on "The Queen's Jubilee" to the Irish Literary Society. The lecturer made the Jubilee fad a peg whereon he hung a deal of Socialism. In the discussion which followed, Socialism was favourably criticised. In the evening, in Hall, comrade Muirhead delivered a lecture on "Silly v. Sensible Socialism," which was a reply to Professor Flint's Edinburgh lectures. Muirhead pointed out that the Socialism which the professor attacked was a silly hypothesis of the professor's own imagination. He criticised the lectures in detail, and showed conclusively the professor's ignorance of the Socialist principles.—J. B. G.

HULL.—On 6th inst., a chapter on "Competition" from A. Besant's "Modern Socialism," was read and discussed. On 13th inst., the Besant-Foote debate was discussed. Mahon's short visit has been productive of much good, many persons having been led to give up their previous erroneous ideas about Socialism.—E. T.

LANCASTER.—Although, owing to prejudice, we are still without a meeting-place, we keep the ball of agitation rolling, and what is more, gathering. We applied for the occupation of the Oddfellows' Hall here, but certain trustees of the swag-belly order turned up at the committee meeting of the "authorities" thereof, after a prolonged absence from the same, and in spite of the vigorous protest of the sympathising working men, who are evidently only executive when the aforesaid permit, the application of the Socialists was squelched. Several comrades are suffering already by boycott and discharge for having the courage of their convictions. We are holding meetings from this date forward, at 11 a.m., on the Quayside. On Sunday, Wyatt and Leonard Hall addressed a meeting.—L. H.

NORWICH.—Last Sunday, we had our comrade H. A. Barker with us from London. He held a very good meeting on St. Mary's Plain at 11, speaking to a sympathetic body of working-men on the Labour Question. In the Market Place at 3, our comrade addressed a large meeting, taking for his subject "Socialist Morality," which was listened to throughout with marked attention; 4s. 6d. was collected for Defence Fund. In the evening, comrade Barker lectured at the Gordon Hall on "Spiritual and Material Consolation" in a manner which gave great satisfaction. This week end we shall be celebrating the Paris Commune, several London comrades being expected to take part. We made five new members.—T. M.

DUBLIN.—On Saturday evening, at the Working-men's Club, Wellington Quay, before an audience of about 300, principally artisans, a debate took place on "Free Trade or Protection." One of the speakers, James Keegan, an American, pointed out that neither Free Trade nor Protection would bring any relief to the workers; that their condition could only be improved by the overthrow of the present system of Society. He was well received. On Sunday, about 4 o'clock, about 1500 mostly unemployed labourers assembled at Beresford, and marched thence to the Phoenix Park. From the base of the Wellington Monument stirring addresses, all of a Socialist nature, were delivered by Keegan, J. B. Killen, and Mr. Hall. Large quantities of Socialist leaflets were distributed. It is satisfactory to note that the Socialist propaganda is being favourably received by the workers here, and is making some progress at present, although carried on less ostentatiously than last year. This is partly due to the prevailing distress, and to the fact that the workers are beginning to see that their so-called leaders are unable and unwilling to do anything to better their condition.—O. K.

GRIMSBY.—On 6th inst., Blakelock and Teesdale (Hull) spoke to about 200 people in the Freeman Street, Market Place, for about an hour. Another meeting was afterwards held at the Hall of Science, when about 70 were present, and a number of names were given in for the formation of a Socialist Society.—E. T.

WARRINGTON.—At the weekly meeting of the Warrington Wesleyan Mutual Improvement Society on Wednesday last week, a paper was read by Mr. W. Chapman on "Poverty: Its Cause and Cure." Dealing with the subject from a Socialistic point of view, the essayist said that ignorance was the primary cause of pauperism, men being unable to understand even the first principles that should govern human society—viz., truth, justice, and love; and the bad social condition, causing disparaging inequalities, was the immediate and determining cause. He held that the remedy lies in first educating the human mind to enable mankind to perceive the causes of the evil, in the union of the workers in all lands, to confer with each other in order to decide upon a common course and a common object, and in their hearty co-operation to achieve the common good of all. This was followed by a somewhat animated discussion, the bulk of the members agreeing with the views of the essayist.

LECTURE DIARY.

London Branches.

Bloomsbury.—Communist Club, 49 Tottenham Street. Friday March 18, at 8.30. Lecture.
Clerkenwell.—Hall of the Socialist League, 13 Farringdon Road, E.C. Sunday March 20, at 8.30 p.m. A Lecture. Wednesday 23, at 8.30. Dr. Aveling.
Croydon.—Royal County House, West Croydon Station Yard. Sunday Mar. 20. W. Utley, "Socialists and Radicals."—Committee Meeting every Friday at 8 p.m. sharp, at Parker Road.
Hackney.—23 Audrey Street, Goldsmith Row. Club Room open every evening from 8 till 11. Business Meeting every Tuesday at 8.30. On Saturday, March 19, Free Concert to welcome our comrade Allan. On Sunday March 20, at 8.30., D. Nicoll, "The Benevolent Middle Class."
Hammersmith.—Kelmescott House, Upper Mall, W. Sunday March 20, at 8 p.m. Hubert Bland (Fabian Society), "What State interference means."—Annual Meeting of Members at 6 p.m.
Hoxton (L.E.L.).—New premises, 2 Crondall Street, New North Road, Sunday March 20, at 8 p.m. A. Howard (Christian Socialist Society), "Christian Socialism."—Members' meeting Friday March 18th, at 8 p.m. Important business.
Merton.—11 Merton Terrace, High Street. Club Room open every evening. Committee every Thursday. Discussions held every Sunday morning at 11.
Mitcham.—Corner of Merton Lane and Fountain Place. Club Room open every evening from 7.30 till 11. Sunday March 20, at 8.30. T. E. Wardle will lecture.

Country Branches.

Bingley.—Coffee Tavern. Every Monday at 7.30 p.m.
Birmingham.—Carr's Lane Coffee House. Every Monday evening, at 8.
Bradford.—Morris's Dining Rooms, 114 City Road. Wednesdays, at 8.
Edinburgh (Scottish Section).—4 Park Street. Meets every Thursday at 8 p.m. Reading Room and Library open every Wednesday evening, 8 till 10.—In Free Tron Hall, Monday March 21, at 8 o'clock. Percival Chubb, "The Inner Spirit of Socialism." Admission 1s., 6d., and 3d.
Fulham.—Address Sec., 34 May Street.
Glasgow.—Reading-room of the Branch, 84 John St., open from 10 a.m. till 10 p.m. daily.
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. Class for study of Carruthers' 'Commercial and Communal Economy,' on Thursdays at 8 p.m. March 20, "The Commune of Paris."
Lancaster.—No fixed meeting-place at present. On Sunday mornings at 11, meetings will be held on St. George's Quay.
Leicester.—Spiritualist Hall, Silver Street. Saturday, March 19, at 8 p.m. Jas. Billson, "The Teachings of Ruskin." March 26, Geo. Robson, "The Population Fallacy."
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, Duke St. Lecture and discussion every Sunday and Monday at 8 p.m. Reading-room open every day from 8.30 a.m. to 10 p.m. A Public Meeting will be held on Saturday March 19, at 8.30, to commemorate the glorious struggle made by the workers of Paris to emancipate themselves from the tyranny and oppression of the landlord and capitalist class. Tochatti and others will speak. Tochatti will also lecture on "The Commune" on March 20 and 21.
Oxford.—Temperance Hall, 25½ Pembroke Street. Thursdays, at 8.30 p.m.

Open-air Propaganda—Sunday 20.

11.30...Hackney—"Salmon and Ball"H. Graham
 11.30...Hammersmith—Beadon Rd.The Branch
 11.30...Hoxton Church, Pitfield Street ...Wade, Pope
 11.30...Garrett—Church InnEden, Kitz, Harrison
 11.30...Regent's ParkThe Branch

11.30...St. Pancras Arches.....The Branch
 11.30...Walham Green—StationThe Branch
 3.30...Hyde Park (near Marble Arch).....The Branch
 3.30...London Fields—BroadwayFlockton Davis

Wednesday 23.

8.30...London Fields—Broadway.....Davis, Graham.

PROVINCES.—SUNDAY.

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

SOUTH PLACE INSTITUTE, Finsbury.—A series of Debates on Socialism and Individualism will take place during March. III. Sunday 20, at 4 p.m., Mr. Sidney Webb (Fabian Society) versus Dr. T. B. Napier.

CLEVELAND HALL, 54 Cleveland Street (near Portland Road Station).—Sundays at 11.30 a.m. Mar. 20. Joseph Lane, "The National Loaf, Who Earns and Who Eats it."

BELFAST.—Abercorn Hall, Victoria Street. Sunday March 20, at 4.30. An address on Socialism by Samuel Hayes.

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

PARIS COMMUNE.

An International Celebration of the PARIS COMMUNE will take place at SOUTH PLACE CHAPEL, Finsbury, E.C. (near Moorgate Street Station), on Thursday, March 17, at 8 p.m., when the following Resolution will be proposed:

"That this meeting of workers expresses its deep sympathy with the heroic attempt of the workers of Paris to bring about the emancipation of labour from the slavery of the exploiting classes, an attempt which was only crushed by mere violence on the part of those whose reign of robbery was so rightly attacked by the Commune of Paris."

The Societies taking part are: Fabian Society; Socialist Union; Socialist League; International Working-men's Clubs of Berners Street, Cleveland Hall, 49 Tottenham Street, and 23 Princes Square; Autonomie Group; Freedom Group; Scandinavian Group; and Franco-Italian Group.

Speeches in English by: Annie Besant, Charlotte M. Wilson, A. K. Donald, P. Krapotkine, Frank Kitz, J. R. Macdonald, W. Morris. Speeches will also be delivered in French, German, and Italian.

The German Choir will sing at the commencement and close of the meeting.

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