

THE COMMONWEAL

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SATURDAY, JULY 2, 1887.

WEEKLY; ONE PENNY.

A LEGAL VIEW OF SOCIALISM.

WHEN good old Burton attacked the generality of lawyers and wrote them down as “a purse-milking nation, a clamorous company, gowned vultures,” as “irreligious harpies, scraping, griping catch-poles,” he wellnigh forgot to except the “worthy lawyers that are so many oracles and pilots of a well-governed commonwealth.” To-day men are quite as prone to overlook the presence of good honest men among lawyers, and write them down as being equal with the worst. E. B. Bax has proved to his own satisfaction, and that of some others, that a judge cannot think, or honestly hold his position. An advocate is writ down a mercenary bravo, and a judge as an inhuman weighing machine or partisan trickster.

It is unhappily true that the majority of the legal profession is hopelessly corrupt; that there is no cause too foul and no wrong too hideous for lawyers to espouse for pay or promotion; that in the whole course of history there has been no cause too noble to be opposed or betrayed from the same high motives. Laden with no conscience and impeded by no principle, there have always been found men to do the dirty work of tyranny, legal or commercial. Yet there have been innumerable instances, on the other side, of men who at the Bar defended or upon the Bench upheld the majesty of Justice; who, disregarding bribery and the applause of the powerful, dared to think for the people and speak truth. Such men we shall see again in the fitting time of stress and trial. Meanwhile we may hail with pleasure the spectacle of the Lord Chief Justice of England daring to denounce the ghastly mockery of “free contract.” We may also in great measure count him heroic when we consider his position and surroundings, and find him questioning the “sacred rights of property” and reasserting the grand old axiom, *Salus populi suprema lex*.

To the annual meeting of the Glasgow Juridical Society, a few weeks ago, Lord Coleridge delivered an address which he called “Thoughts on the value of clear views upon the laws regulating the enjoyment of property.” It is the most searching criticism of one special subject that has been made for a very long time, and should be printed and circulated widely. He began by adjuring his hearers in all controversies to begin by clearly understanding each other’s meaning, and by ascertaining whether the difference between them were one of principle or no. It remains as true as it was in the days of Bishop Butler that “few persons exercise their judgment upon what comes before them in the way of determining whether it be conclusive or holds”; and again, “arguments are often wanted for some accidental purpose, but proof as such is what some persons never want.” To clear the mind, to see things as they really are, to deal with an opponent’s statement as he makes it, and either admit or deny it, these are the first necessities of fruitful controversy; without them the argument degenerates into an endless and unprofitable wrangle. Yet generally the first step is to mistake the proposition impugned, and the commonest argument is consciously or unconsciously to misrepresent it. Controversy is not perhaps the best intellectual atmosphere for a man to dwell in; yet honest controversy has a bracing effect upon a healthy mind, and the effect is lost if we dispute for triumph rather than truth; and although we do not clear our own mind, succeed perhaps in darkening another. And surely if clear views and lucid statements are important in any sort of intellectual pursuit, they are of special importance in things connected with law, the science of the rules of life, of order, of conduct; ignorance of which is grave misfortune; fallacies in which are followed by cruel evils to those who fall into them, more cruel still to those who are the subjects of them. Yet there is no more common confusion than that which is so habitually made between the principles which underlie all law, which are indeed its virtual elements, and the applications of those principles to states and circumstances that rise and pass away, changing with the generations of men, and, as man himself, never continuing in one stage. Yet a present application or illustration of a principle is constantly mistaken for the principle itself, and those who demur to the application of the principle or go about to reform it, are assailed as though they denied the principle itself or desired its destruction. Many examples were cited in proof of the position maintained, that men confound forms with the substance of which they are the outward manifestations, and deal with those who differ with them in point of form as if they were denying the existence of that of which the various forms are but the various clothings.

In the present day there is perhaps nothing as to which this confusion is greater or more mischievous than as to property itself—the

idea or principle of property, and as to the laws of property—the rules by which the practical enjoyment of property is regulated in these islands. The distinction is so obvious that one would think it impossible to be disputed. Perhaps none dispute it in words, but though it undoubtedly exists it is as undoubtedly often utterly forgotten, and that not only by men who cannot grasp a clear thought, and who purposely pass it by, but by men of reflection and cultivation, who seem to lose in their dealings with this question the judgment and temper which education ought to create or to improve.

The right of property, that is the right to possess peaceably what you have yourself acquired, underlies all society. Some sort of right is taken for granted in all communities, even the most savage; without some such right no society could exist. Now what is that right? It is very well put by Sir W. Blackstone in his second book. It is still better put in the ‘Treatise on the Law of Forfeiture,’ which remains the sole evidence to these times of the brilliant but unhappy Charles Yorke. The end of property, he says, is subsistence, by which end nature has branded our pretensions to it. Hence in a state of nature we cannot assume more than we use, nor hold it longer than we have it, longer than we live and are capable of using it. The manner of acquiring property in a state of nature is by occupancy, an act of the body not of the mind, which last would give a title to property too precarious and disputable. In transferring property the consent expressed gives a right to the alienee against the alienor, and occupancy confirms that right against everyone else. But after death there can be no such expression. All other modes of transmission or acquiring are acts of positive and civil law which prevents the property of the dead from reverting, as it would do in a state of nature, to the common stock; and no such modes are manners of acquiring property necessary for the subsistence of mankind or to support the purposes of nature. You may find the same thing elaborately described by Blackstone in the beginning of his second book, and by the writers whom Blackstone himself quotes from and adopts. You will also find it very clearly shown in these and other writers of authority, on grounds of reason and by the distinct evidence of history, that all the complicated and conflicting systems, by which in various civilised countries the powers of the possessors of property have been in various ways now narrowed, now enlarged, are systems of positive law, and that the right of property, as Mr. Austen has shown, has never existed even in its most absolute form without some restriction.

Many laws, among them those dealing with primogeniture, entail, and mortmain, made it clear that the English State claimed to prescribe the conditions on which its citizens should deal with property. It seems also to be reasonably clear that the power which prescribes rules can alter them; that plain absurdities would follow if this were not so, and that the consent of nations and the practice of ages has long since established this simple truth. But the consequences that follow from it are not always apprehended or recognised by those whom they concern. You will hear men talk as if a rule, once laid down, were laid down for ever; as if the rules of enjoyment became part of the thing enjoyed; and as if everyone who presumed to question the wisdom of the rules questioned the existence of that which is the subject of the rules, and that he who dares to propose an alteration should propose it, as in the old Greek Republic, with a halter round his neck. This seems absurd enough, but I put it to anyone of common fairness of mind, and the most ordinary knowledge of history, whether it is not now too much the fact, and whether it was not in times not quite gone by awfully and disgracefully the fact. The terrible penal laws which even so lately made capital crimes of insignificant offences, were defended by men of great power and high character, who always based their resistance to reform on the ground that to abrogate those laws was to attack property, and that to attack property was to subvert society itself. It is necessary to examine these examples of a state of feeling long since passed away, as old-world as the curfew or the sale of a ward’s marriage. Necessary for this reason, that the feeling is not dead; the confusion of thought which is supposed to qualify the feeling is as prevalent as ever, though these particular examples may exist no longer.

It has been shown that the institution of property rests upon the general advantage. The particular rules by which the enjoyment of property is regulated, differing in every country of the world, must rest at last upon one and the same foundation—the general advantage. In this respect the laws of property resemble all other laws. The defence of any law must ultimately rest on this, that it ensues to the general advantage. Despots, if they condescend to a defence of their despotism, base it on this ground. In free countries one cannot con-

ceive of a law resting on any other. It seems an elementary proposition that a free people can deal as it thinks fit with its common stock, and can prescribe to its citizens rules for its enjoyment, alienation, and transmission. That 50 or 100 gentlemen, or even 1,000, should have a right; by agreeing to shut the coal mines, to stop the manufactures of Great Britain, and to paralyse her commerce, seems unspeakably absurd. And again, as to perpetuities, no man can give what he did not receive, and as no man can himself have a perpetuity, so he cannot give it to anyone else. It would indeed be difficult, in the face of bills passed by the hundred every year through both Houses of Parliament, to deny that private property may be rightly interfered with for the public good. But then it is said you have no right to do it except on proper compensation. What is the exact meaning of these words, especially "right" and "proper?" Is the absolute right—right, not power, for that no man questions—is the absolute right of the State intended to be denied to deal with the common stock with or without compensation? And by "proper compensation," is it meant that the compensation is to be proper in the opinion of the person compensated, or the person compensating, or whom? Men to whose personal loss the law is altered are, as matter of common fairness, to be considered in every way, and nothing should be done to their detriment that it is possible to avoid, but it has been decided for centuries that they most certainly have no claim—no legal right—to compensation. All the laws of property must stand upon the footing of general advantage: a country belongs to the inhabitants: in what proportion and by what rules its inhabitants are to own it must be settled by the law, and the moment that a fragment of the people sets up rights inherent in themselves, and not founded on the public good, "plain absurdities" follow. Property is not inherently in this class or in that, or in this man or in that, but laws of property are, like all other laws, made by the State for the State, and are the expression of what is from time to time the judgment of that cultivated intelligence which in a free country controls and leads the opinion of the State upon the various subjects of the laws. Every change should be made with care and tenderness, without unnecessary disturbance, with compensation satisfactory, if it may be, even to the persons unfavourably affected by the change, and doing no violence to the great principle that right must not be compassed by wrong, nor evil done that good may come of it; but, it is not wrong to change the law on good reason of fair terms; it is not evil to vindicate the supremacy of the State over that which is being employed for its destruction. It would be well that all owners of property, from the largest to the smallest, should recognise distinctly that their title to the enjoyment of it must rest upon the same foundation—law, whether positive or presumptive; law, which is practical and intelligible; not upon anything sacred or mystical and transcendental, and that the mode and measure of their enjoyment of the common stock of the State, if it injures the State, can no more be defended, and will no more endure, than can any other public mischief or nuisance, be it criminal or be it civil. It is no doubt often said that to change laws of property involves, as a rule, an interference with free contract; but freedom of contract implies that both parties to it are really and not nominally free. There can be no free contract between a slave and his owner; none with a little child; none where one party to a so-called contract can impose, and the other party to it must accept, its terms, however burdensome, however inherently unjust. Let those who idolise freedom of contract remember what they generally forget, that they must, in consistency, denounce every statute which allows of and regulates bankruptcy, from James VI. of Scotland to Mr. Chamberlain.

Those who rabidly attack Socialists should ponder these utterances of one of the greatest lawyers of the age. To him who reads aright it can but be evident that here a great mind has been weighing the subject without bias, and has spoken upon it as one anxious to aid in its being understood, though he is no partisan of a particular interpretation.

To the Socialist it shows that the ideas for which he fights are making way not alone in the street and in the study, but in every place in which the minds of men are formed or their energies put forth.

H. HALLIDAY SPARLING.

FATHER M'GLYNN AND THE VATICAN—NEW YORK, June 23.—The officers of the Organised Labour party, after the mass meeting held in Union Square on the night of the 18th inst. to do honour to Father M'Glynn, sent a cablegram to Cardinal Simeoni declaring that 100,000 Catholics denounce the threat to excommunicate Father M'Glynn, and protest against ecclesiastical interference with the rights of Americans.—ROME, June 24.—A few days have still to elapse before the term of 40 days assigned to Father M'Glynn for submission to the Papal See expires. It is not believed in clerical circles that he will now obey the Pope's summons to Rome; and if he continues recalcitrant, the sentence of formal excommunication will be pronounced.

HOW IT IS DONE NOW, AND WHAT MAY BE THE FUTURE.—*First Year*:—Labourers (humbly): "Please, Mr. Capitalist, give us a little better wages; our homes are little better than dog-kennels, our families are starving, our—" Capitalist (sternly): "Oh, get out! You people are always whining! Do you want the earth?" *Second Year*:—Labourers (respectfully): "We cannot work longer for such small wages; we must live and have decent houses for our families." Capitalist (ironically): "You needn't work for me if the wages don't suit you. This is a free country, and you are at perfect liberty to leave and go somewhere else." *Third Year*:—Labourers (angrily): "We cannot and will not stand this oppression any longer. We produce the wealth and we propose to have it." Capitalist (terrified): "What is this? Police! Socialists! Anarchists! Communists!" *Fourth Year*:—Labourers: BOOM!!! No capitalists henceforth heard from.—CATO, in *Denver Labour Enquirer*.

HOW WE LIVE AND HOW WE MIGHT LIVE.

(Concluded from p. 203.)

To what extent it may be necessary or desirable for people under social order to live in common, we may differ pretty much according to our tendencies towards social life. For my part I can't see why we should think it a hardship to eat with the people we work with; I am sure that as to many things, such as valuable books, pictures, and splendour of surroundings, we shall find it better to club our means together; and I must say that often when I have been sickened by the stupidity of the mean idiotic rabbit warrens that rich men build for themselves in Bayswater and elsewhere, I console myself with visions of the noble communal hall of the future, unsparing of materials, generous in worthy ornament, alive with the noblest thoughts of our time, and the past embodied in the best art which free and manly people could produce; such an abode of man as no private enterprise could come anywhere near for beauty and fitness, because only collective thought and collective life could cherish the aspirations which would give birth to its beauty, or have the skill and leisure to carry them out. I for my part should think it much the reverse of a hardship if I had to read my books and meet my friends in such a place; nor do I think I am better off to live in a vulgar stuccoed house crowded with upholstery that I despise, in all respects degrading to the mind and enervating to the body to live in, simply because I call it my own, or my house. It is not an original remark, but I make it here, that my home is where I meet people with whom I sympathise, whom I love. Well, that is my opinion as a middle-class man. Whether a working-class man would think his family possession of his wretched little room better than his share of the palace of which I have spoken I must leave to his opinion, and to the imaginations of the middle class, who perhaps may sometimes conceive the fact that the said worker is cramped for space and comfort—say on washing day.

Before I leave this matter of the surroundings of life, I wish to meet a possible objection. I have spoken of machinery being used freely for releasing people from the more mechanical and repulsive part of necessary labour; and I know that to some cultivated people, people of the artistic turn of mind, machinery is particularly distasteful, and they will be apt to say you will never get your surroundings pleasant so long as you are surrounded by machinery. I don't quite admit that; it is the allowing machines to be our masters and not our servants that so injures the beauty of life nowadays. In other words, it is the token of the terrible crime we have fallen into of using our control of the powers of nature for the purpose of enslaving people, we careless meantime of how much happiness we rob their lives of.

Yet for the consolation of the artists I will say that I believe indeed that a state of social order would probably lead at first to a great development of machinery for really useful purposes, because people will still be anxious about getting through the work necessary to holding society together; but that after a while they will find that there is not so much work to do as they expected, and that then they will have leisure to reconsider the whole subject; and if it seems to them that a certain industry would be carried on more pleasantly as regards the worker, and more effectually as regards the goods by using hand-work rather than machinery, they will certainly get rid of their machinery, because it will be possible for them to do so. It isn't possible now; we are not at liberty to do so; we are slaves to the monsters which we have created. And I have a kind of hope that the very elaboration of machinery in a society whose purpose is not the multiplication of labour, as it now is, but the carrying on of a pleasant life as it would be under social order; that the elaboration of machinery, I say, will lead to the simplification of life, and so once more to the limitation of machinery.

Well, I will now let my claims for decent life stand as I have made them. To sum them up in brief, they are: First, a healthy body; second, an active mind in sympathy with the past, the present, and the future; thirdly, occupation fit for a healthy body and an active mind; and fourth, a beautiful world to live in. These are the conditions of life which the refined man of all ages has set before him as the thing above all others to be attained. Too often he has been so foiled in their pursuit that he has turned longing eyes backward to the days before civilisation, when man's sole business was getting himself food from day to day, and hope was dormant in him, or at least could not be expressed by him.

Indeed, if civilisation (as many think) forbids the realisation of the hope to attain such conditions of life, then civilisation forbids mankind to be happy; and if that is the case, then let us stifle all aspirations towards progress—nay, all feelings of mutual goodwill and affection between men—and snatch each one of us what we can from the heap of wealth that fools create for rogues to grow fat on; or better still, let us as speedily as possible find some means of dying like men, since we are forbidden to live like men.

Rather, however, take courage, and believe that we of this age, in spite of all its torment and disorder, have been born to a wonderful heritage fashioned of the work of those that have gone before us; and that the day of the organisation of man is dawning. It is not we who can build up the new social order; the past ages have done that for us; but we can clear our eyes to the signs of the times, and we shall then see that the attainment of a good condition of life is being made possible for us, and that it is now our business to stretch out our hands to take it. And how? Chiefly, I think, by educating people to a sense of their real capacities as men, so that they may be able to use to their own good the political power which is rapidly being thrust upon them;

to get them to see that the old system of organising labour for individual profit is becoming unmanageable, and that the whole people have now got to choose between the confusion resulting from the break up of that system and the determination to take in hand the labour now organised for profit, and use its organisation for the livelihood of the community: to get people to see that individual profit-makers are not a necessity for labour but an obstruction to it, and that not only or chiefly because they are the perpetual pensioners of labour, as they are, but rather because of the waste which their existence as a class necessitates. All this we have to teach people, when we have taught ourselves, and I admit that the work is long and burdensome; as I began by saying, people have been made so timorous of change by the terror of starvation that even the unluckiest of them are stolid and hard to move. Hard as the work is, however, its reward is not doubtful. The mere fact that a body of men, however small, are banded together as Socialist missionaries shows that the change is going on. As the working class, the real organic part of society, takes in these ideas, hope will arise in them, and they will claim changes in society, many of which doubtless will not tend directly towards their emancipation, because they will be claimed without due knowledge of the one thing necessary to claim, equality of condition; but which indirectly will help to break up our rotten sham society, while that claim for equality of condition will be made constantly and with growing loudness till it must be listened to, and then at last it will only be a step over the border and the civilised world will be socialised; and looking back on what has been, we shall be astonished to think of how long we submitted to live as we live now.

WILLIAM MORRIS.

SOCIALIST FEAST IN COPENHAGEN.

DURING all the years in which the political conflict has been going on in Denmark, the 5th of June has been a field-day for the parties. The Social Democratic workmen party also has made that day a feast, not exactly in memory of the charter of the constitution (for to this the working-men are not very much indebted), but a feast which gives us an opportunity for encouraging ourselves to fight for our rights. Year after year the partakers in the feast have grown in number. Last year it was evident that the feast-place was too small; therefore, this year it was enlarged from 21 to 35 acres of land. As in 1886 it was a part of the place for exercising soldiers.

The show was arranged at 1 o'clock in "Norre-Boulevard." 135 unions with their (mostly red) ensigns and banners were present, and 18 bands of music were distributed throughout the procession. All the partakers wore red ribbons on the breast; many of them had a red paper, with the words "liberty, equality, brotherhood" in white, on their hats; some carried little red banners with the same words in gold. Foremost in the show walked the Council of the Social Democratic Federation and the Redaction of the *Social Democrat*; after them followed the members of the Federation with the old ensign of "Internationale," which the Hussars in vain tried to capture at the first great workmen's meeting in Copenhagen. At 2 o'clock the show proceeded from the rendezvous through the main streets; along the road were large masses of people standing to see it pass, and from most houses it was saluted with cheers and flowers. The show was greater than last year, and especially should be noticed 500 women, who with their own ensigns formed a separate division. About 30,000 men and women took part in the show, and it had a length of two English miles, the ranks marching very near each other. It lasted more than two hours before the foremost reached the festival place, the entrance to which was marked with flags and the inscriptions, "Liberty, equality, brotherhood;" "The people's will is the supreme law." The place was enclosed by green branches, and from the enclosure waved the flags of all nations. Upon a hill was raised a decoration of flags, and on a pole 70 ft. high, from which an electric light at night enlightened the place, was hoisted a red flag with the inscription, "Welcome!" As a union arrived at its platform, it stopped and planted there its ensigns and banners. It was a magnificent appearance that of the large show with its many, and for the most part valuable, silken banners, among which red was the prevailing colour, entering the place.

Before the procession arrived, about 20,000 men and women were gathered in the feast-place, and more entered with it, so that at 6.15 o'clock about 70,000 people were assembled around the platforms. At a given sign all the bands played, and the partakers in the feast sang a song glorifying Liberty, and then the speeches began.

The smith Hurop, the joiner Berg, and the cigarmaker Olsen were in the three chairs, while the painter J. Jensen, the secretary Hordum, and P. Holm, M.P., spoke courageously and stoutly about liberty; and after a song for Socialism, the secretary of the Federation, P. Knudsen, the joiner C. C. Andersen, and the treasurer of the Federation G. C. Olsen, spoke about Socialism. At last a song, "To the worker," was sung, and then the partakers, who had enthusiastically cheered the speakers, spread to the different refreshment-tents, while dancing began upon the places set apart for it, which were illuminated by coloured lamps. At midnight the feast ended, and it was again made evident that the working-men themselves keep the best order, and that the constables had nothing else to do beside listening to the speeches, and seeing how the working-men succeeded in celebrating their annual liberty-feast. To the feast telegrams of congratulation arrived from 24 Social Democratic Unions in the country. In most of the towns the workmen party also held liberty-feasts. Especially should be mentioned the feast in Aarhus, the second town in Denmark. Fourteen

unions and about 8,000 men and women were present there, and the speeches of Marott, editor of the *Demokraten*, of Harald Jensen, and the typographer Nielsen, were highly applauded.—With Socialist greeting,
P. KNUDSEN, Sec. S.D.F.,
Copenhagen, June 11, 1887. Norregade 5.

NORTHUMBRIAN NOTES.

THE masters in some cases are preparing to boycott the Socialist Federation branches. At Broomhill the notices stuck up at the pit heap were taken down by order of the managers, although all kinds of notices are usually placed there. The men, however, are not easily cowed, and a little of this kind of action will be useful to the movement.

The dissatisfaction of the men at the action of the Miners' Union agents is getting stronger, and there is a growing settled conviction that a thorough reorganisation of the union is necessary. It is rather discouraging to hear that many miners intend to leave the union. This action is decidedly wrong, and if persisted in will mean the practical smash up of the union. The men have certainly been shamefully used by their leaders, whose action cannot be excused and should not be tolerated, but there is another way of looking at the matter.

In the past the miners, just like all trades' unionists, have been very regardless of the business of their organisation. As long as things went with seeming smoothness they were quite careless of what the officers did. Now when a crisis is at hand it would be cowardly as well as foolish to desert the union. The men have the power to make their society what they wish, and the fault is very much their own that hitherto they have had no definite ideas as to how things should be done, and what aim should be kept in view.

The discussion on the Mines Regulation Bill is a fine example of the uselessness of the present labour M.P.'s. The excessively moderate proposal to reduce the working hours for boys from 54 to 48 per week, was spoken to by Mr. Burt in a way that put an excuse for pitching it out into Mr. W. H. Smith's hand. "I shall vote for this as a matter of policy, but I hope it won't be carried," was the very apparent meaning of what Mr. Burt said, and Mr. Smith, of course, pointed out that as the chief labour M.P. did not care for the amendment the Government would not accept it.

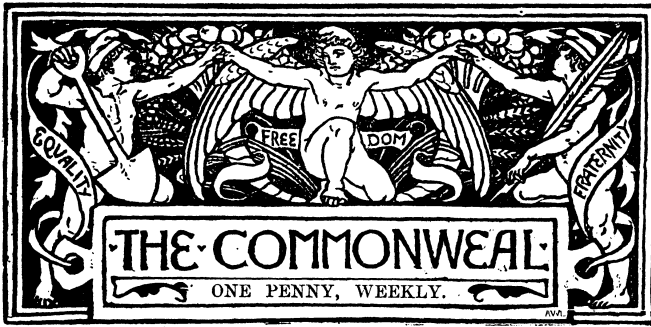
Mr. Bradlaugh fairly outdid himself when he opposed the attempt to put a stop to women working about the pits. As a matter of principle Mr. Bradlaugh objects to interfering with what he calls the "freedom" of labour. Under the present system women are set to do this and other degrading kinds of work because their labour is cheaper than men's; the present organisation of industry forces them to compete against their husbands and brothers, and the capitalists do all they can to encourage it. To ignore the fact that the women are forced into this work, and then to proclaim the wickedness of interfering with their freedom, is really too absurd.

There is a very able article by George Julian Harney (U.S.A.) in the Jubilee supplement to the *Newcastle Chronicle* for June 22nd, giving a sketch of the Chartist movement, and a useful reminder that the extended political liberty of the last fifty years has simply given more power to the capitalist as against the landlord, and not to the worker as against the employing class.
J. L. MAHON.

One of the coalowners that insisted most firmly on the reduction—Potter—has just died. Curiously enough, Potter's father died immediately after a strike which terminated adversely to the men some years ago. Superstitious people might say that this was another solemn warning to the Potter family against grinding down the wages of the workers.

In an article in the *Co-operative News* G. J. Holyoake says that J. Brailsford Bright's article in the *Commonweal* is the first sign of a disposition on the part of Socialists to regard co-operation with a friendly eye. It is a pity that a representative man like Mr. Holyoake should know so little of the present Socialist movement and its relation to other progressive movements. In spite of the fact that some Socialists, by no means of a representative standing, have railed against co-operation, the party generally is in sympathy with the aims of co-operators. Sometimes unfortunately mere dividend-hunting arrogates to itself the title of co-operation, and then it deserves condemnation not because under present conditions it is wrong for workmen to get dividends when they can, but because they put forward their dividend-hunting as a remedy for the present system of exploitation.
A. K. D.

"O'Brien is a MAN. Honour and praise to that courage that refuses the protection of the capitalist troops, even when his life is menaced.—*Denver Labor Enquirer*. Well, "you can't most always sometimes tell." This same O'Brien sought the protection of the "saviours of society" in New York, June 4, and he successfully escaped being publicly worshipped by the hero-worshipping workmen. He was horrified to think that the "mudsills" want to abolish private property in land. He wants none of that, and yet he has been lauded as an Irish patriot! D'ye call that a man?—*Workmen's Advocate*.



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

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

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| Denver (Col.) Labor Enquirer | Rome—L'Emanzipazione | |

NOTES.

The *Pall Mall* is sanguine enough to see a hope of Liberal reunion in Lord Hartington's speech; a less sanguine supporter of Liberalism would see in it the ordinary utterance of a Tory in Whig's clothing (which is the wolf and which the sheep?). But really to take any serious notice of such people as this lazy Whig-Tory lord would be beneath the part of the mere journalist even, if it were not for the worship of Parliament which is such a curious part of the modern Englishman's creed. Meanwhile there is one comfort, not all the Queen's horses (even with artificial tails and stuffed ears) and all the Queen's men can put the Liberal party together again. There is an end of that piece of humbug at any rate.

It is said in the daily papers: "An illuminated address of congratulation on the event of the Jubilee will be presented to her Majesty to-day by Sir James D. Linton and Mr. Alfred Everill on behalf of the Royal Institute of Painters in Water Colours. It is bound in the form of an album in crimson plush," etc. Only by a printers' error, I suppose, the statement is omitted that the plush was cut from the seat of a pair of breeches of that material hitherto reserved for the wear of the President of the illustrious society—the loss will be supplied.

The amendment to the Mines Regulation Bill designed to put an end to the work of the pit-brow women was thrown out. This was a foregone conclusion, considering the amount of ignorance of economy shown on both sides of the question, mingled with the determination to do nothing likely to put a spoke in the wheel of capitalism, which is the natural atmosphere of the House of Commons. Mr. M'Laren, apparently quite innocently, gave the key-note to the whole debate when he said, "No objection had been urged against the employment of women on the pit-bank that could not be urged with as much force against the whole factory system of this country."

To Mr. M'Laren that seemed a conclusive argument;—and to us it seems so also. It would not be worth while attacking here and there a special abuse, a special horror of the present labour system, unless through it we were attacking the whole capitalistic system; we don't want to improve the system which Mr. M'Laren obviously thinks as necessary to the production of commodities as the sun is to the production of plants, but to sweep it away.

The case of the pit-brow women has been put more than once in the *Commonweal*, but as not everybody who may get hold of this number will be a subscriber to the paper, it may shortly be stated again thus:

that these women are employed on work unfit for women in order to reduce the wages of men in the coal industry. That is the whole matter in a nutshell. W. M.

A letter on "The Labour Struggle," signed "Oswald Birchall," and dated "Buscot Rectory, Lechlade, Jubilee Day," appears in the *Co-operative News*, in the course of which the writer says, "I am glad to learn from the *News* that co-operation is to be started at Cradley Heath, but for such news I am generally obliged to turn to "The Labour Struggle" in the *Commonweal*, of which I send you the current number. I do not know how far the picture made up by the various items there may be accurate or not; but surely it is as dreadfully startling as ever, and ought to be looked into by all co-operative associations, with a view to productive experiments, without waiting for any other objects." I am sure I may venture to inform our friend that if there be any inaccuracy in the "dreadfully startling" account presented in the "Labour Struggle," it is certainly not in the direction of overstating the case. T. B.

A FREE-TRADER'S VIEW OF THE LABOUR QUESTION.

II.

This, then, is the second proposition that presents itself in considering Mr. Atkinson's view of the relations of labour and capital: That the nationalisation of capital, attended as it would be by the division of the profits of the capitalists amongst the working classes, would give such slight additional advantage to the latter as to render it, even if just, not worth the trouble of doing.

As I have already pointed out, most capitalists get far more than 5% per cent. of the total proceeds of their business; railway shareholders, for instance, taking more than one-half, or over 50 per cent. In such cases there can be no question whether it is worth while for the labourers to claim their rights. I must leave it to the men who live on £60 a-year to determine whether an extra £12 is worth striving for. All I know is, that it is *not* worth their while to work as they do for what they can buy with £60 a-year.

Let us, however, suppose, for the sake of argument, that Mr. Atkinson's figures represent truly the "present division of profits," and that, divided all round, the capitalists' share would not make five pounds a-year difference. Ought not the workers, then, to be satisfied, and Socialist agitators shut their mouths, and settle down in peace? Surely nothing more could be desired?

Well, as I said before, the labour question does not to my mind run on one line only; it is a figure of many sides, of which this of wages and the division of profits is perhaps the least important. We Socialists believe that the day will come when there will be no more profit-making, nor working for wages or money at all, but all will work for one common aim, as may sometimes be seen amongst the brothers and sisters of one family.

But before that blessed time arrives other things besides wages must be readjusted. For there are far more important relations between capital and labour than those which affect wages. Here, for instance, is something connected with another side of the question: "A general meeting of the cotton-spinners of Lancashire, Cheshire, and the neighbouring districts was held in Manchester yesterday, when it was resolved to run the mills upon half-time for eight weeks. This step is attributed to the adverse effect upon the spinners of the speculations of cotton-brokers at Liverpool" (*Standard*, May 28). I will not now go into the effect of this decision on the wages of the working people; but it is a fair example of "the service which capital does to labour in assisting it to economise time." The main thing, however, to be noticed in this extract is the proof it affords of the almost absolute power which the capitalist has over the labourers so long as he has control of the capital. It is possible for him to compel them to work themselves to death, or to stand idle and starve, according as it pays him best.

Still worse even than this is the misdirection and waste of labour which goes on when the working classes are at the mercy of the holders of capital; for the latter have absolute power to employ the labourers at whatever they may please—useful, useless, or absolutely harmful, as it suits their fancy. This it is which is the real, or at any rate by far the most fruitful cause of overwork. Every labourer who is taken away from the production of what he or his class needs, becomes a drag on those who are left. They have to produce the food he eats, the clothes he wears, and everything that he uses; and he does nothing for them in return, but is "employed" by some capitalist or master to do unnecessary work for him. And yet Mr. Atkinson tries to make believe that it is a blessing to the labourers to have a capitalist to "give further employment to labour," and thus prevent the working classes from enjoying that leisure which the introduction of machinery should have afforded them. If all the funkeys and domestic servants, all the makers of articles of luxury and builders of large mansions and churches, all the carriage-builders picture-painters, tailors, advertisers, and innumerable others whose work is now absolutely wasted on those who are utterly useless but whose possession of capital enables them as a class to compel the labour of all these producers,—if all these said producers or hangers-on were to leave off working for another class and merely toil for the needs of their own class, even without the help of modern inventions they would by working very short hours be able to produce all that they needed; and with "capital" in the form of

machinery they might reduce almost to nothing the time occupied in the production of their necessaries, though it must not be forgotten that the manufacture of this machinery would take some of them away from more healthy and happier work.

This would be the advantage of capital to the labourer, if it were not for the capitalist; so that it is entirely wrong to talk of capital and capitalist as if they were one and the same thing; the former being a blessing to mankind, were it not for the curse imposed on us in the person of the latter.

Surely this is a most important side of the labour question, and yet Mr. Atkinson's straight lines don't lead us to it at all. One begins to suspect that after all his view of the affair is only easy because so extremely narrow, and the simple look it has is the sham simplicity put on to hide dishonesty of thought. What other opinion can one hold of such expressions as these: "Every capitalist who puts his money into useful work—into cloth, food, fuel, metals, and the like—saves every workman a deal more than he takes from him"; "For every cent that almost every great capitalist receives, the workmen are saved ten cents somehow or other"?

But it is weary work to dwell so long on such stuff as this, and I will pass on to the last paragraph, where we learn that "forty or fifty years ago the men and women in the cotton-mills worked thirteen or fourteen hours a-day, while they only earned half as much wages. . . . It was just the same in every other kind of work. . . . Where it took thirteen or fourteen hours then it now takes but ten hours. By and by it will take less. Very likely the next generation will be able to get just as good a living, and perhaps a better one than the present by working eight hours a-day; but they won't get it by Acts of Legislature."

I commend this, especially the last sentence, to the consideration of all. The evident idea is to show that the capitalist is the benefactor to whom the workers owe the shorter hours of labour which we are told they enjoy. Whereas the fact is that in every instance the capitalists have as a body resisted every concession in the way of shortening the hours of labour that has hitherto been requested. What little advantage has been gained has been rendered more possible by machinery and the increase of capital, but has been all but spoilt by the capitalists; and all benefits the workers enjoy are due almost wholly to their own determined agitation. Bearing this fact in mind, we must toil on, recognising that one truth of Mr. Atkinson's, that we shall not get anything by Acts of the Legislature, and organise ourselves in such a way that ere long we may experience the blessing of capital, *without its present attendant curse.*

Meanwhile, I shall feel amply rewarded for what trouble I have had in following Mr. Atkinson's dreary lines if I have succeeded in tearing up any of them, so as to bring those who have been travelling along them to the final break-down of the train of thought which must precede their walking in the better paths of Socialism.

GEORGE STURT.

LITERARY NOTICES.

Our Corner for July is an excellent number. John Robertson's article on "Culture and Reaction. A Chapter in Political Science," is scholarly and thorough. The second and concluding instalment will appear next month and will be looked for with great interest. Annie Besant has a good article on "The Future of the Workers in England," that the "If not, why?" style of argument would have some difficulty in meeting. There are several other readable and interesting contributions, including poems by E. Nesbit and Fred. Henderson, the sonnet by the latter written in prison.

'Socialism: For and Against,' by Annie Besant and Charles Bradlaugh (Freethought Publishing Co., 4d.), is a written debate upon Socialism, which does not bring any new point very strongly forward, but once more restates the old objections and ably answers them.

'The Socialist Movement,' by Annie Besant (Freethought Publishing Co., 63 Fleet Street, 3d.), is a reprint of an article in the *Westminster Review*. It is a calm, clear statement of Socialism and its aims; an eloquent exposition of the forces that work toward its realisation. A temperate and impartial explanation is given of the attitude of differing schools of Socialists on the most important points; and altogether this is a most valuable pamphlet for students of the subject.

'Radicalism and Socialism' (same writer, publisher, and price) is an endeavour to show Radicals that their political principles rightly held and applied should make them Socialists, and that the whole tendency of modern legislation is socialistic, a tendency so developed as to be beyond successful interested resistance. Mrs. Besant says truly, "The main difference between Radicals and Socialists . . . is that Radicals take the steps towards Socialism without recognising whether they are going; while the Socialists see the goal as well as the separate Acts of Parliament." There are those of us, of whom the talented authoress is not one, would say that one of the lessons she taught in this pamphlet is that Radicals are perfectly competent to do all that can be done on parliamentary lines, and that for Socialists the rôle of teacher and agitator was the one most open. S.

THE CONCENTRATION OF CAPITAL.—From 1863 to 1869 there were 4,782 new limited companies, from 1870 to 1876 there were 6,905; from 1877 to 1883 there were 8,643; and in 1883, 1,634, the largest number of new companies ever started in one year. These figures show rapid and enormous concentration. A large proportion of these fail, but that is simply the survival of the fittest companies. This shows the growth of large capitals. Here is the smashing up of the small. Bankruptcies and composition with creditors from 1870 to 1875 rose gradually from 5,002 to 7,899; by 1879 they reached 13,132. Since then they have gradually decreased, the slaughter of the superfluous being fairly well accomplished for a time. The great increase of large fortunes is also a proof of the concentration of capital. The co-operative stores have smashed up hundreds of shopkeepers.—J. L. M.

CORRESPONDENCE.

THE MARGIN OF PROFIT.

Owing either to their extraordinary dullness or to their impudent dishonesty, several of our opponents persist in using "profit" and "surplus-value" as identical terms, and in maintaining that if the margin of profit is proved to be small, it necessarily follows that the workers would not be benefitted to an appreciable extent were they to receive in addition to their wages all the surplus-value they create. Over and over again it has been pointed out to these people (manifestly without effect) that even when little or no profit is being made there may still be produced an enormous amount of surplus-value.

To prove this once more, I append the balance-sheet for 1886 of an Ayrshire farmer, which appears in a report on 'Farm Rents in Scotland,' drawn up by Mr. Lucien J. Walker, United States commercial agent in Dunfermline. I choose this balance-sheet out of several at hand, of various industrial concerns, because agriculture, it is frequently asserted, is the most unprofitable industry in the country, and is therefore likely (if all that our opponents say be true) to be the industry in which the least surplus-value is produced. We are led to expect that the rate of exploitation is very small indeed—so small that farm labourers would receive only a few pence in addition to their present wage were they to get the full fruits of their labour. Contrary to expectation, however, we find in the case of this farm that although the profit is nil, the rate of the production of surplus-value is over 200 per cent. In plain English, for every £100 paid out of the net produce as wages to labour, £200 is paid as rent and interest to capital. It is evident that if the exploitation of labour were put an end to, the wages of labour on this particular farm might be trebled, as the workers on it are at present robbed of £2 out of every £3 the net produce of their labour brings in the market!

Balance-Sheet of an Ayrshire Farm in 1886.

| RECEIVED. | | PAID. | |
|---------------|-----------|--|-----------|
| Grain | £40 16 0 | Manure, Feeding Stuffs | £74 15 0 |
| Green Crop | 13 0 0 | Rent | 200 0 0 |
| Hay | 60 10 6 | Interest | 40 0 0 |
| Stock | 40 0 0 | (Deduct small percentage for insurance and depreciation.) | |
| Dairy Produce | 201 10 0 | Wages | 64 17 0 |
| Grazing | 75 0 0 | Ditto. Balance left farmer to pay taxes, etc., and to feed, clothe, and educate his children | 51 4 6 |
| | £430 16 6 | Profit | nil. |
| | | | £430 16 6 |

The words in italics are mine.

Let us hope we shall have no more of the margin-of-profit juggle.

J. HALDANE SMITH.

"CHRISTIANITY, POSITIVISM, AND SOCIALISM."

FRIEND,—That Christian or any other morality may easily be, and is, distorted to suit selfish individual ends is not only credible, but undoubtedly true; yet it is difficult in the light of early Christian teaching to altogether accept Mr. Bax's views.

The "notion of Holiness," while conveying the sense of the relation of the individual soul with God, equally necessitates the highest social morality; and this double teaching—generalised in the words "Love the Lord thy God and thy neighbour as thyself"—is amplified throughout the whole of the New Testament. The writer who said "What doth it profit though a man say he hath faith and have not works? Can faith save him?" certainly had not the notion that the requirements of the Christian faith ceased at an introspective holiness; while the works implied have no connection with introspection. Again, the general and, to a modern individualist, meaningless denunciations of the rich are but examples of social teaching which, we may take it, had their partial result in the semi-communism lately mentioned. This teaching, well set forth in the epistle quoted, is also apparent throughout the whole of the Testament, and is entirely inseparable from the introspective which apparently gives such offence.

It were perhaps unjust to apply Mr. Morison's Napoleonic quotation to Mr. Bax, yet this ignoring of the twofold nature of Christian teaching would certainly seem in some measure to warrant it.

While recognising the present social condition to be the result of a purely human disease—selfishness—to which social evolution is applying a divine remedy—brotherhood—is it just to attribute either directly or indirectly such condition to a religion which, in its primitive teaching at least, while asserting individual responsibility severely condemned individual selfishness?—Yours sincerely, CHARLES J. GLADWELL.

McGlynn has set New York in a roar by saying that O'Brien is only Lansdowne with twenty-five per cent off! This hit harder and truer than the Canadian brick.—*Denver Labour Enquirer.*

"I am for Ireland and Ireland alone. I will touch nothing else."—WILLIAM O'BRIEN. Then what are you doing here? We, organised workmen, are men of all nationalities, and contend for the workers of the world, including the Irish. William, you're a disgrace to humanity.—*Workmen's Advocate.*

"BRAIN" WORK.—Jay Gould: "Want a yacht, eh? Well, you've got to make the money to buy it. I'll take a walk down street." Son George: "Yes, father." "I'll slip on the pavement." "Yes, father." "And have myself brought back in an ambulance." "Yes, father." "Then stocks will drop and you buy." "Yes, father." "Then I'll go out on the front pavement and dance a jig." "Yes, father." "Then stocks will go up and you sell."—*Denver Labour Enquirer.*

That the labourers are entitled to life and the means of life; that they are entitled to the full benefit resulting from their labour; that in order to secure these, they must control the means; and that any system which makes it possible for individuals to enslave others is wrong and must be abolished—these are the principles that animate the real labour movement. Carry on the agitation for principles; be as radical as you please, but don't make idols of men and worship them.—*Workmen's Advocate.*

THE LABOUR STRUGGLE.

BRITAIN.

The Dundee masons came out on strike on Saturday, for an advance of a halfpenny on their present wages of 7d. per hour.

At a meeting of cotton spinners in Heywood, on the 24th, representing 250,000 spindles, it was decided unanimously to run short time.

Meetings of joiners have been held in Dundee to consider the wages question, with a view of enforcing the standard rate in all the workshops in Dundee.

The strike of masons, which took place in Dundee last Saturday, has been partially settled by several of the employers conceding the advance of a halfpenny per hour on the standard rate of wages, 7d. per hour.

The whole of the limited spinning companies in the Ashton and Stalybridge district have agreed to commence three days a week for two months. At Oldham, short time has started at Sun Mill, Gladstone, and other companies.

India mills, which are the largest in the Darwen district, have now been closed for about six weeks, and are not expected to recommence work until after the Darwen fair holidays, which commence in about a month. Cotton Hall Spinning Mill and Darwen Spinning Company's Mill are also closed owing to the state of trade.

The weavers employed at the Lower Darwen and by Messrs. Thomas and Richard Eccles are out on strike. The weavers allege as their reason bad material, contending that it cannot be worked properly. The mill is closed, and is not likely to be again opened for some time unless, it is said, the workpeople make a special request to the employers.

BLACKHEATH STUD AND PEG TRADE.—On Saturday the operatives in the stud and peg trade in the Blackheath and Rowley Regis districts gave their employers 14 days notice for a return to the 1881 list of prices.

COLLIERY ENGINEERS' WAGES AT BRIERLEY HILL.—Fourteen days' notice was given on Friday last at the Earl of Dudley's collieries in the Brierley Hill district for a reduction of 4d. a day in the wages of colliery engineers—from 3s. 8d. to 3s. 4d. a day.

The London Trades Council Annual Report is to hand, eight pages, of which four and a half are devoted to the proceedings connected with the visit to Sandringham, and eight lines to strike movements. There is a good deal of implied abuse of Socialists which will be dealt with next week.

The Edinburgh Trades' Council at a special meeting resolved, by a majority of 14 to 12, to refuse the ticket of admission to the Westminster Jubilee service, which had been forwarded to the President by the Secretary of the National Union of Conservative Associations. In consequence of certain expressions used towards him by one of the members, Mr. George Mackay intimated his intention of sending in his resignation as President.

On Monday morning, three chain shops at Dudley Wood and New Town, near Cradley Heath, were blown up by gunpowder. The shops are said to have been used by workmen who have been working under price, and an inspection of the buildings shows that they have been destroyed by canisters of gunpowder being dropped down the chimneys to which fuses were attached. The hearths and buildings are completely destroyed.

On Friday the 24th ult. a deputation of about 100 workmen residing at Bloomfield, Tipton, waited upon the Poor Law Guardians, and applied for relief. It was stated that about 400 ironworkers and their families were starving, through the stoppage of the ironworks, some of the men not having broken their fast for several days. The Chairman and other Guardians sympathised with the men, and stated that the only relief they could give was to send them into the workhouse.

At a representative meeting of chainmakers on the 24th ult. at Cradley Heath, it was stated that at meetings of the operatives held throughout the South Staffordshire and East Worcestershire districts, they had unanimously decided to cease work on the 1st July, in consequence of a number of employers having disregarded the recognised list of prices. The result will be that upwards of 3000 operatives will turn out on strike. Arrangements are being made to provide co-operative works on an extensive scale, which, it is contended, will deprive the obnoxious middlemen of their occupation.

BROXBURN—SHALE-WORKERS' WAGES.—Notices have been posted up at Newliston and Holmes intimating that, in accordance with an agreement come to by the whole of the oil companies, the miners and oncost men will have their wages reduced by one-sixth after next pay day. It is expected that a similar notice will be posted at Broxburn Oil Works in a few days.

END OF A STRIKE.—Some few days ago the colliers working in Wester Gartshore Pit, W. Scotland, struck work owing to the attempted imposition of a scale of deductions for "dirt" sent up in the hutches, which the men regarded as unreasonable. A meeting between the masters, the men, and the miners' agent for the district has resulted in the scale being withdrawn, and the men have resumed work.

GLASGOW BAKERS.—A meeting of the operative bakers of Glasgow was held last week for the purpose of considering their hours of labour; Mr. David Fortune presided. It was moved by one of the bakers, "That this meeting is of opinion that the present state of trade demands the gravest consideration, inasmuch as the position of the operatives has become such that it is simply impossible that they can in any adequate measure fulfil the duties devolving on them as citizens of the commonwealth." This resolution was seconded by Mr. H. Tait, general secretary of the Scottish Railway Servants, and supported by Mr. Drummond, secretary of the Scottish Typographical Society (the latter of whom remarked that, in his opinion, twenty-four hours would settle any dispute if the men chose to stop supplies), and was unanimously passed.

GLASGOW TRADES' COUNCIL.—This Council met on the 22nd, Mr. R. C. Grant, president, in the chair. Mr. Hunter reported on behalf of the bakers that they had held a meeting on the preceding night to take steps to improve their trade. He went on to state how things were now managed in the Co-operative Society. Until recently the men working there had not started work before four o'clock, although they were confessedly straitened for room; but, strange to say, now that they had opened splendid premises, with plenty of room and all the latest improvements, they had found out that they required to begin work at 1 o'clock with the prospect of being advanced to 11 o'clock. This, he thought, was not creditable to the co-operators, who were many of them working-men, and many of them trades' unionists. He

had also heard that other little pleasant surprises were expected to be in store for them, notwithstanding that at the present time more work was screwed out of them than in any shop in the city. A considerable number of men in the Council who are co-operators said they would take the earliest opportunity of inquiring into the matter.

THE LOTHIAN SHALE MINERS.—A mass meeting of the shale miners of Broxburn, Uphall, Holmes, Newliston, etc., was held on Thursday night at Broxburn, to consider the proposed reduction of their wages. Mr. Wilson, agent, pointed out that there had been no change in the oil trade during the past twelve months to warrant this reduction. He denounced the Broxburn Company—a company which could pay 15 per cent., and had £25,000 undivided profits—for proposing to reduce the men's wages, many of whom, he said, were not earning as much, after paying deductions, as it would require to keep them and their families in the poor's house. With the exception of four men, who held that they should not begin work on the reduction at all, all present (about 1,000 men) agreed to resort to a four-days-a-week policy, the onus thus falling on the employers if they were locked out. The reduction of wages is to the extent of one-sixth. Workers, miners especially, ought to see the need for "a long pull, a strong pull, and a pull all together," to put an end to this monstrous capitalistic system with its under-payment and over-work for the many and its leisure and luxury for the few. Petty local strikes can have little or no effect. Workers in all industries must combine and quietly but determinedly set aside all landowners, shareholders, dividend-drawers of all kinds, and other drones; and work the land, the mines, and the capital of the country for behoof of the industrious only. To organise and educate the workers to this end is what the Socialist League sets before it, and therefore all intelligent working-men ought to enrol themselves as members.

LONDON APPRENTICES.—At the instigation of Sir E. Currie, on behalf of the trustees of the People's Palace, the London Trades' Council has through its secretary, Mr. George Shipton, issued an invitation to the trades to attend a meeting of workmen to be held in the Memorial Hall, Farringdon Street, and by the time this is in print the meeting will have been held. The trustees of the People's Palace, with the assistance of the Trades' Council, propose "to establish an extensive scheme under which apprentices in all trades of the metropolis should be asked to compete for various prizes in their respective industries with a view, if possible, of showing that the charges sometimes made against English workmen that they are inferior to their foreign rivals cannot be sustained." The object of calling the meeting is "to formulate a plan for reaching the apprentices in all trades throughout the metropolis, and inducing them to exhibit specimens of their individual work of the particular industry in which they may be serving their time." An exhibition of the works is to take place in the Queen's Hall of the People's Palace, and prizes of considerable value are to be given. The Executive of the Trades' Council adds: "The question of apprenticeship is one of vital moment to England's workpeople and their industrial future." There is a sort of pseudo-mediaevalistic smack about all this nonsensical twaddle. The apprentices of the metropolis, compared to the number of youths engaged in the various forms of industry, how many of them are apprentices in the old English sense of the word? Few indeed, very few. Besides, the present-day method of producing goods has done away with the necessity for apprenticeship in the proper sense and meaning of the term. Ever since the rise of the industrial system, ever since the invention of labour-saving machinery, the processes of production have become more and more divided. Even in industries that machinery has not directly affected, subdivision of craft has been made. To-day the boot-maker is only in part a boot-maker; he is either laster, rivetter, finisher, clicker, or something in the leather line. In other trades it is much the same, and there are very few trades to-day in which may be found the entire workman, the maker or doer of the craft right out. As the capitalistic method of production has developed, so gradually has been wrought an entire change in the character of the industries of the country. Of course, all this is obvious to the most superficial observer. The point to note about this ostentatious business, is the attempts that are being made from time to time by the various City Companies to make the workers believe that they have an ever-watchful eye for their interests. The Plumber's Company has lately been bestirring itself. The Master of the Draper's Company, the newly-made knight along with a number of others, are now a-fussing about and talking, if even they be in earnest, about matters they know little or nothing about. The words London apprentices have about them an old-fashioned charm, and this probably accounts for the action of the London Trades' Council in the matter. To-day I simply draw attention to the meeting, and refrain from discussing in detail its object. I hope to be able to do this after the meeting has been held.—H. A. BARKER.

FRANCE.

It appears that a new period of expulsions is likely to go on. Comrade Luigi Parmeggiani has received last week orders to leave France, because he is a Socialist, and only therefore, for he has done nothing whatever against the so-called "law and authority." He at once declared that he refused to go, having the right, as an international Socialist, to live anywhere he likes. The *Cri du Peuple* says that the same measure will be applied to several other "foreigners," and gives them the good advice to do the same as Parmeggiani.

At Montluçon, 1500 glassbottle-makers are on strike. They have decided not to resume work until their "masters" have accepted their proposals—8 hours of work for each 24 hours, and all bottles thrown aside to become the property of the workers. This last condition is a very important one, because the exploiters throw aside a great quantity of bottles, which in reality they afterwards sell at the same price as the well-finished bottles, without paying any salary for them. To this swindle the workers intend to put an end. We are invited by the *Chambre Syndicale* (Trades Union) of the glassbottle makers of Montluçon to warn English glass-bottle makers not to cross the Channel and accept work there.

BELGIUM.

Agitation is going on amongst the unfortunate workers of this country. At Mons, at Charleroi, at La Louvière, at Liège, Seraing, in all the miners districts, the general impression is that in a very short time a general strike will again break out, and it is said that the Executive Council of the Parti Ouvrier is intending this time to take the head of the movement. The Socialists of Ghent also are said to prepare themselves to join in the struggle. Everywhere, in order to make the next outbreak a success, the workers are endeavouring by all means to secure a good and strong organisation, and, as matters stand now, they hope that the final result of their efforts will be beneficial to them.

GERMANY.

Twenty-two new arrests have been made in Magdeburg, and the accused have been ordered to Leipzig for high treason. Eighteen other Socialists have been expelled. Perquisitions are made every day. It is in Magdeburg that resides the omnipotent M. Krieter, police councillor, who recently published a book entitled "The Secret Organisation of Socialism in Germany."

The State of Siege for Leipzig and district has been prolonged for the term of one year. Never mind! Socialism is spreading all over Saxony all the same.

According to the laws against the Socialists, the police director of Berlin has prohibited the circulation of the pamphlets of the International Revolutionary Library edited in New York. Since that prohibition was issued, several thousand copies have been distributed throughout Germany. The best answer indeed!

The Socialist paper *Leipziger Volksblatt* has been suppressed, and Albert Seebach, the publisher, and Albert Schmidt, the chief editor of the paper, have been expelled from Saxony.

In Elberfeld and Barmen the Socialists have distributed secretly during the last week 10,000 copies of a large size pamphlet entitled 'Address to the German Voters.' The business as a whole was performed very successfully, two Socialists only having been arrested, and we know that two out of a dozen is not much in the police-blessed land of Germany.

At Hamburg, the police "authorities" have lately made several perquisitions in all the streets which are in the vicinity of the Lake Binnen-Alster, and they have discovered immense quantities of pamphlets, leaflets, Socialist papers, mostly published at New York and at Berlin, but they have made no arrest, "because," says a Hamburg bourgeois paper, "they ought to have arrested all the inhabitants of that part of the town, all being Socialists." Right so!

ITALY.

CARRARA.—A correspondent to the *Emancipazione* (Rome) writes very warmly in a late number of that journal of the miserable condition of the day-labourers and navvies at work in the town. Of late some drainage-work, enlargement of the cemetery, etc., were put up to auction by the municipality—Italian officials are more impudently frank and open in their doings than others—and were of course knocked down to some conscienceless speculators who kindly offered to do the work for an impossible price; whereafter the curious observer might watch the mushroom growth of a slave-driving organisation "in little," in which the slaves work some 14 hours a-day with as little respite as may be for the necessary stowage of food, ruled with the rod of iron of petty despotism, cursing their fate and bearing with it out of sheer force of habit.

WAGES OF RAILWAY EMPLOYEES.—The wages of railway employes in Italy are regulated by the different companies on the basis of the strictest economy. I will give one or two examples that may be interesting to those whom "work and wages" concern. The clerks of the Roman-Provincial line, after working several months on day-wages, enter into a monthly salary of 100 lire (£4) or less than £1 a week; after 10 or 12 years they can rise to between 130 lire and 175 lire (£4 to £7). On the Southern line the monthly rise is only from 5 to 15 lire in such long periods that the life of Noah himself would scarcely suffice for a hard-working clerk to touch the princely salary of 18 lire monthly. The pay of the rest of the "personale" is meted out in like proportion. There is perhaps nothing out of the common in these figures for Italian wages, and with one more instance I will have done, that of the pointsman who has to be, or should be a man of trust, and whose obviously important duties should be proportionately paid—this man on the Roman-Provincial receives a wage of 1s. 2d. per day!

GRAVE DANGER.—"Dr. McGlynn in grave danger," says a headline in the *Kansas City Times*. And what do you suppose is the nature of this "danger?" Why, the senile Mr. Pecci, of Rome, is said to threaten to excommunicate him if he does not present himself before the ecclesiastical tribunal in that city within a certain specified time! What terrors such a prospect must have for a healthy mind!—*Lucifer*.

SENTENCE ON RUSSIAN NIHILISTS.—The verdict has been pronounced in the trial of the persons charged with murdering Colonel Soudeikin, chief of the St. Petersburg secret police, in December last. Seven of the accused were sentenced to death, fourteen to terms of hard labour, and two were acquitted. It seems to be the first time that a Russian court-martial has ever acquitted political criminals.

THE BLACK FLAG IN CORK.—In consequence of the action of the Mayor of Cork in hoisting a black flag on the municipal offices on Jubilee Day, and also what the authorities regard as a prejudiced disposition to deal leniently with offenders of a certain class, Captain Plunkett, divisional magistrate, has taken magisterial charge of the city. He has issued instructions to the police to permit no prisoner to be discharged on the mayor's order, and to have all prisoners tried by a resident magistrate.

THE FAMINE YEARS IN IRELAND.—We are often asked to give the statistics of the exportation of food from Ireland during the famine there. Here are some. The first figures are taken from two returns made to the House of Commons of the exports from Ireland into Great Britain for the quarter ending July 5, 1846. Of the first account: wheat, 59,478 quarters; barley, 18,417 do.; oats, 245,067 do.; flour, 242,257 cwt.; oatmeal, 138,241 do. Of the second: oxen, bulls, and cows, 33,850; calves, 1293; sheep and lambs, 56,669; swine, 124,762. 14,369 barrels of oats were exported from Limerick to London and Glasgow the third week of November, at the same time that £210 duty was paid on the importation of Indian corn. From the same port 47,000 firkins of butter were shipped from 1st May. From other returns we find that the total export of provisions from the ports of Waterford, Cork, Limerick, and Belfast, from the 1st of August 1846 to the 1st of January 1847 was: pork, barrels, 37,123; bacon, fitches, 222,608; butter, firkins, 388,455; hams, hgsds., 1971; Beef, tierces, 2555; wheat, barrels, 48,526; oats, barrels, 448,232; barley, barrels, 12,029; oatmeal, cwt., 7210; flour, cwt., 144,185; pigs, 44,659; cows, 9007; sheep, 10,288. A careful census of the agricultural produce of Ireland for the year 1847, made by Captain Larcom, as a Government Commissioner, gives the total value of that produce as £44,958,120 sterling, which would have amply sustained double the entire people of the island. If all the figures of the famine years, of which these few are a fair sample, were gathered together, it would be found that there was no necessity for a famine at all, were it not for "law and order" and the "rights of property"; and that English rule and landlordism are to be credited with a million and a half deaths of hunger.—S.

THE SOCIALIST LEAGUE.

OFFICES: 13 FARRINGTON ROAD, E.C.

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

London Members.—The first meeting of London Members will be held on Monday the 4th of July.

Open-air Propaganda.—The Lecture Secretary requests that all the League lecturers will attend the General Meeting on Monday next, and that London Branches send delegates to assist the arrangement of a rotation of lecturers and other business connected therewith.

Resolution of Council.

"That all monies collected at open-air meetings must be duly handed to the treasurer of the League, and the receipt of same acknowledged in *Commonweal*."

"COMMONWEAL" PRINTING FUND.

Hammersmith Branch (two weeks), £1. Edward Carpenter (two quarters), £10. K. F. (weekly), 1s. Medical Student (don.), 5s.—Total, £11, 6s.

FOR PROPAGANDA.

Collected at Regent's Park—19th, 2s. 8½d.; 26th, 4s. 4½d.

Ph. W., Treasurer, June 28.

REPORTS.

BLOOMSBURY.—On Thursday, June 23, Mrs. Besant lectured to a crowded audience on "The Prosperity of the Working Classes." A few questions were asked, and there was a slight discussion after the lecture. On Sunday, W. H. Utley lectured to a large crowd at the Arsenal Gates, Woolwich, on "Socialists and Radicals." Large quantities of literature were sold at this meeting, which comrade Banner also addressed.—U.

CLERKENWELL.—On Wednesday, June 22, T. Bolas opened a very interesting discussion on "Limitations of Communism." On Sunday, June 26, we held a good meeting on Clerkenwell Green, addressed by Annie Taylor, Somerville, Lane, and Blundell. In our hall, after the outdoor meeting, T. Bolas lectured on "Capitalism, its Growth and Delimitation." Several questions were asked and answered, and then a rather lively discussion followed. *Commonweal* and pamphlets keep steady sale.—A. T. and W. B.

HACKNEY.—D. Nicoll addressed a large meeting at the Salmon and Ball on Sunday morning. At the club on Sunday evening, H. A. Barker delivered a lecture on "Evolution and Socialism" to a good audience. Discussion followed.

MERTON AND MITCHAM.—Last Sunday morning Eden addressed a good meeting on the Fair Green. In the evening Winkworth, Hardesty, and Kitz made a propagandist tour around Garrett, Tooting, and Wimbledon, distributing literature from house to house.—F. KITZ.

NORTH LONDON.—On Sunday morning, in Regent's Park, we held a very good meeting, addressed by Cantwell, Brooks, and Mainwaring. Some opposition was offered by an American, who was astonished that such a number of Englishmen stood quietly by and heard their Parliament called "a den of thieves," and was satisfactorily replied to.

EDINBURGH.—On Saturday evening, C. W. Tuke and J. Smith had a good meeting at Loanhead. On Sunday evening, in Queen's Park, a large and very attentive meeting was addressed by Davidson, Tuke, J. H. Smith, and Gilray. *Commonweal* sold out at this meeting, and good sale in Meadows.—J. G.

GLASGOW.—On Saturday, Paterson, Carmichael, Glasier, and McMunn addressed a good meeting at Motherwell, and in spite of interruptions from some Orange rowdies they were listened to with great attention. Good sale of *Commonweal*. On Sunday, at Paisley Road Toll, a large audience gathered to hear Glasier and Burns. *Commonweal* sold well. On the same day, McLean gave a very thoughtful and interesting lecture on Socialism to the Coatbridge Branch of the Irish National League. There was a large and enthusiastic audience.

NORTH SHIELDS.—Large and successful meeting was addressed by A. K. Donald. A queue of *Commonweal* and other literature sold on Sunday morning. A collection for expenses was made.

NORWICH.—On Sunday, we held a successful meeting at Wymondham, addressed by Henderson and another. *Commonweal* sold well. In the afternoon, we held our usual meeting in Market-place, addressed by Henderson and Darley. In the evening a large meeting was held on Agricultural Hall Plain, Morley and Slaughter speaking. Many adjourned with us from there to Gordon Hall, which was crowded. Henderson lectured on "Parliamentary Action."—J. S.

SOUTH SHIELDS.—A large meeting was addressed by A. K. Donald in the Market-place on Sunday evening. A number of questions were put and an unabated interest shown in the cause. Good sale of literature. Friends wanting to join, please communicate with J. Wood, 105, Bath Street.

WALSALL.—On Monday, June 20, Sanders and Deakin spoke at Wednesbury on "The Meaning of Socialism." Names were given in for a Branch, and many pledged themselves to push forward the work of organisation. Pelsall, a mining village four miles from here, was visited on Wednesday, Sanders speaking on the Green or common. We were well received, and at the close asked to come again. On Saturday evening, in the Market-place, Walsall, Sanders spoke to large audiences. Fair sale of literature.—J. T. D.

DUBLIN.—At the Labour League on Thursday, June 23, I. Cantwell delivered a highly instructive address on "Organisation," in the course of which he pointed out that the condition of the labourers would never be improved so long as they looked up to the middle-class for leadership, that they should rely entirely upon themselves. An interesting discussion followed, in which Coffey, McGuinness, a popular temperance reformer, and others took part. A letter from comrade Kitz, Merton, anent the Jubilee celebrations, was read amidst great applause.—O. F.

NOTTINGHAM SECTION, SOCIALIST UNION.—On Tuesday, June 21, the members, to escape the tomlfoolery connected with the Jubilee, held a picnic at Gotham, a village seven miles from Nottingham, where no public celebration was held. In the evening, with the help of the inhabitants, we held a large meeting. Waive, Proctor, and Peacock delivered strong Socialist speeches, which were well received. On Sunday morning, in Smeinton Market, Peacock addressed a very good meeting. At night, in the Great Market-place, Waive and Peacock spoke. There was some opposition, which was easily disposed of by Peacock. Collections for the day, 5s. 8½d. *Commonweal* eagerly bought and soon sold out.—A. C.

NORTH OF ENGLAND SOCIALIST FEDERATION.—The propaganda this week has been very successful. Donald and I went to Jarrow-on-Tyne, and to Seaton Delaval on Wednesday and Friday last. On Saturday, Donald spoke at Seaton Stuce, East Holywell, and Blyth, while I addressed good meetings further North at Chevington, Broomhill, and Amble. On Sunday, Donald spoke to large meetings at North and South Shields and enrolled several members, while I went to Sunderland and Monkwearmouth, and after a squabble with the police and a few wrangles with some roughs and a clergyman, got two large meetings and sold a good deal of literature. On Monday night Donald lectured to the miners and ironworkers of Consett, in Durham, while I went to New Delaval. On Tuesday night successful meetings were held at Belside and Throckley.—J. L. M.

LECTURE DIARY.

LONDON.

Bloomsbury.—Communist Club, 49 Tottenham Street, Tottenham Court Road, W. On Thursday June 30 a Business Meeting of Members will be held, to be followed by a Social Evening. All members are requested to attend. On Thursday July 7, at 8.30, F. Verinder will lecture.

Clerkenwell.—Hall of the Socialist League, 13 Farringdon Road, E.C. Sunday July 3, Branch Business Meeting of Members, 7 p.m. Concert by W. Blundell and Friends, 8.30 p.m. Wednesday July 6, at 8.30 p.m. Edward Aveling, "Means of Propaganda."

Croydon.—Parker Road.

Hackney.—23 Audrey Street, Goldsmith Row. Club Room open every evening from 8 till 11.30; Saturday, 7 till 12.30; Sunday 11 a.m. till 12 p.m. Lecture on Sunday July 3, at 8.30: J. Lane, "The National Loaf; who Eats and who Eats it." Monthly Business Meeting of Members, Tuesday 5th at 8.30: election of officers and other important business. A free Concert on Saturday July 2—all members of the S.L. invited.

Hammersmith.—Kelmscott House, Upper Mall, W. Sunday July 3, at 8 p.m. J. Brailsford Bright, a Lecture.

Hoxton (L.E.L.).—2 Crondall Street, New North Rd. Club Room open on Monday, Wednesday, and Saturday evenings from 8 till 11. Singing Class every Wednesday at 8.30. Lecture on Sunday July 3, at 8 p.m.: Wade and Pope, "A Night with T. Moore."

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

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

North London.—Branch meets at 32 Camden Road, N.W., for reception of new members and other business, on Wednesday evenings at 8 o'clock, until further notice. H. Bartlett, sec.

PROVINCES.

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.

Dublin.—Irish Labour League, 2 Bachelors Walk, every Thursday at 8 p.m. Discussion on all subjects connected with the Labour Question.

Dalkeith (Edinburgh).—Open-air meeting Wednesday at 8.15. Members especially invited, to make arrangements for summer months.

Edinburgh (Scottish Section).—4 Park Street. Meets every Thursday at 7.30 p.m. to transact business. Class for the study of 'Das Capital' at 8.30. (See "Open-air" below.)

Glasgow.—Reading-room of the Branch, 84 John St., open from 10 a.m. till 10 p.m. daily. Meeting of Members in Rooms on Sunday evening at 7 o'clock.

Hamilton.—Paton's Hall, Chapel St. Every Thursday at 7.30.

Hull.—Address all communications to E. Teesdale, 20 Shakspeare Street. See Open-air meetings below.

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

Leeds.—17 Chesham Street, Sweet Street. Club and reading room open every evening. Business meetings every Wednesday at 8 p.m.

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

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

Norwich.—Gordon Hall, 5 Duke Street. Free Lectures every Sunday at 8 p.m. Business meeting every Monday at 8.30 p.m. Speakers' Class every Sunday at 10.30 a.m. Social evening every Saturday at 8 p.m. On Sunday at 8 o'clock, lecture by Fred Henderson—subject, "The Marriage Question."

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

Shields (North and South).—Meetings every Sunday, Quay-side and Market Place. Branch meetings on Thursday nights at the "General Gordon." Bath Street, Maxwell Street, South Shields. Secretary, J. Hearne, 32 Clive Street, No. Shields.

OPEN-AIR PROPAGANDA.

LONDON—Sunday 3.

- 11.30...Garrett—"Plough Inn".....The Branch
11.30...Hacaney—"Salmon and Ball".....The Branch
11.30...Hammersmith—Beadon Rd.....The Branch
11.30...Hoxton Ch., Pitfield St.....Barker
11.30...Mitcham Fair Green.....Eden & Kitz
11.30...Regent's Park.....Sparling
11.30...St. Pancras Arches.....Bartlett
11.30...Walham Green.....The Branch
3...Hyde Park.....Lane
3.30...Victoria Park.....Mainwaring
7...Clerkenwell Green.....Sparling

- 8...Ossulton Street, Euston Road.....Nicoll
8...Broadway, London Fields.....Morris
8...Hoxton, Pitfield Street.....The Branch

PROVINCES.

- Edinburgh.—Sunday: Queen's Park, 6.30 p.m.
Loanhead.—Saturday 7 p.m.
Galashiels.—Monday evening.
Hawick.—Tuesday evening.
Dalkeith.—Wednesday 8.15 p.m.
Glasgow.—Sunday: Jail's Square, 1 o'clock; Paisley Road Toll at 5.
Blantyre.—Saturday: 6 o'clock.
Cambuslang.—Saturday: 8 o'clock.
Hull.—Open-air meetings will be addressed by J. L. Mahon as follows: Monday July 4, Hessele Road, "Socialism and the Miners." Tuesday 5th, St. George's Road, "Practical Work for Socialists." Wednesday July 6th, Waterloo Street, "Socialism, Trades-unionism, and Co-operation." All beginning at 8 p.m.
Leeds.—Sunday: Hunslet Moor, 11; Vicar's Croft, 7.
Norwich.—Sunday: Market Place at 3; Agricultural Hall Plain at 7.
Aylsham.—Alternate Tuesdays: Market Place, at 7.
Derham.—Thursday: Market Place, at 7.15.
Diss and Wymondham.—Alternate Sundays at 10.30 and 11 respectively.
Yarmouth.—Wednesday: On the Quay, at 7.30.
Walsall.—Saturday, at 6.30 pm.

NORTH ENGLAND SOCIALIST FEDERATION.

MEETINGS—JULY.

- Fri. 1—Backworth, 7 p.m.
Sat. 2—Cambor's colliery, 3.30 p.m. Blyth Market Place, 6.30 p.m.
Sun. 3—N. Shields, Quay Side, 11 a.m. Sunderland, the Garrison, 2.30 p.m. South Shields, Market Place, 6.30 p.m.
Mon. 4—Consett, near Town Hall, 7 p.m.
On Saturday July 9 an important Delegate Meeting will be held at the Grey Mare Inn, Blyth, at 3 p.m.

HOXTON (L.E.L.).—Excursion on July 10th to the Rye House. Those wishing to take part in it can obtain full particulars from the secretary.

STAMFORD HILL AND TOTTENHAM.—Comrades and Friends living in this district desirous of forming a branch of the Socialist League are requested to address John Flockton, 3 Sussex Terrace, Markfield Road, Broad Lane, Tottenham, or to the Secretary of the League, 13 Farringdon Road, E.C.

WOOLWICH.—Arsenal Gates, Sunday at 7 o'clock, GRIMSBY.—J. L. Mahon will give three lectures on Sunday July 3. In Freemans Road Market Place at 11 a.m. and 3 p.m., and in the Hall of Science at 7.

United Socialist Societies of London.—ANNUAL EXCURSION TO EPPING FOREST (ROBIN HOOD), on Sunday July 10, by railway to Loughton Station, for the benefit of the condemned comrades in Chicago.

The procession will start from the West-end at 9 a.m., corner of Tottenham Street and Charlotte Street; and from the East-end at 9 a.m., from the Club Morgenroethe, Princes Square, Cable Street, with full brass bands, banners, and standards.

Trains leave from Liverpool Street Station at follows: morning, 8.53, 9.53, 10.30; afternoon, 12.8, 2.28, 3.22, 5.50.

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