

THE COMMONWEAL

The Official Journal of the Socialist League.

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SATURDAY, MARCH 10, 1888.

WEEKLY; ONE PENNY.

THE PARIS COMMUNE.

THE celebration of the anniversary organised by the English Socialist Societies will take place on

MONDAY MARCH 19,
at the
STORE STREET HALL,
Store Street, Tottenham Court Road, W.C.

The following speakers will address the meeting:—

ANNIE BESANT, JOHN BURNS, ELEANOR AVELING, WILLIAM MORRIS, CHARLOTTE WILSON, P. KROPOTKINE, F. KITZ, A. HEADINGLEY, F. HICKS, H. H. SPARLING, DR. MERLINO, BORDES, and others.

The Chair will be taken at 7.30, by

H. M. HYNDMAN.

The following is the resolution which will be moved at the meeting:

"That this meeting expresses the deepest sympathy with the heroic attempt of the workers of Paris to overthrow the domination of the classes that live by the robbery of labour, and looks forward to the time when the distinction of classes will be abolished, and the hopes for which so many workers have sacrificed their lives will be realised in the true society of the workers of all countries."

A Choir will attend and give a selection of appropriate music.

Comrades and friends are earnestly requested to take in hand the collection of money for the defrayal of expenses, for which purpose collection sheets have been issued. Donations may be sent to

G. CLIFTON (S.D.F.) Treasurer; or to
H. A. BARKER (S.L.) Secretary,
13 Farringdon Road, E.C.

NOTES ON NEWS.

THE farce of bringing the matter of Trafalgar Square before the House of Commons, that is of asking the Government who ordered the arbitrary closure of it to consider what right they had to do so, was brought to an end on March 2nd. The Government very naturally put its foot down, and in order to put the screw on some of its supporters who used to be considered Liberals and even Radicals, announced their intention of making the vote one of confidence, thereby, of course, formally declaring their approval of all the acts of law and order. Nothing less was to be expected of them, and they would have been fools indeed if they had hesitated in avowing their complicity with Warren, especially after their victory at Deptford.

Sir C. Russell's speech was of little importance; he was bound by convention to make a sort of legal case for the right of use of the Square by the people, to which of course no Government need pay the least attention, since they have plenty of weapons in the legal armoury with which to annihilate any such right. Sir Charles finished fairly well by appealing to the true foundation of the right to speak in the Square, which is, in fact, simply public convenience—for which, of course, no Government cares one jot.

Mr. Matthews repeated the whole string of stale lies about the dangers of the unemployed meetings. He had the fatuity to quote some piece of speaking about the firing of London from an orator, whom Mr. Bradlaugh, interrupting him, said was an associate of the police. In the course of this speech, Sir C. Russell undid the effect of the whole of his action by admitting that the Government had a right to stop the meeting (in that case why not every other meeting?). His speech meant that Trafalgar Square is royal property, and that, whether or not, the executive had the right to stop any meeting they think fit to stop—as they certainly, at present, have the *might* to do.

It is this all-important fact which nullified Mr. Bradlaugh's powerful speech, which would otherwise have been effective and convincing. He was quite right in stating that besides the question as to whether the people had the right of free speech in the metropolis, the question as to whether they had the right of free speech in the country generally was before them; and the provincial Radicals who have paid no heed to this Trafalgar Square business should take note of the fact. Unfortunately, of what use is the verbal assertion of the right in face of a Parliamentary majority elected by the combined property and ignorance of the nation, and their committee, the Executive Government, who are holding their places on the condition that they will do the bidding of property and ignorance?

Mr. Bradlaugh on the 3rd brought the disgraceful fact of the assaults on prisoners by the police plainly and squarely before the House; but the Attorney-General showed by his speech that the Government understood too well the resources of law-and-order in the great body of professional witnesses at their command—whose idea of duty is to give the evidence that they are expected to give—to be much disquieted at his plain statement of facts. We can only hope that the country generally will take note of it.

Our friend, Cunninghame Graham, spoke as usual boldly and well, and did good service by pointing out the undoubted fact that the Government did their best to create a riot on Bloody Sunday, and that the "hazing" of the police by Warren was a good means of ensuring this. Of course, Matthews denied it; but also, of course, who would play such a game would deny it with the holiest horror. The fact remains true in spite of all denials.

Graham was received with what may be called House of Commons manners, that is to say, more brutally than if he were addressing a crew of drunken roughs at election time. What on earth *can* one say of men who jeer at a citizen for being ill from the effects of police brutality and prison torture? To call them blackguards has no meaning; to call them curs would be gross flattery, since I have known several curs (real ones with tails) of high moral worth and pleasing manners. How long are we to bear this disgrace, the House of Commons?

So, after all, there was a division on the question; and it may be said as the net gain of the debate that besides the calling the attention of the Committee to the police outrages, it consisted in forcing the respectable Liberals to commit themselves to something, though not much. Whether they will remember this when they come into office is another matter; they have plenty of loop-holes at which to climb out of. Apart from this small gain the matter remains exactly where it was before the debate; the Government are prepared to resist any attempts to speak in the Square by the usual machinery of law and order, police, soldiery, drum-head court-martials, professional witnesses, judge-directed juries, and the rest of it. Who could expect anything else?

The Welsh Anti-Tithe rioters got off very cheap—since they had to pay nothing. If they had done the same thing in London they would have had various terms of imprisonment, from four months to two years for their boldness. What is the explanation of this, if it means anything more than that Mr. Justice Willis is a very much better fellow than his brethren, as we will hope and believe? I cannot help thinking that it means a recognition of the power of the Nonconformists, who are the strength of the respectable Liberals. Anyhow, glad as we must be that these good fellows have got off, we are bound to point out once more what a ridiculous tyranny our law courts are. A crime in London is a peccadillo in Wales.

That absurd body, the Convocation of the Province of Canterbury, has been receiving a petition from some wise-acres as to the Sunday amusements of the upper classes. These amusements only concern us from the fact that they are paid for by misery of the lower classes. But the curious *non sequitur* of the petitioners that excursion trains on Sundays should *therefore* be stopped, shows the cloven hoof under the garment of religion, and lets us know what these anxious Christians would do to us if they could.

W. M.

"They manage these things better in France," though it be not a dictum that holds all round, at least appears to hold in the trial of

M. Wilson over the "decoration scandal." When may we hope to see the same kind of jobbery exposed here? And, when it is exposed, to hear an English magistrate or judge say to a prince or duke or that kind of person, that his offence was aggravated by his high position, and that therefore he must undergo a heavy punishment, where a less illustrious person might have got off with much less.

"They do these things better in Germany," might well be the cry of any ordinary patriotic Briton on reading that the Duke of Cambridge had smashed up the Wimbledon Volunteer Rifle-meeting, in order to heighten the rent on some of "his" land that lies behind the butts. The *Star* well contrasts this kind of jew-broker business with the behaviour of German generals, men of the same blood as the Umbrella Duke. "Imagine Moltke dealing a serious blow at his beloved *Landwehr* merely for the sake of obtaining a large rent for his estates!"

Can there be a plainer example of the spirit of our present system than this weakening of a national defence for the profit of an individual? The earl of Wemyss is not only a prominent Individualist, but also one of the chief originators, if not the chief, of the National Rifle Association. What has he to say in the matter?

Of course the "beastly flunkies" re-elected the Royal Grabber as their president, even after the kicking he had bestowed upon them!

A few numbers back in this column I spoke of King Ja Ja and his appeal to English justice. The whole affair has duly taken the course I predicted. He was promised protection, and has been deposed; guaranteed a fair trial on the spot, and hurried hundreds of miles away from it; allowed to call no witnesses, and sentenced on the bare word of his accusers. He is only another poor "protégé" of England who has found her honour to be that of a gambling hell, and her tender mercy that of a tiger. S.

THE RICH FOOL.

"The ground of a certain rich man brought forth plentifully. . . . And he said, . . . I will pull down my barns and build greater, and there will I bestow all my fruits and my goods. And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry. But God said unto him, Thou fool."

In these ungodly days, when the howl of Radical "Reformers" against the Church and her ministers seems growing louder, all manner of Socialists, not to mention well-meaning but misguided men like John Ruskin, are never tired of showing that the political economy which the Christian sects of to-day practice is wholly at variance with the precepts of the religion which they profess; when the poor seem to be forsaking their divinely appointed shepherds, and joining the angry throng of agitators whose syren voice is leading them astray,—in such depressing times surely a word of encouragement to those two despised sects of Ministers of Religion and Professors of Political Economy will not be thrown away.

Let them, then, take heart of grace; for, after all, the centuries have not been wholly wasted,—something has been achieved; and thanks mainly to their energy, no man now is in danger (wherever else he may fail) of incurring, as this man in the parable did, the awful contempt of the Most High, and being called "Thou Fool" by Him, who is so jealous of the use of those dreadful words as to threaten any mortal who ventures to speak them with being "in danger of Hell fire."

For what rich man to-day, whose ground (note in passing how by these words divine sanction is given to private property in land) brings forth plentifully, would be so foolish as to think to store his crops, and to rejoice his soul, like any common labourer, on the mere bread and potatoes which would most likely form the product of his estates? And who, to gain this foolish end, would be so entirely devoid of common sense as actually to waste what ready money he had in pulling down his barns to build greater, in order that he might (ah, wretched folly!) live on his principal? No! thank Heaven, our Land-owners, and wealthy people generally, have learnt the lesson, and are become wise; they would "realise" their crops, let their barns to a tenant, and, after purchasing machinery for the future cultivation of their ground, invest the remainder of their money in some Limited Liability Co., or let it out in some other way, so that it might at the same time yield them a good interest and be quite secure from thieves breaking in to steal. And for purposes of making merry, have they not rich and dainty viands, and champagne, and every conceivable luxury? which indulgence (as Sir Henry Knight knows well) is entered to their credit as "charity," since it all makes work for the unemployed. Trouble me not with suggestions that perhaps there were no unemployed for this rich fool to find work for: to-day, when we have labour-saving machinery, there must and always will be poor who desire employment; and it is in dispensing charity to them that modern wealthy men find that ease for their souls which the rich fool of old vainly expected to find in eating and drinking. Therefore our Philanthropists lay up treasure in heaven by nobly sacrificing all that they do not require themselves to charitable purposes,—National Vigilance Societies, Hospitals, Missions, Soup Kitchens, and what not; and in confirmation of the divine saying "Give and it shall be given unto you," we see that for every pound they give away in charity, they receive an hundred-fold from the proper investment of that wealth which the rich fool of the parable stupidly thought to store up till he had consumed it.

Will the vile agitators, who trade on the necessities of the poor, remind me of that other Rich Man, who, although he allowed Lazarus to lie at his gate and eat the waste from his table, yet was consigned to Hell and eternal torments? or of him who was advised to "sell all that he had and give to the poor"? Do they tell me that "ye cannot serve God and Mammon," and bring up against the practice of investing money for interest the command to "lend to him of whom ye hope to receive nothing again," with all the passages pretending to be condemnatory of Interest in the Old Testament? Or will they ask what I have to say to that action of the early Christians, who, having land, sold it and laid the money at the feet of the apostles (the predecessors of our present spiritual Lords) and they had all things in common?

A certain Negro preacher, teaching his flock how at the creation God made Adam and Eve of clay, and leaned them up against a fence to dry, when interrupted by some sceptic with the question "Who made dat fence?" replied with crushing force, "Bredren, such questions as dese are enough to overturn any system of theology."

To these my carping critics I condescend no other answer than that of the negro minister. Inconsistencies and human failings of course our clergy and economists have—as what mortal has not?—but to them belongs the honour and spiritual satisfaction (glory they do not seek) of having taught the rich to "labour not for the gold that perisheth," since it is so much more easily acquired by Interest than by Labour; whilst at the same time they have impressed upon the poor the duty of being contented in that state of life unto which it has pleased God to call them.

Therefore let the Ministers of Religion and Political Economists labour on in harmony together, comforting themselves with the reflection that though they be despised and ridiculed by this wicked world, "that which is highly esteemed among men is abomination in the sight of God."

GEORGE STURT.

CHATTEL SLAVERY v. WAGE SLAVERY.

In the Brazilian Empire there are 1,300,000 slaves, and their estimated value is about 436 dols. per head. A movement is on foot in Brazil to abolish slavery, and strange to say the leaders of the movement are the wealthy landowners. It has been found, by the experience of the Southern planters, that the wages system gives cheaper labour than chattel slavery did, and the Brazilians are profiting by the experience. When the Brazilian landowner has acquired a slave, to preserve his property he has to feed, clothe, and care for it, whether it is at work or not, or whether he can sell the product of his slave's labour at a profit or not. Modern industrialism has found a better method of slave-owning than this: it borrows the public slaves whenever it can make money out of them, and the day it finds the loan unprofitable it discharges them and sends them back to the public or to Old Scratch, which is about the same thing. The system is beautifully ingenious, and infinitely superior to the old system. Prior to the burst up of the Roman Empire all government and all social life was founded on slavery, and it is only within very recent periods that the old plan of chattel slavery has been superseded by wage slavery. Let us give just a minute or two to the subject. A chattel slave in Brazil is worth from 400 dols. to 700 dols., and he must be fed, clothed, and cared for whether or not he is at work. A wage slave in the States gets 365 dols. a-year, in England 300 dols., in Ireland 125 dols., and in India 20 dols. These are the ascertained average wages. According to the life assurance tables a healthy young man of twenty will on the average live about forty years. His average wage is, as we have seen, in the States 365 dols. a-year; this latter sum multiplied by forty therefore gives the market price of a man's life. This is 14,600 dols. There is nothing fanciful about this. It is plain matter-of-fact. For less than 15,000 dols. one may have the products of a life of labour for one's use or wasting—one can go into the market and buy just as many lives as one pleases at that price. When the clever arrangement of Protection enables a sugar refiner to make a profit of 30,000 dols. a week, it gives him the power of eating up the entire lives of 104 wage slaves every year. Is not the system an admirable one? Is not wage slavery, except to the wage-slave, a vast improvement on chattel slavery, and is it not easy to understand why the slave owners of Brazil are anxious to abolish chattel slavery and replace it with the wage-slavery of modern industrialism? There is only one disturbing circumstance in the arrangement—there is such a thing as a love of justice in the hearts of many people, and these demand a day of reckoning. About a hundred years ago one of those days of reckoning came in France. It was unpleasant while the reckoning was proceeding. Another such day is very near in America, when the wage-slaves will remonstrate with dynamite and protest with the torch. They have got the idea into their heads that they are entitled to what they earn, and that those who do not work should not be allowed to eat. They propose to reverse the present position, and become themselves the masters. They don't know exactly how to set about the business, but they will eventually try some rough and coarse plan, which may produce the required result or it may not. There is a hoarse sullen roar which can already distinctly be heard in this office of Advanced Thought, and that roar increases in strength and volume from day to day. The wage-slave of the immediate future will demand something more than mere subsistence, and if he doesn't get it there will just be the most tremendous shindy the world has ever witnessed. We have warned the world in good time. If the world does not take the warning and act upon it, so much the worse for the world. If the world is wise it will accept our warning, and should it wish to consult us specially, our representative can be found any evening at the rink.—*The Bobcaygeon Independent*.

A FELLOW EXILE OF LEDRU-ROLLIN.—M. Octave Dupont, the friend and fellow exile of Ledru-Rollin, died on Friday 24th ult., while playing billiards at a Paris club. He was seventy-seven years of age. He took part in the Socialist rising of 1849, fled to England, and was sentenced by default to hard labour for life. He was for nearly twenty years professor of French in a military college in England. He retired on a pension, and on the fall of the Empire returned to Paris, and was for a time a municipal councillor.

INTERNATIONAL NOTES.

FRANCE.

The Marxist organ of our French Socialist comrades, *Le Socialiste*, has been obliged to stop its publication, owing to lack of financial support. Comrades Jules Guesde, Paul Lafargue, and Gabriel Deville, who have been very active in propagating the Communist doctrines of Marx and Engels, will no doubt find ere long the means of continuing their work in a new paper.

Our French colleague, *La Révolte*, has commenced in this week's literary supplement of its valuable organ the translation of comrade William Morris's striking Socialist interlude, 'The Tables Turned.' It will certainly incite some of our French comrades to make use of the theatre as a means of Socialist propaganda. We may add that the first instalment of this French translation is in every way an admirable one.

ITALY.

During the first week of April a new paper will be started at Mantua, entitled *L'Amico del Popolo* (the People's Friend). It is to be a weekly Socialist organ for the defence and propagation of the ideas and doctrines put forward by the Italian working-men's party.

The unemployed of Rome are at the present time in a great state of excitement. They have asked for work, and instead of work Signor Crispi has sent the military to the spot, in order to settle the starvation question in the usual shameful way. Several people have been seriously injured and a great number of arrests have been made.

GERMANY.

The trial of the so-called Central Committee of the Socialist Party at Berlin has come to an end. Comrades Ferkel, Apelt, Jahn, Schmidt, Wilschke, and Seelig have got three months, Scholz and Neumann two months' imprisonment, and several others have been dismissed. From the whole dreadful secret conspiracy there remains nothing; it was all police humbug, and the magistrates, for once, did not dare take on account the rather clumsy means and ways used by the interesting employes of his Excellency M. von Puttkammer.

Our readers are aware that at the St. Gallen Conference of the German Social-Democratic party it was decided to convene an International Socialist Congress to be held at London during the present year. But it so happened that about the same time the English Trades' Union Congress at Swansea also resolved to summon an international conference. The committee appointed by the St. Gallen Conference and the Parliamentary Committee of the trades unions thereupon entered into correspondence, in order to make it possible that only one general international congress should be organised. These negotiations have completely failed, and the St. Gallen committee, composed of all the deputies at the German Reichstag, have now decided to convene an international congress for the year 1889. In the next issue of this paper I shall give a complete translation of the circular issued by that committee, stating at some length the reasons for the failure of the said negotiations.

BELGIUM.

After the pardon which has been granted a fortnight ago to the ex-clerical M.P. of Brussels, Vandersmissen, sentenced to fifteen years' hard labour for the murder of his wife, it would have become an everlasting shame for the reactionary Belgian government to detain any longer in prison the victims of the strikes of March 1886. Last week Xavier Schmidt, sentenced to twenty years' hard labour for a crime which not he, but society, had committed, was released from jail. However, it is not a full amnesty which has been granted him, but only a provisory release for illness' sake. Nevertheless it is certain that our Belgian comrades won't rest until this has been changed to a definite one. It is said that in a few days, Oscar Falleur, who was also sentenced to twenty years' hard labour, will be set free. We earnestly hope and believe that all the other victims of the capitalistic exploitation, and the Belgian prisons are full of them, will no longer be detained, but one and all of them are equally innocent of the "crimes" for which they have been unjustly condemned. And our young and courageous comrade Jahn, is he not to be released too? Our Belgian friends would only do their duty by working for him as they have done for the victims of the March strikes.

The ironworkers of Sous-le-Bois (Aversnes district) have struck, asking 5 per cent. augmentation on their wages. The strikers are now 600 in number, but it is said that a general strike is imminent, and then there will be about 4000 men out of work. At the Providence works, at Haumont, 1100 workers are also on strike, and it is rumoured that several other thousands are likely to join in the struggle. The outlook in the whole district seems a very dark one.

Our readers will remember the quarrel which some time ago arose between the Belgian and the English fishermen at Ostend. The question was one of lawful exploitation of the poor fishermen by the rich boat-owners, and it was at once settled by the intervention of the military, who shot dead five workers, wounded a couple of dozen others, and finally imprisoned a good many of the hungry men. Sixty-nine of these have now been sentenced to various terms of imprisonment, amounting to fifty months, and fines to three thousand francs! The brutal force and the brutal justice are the two regulators and settlers of all social questions in our well-organised society! Proletariate of all countries, unite! and then, but then only, victory will become yours!

V. D.

EDINBURGH PLUMBERS.—At a meeting held in Edinburgh a local council was appointed to act in unison with the London Plumbers' Company, with the view of bringing about a national system of registration of plumbers.

On the whole, therefore, we honestly think that a committee of the thieftous denizens of Pentonville would be more likely to form an intelligent opinion regarding the cause and cure of the sweating system than the Select Committee of Inquiry which the Tory Government have consented to appoint.—*Reynolds*.

Every man is a consumer, and ought to be a producer. He fails to make his place good in the world unless he not only pays his debt, but also adds something to the common wealth.—*Emerson*.

Liberty, I am told is a divine thing. Liberty, when it becomes the "Liberty to die of starvation," is not so divine.—*Carlyle*.

EASY LESSONS.

[ELLEN MARY DOWNING. Reprinted from the *United Irishman*, April 22, 1848.]

"SPECIAL PLEADING."

The very subtlest eloquence
That injured men can show,
Is the pathos of a pikehead,
And the logic of a blow.
Hopes built upon fine talking
Are like castles built on sand;
But the pleadings of cold iron
Not a tyrant can withstand!

"SERMONS IN STONES."

An ancient poet singeth
Of a sermon in a stone,
And Frenchmen thought it good enough
For preaching to a throne.
So piled they up the barricades
With ready will and hand;
For the preaching of a barricade
A king can understand!

"MUSIC."

Now, citizens and countrymen,
'Tis time for us to learn
Aristocrats are kindest
When democrats are stern.
They talk us down and walk us down,
Who cringe to their command;
But the yell of our defiance
Not a coronet can stand!

In The Great Metropolis.

[ARTHUR HUGH CLOUGH, D. 1861.]

Each for himself is still the rule;
We learn it when we go to school—
The devil take the hindmost, O!

And when the schoolboys grow to men
In life they learn it o'er again—
The devil takes the hindmost, O!

For in the church, and at the bar,
On 'Change, at court, where'er they are,
The devil takes the hindmost, O!

Husband for husband, wife for wife,
Are careful that in married life
The devil takes the hindmost, O!

From youth to age, whate'er the game,
The unvarying practice is the same,
The devil takes the hindmost, O!

And after death, we do not know,
But scarce can doubt, where'er we go,
The devil takes the hindmost, O!

Ti rol de rol, ti rol de ro,
The devil take the hindmost, O!

"DERANGEMENT OF EPITAPHS."—A few days ago, says the *Pall Mall Gazette* on the 3rd, some verses were quoted in this paper from Mr. Lewis Morris's "Silver Wedding Ode" in *Murray's Magazine*, and Mr. Morris was referred to as "first favourite for the Laureateship," not of course *de jure*, but *de facto*, as this is the second occasion on which Lord Tennyson's duties have been devolved upon Mr. Morris. The *St. Stephen's Review* makes this delicious reference to the matter: "How the lucubrations of a Socialist poet will be received at Marlborough House and Windsor I have yet to learn." Such is fame! But perhaps the *St. Stephen's Review* thought that two blunders make a right, and thus tried to make amends to Mr. William Morris for the reference to him the other day in another Tory journal—the *St. James's Gazette*—as "Mr. Morice, the author of the 'Earthward Paradise'."

IRISH EVICTION STATISTICS.—A parliamentary paper was issued on the 27th Feb., showing the number of tenants and sub-tenants evicted in Ireland during the quarter ended September 30, 1887, and the number readmitted as tenants or as caretakers on the day the decree was executed. The total number evicted was 4,033; readmitted as tenants or sub-tenants, 52; as caretakers, 2,330. For the various provinces the numbers are—Ulster, evicted, 538; readmitted as tenants or sub-tenants, 7; caretakers, 377. Leinster, evicted, 596; readmitted as tenants or sub-tenants, 17; caretakers, 213. Connaught, evicted, 1006; readmitted as caretakers, 632. Munster, evicted, 1893; readmitted as tenants or sub-tenants, 34; caretakers, 1108. A return of evictions from agricultural holdings in Ireland during the same quarter for causes other than those included in the foregoing table, which were for non-payment of rent, non-title, or breach of covenant, shows that 162 persons were evicted, of whom 27 were readmitted as caretakers.—*Pall Mall Gazette*.



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.

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. Rejected MSS. only returned if a stamped directed envelope is forwarded with them. Subscriptions.—For Europe and United States, including postage, per year, 6s. six months, 3s.; three months, 1s. 6d.

Business communications to be addressed to Manager of the COMMONWEAL, 13 Farringdon Road, E.C. Remittances in Postal Orders or halfpenny stamps.

Periodicals received during the week ending Wednesday March 7.

ENGLAND	UNITED STATES	Liege—L'Avenir
Bristol—Maggie	New York—Freiheit	ITALY
Church Reformer	Der Sozialist	Gazetta Operaia
Christian Socialist	Volkzeitung	Milan—Il Fascio Operaio
Croydon Echo	Chicago—Vorbote	SWITZERLAND
Democrat	Denver (Col.) Labor Enquirer	Geneva—Bulletin Continental
Jus	Douglasville (Ga.)—Roll Call	SPAIN
Justice	Fort Worth (Tex.)—South West	Barcelona—Acracia
Kettering Observer	Hammond (N.J.)—Credit Foncier	Madrid—El Socialista
Leaflet Newspaper	Milwaukee (Wis.)—Volkblatt	PORTUGAL
London—Freie Presse	N Haven—Workmen's Advocate	Lisbon—O Protesto Operario
Norwich—Daylight	St. Louis (Mo.)—Die Parole	GERMANY
Our Corner	San Francisco Arbeiter-Zeitung	Berlin—Volks Tribune
Personal Rights Journal	FRANCE	AUSTRIA
Railway Review	Paris—Cri du Peuple (daily)	Vienna—Gleichheit
NEW SOUTH WALES	La Revolte	HUNGARY
Hamilton—Radical	Guise—Le Devoir	Arbeiter-Wochen-Chronik
INDIA	HOLLAND	SWEDEN
Bankipore—Behar Herald	Hague—Recht voor Allen	Stockholm, Social-Demokraten
Madras—People's Friend	BELGIUM	Malmö—Arbetet
	Seraing (Ougree)—Le Reveil	

THIEVES.

"WHAT'S in a name?" asked Shakespeare, and we in these days can answer, "Everything's in a name."

"That which we call a thief
Call him but (speculator, and the world
Will bow before the fruit of his success."

In this age of unrealities we worship mere names. Old formalisms, that have lost whatever life was once in them, constitute our religion and pervade our social life. The old virtues are fled, and all that we have now is the hollow echo of glories that once were, the pretence where no possession is, a mockery of reality. In nothing is the miserable hypocrisy of the present day seen more plainly than in this name-worship. The identical same vice that is strongly condemned under one name is as loudly praised under another. Especially is this so with that huge vice—the effort to live without working by getting hold of the result of other people's work, i.e., theft. Now it is the end and aim of the lives of our business classes to succeed in this action; our present system of society is built up on the foundation of the effort to carry it into effect. By theft I understand the taking of goods in the production of which the taker had no part, and for which he gives no equivalent to the producers; and this is precisely what is done by landlords and employers of labour every day; and yet when a thief arises who openly calls himself by his true name, he is instantly subjected to indignation and bad treatment from his veiled fellow-plunderers, who punish him for doing openly what they do unhandedly. So hypocritical is our society of thieves that it cannot endure that anything,—not even robbery, its favourite amusement and sole support,—should be done except under a cloak. There is work for an Ithuriel amongst these thieves who try to hide their knavery even from themselves by taking such names as capitalist, employer of labour, or landlord. At the touch of truth the devil will stand exposed in them all.

I do not say that every idler is really conscious of being a thief. In most instances his training has dulled his intellect too greatly to allow him to grasp the reality of things; but the reality of his robbery is there all the same. Born into a corrupt society, and educated on the orthodox plan of crushing out any tendency to independent thought, it is no wonder that he takes for granted the rightfulness of his position. "Do you call me a thief, young man?" a middle-class man indignantly asked me at a meeting on one occasion; and the question seemed to imply that no harm could be done by an evil if he who performed it did so unthinkingly, or was unconscious of its wrongfulness. The evil of robbery is the main principle in our class society, and it is no palliation of the evil to plead that the robbers call themselves by some other name, and blind even themselves to the real nature of their mode of

living. The old robber baron who sent out his troops of mercenaries to pillage, was no more a thief than the modern landlord who, with his troops of mercenaries—rent collectors, bailiffs, and (witness Ireland to-day), armed soldiery as well,—levies blackmail upon the tillers of the soil, attacks their homes with crowbar brigades or burns them with petroleum, and drives the wretched tenantry out, in many cases to die of exposure to the elements. Why, we have in our very midst the same old system of plunder, decked out in the same array of ruthless cruelty as we had in the old times, the recital of whose events fills us with a horror of their injustice!

"Ah," says the virtuous capitalist, "I am not as these are. Your attacks do not touch me. These landlord cruelties I do not practice." No? Your robbery is disguised under the garb and name of "commerce;" and if it be true that you do not practice these atrocities, what is the meaning of the burning villages of Burmah and other half-civilised countries? What do they mean if they are not the outcome of your greed, which sent your armed hirelings there to gain plunder for you? At home, too, are not the crowds of homeless unemployed a direct outcome of the robbery that your competitive system practises? Don't talk cheap sentiment about the "glory of the empire" and the "dignity of labour"; but if you are a man, be honest in your villainy, and confess that it is villainy.

It would be an interesting experiment to pass in review every one of those qualities that are the subject of adulation from our commercial classes: almost without exception they will be found to be vices which, under other names, are as loudly condemned. The virtuous middle class woman, under the veiling name of "marriage," prostitutes herself by taking for a partner a man, not because she loves him, but because he can give her a good position in society, and hypocrite (though often an unconscious one) as she is, looks with scorn upon her sister prostitute who openly proclaims what she is. The pious middle class will zealously refrain from lying, unless you call it "advertising" or "criticising a political opponent"; from murder, unless it is styled "maintaining the commerce of the country in foreign parts;" and from theft, unless you apply to it some such name as "business enterprise" or "commercial success."

Would again that some Ithuriel would touch the horrid shams and deceiving shapes under which the fraud and degradation of our present system has hidden itself, and show the real devil's nature of the brute!

FRED. HENDERSON.

SOCIALISM FROM THE ROOT UP.

CHAPTER XXII.—SOCIALISM MILITANT.

WE have now arrived at the most exciting part of our subject, since it has to do with what we may fairly call the practical politics of Socialism, with matters which all who call themselves Socialists must of necessity consider, unless they chose to relegate themselves to the position of theorists pure and simple. What lies in the scope of these chapters is the giving some idea of the relative position of the attack and defence in the passing time, when armies are definitely gathering for the battle, and it is beginning to be perceived that Socialism is the one serious question of the epoch, since it covers every interest of modern life.

Let us turn our attention first of all to the defence; and we use the word advisedly, since the present proprietary and dominant class has absorbed into itself its old enemy the feudal proprietary class, and, since it has now no longer anything to attack, has taken the position once occupied by the latter. This indeed has been the position of the victorious middle-class for some time, but it is now at last waking up to the fact, and can see the enemy which is advancing to the attack. The middle-class is speedily getting to be no longer democratic even in appearance: it once wore that guise because it was confounded with the working-classes, whose position was then entirely subordinate to it. This condition of things was the high-water mark of the French Revolution, though there were from time to time indications of the coming solidarity of labour; and it lasted through the revolutionary period of 1848. Up to that time the triumphant middle-class, trampling down the last embers of the feudal opposition, saw nothing before it but a continued career of success; although the principles on which that success was founded were not of the kind that would allow it to have a definite aim beyond the point which it had already reached.

The first distinctive movement in England betokening a separate and aggressive community of feeling in the working-class itself, was the Chartist agitation; but this, as we have pointed out in preceding chapters, was swept away by the great wave of British commercial prosperity indicated by the success of the Cobden-Bright, or as it is called on the Continent, the Manchester School. The main result of this wave of prosperity was the enormous increase in the number and power of the middle-classes, and the corresponding rise in their standard of comfort. It is often alleged that the working-classes are in a better position than they were fifty years ago, and that this is the main work of the nineteenth century; but the improvement is doubtful and the inference drawn from it is false. The fact is, that the country fifty years ago was passing through a severe commercial revolution, that of the great machine industries, which, as before stated, brought for the time unexampled misery upon the workers, and that the settling down

of this crisis did to a certain extent relieve this special and temporary misery. But apart from that the condition of even the aristocracy of labour is little if any better than it was. What has really happened is just that increase in the numbers and prosperity of the *middle-classes* above spoken of. But this great and overwhelming prosperity of theirs is now seriously threatened. The increasing severity of competition in the world-market, accompanied by a ceaseless and rapid increase in the productivity of labour, acting and reacting on one another, are bringing about a fresh commercial revolution which will extinguish the small capitalist by reducing his profits to the vanishing-point; so that none but huge concerns, joint-stock or otherwise, will be able to survive, and the once small capitalist will have to become a manager, a servant of the great one. This process is already far advanced, and is creating a fresh lower middle-class entirely dependent on the commercial aristocracy. Under these conditions that very rise in the standard of middle-class comfort has become a snare to the class as a whole. The difficulty of ordinary well-to-do families in finding a "respectable" position for their children is now a sufficiently trite subject; all occupations endurable by a "refined" youth are overstocked; education is cheap and common, and has lost its old market-value, and even at the ancient seats of learning it has grown to be a matter of commercial competition.¹ The lower ranks of art and literature are crowded with persons drawn to these professions by the pleasantness of the pursuits in themselves, who soon find out the very low market value of the ordinary educated intellect. These, together with the commercial clerks, in whose occupation no special talent is required, form an intellectual proletariat, whose labour is "rewarded" on about the same scale as the lower portion of manual labour, as long as they are employed, but whose position is more precarious, and far less satisfactory.

On the whole, then, in spite of the rise in the standard of comfort of the middle-classes, it must be said that they have rather gained power than well-being, and that they are now being threatened with a loss of that power, their tenure of which, now that the working-classes are beginning to learn their solidarity, depends on the latter being apathetically contented with a position at the best inferior to that of the bourgeoisie.

But the bourgeois ideal of what that position of the workers might be at the best, has never been realised, nor ever can be; nor as above-said have the working-classes any special reason for being "contented" at the present time. The class of unskilled labourers are still, as they always must be in a system which forces them to compete with their fellows, in the position of earning a bare subsistence wage; and this class tends to increase more and more, as the introduction of fresh machines increases the productivity of skilled labour, makes it possible to substitute unskilled in its place, and thus drives the skilled artisan from his position and compels him to accept that of the unskilled labourer.

Elaborately arranged figures, therefore, by which is sought to show that the workmen in general are steadily improving their condition, where in themselves correct, which is by no means always the case, are only applicable to certain groups of workmen, and even then frequently do not prove what they are intended to: e.g., the average wages will be stated at such and such, but it never happens in any trade that all the workmen receive the full amount of the wages stated after all deductions are made; few workmen indeed are in constant employment, even when trade is flourishing; the estimated prices are the full wage laid down by the trade unions, but most workers unprotected by a union, and in bad times even men inside the union, often work for less than the full wage; some, as in the building trades, are never employed for a large part of the year; and in all trades it would be impossible to keep up the standard of wages without occasional strikes and lock outs. It must be remembered, too, that the workman is often taxed in the form of his subscription to his trades union or benefit society, which from one point of view means that he helps his master to pay his poor-rate. Moreover it is doubtful if the unions are strong enough pecuniarily to hold out against a continued depression of trade.

However, the question of this doubtful improvement in the position of the better-off workmen is by the way. The real point is, first, that there are many indications that this improvement cannot be sustained in the face of the continuous increase in the productivity of labour, and that the position of the skilled mechanic is a precarious one; and secondly, it is clear that however the workmen's position may have improved, they are growing discontented with it, since it is becoming manifest to them that it is one of inferiority, and quite unnecessarily so. And that especially since the management of production is less and less undertaken by the so-called manufacturers, who are more and more becoming mere financiers, or shareholders obviously living on the privilege of taxing labour, both that of the "hand" and of the manager.

All this has been gradually dawning on the workmen of the Continent, and especially of Germany (so much more intellectually advanced than the British workmen) since the bourgeois constitutional revolution of '48.

E. BELFORD BAX and WILLIAM MORRIS.

¹ A very old friend, who has been for many years engaged in tuition at Oxford, has told me that the pressure there has enormously increased since I was an undergraduate; that for instance the kind of man whose attainments would once have ensured him a mastership at Rugby or Harrow has now to put up with a place at a third-rate grammar school, and that the competition for quite insignificant posts is most severe.—W. M.

CORRESPONDENCE.

"PRACTICAL" SOCIALISTS.

SIR.—As comrade Binning has placed his side of the question before us I trust you may be able to find room for a few brief criticisms.

Is it not historically obvious that progress in any society is measured by the number of extremists, idealists, or men who "go the whole hog," and the activity of these in propagating their ideal views? We believe that by directly propagating and "focussing our views on the far distant future," we indirectly urge forward minor reforms; and that the latter is accelerated or restrained by just so much as we accelerate or restrain our activity in propagating our ideal Socialism. Does comrade Binning deny this historical truth? If our view is correct, he could not only afford to isolate himself from parliamentarianism, but in devoting his time to propagating his ideal Socialism he could draw many a useful (not necessarily "carping or cavilling criticism") lesson from the "blundering efforts" of the "palliative anti-reformers."

Such being the case, we cannot consent to alter our mode of procedure because a misunderstanding—born of ignorance—as to our action in this respect seeming to oppose reform, takes place in the minds of some.

It is that very "common action" which comrade Binning wishes us to take with minor reformers that is so reactionary, by tending to obscure the ultimate ideal.

T. M. BOBBIN.

All "non-politicals" must have read comrade Binning's "counterblast" with an amount of mixed pleasure and regret. Morris's charge against "practical" Socialists was one of "want of perspective," or the too common fault of not being able to see beyond one's nose. T. Binning has proven Morris's charge, if not wholly, partly so, and the "tooters of penny whistles" have cause to be thankful.

Comrade Binning says: "It is with the bare and ugly present that I am concerned"; and again, "A true revolutionist is one who brings something to bear upon the ordinary everyday life of his own generation." All "non-politicals" will see at once the grave admission. I agree decidedly, but do not stop there, because it is impossible, although perhaps prophetic, to say right off that this is "the generation" which will benefit by Socialism. It is with "generations of peoples" that a true revolutionary Socialist must feel concerned. Surely our comrade Binning's "political" mind was dazed, or he would have recollected that this generation was severely suffering from the faults of past generations; and "political" programmes must intensify this evil for future generations while monopoly in the means of subsistence exists. Further on, those Socialists who do not believe in "practical" methods are charged with "a cowardly policy in standing aloof." This does not apply; it could be used by "non-politicals" in an opposite sense.

It is clearly the duty of revolutionary "non-politicals" not to "carp and cavil" but to "criticise" all "political" efforts; which efforts, we are told, will result in "foretastes" of Socialism. What are these foretastes? Are they part of the Social Democratic programme—viz., Adult Suffrage, Annual Parliaments, Proportional Representation, Payment of Members, etc., etc.? If these are what our comrade means by "foretastes," he surely can find a loop-hole for his efforts without casting charges of cowardice amongst the ranks of those who dub themselves "non-political." The new Society cannot be brought about by legal and pacific methods, and that is why I claim to be a revolutionary non-political Socialist.

The terms "impatient spirits" and "apostles of inaction" seem to me to be very contradictory. Again, "the main body of the workers must be leavened with the spirit of Socialism." Exactly; and that is the one thing, above all others, that non-politicals, the so-called "apostles of inaction," have set themselves to do. I disagree with your methods, not aim.

And now comes the text of our comrade's "counterblast": "I hold that a truly Socialistic Society can only be established and administered by Socialists . . . a determined and intelligent minority prepared to take control." Surely this cannot be one of the foretastes? However, I cannot subscribe to the above text. A centralised minority-force of "Socialist" administrators, directors, or whatever name you may give them, will be as great an evil, if not worse, than those Governments dubbed Liberal and Tory. You must not forget for one moment the display of party spirit in all governments; and I guess, with some amount of certainty, that this "intelligent minority" would possess their share of party, to the detriment of the worker's interest; who, I suppose, our comrade imagines they would represent. It will be our bounden duty to combat such centralisation of minority-dictation.

And why? Let us find the answer out of Binning's own mouth. He charges non-political Socialists with being partisans of revolts, forgetting that the Socialist centralised administration (if it ever becomes full-blown) must of necessity be productive of revolts, and, says he, "revolts can achieve even at the utmost a mere change of governors." Just so, politically. He cannot mean socially. If he does, the charge does not stand. A mere change of party, of governors; and that is why we must criticise and combat the utility of such administration.

In conclusion, all Socialists, whether professing political or non-political methods, must assuredly agree that "monopoly in the means of subsistence" is a cardinal principle which must not be lost sight of. Now, if my comrade Binning admits that a "Socialist" Administration such as he speaks of is to be brought into existence and carried on before this cardinal principle has been obtained—viz., monopoly of all the means of subsistence abolished—I must give it as my opinion that the Administration is not worth working for. For my part I am content to work for the attainment of this principle, and that alone, outside all centralised forces; at the same time, as far as possible, educating my fellow-workers in the doctrines of International Revolutionary Non-Political Socialism. After this latter admission, I feel sure comrade Binning will feel much regret at having used the phrase "Apostles of Inaction." If not, I shall feel inclined to think he must be one of the "Impatient Spirits."

W. BLUNDELL.

The way to make a happy future is to make a happy present.—Ernest Jones.

Ignorance is a disease, and a deadly and dangerous disease. There are few things in the world more costly than an ignorant man.—Ernest Jones.

In a valiant suffering for others, not a slothful making others suffer for us, did nobleness ever lie. The chief of men is he who stands in the van of men, fronting the peril which frightens back all others; which, if it be not vanquished, will devour the others. Every noble crown is, and on earth will for ever be, a crown of thorns.—Carlyle.

THE LABOUR STRUGGLE.

BRITAIN.

The strike of the weavers at Colne is now in its sixteenth week. The employés remain steadfast, and are being well supported.

The fustian trade is very bad at Islam and Cadishead. The ship canal has given employment to a number of those out of work.

The weavers in Heywood and district are agitating for an advance of wages. Several firms are reported as paying below the standard list. The employés of one firm have already begun to take action.

The strike of engineers at Blackburn for an increase of 2s. per week was settled on Monday, the men returning on an immediate advance of 1s. per week, and the promise of another shilling on the first week in June.

In consequence of the depression in trade, the associated masters of the Dean Forest coal trade have advised their agents that the various qualities of coal, except small, will be reduced sixpence per ton on March 1st. Notices have also been served on the colliers of $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. reduction in wages, to commence at once.

THE KIRKCALDY MINERS.—The miners in the Kirkcaldy district have not resumed work, although in some instances the pits are being worked by men who have not come out on strike. Those who agreed to take a fortnight's holidays are now willing to return to work at the masters' reduction, and await the decision of the meeting of coalmasters to be held this week.

TERMINATION OF THE HOE-MAKERS' STRIKE.—The strike of the hoe-makers at the Brades Steelworks, Oldbury, reported in the *Commonweal* of 21st January, terminated on Tuesday, 28th February, and the whole of the men resumed work on Wednesday morning. The masters have conceded everything asked for by the men, and they are not only to be allowed for all waste made, but they are to have a substantial increase also.

CRIBBING TIME.—A determined effort is being made by Inspector Osborn to put a stop to the cribbing of time, which is notorious in the limited spinning companies in the Rochdale and Oldham districts. The number of cases which have been brought into court, notwithstanding the smallness of the fines imposed by partial magistrates, is producing a wholesome effect. The operatives ought certainly to do all in their power to aid the inspector in his somewhat difficult task.

NUT AND BOLT MAKERS' STRIKE.—On Saturday night a meeting of nut and bolt makers was held at Darlston. Mr. R. Juggins read a circular which was addressed to the employers, and pointed out that in 1885, when wages was reduced 5 per cent., the employers promised that 5 per cent. should be returned when trade had sufficiently improved and the workmen applied for the same. Several employers had already intimated their willingness to comply. It was decided to continue the strike and the levy in support of the men.

END OF A STRIKE OF WORSTED WEAVERS.—A strike which appeared to be assuming large dimensions was brought to a conclusion last week. It affected about 360 or 400 worsted coating weavers in the employ of Messrs. Merrill and Sons, of Lees and Ebor Mills, Haworth, and at Oxenhope. The terms finally offered by the masters were that the deductions should be returned, but that the rate per piece should be reduced 3d. A vote by ballot was taken, and, after some discussion, the men decided, by a majority of five votes, to accept the terms.

Reports from Lancashire show that great depression in trade still continues in several districts, both in the cotton and woollen industries. At Castleton, several of the mills are very slack, and the outlook in all branches of trade is gloomy. At Milnrow the whole of the hands employed at Messrs. Schofield and Sons, woollen mills, are again reduced to working four days a week after only two or three weeks full time. At Higher Walton, the spinners at Messrs. G. and E. Dewhurst's are running short time, and the card hands have done very badly for the last six months. There are between 70,000 and 80,000 spindles at this mill.

COLLAPSE OF THE FIFE MINERS STRIKE.—The men resumed work on Monday after a three week's struggle. From reports to hand, it seems that the companies were getting cornered, notwithstanding the stocked coal; orders had been diverted from the Forth to the Tyne, thus giving promise of victory to the men if they had held out a little while longer. The reduction of 10 per cent. on the wages is most unwarrantable, as the dividends paid average $12\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. It is most lamentable to see how the workers allow themselves to be defeated in detail instead of massing themselves against their tyrants.

THE LOCK-MAKERS' STRIKE AT WILLENHALL.—A deputation from the lock-makers on strike at the works of Messrs. Payton and Co., Willenhall, having requested that the list of prices paid by other makers in the district should be adopted by the firm, a notice was issued to the effect that "unless the workmen now on strike accept the terms we hereby offer—viz., rim-lock makers to return at prices previously paid, and mortise-lock makers at the list of prices arranged between our Mr. Cashin and William Turner—they one and all are discharged from our employ." It is stated that the list referred to was not adopted.

COLLIERS' STRIKE.—The whole of the men and boys employed at the Felling, Ulsworth, and Wardley collieries, on the south bank of the Tyne, are on strike under rather peculiar circumstances. A dispute arose as to some extra time of one of the workmen, named Wilson. Wilson being absent from the colliery, his brother acted as a substitute, and the men alleged that the brother worked and received pay for three extra "shifts." There is an arrangement among the men that no man shall work for more than twelve days in a fortnight, and as the manager refused to suspend Wilson the men came out on strike. On Wednesday 181 of the men were summoned for illegally absenting themselves from work, and 170 were fined 5s. per day and costs. They marched in procession to the court, joined by the Ulsworth workmen, who laid their pit idle for the day. For this they in their turn have been summoned. Meetings have been held, and it was decided not to pay the fines, and lay all the pits idle till the masters accede to their requests.

THE NORWICH UNEMPLOYED.—It was reported in these columns some weeks ago that the Norwich Corporation had resolved to look a little after its unemployed during this winter, and in the goodness of its heart had ordered a hundred tons of granite to be broken up, the mayor making a buttery little speech at the time, expressing great sympathy with the men. To those who think that sympathy is the real motive, the following little conversation, which I got from a councillor who heard it, may bring the matter into a new

light. Several Tory councillors, on the conclusion of the work, were speaking about the cost of it, and one of them asked how much more it had cost than it would have done had they bought the granite ready broken. After a little figuring, the answer was, "£150." "Well," replied the sympathetic gentleman, "none of us will grudge that. Its a damned cheap price to have kept them quiet for." So that it seems, after all, that fear of a repetition of last year's rioting was the motive. Let the unemployed learn the lesson that this teaches.—F. H.

STRIKE IN THE NORWICH SHOE TRADE.—The committee of the local branch of the National Union of Operative Boot and Shoe Rivetters and Finishers have issued an appeal to their fellow-workmen in which they say—"We now take the opportunity of appealing to you to render us what assistance you can in our present struggle with the firm of Haldinstein and Sons, who have locked out men in consequence of their refusing to accept a series of reductions, direct and indirect, among which is a turned-in kid shoe at 5s. per dozen, also a glazed kid, button or ball, at 5s. 6d. per dozen. There are other things in dispute, but we think the above is sufficient to show we have a good cause. This firm has always been a source of trouble to both the Union and our branch, so much so, that we have had to spend the greater portion of our branch funds upon this firm. Not only this, but all the other firms in Norwich point to this as a pretext to justify themselves in offering reductions, and should these employers succeed in their object, we may expect to hear something from the other firms, who at present are paying considerably better wages." It is very much to be regretted that a very large proportion of the men affected are not members of the Union. This is one reason, no doubt, for the action of the firm, as of course the strain on the society's funds is very great. It is to be hoped that whether or not success attends the present effort of the employés, the outcome will result in greater solidarity amongst them in the future.

PRESENT AND FUTURE.—The present need is pressing, and daily bread must be looked after; but the future also takes up the thoughts of careful men. Socialism must not take our attention from the practical bearing of the facts of every-day life. Trades Unionism must not entirely absorb those facts alone.—*Miner*.

The sweater's employés are practically slaves, with all the disadvantages and few of the advantages of genuine servitude. And like slaves, they have, alas! in too many instances the characteristics of slaves. The iron of their miserable lot has so eaten into their very souls that they have seemingly lost the desire for emancipation.—*Reynolds*.

At Burton-on-Trent a working cooper, in the employment of Messrs. Allsopp, has been elected to the School Board at the head of the poll with 6,235 votes, and his employer, Mr. George Allsopp, M.P., who was chairman of the late Board, was ninth on the list of those elected, and only polled 3,418 votes. Burton-on-Trent is evidently getting democratic, in spite of beer.—*Democrat*.

Sir James King, Lord Provost of Glasgow, as a railway director, addressed a large assemblage of Caledonian Railway employés a few nights ago, and in the course of his interesting remarks estimated, pretty accurately, that nearly a million people got their daily bread from the railway interest. So far as some thousands of them are concerned the Lord Provost's remark is literally correct, for they are enabled to get bread and little else, by reason of their scanty wages. While they must eat their bread without butter, those who impose such terms upon them have theirs buttered on both sides, and are enabled to indulge in many other luxuries besides. It is surprising to find how railway men endure this sort of thing—but they do.—*Railway Review*.

THE RAILWAY STRIKE IN AMERICA.—NEW YORK, March 5.—At a meeting held yesterday of engineers representing all the railways running into New York, it was resolved to support the men on strike on the Burlington, Chicago, and Quincy Railway even to the extent of stopping all the railways in the country. The Brotherhood of Engineers and Firemen, numbering 100 men, employed on the Chicago, Burlington, and Northern Railway, have decided to strike to-night owing to the company's interchanging traffic with the Chicago, Burlington, and Quincy line. In the House of Representatives to-day a resolution was brought forward for the appointment of a committee to investigate the cause of the strike on the Chicago, Burlington, and Quincy Railroad, and act as mediators for securing an amicable settlement of the dispute.

THE WORKLESS AND HUNGRY IN ROME.—A serious agitation among the working classes, and especially among the masons, has manifested itself during the last few days in Rome, and assumed large proportions on Thursday 1st inst. In consequence of the economical crisis in Rome, several of the more important contractors have been compelled to suspend their works. Many workmen are unemployed, and are without means of subsistence. The bakers' shops in several quarters were threatened, and the unemployed assembled in various parts of the town and compelled their comrades to leave work. The troops had to be called out to keep order, and arrests were made on a large scale. The agitation throughout the town was considerable. The press urged the Government to take energetic measure to procure occupation for the unemployed by beginning several of the public works—such as the Tiber embankment, the law courts, and the new barracks.

A "WOLF'S REASON."—As one of the reasons why the German Reichstag felt bound to prolong the law against the Socialists, it was mentioned that they could not be prevented from preaching at their meetings murder, riot, and revolution! At the same time there existed another law throughout Germany which empowers the police to dissolve any meeting as soon as they think it necessary. Of this power use has been made very frequently already, even before the law against the Socialists was passed in the year 1878, and amongst other reasons why public meetings of workmen have been dissolved at Berlin and at other places, are recorded the following:—1. Because there was not a passage left free in the middle of the hall. 2. Because a window was open, and the watching official got the conviction that it was for that reason an open-air meeting. 3. Because people were standing outside a window looking into the hall, and the police-officer thought they might break the panes. 4. Because somebody in the hall during a speech shouted out "Ridiculous!" 5. Because some people laughed. 6. Because a dog came into the hall, etc., etc. For such empty motives every meeting, even of thousands of persons, can be dissolved; and then the bourgeoisie is not ashamed to bring forward as one of their reasons that they have not power enough to prevent public speakers from preaching "Bloody Revolution!"—G. Sch.

REVOLUTIONARY CALENDAR.

WEEK ENDING MARCH 17, 1888.

11	Sun.	1702. First London daily newspaper.
12	Mon.	1817. J. Cashman hanged for "treason" in connection with Spa Fields Riots.
13	Tues.	1733. Dr. Joseph Priestley born. 1848. Chartist Meeting on Kennington Common.—Open-air Demonstration at Berlin. 1879. William Broadhead died. 1881. Execution of Alexander II.
14	Wed.	1820. Gilbert McLeod transported for five years for sedition (a speech at a Radical meeting). 1848. Metternich expelled from Vienna. 1883. Karl Marx died.
15	Thur.	1812. D. J. Eaton imprisoned for publishing <i>Age of Reason</i> . 1881. Famous Article in the <i>Freiheit</i> . 1883. Explosion (nitroglycerine) at office of Local Government Board, Whitehall, and at same time unsuccessful attempt on the <i>Times</i> office.
16	Fri.	1820. H. Hunt and others tried for conspiracy.
17	Sat.	1754. Madame Roland born. 1877. Public Funeral to George Odger. 1882. Meeting at Grafton Street to celebrate the Commune and death of Czar.

Great Demonstration of Chartists on Kennington Common.—1848 has been called the year of revolutions, it was certainly a year of public meetings. On the 6th of March, a meeting of the bourgeoisie was called in opposition to the income tax; it was called by one Cochrane, for Trafalgar Square; it was proclaimed by the Government, and Cochrane funk'd and tried to prevent the meeting. A man was found with pluck enough to preside, and a splendid Chartist meeting was the result, resolutions in favour of the Charter and the French revolutionists being enthusiastically passed, and no trouble would have arisen but for the action of some well-dressed rowdies who stirred up the police to baton the crowd who had followed the chairman to his house in Wellington Street, where he spoke from the balcony. G. W. M. Reynolds, the man who dared the Government, was not up till then known as a political speaker, but he by this action made his mark, and at the great demonstration on Kennington Common of the following week he took the chair, the other speakers being McGrath Williams, Clark Dixon, and Ernest Jones. Some 20,000 persons were present, and a strong police force, over 4,000, some being mounted and armed with sabres and pistols, and some in plain clothes in the body of the meeting. Special warnings were issued to dealers in powder and shot, and gunsmiths were requested to unscrew the barrels of their fire-arms. The Charter was unanimously adopted, and cheers were given for the French Revolution, the tricolored flag all the time waving from the platform. In the evening another great meeting was held, this time in the South London Hall, Blackfriars Road; and the next day yet another.—T. S.

Alexander II. Romanow executed.—On March 13, 1881, the execution took place at St. Petersburg of Alexander II. Romanow. This man united the vilest cruelty with the meanest hypocrisy; drenching for instance Poland in blood, having thousands of men killed at Plevna in celebration of his birthday, sending the best men and women of his country to die in prison holes, in Siberian mines and icy deserts, and on the gallows only for having Socialist opinions; all this while posing with his sham emancipation of the Russian peasants from serfdom as a "liberator," robbing Turkey under the pretext of fighting for the freedom of the Christian nations of that country, etc. He well deserved his fate. One of those who undertook to kill him was killed on the spot, another shot himself when the police broke into his home; Jesse Helfmann was left to die painfully and slowly in the Junglow dens; and five, Ryssakoff, Michailoff, Teliaboff, Kibultshish, Sofia Perofskaja went through a judicial farce, were sentenced to death, and afterwards submitted to tortures, a practice commonly exercised with political "criminals" in Russia; their dying voices, oversounded by the noise of drums, told that to the people. Their murder is described even by bourgeois correspondents as a most horrible scene, some being hanged twice or thrice and slowly strangled, struggling for many minutes with death. (Their murderer was to have met the same fate as his father six years afterwards, on March 13, 1887, but escaped for that time.)—Z. Z.

'Freiheit' Prosecution.—Englishmen whose liberties are now taken away one after the other, will do well to remember that from that same time the much-boasted freedom of the press was practically done away with. John Most had made in the weekly German paper *Freiheit* (Freedom), in the issue of March 19th, some comments on the execution of the Russian despot, differing of course from the laudatory hymns of the hired capitalist press. Upon this, on the instigation of the German Government, whose most dangerous enemy the *Freiheit* was at all times, six ruffians invaded on March 30th the office of the *Freiheit* and arrested Most. He was put into Newgate and was shamefully ill-treated there, as well as afterwards in the House of Correction of Clerkenwell. The public prosecutor shifted his ground on every stage of the prosecution. Arrested on the charge of a libel on the late Emperor of Russia, Most was committed for trial at Bow Street for inciting to murder Continental rulers in general, but on the trial he was charged with inciting persons to murder William I. of Germany, the well-known "heldengreis," and Alexander III. of Russia. Evidently the Government feared he would prove the truth of the alleged libel on Alexander II. by showing the atrocious deeds of this man. Public opinion was raised against this attack of the "Liberal" Government, headed by Mr. Gladstone, on one of the most cherished English liberties. A defence committee was formed, and an English paper *Freiheit* was started, of which seven numbers appeared (April 24th to June 5th). Most was ably defended by the Irish M.P., Mr. A. M. Sullivan, who showed from English literature many examples of eulogy upon tyrannicide which nobody ever thought of prosecuting. The packed jury, of course, found Most guilty, and Lord Chief Justice Coleridge sentenced him to sixteen months' imprisonment with hard labour, an outrageously severe sentence, the "crime" (which did not exist, indeed) being a political one, and Most having been imprisoned for months previous to the trial. He left the prison on October 26, 1882, and shortly afterwards went to America. The "Liberal" Government was not content with these exploits; they delivered letters and addresses stolen in the *Freiheit* office to the German and Austrian Governments, and the imprisonment and ruin of several comrades in these countries were the consequence of this deliberate denunciation by the Gladstonian Government. They also prosecuted the *Freiheit* again and again, imprisoned Schwelm and Merten, and made it impossible for the paper to be printed further in England, thus practically destroying the freedom of the press.—Z. Z.

Death of Karl Marx.—Karl Marx, often called the founder of scientific Socialism, was born at Treves on May 18, 1818. He studied at the Universities of Bonn and Berlin, and became a convinced partisan of the Hegelian school of philosophy, and in so doing showed that he had ceased to see things as eternally fixed categories, and observed the change in them, the evolution. Thus the more consequent thinkers of that school were soon led also in losing their blind respect for the now existing social and political institutions, held by silly people to have existed and to exist from everlasting to everlasting. They observed the

conditions of change, and found that the political, religious, etc., conditions of any epoch, are dependent on the economical conditions of that epoch. This theory is commonly called the "materialistic contemplation of history." Also the American, Morgan, working on quite a different field from Marx, came to these same conclusions. Marx edited a Radical paper at Cologne (*Rheinische Zeitung*, 1842-3); after its suppression by the Prussian Government, he carried on at Paris the *Deutsch-Französische Jahrbücher*, in which Socialist and Radical articles are mixed. He collaborated the *Vorwärts*, wrote several pamphlets together with his friend for life, Friedrich Engels; also a refutation of Proudhon's views, 1847, etc. At this time the *Kommunisten-Bund* (Union of the Communists) was formed, the first really International Socialist Society, and Marx and Engels wrote the celebrated Communist 'Manifesto,' probably the Socialist document which is widest spread and soonest translated into any language in which a Socialist literature, however small, exists at all. He and Engels lived afterwards in Belgium, editing the *Deutsche Brussler Zeitung*, but were expelled by the Government of that country, which was then nearly as servile as it now is to the Prussian authorities. They went to Paris, but the revolution of 1848 flashing out they returned to Germany, and edited at Cologne the daily *Neue Rheinische Zeitung*, the most brisk and fervent Socialist paper of the many which sprang up then all over the country. It was suppressed in 1849; Engels went to Baden, Marx to Paris, and thence was forced to come away to London. Here the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung* was edited for a short time as a review, printed at Hamburg, but soon died. The *Kommunisten-Bund*, many of whose members had been fighting in Germany and had finally fled to England, split not long afterwards, there being an authoritarian and a federalist party in it; Marx belonged to the former, or rather he was the head of that party. He lived from this time in London, writing pamphlets, corresponding for the *New York Tribune*, and doing his great work of research and study in political economy, history, etc. In 1859, he published a book, entitled *Zur Kritik der Politischen Oekonomie*, from which Lassalle afterwards took the bulk of his arguments. His chief work is *Das Kapital*, vol. i., 1867; vol. ii., 1885; the third volume announced to come out in one or two years. A Russian, French, and lately an English translation of that fundamental book for criticism of the present system of society, and many extracts and popularisations, for it is a rather tough lecture at first, have been published. Marx was intimately connected with the International Working-men's Association, founded in St. Martin's Hall, on Sept. 28, 1864, with the founding of which he had perhaps more to do than any other.—Y. Y.

TO THE EDITOR.

The Respectables (would-be) of Hackney and Bethnal Green are very busy in getting up petitions against meetings on Sundays in Victoria Park, the reason given is "because of the bad, seditious, blasphemous, and disgusting language used." If the Rads and the Reds of the neighbourhood don't soon wake up and take action they will find no place left them to air their grievances. The canvassers very kindly inform you that anyone can sign irrespective of age, therefore the petitions are largely filled up by children and women, who sign it mostly because someone else has signed.

T. R. COOPER.

Comrade Bolas asks us to say that comrade Burton who is spoken of in last number as "formerly a member of the Hamersmith Branch," is still a member; has lately paid up all subs., and expects to be back and working with us in about two years' time.

THE SOCIALIST LEAGUE.

OFFICES: 13 FARRINGTON ROAD, E.C.

Annual Conference.

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

Branch Subscriptions Paid.—1887: Hastings, Nottingham, Pelsall—None. Bradford, Croydon, Glasgow, Hackney, Ipswich, Leeds, Marylebone, Merton, North London, Norwich—to end of March. Edinburgh—to end of May. Mitcham—to end of July. Walsall—to end of August. Hull—to end of September. Bloomsbury, Walham Green, Wednesbury—to end of October. Leicester—to end of November. Clerkenwell, Hammersmith, Hoxton, Mile-end, Oxford—to end of December.

"COMMONWEAL" PRINTING FUND.

Weekly Subscription—W. B., 6d.

Strike Committee.—Collected in Regent's Park, Sunday March 4th, 2s. 4d.—J. LANE.

REPORTS.

ACTON.—Good open-air meeting held at Steyne at 11 on Sunday by Day, Tochatti, and Maughan. Good sale of *Commonweal*. At 12, good meeting on Front Commons, Turnham Green, when Tochatti, Day, and Maughan spoke. Sold one quire of *Commonweal*. We have discontinued meeting on Acton Green, and intend to hold it in future on Front Common, at which we hope to have a larger audience. In the evening, J. Turner lectured at our rooms on "Control of Capital," before which Day and Maughan held a meeting outside.—H. J. D.

BLOOMSBURY.—Social evening held last Thursday at Communist Club by members of branch and their friends. Very successful.

CLERKENWELL.—On Wednesday, Feb. 29, Capt. Pfoundes spoke on "Voluntary Emigration." Good discussion. On Sunday, March 4, a very enjoyable "social" evening was spent by members and friends.—B.

FULHAM.—Sunday morning meeting addressed by Parker (of Norwich) and Catterson Smith. *Commonweal* sold well. One new member, and 2s. collected. Usual meeting outside rooms in evening. Parker, Tochatti, and Groser spoke; and Parker afterwards lectured on "The Labour Struggle and how to end it."—S. B. G.

BRADFORD.—Maguire, of Leeds, lectured at the Exchange last Sunday evening on "Private and Public Wrongs." Well received and good discussion. Gaskell lectured same time at Firth's Temperance Hotel on "Social Reconstruction of Society."

NORWICH.—Tuesday, Feb. 28, quarterly meeting of members held. Our membership has greatly increased during the last three months; in November it was 40, to-day we number 74. Sutton was elected secretary, F. Turner treasurer. Friday a paper opposing Socialism was read at one of the Sunday-schools in this town, when branch members were present in strong numbers and took part in the debate. On Sunday, a much larger meeting than usual was held in the

Market Place, owing to the strike in the shoe trade here. Mowbray addressed it, principally on the strike. In evening in Gordon Hall, Houghton lectured on "Malthusianism" to good audience, Turner in chair; Mowbray and Hardy took part in discussion.—S.

WALSALL.—Monday, Deakin lectured on "Technical Education." Good discussion. Last Sunday, Donald delivered fine address on "John Ruskin as a Moral Teacher;" well received. Saturday we visited Pelsall, and listened to lecture at the Wesleyan Mutual Improvement Society on "Unpractical Socialism." Sanders and Deakin spoke, and although allowed only a few minutes, succeeded in evoking manifestations of sympathy from a large number of the audience.—J. T. D.

LONDON PATRIOTIC CLUB.—On Sunday morning, W. B. Parker lectured here on "Radicalism and Socialism." Mr. J. Fuller took the chair. Good discussion.

LECTURE DIARY.

LONDON.

Acton.—17 High Street, Acton, W. (adjoining Purnell's Dining Rooms). Sunday March 11, at 8 p.m., Miss E. Wardlow on "Ireland."

Bloomsbury.—Communist Club, 49 Tottenham Street, Tottenham Court Road. Thursday Mar. 8, at 8.30, Business meeting (members of the Concert Committee are specially requested to attend). Thursday Mar. 15, at 8.30, Dr. Aveling will lecture on "The Gospel of Socialism."

Clerkenwell.—Hall of the Socialist League, 13 Farringdon Rd., E.C. Business meeting every Sunday at 7. Sunday March 11, at 8.30, Mr. Touzeau Parris. Wednesday March 14, at 8.30, Thomas Shore, jun. (L.R.L.). Sun. 18. Commune Celebration.

Fulham.—8 Effie Road, Walham Green. Sunday at 8, Mrs. Wilson, "The Social Revolution."

Hackney.—96 Percy Terrace, Victoria Road, Hackney Wick.

Hammermith.—Kelmescott House, Upper Mall, W. Sun. at 8, J. Tochatti, Human Nature and Socialism.

Hoxton (L.E.L.).—C. J. Young, 8 Dunloe Street, Hackney Road, Secretary. Members please take up their membership cards for 1888.

Mitcham.—Corner of Merton Lane and Fountain Place. Club Room open Saturday, Sunday, and Monday evenings from 7.30 till 11. W. E. Eden, 12 Falmerston Road, Wimbledon, Secretary.

Mile-end and Bethnal Green.—95 Boston St., Hackney Road. Business Meeting every Thursday at 9 p.m. Debating Class for members after Business Meeting.

PROVINCES.

Aberdeen (Scottish Section).—Sunday night meetings in Baker Street Hall, at 6. Secretary, J. Leatham, 15 St. Nicholas Street.

Birmingham.—Meetings at Summer Row Coffee House every Saturday evening at 8.

Bradford.—Morris's Dining Rooms, 114 City Road. Wednesdays, at 8.

Carnoustie (Scottish Section: Forfarshire).—Meeting every Wednesday, at 8 p.m., in the Carnoustie Restaurant. H. M'Cluskey, Millar Street, Secy.

Cowdenbeath (Scot. Sec).—J. Duncan, 30 Arthur Pl., sec

Dublin.—Saturday Club, Central Lecture Hall, 12 Westmorland Street.

Dundee (Scot. Sect.).—Meetings every Sunday in the Trades Hall, opposite Tay Bridge Station. Political Economy class, 2 p.m. Lecture at 6.30.

Edinburgh (Scottish Section).—4 Park Street. Every Thursday at 8, class for study of Marx's 'Capital.' Trades Hall, High Street, Sunday March 11, Gilbert Hossack, "The Workers' Share of Civilisation."

Galashiels (Scot Sect).—J. Walker, 6 Victoria St., sec

Gallatown and Dysart (Scottish Section: Fife).—Meet every Tuesday at 7 p.m. in Gallatown Public School. Secretary, A. Paterson, 152 Rosslyn St.

Glasgow.—84 John St. Reading-room open 10 a.m. till 10 p.m. daily. Propaganda Committee, Mondays at 8. Discussion Class meets every Thursday evening at 8 p.m.

Leeds.—Lady Lane. Open every evening. Business meeting Fridays at 8. Address all communications to T. Taylor, 11 Sheldon Street, Holbeck, Leeds.

Leicester.—Hosiery Union, Horsefair St. Fridays at 8.

Lochelly (Scottish Section: Fife).—Secs. (pro tem.), John Greig and Hugh Conway, The Square.

Norwich.—Gordon Hall, 5 Duke Street. Monday, Entertainment at 8 by the Minstrel Troupe. Tuesday, Members meeting at 8. Wednesday, Ways and Means Committee at 8.30. Thursday, Discussion class (Gronlund), 8. Friday, Literary Committee at 8. Band practice at 8.

Nottingham.—Club and Reading Rooms, 1 Tokenhouse Yard, Bridlesmith Gate, open every evening. Lectures and Discussions every Sunday.

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

Walsall.—Lecture Room, back of Temperance Hall. Mondays at 8 p.m.

West Calder (Scottish Section).—Sec., Robert Lindsay, West Calder.

OPEN-AIR PROPAGANDA.

LONDON—Sunday 11.

- 11 ...Acton—the SteyneActon Branch
11 ...Turnham Green—Front Common ...Acton Beh.
11.30...Hoxton Church, Pitfield St.Pope & Wade
11.30...Merton—Haydons Road.....The Branch
11.30...Mitcham Fair GreenKitz & Eden
11.30...Regent's ParkParker
11.30...St. Pancras ArchesBloomsbury Branch
11.30...Walham GreenFulham Branch
3 ...Hyde ParkParker
7 ...Acton—PrioryActon Branch

PROVINCES.

Leeds.—Sunday: Jack Lane End, Meadow Road, at 10.30 a.m. In Prince's Field, at 3 p.m.
Norwich.—Market Place, at 3 every Sunday.

On Thursday March 15 a Discussion will take place at 13 Farringdon Road, at 8.30 p.m., on Communist v. Individualist Anarchism, to be opened by Peter Kropotkin. Admission free; discussion invited.

PROGRESSIVE ASSOCIATION, Penton Hall, 81 Pentonville Road.—Sunday March 18, at 7 p.m., Percival Chubb, "Ethical Socialism in Practice."

LEYTONSTONE WORKING MEN'S CLUB, 1 Cathall Rd., Leytonstone.—Sunday March 25, 11.30 a.m., H. Halliday Sparling on "What Socialists Want."

SHEFFIELD SOCIALISTS, Commonwealth Café, Scotland Street, Sheffield.—Discussions or Lectures every Sunday evening at 7 o'clock. Free.

Imprisonment of Gough.

Our comrade Gough will be released from Pentonville Prison on March 14th. Cantwell, Nicoll, and Parker are organising reception.

The Strike Fund.—Entertainments will be given on Saturday evenings in the Hall of the League, at 8 p.m., in aid of the above Fund. Friends wishing to assist with songs, recitations, instrumental music, etc., should at once communicate with W. B. Parker, at office of League. First Entertainment, March 24th.

East-end Socialist Club.—A Grand Vocal and Instrumental Concert will be given in Hall of League, at 8 p.m., on Easter Monday, April 2nd, in aid of funds of projected East-end Club.

PARIS COMMUNE CELEBRATIONS.

CLERKENWELL.—Hall of the Socialist League, 13 Farringdon Road; E.C., on Sunday March 18, at 8.30. Social Evening, with short addresses, songs, etc.

NORWICH.—On Sunday March 18 a great meeting will be held in the Market Place, to celebrate Paris Commune. On Monday March 19 a Tea and Entertainment will be held in the Gordon Hall. Tickets 1s. each, to be had of the Secretary.

BRIMMINGHAM.—It is intended to celebrate the Commune by a Dinner, etc., on March 19. Friends wished to join in the same please communicate with comrades Sketchley and Copeland, 8 Arthur Place, Parade, immediately.

DUBLIN.—The celebration of the anniversary of the Commune of Paris will be held, under the auspices of the Dublin Socialist Club, at 2 Bachelors Walk, on Sunday March 18th, at 8 p.m. Tickets 1s. each.

SOCIALIST CO-OPERATIVE FEDERATION.—Meeting at Commonwealth Office, 13 Farringdon Road, on Sunday March 11, at 3.30 p.m.

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[We publish this very incomplete list in the hope that friends will make it their business to supply us with fuller details. Newsagents not included here are requested to supply their names for publication.]

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