

THE COMMONWEAL

The Official Journal of the SOCIALIST LEAGUE.

VOL. 6.—No. 209.

SATURDAY, JANUARY 11, 1890.

WEEKLY; ONE PENNY.

NEWS FROM NOWHERE:

OR,

AN EPOCH OF REST.

BEING SOME CHAPTERS FROM A UTOPIAN ROMANCE.

CHAP. I.—DISCUSSION AND BED.

UP at the League, says a friend, there had been one night a brisk conversational discussion, as to what would happen on the Morrow of the Revolution, finally shading off into a vigorous statement by various friends of their views on the future of the fully-developed new society.

Says our friend: Considering the subject, the discussion was good-tempered; for those present being used to public meetings and after-lecture debates, if they did not listen to each others' opinions (which could scarcely be expected of them), at all events did not always attempt to speak altogether, as is the custom of people in ordinary polite society when conversing on a subject which interests them. For the rest, there were six persons present, and consequently six sections of the party were represented, four of which had strong but divergent Anarchist opinions. One of the sections, says our friend, a man whom he knows very well indeed, sat almost silent at the beginning of the discussion, but at last got drawn into it, and finished by roaring out very loud, and damning all the rest for fools; after which befel a period of noise and then a lull, during which the aforesaid section, having said good-night very amicably, took his way home by himself to a western suburb, using the means of travelling which civilisation has forced upon us like a habit. As he sat in that vapour-bath of hurried and discontented humanity, a carriage of the underground railway, he, like others, stewed discontentedly, while in self-reproachful mood he turned over the many excellent and conclusive arguments which, though they lay in his fingers' end, he had forgotten in the just past discussion. But this frame of mind he was so used to, that it didn't last him long, and after a brief discomfort, caused by disgust with himself for having lost his temper (which he was also well used to), he found himself musing on the subject-matter of discussion, but still discontentedly and unhappily. "If I could but see a day of it," he said to himself; "if I could but see it!"

As he formed the words, the train stopped at his station, five minutes' walk from his own house, which stood on the banks of the Thames, a little way above an ugly suspension bridge. He went out of the station, still discontented and unhappy, muttering "If I could but see it! if I could but see it!" but had not gone many steps towards the river before (says our friend who tells the story) all that discontent and trouble seemed to slip off him.

It was a beautiful night of early winter, the air just sharp enough to be refreshing after the hot room and the stinking railway carriage. The wind, which had lately turned a point or two north of west, had blown the sky clear of all cloud save a light fleck or two which went swiftly down the heavens. There was a young moon halfway up the sky, and as the homefarer caught sight of it, tangled in the branches of a tall old elm, he could scarce bring to his mind the shabby London suburb where he was, and he felt as if he were in a pleasant country place—pleasanter, indeed, than the deep country was as he had known it.

He came right down to the river-side, and lingered a little looking over the low wall to note the moonlit river, near upon high water, go swirling and glittering up to Chiswick Eyott: as for the ugly bridge below, he did not notice it or think of it, except when for a moment (says our friend) it struck him that he missed the row of lights downstream. Then he turned to his house door and let himself in; and even as he shut the door to, disappeared all remembrance of that brilliant logic and foresight which had so illuminated the recent discussion; and of the discussion itself there remained no trace, save a vague hope, that was now become a pleasure, for days of peace and rest, and cleanness and smiling goodwill.

In this mood he tumbled into bed, and fell asleep after his wont, in two minutes' time; but (contrary to his wont) woke up again not long after in that curiously wide-awake condition which sometimes

surprises even good sleepers; a condition under which we feel all our wits preternaturally sharpened, while all the miserable muddles we have ever got into, all the disgraces and losses of our lives, will insist on thrusting themselves forward for the consideration of those sharpened wits.

In this state he lay (says our friend) till he had almost begun to enjoy it: till the tale of his stupidities amused him, and the entanglements before him, which he saw so clearly, began to shape themselves into an amusing story for him.

He heard one o'clock strike, then two and then three; after which he fell asleep again. Our friend says that from that sleep he awoke once more, and afterwards went through such surprising adventures that he thinks that they should be told to our comrades of the League, and therefore proposes to tell them now. But, says he, I think it would be better if I told them in the first person, as if it were myself who had gone through them; which, indeed, will be the easier and more natural to me, since I understand the feelings and desires of the comrade I am telling of better than anyone else in the world does.

CHAP. II.—A MORNING BATH.

WELL, I awoke, and found that I had kicked my bedclothes off; and no wonder, for it was hot and the sun shining brightly. I jumped up and washed and hurried on my clothes, but in a hazy and half-awake condition, as if I had slept for a long, long while, and could not shake off the weight of slumber. In fact, I rather took it for granted that I was at home in my own room than saw that it was so.

When I was dressed, I felt the place so hot that I made haste to get out of the room and out of the house; and my first feeling was a delicious relief caused by the fresh air and pleasant breeze; my second, as I began to gather my wits together, mere measureless wonder: for it was winter when I went to bed the last night, and now, by witness of the river-side trees, it was summer, a beautiful bright morning seemingly of early June. However, there was still the Thames sparkling under the sun, and near high water, as last night I had seen it gleaming under the moon.

I had by no means shaken off the feeling of oppression, and wherever I might have been should scarce have been quite conscious of the place; so it was no wonder that I felt rather puzzled in despite of the familiar face of the Thames. Withal I felt dizzy and queer; and remembering that people often got a boat and had a swim in mid stream, I thought I would do no less. It seems very early, quoth I to myself, but I dare say I shall find someone at Biffen's to take me. However, I didn't get as far as Biffen's, or even turn to my left thitherward, because just then I began to see that there was a landing-stage right before me in front of my house: in fact, on the place where my next-door neighbour had rigged one up, though somehow it didn't look like it either. Down I went on to it, and sure enough among the empty boats moored to it lay a man on his sculls in a solid-looking tub of a boat clearly meant for bathers. He nodded to me, and bade me good-morning as if he expected me, so I jumped in without any words, and he paddled away quietly as I peeled for my swim. As we went, I looked down on the water, and couldn't help saying—

"How clear the water is this morning!"

"Is it?" said he; "I didn't notice it. You know the flood-tide always thickens it a bit."

"H'm," said I, "I have seen it pretty muddy even at half-ebb."

He said nothing in answer, but seemed rather astonished; and as he now lay just stemming the tide, and I had my clothes off, I jumped in without more ado. Of course when I had my head above water again I turned towards the tide, and my eyes naturally sought for the bridge, and so utterly astonished was I by what I saw, that I forgot to strike out, and went spluttering under water again, and when I came up made straight for the boat; for I felt that I must ask some questions of my waterman, so bewildering had been the half-sight I had seen from the face of the river with the water hardly out of my eyes; though by this time I was quit of the slumbrous and dizzy feeling, and was wide-awake and clear-headed.

As I got in up the steps which he had lowered, and he held out his hand

to help me, we went drifting speedily up towards Chiswick; but now he caught up the sculls and brought her head round again, and said—

"A short swim, neighbour; but perhaps you find the water cold this morning, after your journey. Shall I put you ashore at once, or would you like to go down to Putney before breakfast?"

He spoke in a way so unlike what I should have expected from a Hammersmith waterman, that I stared at him, as I answered, "Please to hold her a little; I want to look about me a bit."

"All right," he said; "it's no less pretty in its way here than it is off Barn Elms; it's jolly everywhere this time in the morning. I'm glad you got up early; it's barely five o'clock yet."

If I was astonished with my sight of the river banks, I was no less astonished at my waterman, now that I had time to look at him and see him with my head and eyes clear.

He was a handsome young fellow, with a peculiarly pleasant and friendly look about his eyes,—an expression which was quite new to me then, though I soon became familiar with it. For the rest, he was dark-haired and berry-brown of skin, well-knit and strong, and obviously used to exercising his muscles, but with nothing rough or coarse about him, and clean as might be. His dress was not like any modern work-a-day clothes I had seen, but would have served very well as a costume for a picture of fourteenth century life: it was of dark blue cloth, simple enough, but of fine web, and without a stain on it. He had a brown leather belt round his waist, and I noticed that its clasp was of damascened steel beautifully wrought. In short, he seemed to me like some specially manly and refined young gentleman, playing waterman for a spree, and I concluded that this was the case.

WILLIAM MORRIS.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

THE ARGENTINE REPUBLIC AND ENGLISH RADICAL REFORMERS.

(Continued from p. 3.)

TIME rolled on, and the year 1874 brought with it a presidential election, and great was the excitement during the latter part of the preceding year, as the parties in favour of the two candidates, General Mitre and Doctor Alsina, were both very strong, and lively times were expected. Alsina, however, had the advantage of being supported by the Government of the Province of Buenos Ayres, if he was not actually governor at the time. I think he had lately retired in favour of one of his political friends.

I cannot help recalling to mind the graceful satire of Goldsmith in his "Letters from a Citizen of the World," as I begin my task of describing a contested election in the free Argentine Republic in the year of grace 1874. I cannot but imagine the candid Chinaman, or some equally candid believer in Republicanism and Universal Suffrage, just arrived in the town of Navarro, and preparing himself to enjoy the sight of a "free" people exercising its right of suffrage, in order to choose the chief magistrate who should "preside over its destinies" for the next six years!

Free! oh yes, the ballot box was there, guarded by the agents of law-and-order, the gallant policemen of the Partido (district), every man armed with a carbine that would not go off and a big cavalry sword that would, and that on the slightest occasion. An awkward squad, they were paraded in front of the church, and in the porch of that temple was placed the table on which rested the aforesaid box, and behind which sat the scrutineers with their president. You see how even the influence of religion was invoked, to give solemnity and safety to this solemn civic ceremony. And yet, O shade of Whang Hoam! it was observed that none came to deposit their votes in that sacred urn but those who were of one and the same political colour, and that the colour of the Mayor or Juez, and other authorities of the district!

Why was this? Were they not free to come? Certainly they were, but certain little previous incidents had shown them clearly that they were sure to have their throats cut if they voted the wrong way. They were much in the predicament of the free worker in certain other countries, who is "free" to accept the employer's terms or reject them and starve!

A few days before the election, there had arrived in the town a man well known in the district and in all the country round for the number of murders he had committed. He was one of those unfortunate victims of the hateful frontier system I have just mentioned, and of the many other injustices inflicted on the poor Gaucho. One of those, of whom I am only surprised there were not more, who, tired of injustice, and being daring and powerful, and skilful in the use of the long *facon* or dagger they use, turned out at war with society in every district. The rural police of that time were not able to cope with them, one of the favourite feats of such men as this Juan Moreira being to engage in battle with the whole police force of a district, six or seven men, and rout them after killing one or two. The feat was not so difficult as may be imagined, for the Gaucho was always well armed, and well mounted, which was of more importance still, while the police were always badly mounted and armed, and with very little desire to risk their lives in an attempt to capture a man with whom they were strongly in sympathy. They were at that time also quite unused to fire-arms, so the well-mounted Gaucho cut them up in detail, charging them when he chose on the open Pampa, or prairie, for it must be remembered that the Province of Buenos Ayres is one great flat open plain.

This Juan Moreira was known to have killed several men and one officer of police in the very same district, or Partido of Navarro, and yet here we find him coming openly to the town and taking up his quarters—in the house of the Mayor! So it was; but then these were election times, and it had been the custom at all elections to make use of good fighting men, no matter what their antecedents. The fact was, that Moreira had been sent for by the chief of the government party, but, being under some obligations to the Mayor, who was in opposition, he had placed his sword or *facon* at his service, and it was joyfully accepted. He brought with him a number of men more or less of the same stamp as himself, and they began operations by killing three men of the opposite party in the suburbs of the town, and one old man in the public square, quite near to the Juzgado or Town Hall. This man, though left for dead, was not so, but died a few days after under my care. When Moreira and one of his men who accompanied him on this occasion, had retired, the police came and carried in the body to the Juzgado, and one of the policemen finding the sheath of Moreira's *facon* on the side walk, ran after him and restored it to him!

After this the opposite party hid themselves in terror, and the Mayor's party had it all their own way. Three cheers for Universal Suffrage and "free" institutions generally! A few days after this I saw Moreira and some of his companions galloping at full speed round the Plaza, or principal square, and shouting with all the force of their lungs, "Death to the Alsinistas!" I had occasion to see him more closely a little later on.

The government of the province, being a supporter of the opposite party, the Alsinistas, sent down a squad of city police (25 men) to take Moreira, and they arrived one night quite unexpectedly. They were joined on their arrival by a large number of the Alsina party, and learning that Moreira was quietly taking his glass at a small inn in company with two policemen of the town, they altogether marched up there at about eleven o'clock at night, and surprised him. They did not succeed in taking him, however, for Moreira as soon as he saw the crowd rushing into the house whipped off his poncho, and in a twinkling put out all the lights, and in the darkness and confusion managed to slip out through them all! Not content with this he turned and fired on them as soon as he reached a vacant space where he felt sure of escape. He grievously wounded one of the party with a bullet that smashed his lower jaw, but he himself was hit by a split bullet from a blunderbuss, which lodged in his face. He escaped, however, and two days afterwards I was requested by a member of the municipality to go and visit him at the house of the commander of National Guards. I there removed from under the skin of the lower jaw half of a pistol bullet. He was a handsome, powerfully-built man, and bore the necessary operation without a grimace. After all was over he thanked me with all the grace and politeness which distinguish the Argentine Gaucho or peasant.

It would be impossible for me to describe the confusion of mind which possessed me during all these events, and on this occasion in particular. I looked upon this man at the time as a vulgar assassin, and deserving as such to be attended only in the jail, as I told the man who came to call me; but he was actually in the hands of the authorities of the town, who supported him, and in any case he was entitled to have his wounds attended to. I therefore came to the conclusion that it was my duty to attend him, as my refusal to do so could do no good in any way.

Such cases as these show plainly what law and authority really are, and how false is the pretence that they are intended to protect the weak, or serve the general good of the community. While the opposition party made use of Moreira and others, the government party released from the jails all such men as they thought they could rely on to serve them in the same way during the elections,—and they do so still.

The upshot of the matter was that the opposition party took up arms, headed by their candidate General Mitre, declaring that they had been defrauded of their rights because the government party had done what the opposition had shown *they* were ready to do, where they had the power, as in Navarro. Then the government called out the National Guards, and the Mitre party did the same where they could. Then was seen the spectacle of the poor Gauchos dragged from their homes to fight, either for or against the government, according to the political leanings of their masters.

It was a strange and curious sight to see them mustering in Navarro. Every man came with his horse and equipments, and he was furnished with a long cane with one blade of shears fastened to the end of it by way of a lance—that was all.

JOHN CREAGHE.

(To be concluded.)

William Lloyd Garrison, the great Abolitionist, has declared himself on the side of the Single-tax and Socialism.

METROPOLITAN PAUPERISM.—Census of metropolitan paupers, exclusive of lunatics in asylums and vagrants, taken on the last day of the weeks named hereunder (enumerated inhabitants in 1881, 3,815,000):—Third week of December, 1889—indoor, 60,228; outdoor, 38,186; total, 98,414. Third week of December, 1888—indoor, 59,939; outdoor, 41,345; total, 101,284. Third week of December, 1887—indoor, 59,612; outdoor, 44,356; total, 103,968. Third week of December, 1886—indoor, 57,578; outdoor, 40,814; total, 98,392. These figures do not include patients in the fever and smallpox hospitals of the Metropolitan Asylum district. The number of these patients on the last day of the week was returned as 1,774 in 1889, 873 in 1888, 2,593 in 1887, and 666 in 1886. Vagrants relieved in the metropolis on the last day of the third week in December, 1889:—Men, 722; women, 115; children under 16, 15; total, 852.

INTERNATIONAL NOTES.

GERMANY.

The German Emperor has again shown what kind of a man he is. Paul Singer, a Socialist member of the Reichstag, having brought an accusation of libel against an individual named Bachtler, the Berlin tribunal, fully convinced of the gross insult which Bachtler had thrown at Singer, ordered the libeller to pay a fine of 400 marcs. Bachtler declared himself satisfied, did nothing to have the sentence altered, and *actually paid the fine*. The German Kaiser, hearing of this hitherto unheard of thing, viz., a Socialist gaining in a law suit, at once granted a full and unsolicited pardon to Bachtler, and directed the fine of 400 marcs to be returned to him. Singer is a Socialist, hence, according to the views of that abominable ruler, he has no right whatever to have his honour protected—in fact, he has no honour at all. A good slandering of his character is all he deserves, and he has got it.

The editor of a Saxon weekly, Wittner, having recapitulated in his paper the fabulous number of banquets which the crazy young German Emperor had ordered to be given in his honour since his accession to the "throne of his fathers," has got eight months jail for it. The Dresden magistrates thought it very unbecoming indeed for any of his Majesty's subjects to take measure of the capacity of his Majesty's belly. For speaking of his belly eight months, for sounding his "left ear" sixteen months! O William! O Charlemagne!

Comrades Wilhelm Ganshow, Hermann Tappart, and Rudolf Richter have been sentenced at Berlin to six months' confinement for "secret conspiracy"; comrade F. Noack got only four months for the same abominable offence. In this case the conspiracy was such a terribly "secret" one that the conspirators did not even know each other! How wicked these malefactors must have been, and how happy "law-'n'-order" must be now that this awful conspiracy is over!

The Berlin police have interdicted the circulation throughout the blessed land of a book entitled "Etude sur les doctrines sociales du Christianisme (Study on the Social Doctrines of Christianity), by Ives-Guyot, the actual Minister of Public Works in France, and Sigismond Lacroix, another Opportunist Republican. I wonder if they have read the book? True, that is not necessary. On the other hand, the Imperial Commission appointed to decide appeals against the enforcement of the Socialist law in particular cases, has rescinded six sentences passed upon newspapers and one upon an association. By so doing they appear to act fairly, you see, and can all the better throw dust in the eyes of the public.

BELGIUM.

We regret to announce the death of a staunch Revolutionary Socialist who has struggled in our ranks for more than a quarter of a century, Léopold Chainaye, who died in the last days of December at Liège, his birth-place. He was a wealthy manufacturer, and took a prominent part twenty-five years ago in the foundation of the International Working-men's Association. He has always spent largely his time and money in the service of the Socialist and Freethought movements. A few years ago he founded at Liège the *Union Socialiste*, and did a good deal of propagandist work amongst the miners of the various coal districts of the province of Liège. A clever and learned writer, he contributed largely to the columns of *Le Devoir* (Duty), (Liège, 1864 and 1869), *Le Journal des Etudiants* (The Student's Journal), (Liège, 1886, etc.), *L'Avenir* (The Future), a daily paper (Liège, 1865-75), etc. The Belgian Socialists will always keenly remember good old Chainaye, one of their forerunners in the Cause.

Our Belgian comrades are going to issue two new Socialist organs. One of them is to be published at Huy, and the other at Verviers, both in the province of Liège. The first is to be called *L'Echo de Huy* and the other *L'Echo de Verviers*.

HOLLAND.

The Dutch diamond cutters have resolved to run a special organ of their own in opposition to the former trade paper, which was conducted by M. Rose, and which wrote more and more in the interests of the masters. The new venture is entitled, *De Diamantbewerker* (The Diamond Cutter), and will be the official organ of the Dutch Diamond Cutters' Union. E. van Praag, A. Peyra, H. Haye, and H. A. Monfroy will act as joint editors. The first issue appeared last week at Amsterdam.

The annual Conference of the Dutch Socialists has been held at the Hague on the 25th and 26th of last December. Besides mentioning the fact that all the delegates were unanimous in their hopes towards the bright future prospects of Socialism, and that two mass meetings were held after the Congress, *Recht voor Allen* does not say one word about the proceedings. Why?

RUSSIA.

Several telegraphic agencies state that the police of St. Petersburg have got positive proof that a new Nihilist society has been formed, which intends giving up *open terrorism*, and will carry out its objects *secretly*—whatever that means! Several artillery and naval officers have lately been arrested in connection with the new society. The discoveries made by the police are so extensive that the new formation will scarcely be able to develop much activity. (Really they are so extensive?) But this is perhaps more serious; rigorous precautions still continue to be taken all round the Imperial Palace. The Imperial Guard has been confined to barracks for several days past, and all the functionaries ordered to remain at their posts. The illness of the Czar is attributed to poisoning by the Nihilists, and his real state of health, which is very bad, is kept secret for political reasons. What a strange malady he must be suffering from, that "confining soldiers to barracks and surrounding the Palace with guards" should be the remedy for that illness! So strange indeed, that we won't say what we think of it. VICTOR DAVE.

To Help the Paper.—There are several ways in which you can help to spread the *Weal*. Ask your newsagent to try and sell it. Get those who don't care to buy it week by week to subscribe direct. Arrange for the posting of contents bills anywhere you can. Any number of other plans will suggest themselves if you think about it.

Postal Propaganda.—Some who would like to do propaganda but dare not openly, or who cannot spare the time to do it personally, can find many ways in which it can be done quietly. Not the least useful among possible plans would be to order and pay for a number of copies to be sent to persons in whose hands they might do good. We will send six copies to six different addresses for 7d. Write the names and addresses legibly.

THE MEETING OF THE POPES.

POPE LEO, that most holy man,
Was sitting in the Vatican
One afternoon, from callers free,
Sipping his sacerdotal tea;

When, lo! he hears with sudden dread
The name announced of W—ll—m St—d,
That journalistic pope, who's rather
More holy than the Holy Father!

Men say that he was framed from birth
To be God's vicegerent on earth;
And his oracular *Pall Mall*
Has long been proved infallible.

Old Leo felt his doom draw near
When this new lion did appear,
Who to remotest realms afar
Is known as patron of the Czar.

So quickly from his throne he rose,
And waived the point of kissing toes;
And thus the patron of the Czar
Outspoke with voice oracular:

"Friend Leo, though you deem it odd,
I've come to save the Church of God;
Take my advice, and all is well—
I'll puff you in the great *Pall Mall*."

"Across the wide Atlantic foam
Go, found a newer, mightier Rome;
When there your banner is unfurled
You'll rule the federated world."

Pope Leo answered, smiling sly,
And winking with paternal eye,
"Friend W—ll—m, what you hint is true—
This world's too small for me and you."

"But why must I, with age opprest,
Thus journey to the utmost West,
To dwell in some inclement spot,
'Mid prairie-dogs and God knows what?"

"There's this alternative at least,
That you, good friend, should journey East;
Let me advise that you should go,
Pall Mall and all, to Jericho!"

ANON.

CORRESPONDENCE.

FROM THE SICK CHAMBER OF THE OLDEST ENGLISH SOCIALIST.

For ten out of twelve years I have for five months of every winter been confined to my solitary hospital-prison house, musing on the needless sufferings of humanity. At an early hour of the morning of Christmas Day I was mystified by the carolling of two choirs at my door and window. One of them was the "Whiteboys" or choristers of "Holy Innocents," singing of the birth of the Carpenter's Son. They sang sweetly the usual melody. When they finished, I was mystified by another choir, of more natural and harmonised voices, continuing the air but with different words, although I could not make out the burden of their song. The Salvationists seemed to me the cause of the mystery. But wonder and surprise was intensified when the choir burst out in the glorious and thrilling anthem of the revolutionary movement, that arose out of the volunteers of Marsailles singing this song with electric enthusiasm as they marched into Paris, chanting "Ye sons of Freedom, awake to glory! Hark, what myriads bid you rise!" The band of the Blue Bonnets, their tambourines, and the *War Cry* have adapted this fine tune to some doggerel verses. But the distinctness of the words led to the supposition that some other choir was at hand. A severe attack of emphysema of the lungs makes the slightest exposure to cold air dangerous, so I awoke Mrs. Craig, who was selected as a chorister to sing on the anniversary of the Peterloo Massacre. Her rich and musical voice was requisitioned at all Socialist assemblies until 1840. As she reached the window, the choir was singing the last line. On describing the singers, there were no blue bonnets, and the men were not dressed in white overalls. It was not a choir from St. John's. It now revealed itself as a vision, and I exclaimed, It is the choir of the Holy League!

It was a source of gratification that the League had progressed so as to sing the Songs of Labour as a propaganda. I regretted I had not any intimation of the visit so as to improve the occasion; and recommend an increase of young members to open all lectures with chorusses, which sixty years ago had a marvellous charm among the Lancashire lads and lasses of those early Socialistic days of struggle.

There was, however, a touch of social sympathy which reached the heart of the wounded and weary soldier, who, from sheer exhaustion was compelled to retire with his wounds to the rear of the battle and leave the fight of the future to younger and stronger hands. The knowledge that some sympathy is felt for an earnest but disabled social reformer moved the heart-strings of emotion.

28 Dec., 1889.

E. T. CRAIG.

We have received "Fabian's Essays in Socialism," but too late for notice in present number.

THE GREAT LOCK-OUT AT BRISTOL.—This strike still continues, and fifty of the principal factories have now been closed for over a week, some ten thousand hands being idle.

THREATENED STRIKE OF ROAD-CAR MEN.—The directors have broken their agreement, and concluded with the men during the recent dispute. The men are about to send them a deputation, and are determined to strike if they do not receive a satisfactory reply.



OFFICES: 24 GREAT QUEEN STREET, LONDON, W.C.

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!

THE COMMONWEAL is the official organ of the Socialist League; but, unless definitely so announced by the Editors, no article is to be taken as expressing in more than a general way the views of the League as a body. In accordance with the Manifesto and Statement of Principles of the League, the COMMONWEAL is an exponent of International Revolutionary Socialism. On minor differences of opinion the widest freedom of discussion is maintained. As all articles are signed, no special significance attaches to their position in the paper.

Articles and letters dealing with any phase of the social problem are invited and will meet with earnest consideration. They must be written on one side of the paper only, and accompanied by the name and address of the writer, not necessarily for publication. MSS. can only be returned if a stamped directed envelope accompanies them.

Advertisements can only be inserted if unobjectionable in all particulars. Scale of charges and special quotations may be obtained from the Manager.

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Remittances from abroad must be made by International Money Order.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

J. B. (Bristol).—Thanks for contribution, acknowledged elsewhere; also for promise of help.
J. C. (New Cross Road).—We regret to find verses unsuitable for our columns.

CONTENTS.

		PAGE.
News from Nowhere; or, an Epoch of Rest	WILLIAM MORRIS	9
The Argentine Republic and English Radical Reformers ..	JOHN CREAGHE	10
International Notes	VICTOR DAVE	11
The Meeting of the Popes	ANON.	11
Correspondence	11
Notes on News	H. H. SPARLING	12
In France	A. COULON	13
In Chicago	WILLIAM HOLMES	13
Yankee Christmas	13
The Labour Struggle	D. N. and G. S.	14
Literary Notes	S.	14
Executive Announcements, Reports, Lecture Diary, and Notices of Meetings ..		15
Advertisements, New Publications, etc., etc.		16

Periodicals received during the week ending Wednesday January 8.

ENGLAND	Detroit—Der Arme Teufel	PORTUGAL
Church Reformer	San Francisco Arbeiter-Zeitung	Lisbon—O Protesto Operario
Christian Socialist	St. Louis (Mo.)—Die Parole	GERMANY
Railway Review	FRANCE	Berlin—Volks Tribune
Seafaring	Paris—Bourse du Travail	AUSTRIA
Unity	Le Proletariat	Wien—Arbeiter-Zeitung
Worker's Friend	La Revue Europeenne	Brunn—Arbeiterstimme
INDIA	Paris—La Revolte	DENMARK
Bankipore—Behar Herald	Lille—Le Cri du Travailleur	Social-Demokraten
UNITED STATES	Rouen—Le Salarial	Copenhagen—Arbejderen
New York—Freiheit	HOLLAND	SWEDEN
Volkszeitung	Hague—Recht voor Allen	Stockholm, Social-Demokraten
Workmen's Advocate	Middelburg—Licht en Waarheid	WEST INDIES
Boston—Woman's Journal	BELGIUM	Cuba—El Productor
Investigator	Ghent—Vooruit	ARGENTINE REPUBLIC
Chicago—Knights of Labor	Liege—L'Avenir	Buenos Ayres—Vorwarts
Vorbote	Antwerp—De Werker	

DO YOU AGREE?

Do you agree with us that the social awakening of the workers is a desirable end? Do you agree with us that we are working in the right way to achieve that end?

You do not? Then oppose us and prove us wrong on every platform and in every paper to which you can gain access!

You do agree? Then work with us and for us; help us to extend our circle of influence; let no day pass in which you have not interested some one in our propaganda!

There is no middle course for an honest man!

NOTES ON NEWS.

In this editor-driven age, I suppose that the starting of two "important and influential" papers in one week is something to be noted. The *Speaker* is added to the list of weeklies, and the *Daily Graphic* to that of the dailies; but neither of them is likely to interest democratic readers very much. The *Graphic* is frankly reactionary, and goes in for an amount of sloppy loyalty and sickly gush that is rather astonishing at this time of day. Scarcely less reactionary, but far more hypocritical, is the *Speaker*;—and oh, so ponderously respectably dull! Those who have been dilating on the democratic advance of the Liberal party, and its adequacy to the achievement of any required reform, had better not read the *Speaker*, unless they would carry a leaden weight upon their consciences for many a long day.

No! the new sixpenny promises to be a weekly wonder in the way of ditchwater deadliness and respectable un-originality. And that while the penny weeklies are being compelled to creep on continually further and further along the road that leads to Socialism. Does not this point in a sufficiently clear manner to the ever-growing divergence between the two publics—the sixpenny respectable and the penny democratic? Some day, and that not far in the future, the divergence will become so marked as to force itself upon the notice of everyone—the divergence will have become a great rent in the fabric of society as it is, never to be closed again but in society as it is to be.

Some time ago the *Standard* published a long letter from a Mrs. Todd, of New South Wales, bemoaning the woes of Australian mistresses, and appealing to the ladies of England to form themselves into committees to select and despatch suitable servants to the colonies. The *Standard* also improved on Mrs. Todd's bitter cry in a leading article. But the other side of the question is put in an advertisement from a Sydney journal:

"AN AUSTRALIAN SLAVEY.—This is to remind Mr. and Mrs. Todd to advocate the formation of a society in England to undertake the supply of a superior class of masters and mistresses to Australia, as there is already enough atrocious nigger-drivers and good servant-spoilers.—MISS CLARK."

Thus says the *Pall Mall Gazette*:

"It is 'the duty of Conservative clubs,' said Sir Michael Hicks-Beach at Leamington yesterday, to show 'the Socialists and Secularists' that 'in hereditary rank or hereditary legislation there is a kind of necessity for noble thoughts and noble deeds.' It is a very queer 'kind,' we are afraid. Hereditary rank ought to ensure noble deeds, of course: *noblesse oblige*. But does it? Sir Michael Hicks-Beach should be thankful that he was not greeted with cries of 'Cleveland Street.'"

So far, so good! But what of many other kinds of rank to which the *Pall Mall* bows the supple back? The rank, for instance, of Pioneer of Civilisation?—unrewarded by royalty, to the *Pall Mall's* great sorrow, with titles and what-not. The rank, for instance, of Self-appointed Paul Pry and Music-hall Moderator?—treated with scoffing contempt by all but prizes and hypocrites, to the *Pall Mall's* direful anger. Or, again, what of the Administrator of Stolen Millions and Preacher of the Gospel of Wealth?

We Socialists are less likely than even the *Pall Mall* to lie under suspicion of admiring hereditary rank. We go further than the *Pall Mall* is ever likely to go, or than even the *Star* is free to go, in our unbelief in every kind of rank or power, hereditary or acquired, which gives the power of compulsion into the hands of any man. And we deny that any lord or earl, or anything else upon the list of titles, can compare with a Norwood, a Stanley, a Livesey, or a Carnegie, for harmfulness and power for evil. Nor can we see that even the foul offences of which the *Pall Mall* speaks, or those which it made public a few years ago, are anything else than the necessary results of wealth and poverty, privilege and oppression. And it is to be doubted whether any single exploiting capitalist or exploring carpet-bagger has not wrought more real and widespread harm to humanity than even the foulest and most obvious brute may have done.

Here is what Saturday's *Star* had to say on the case of a woman who had starved to death during the week:

She and her daughter had 9s. a week to live on; 3s. 3d. went for rent, leaving 5s. 9d. a week for two civilised beings to feed and clothe themselves withal. One human being failed, and we have the impudence to label her death—which is practically a murder by society—as from 'natural causes.' So they were—immediately natural. If you withhold the means of renewing exhausted tissue from men and women they will die. But anything more 'unnatural' than the state of society under which abundance—nay, surfeit—is poured into one lap while another lap gets nothing at all—could not well be imagined.

In such an unnatural state of society, what is to be looked for but what is always happening, the perpetration of foul crime and the indulgence in filthy and repulsive vice? The dull dreariness of ordinary "respectable" life; the conventional decorum and restraint upon all natural impulse which it imposes; the magnitude of the temptations that follow the command of wealth and power—all these on the one hand. On the other all these but the wealth and what follows it; instead of that the pains and penalties of "respectable poverty." With such a life and death as that of the poor needle-woman to be the "reward of virtue"; with the workhouse and the pauper's grave as the final goal of the vast majority of the working-classes, even if they

obediently and most faithfully carry out the advice and commands of their masters—who can measure the temptations that beset their path?

The weariness of leisured repletion, and the weariness of hungry toil; the unbridled power of wealth, and the miserable helplessness of poverty—when these things come together who can wonder at what ever follows? The hired ruffians of the ring, and their no less degraded employers; the minotaur and his victim; and every other kind of monster and malefactor, with those who suffer by them, are the natural and necessary outcome of the reign of the capitalist, of the power of the money-bag.

Until monopoly in the means of life be destroyed these things must go on; it is but lopping small branches and fiddling with results to attack any of the crimes and horrors of civilisation without striking at the root—and there is no axe that can reach that root but the Social Revolution. S.

IN FRANCE.

It is something worth remembering to assist at a "Punch" offered to those Socialist Deputies who have been elected as such, without compromise with bourgeois parties. It is most enthusiastic! From these conferences are excluded: First, the two Possibilist Deputies, Joffrin and Dumay, who have made a compromise with the Opportunists in power; second, the two *ci-devant* Blanquists, Granger and Roche, who have bribed Boulanger's electors; and lastly, the "Christian" Socialist, De Mun.

This last-named rogue preaches humility on the part of the workers, and the supremacy of property. He preaches that our physical misery and discomfort is most healthful for our spiritual life hereafter; and all the rest of that stinking rubbish that suits old maids so well.

At the conferences which I attended, there were present Baudin, Boyer, Chassaing, Cluseret, Ferroul, Hovelacque, Lachize, Millerant, and Thivrier, Deputies. These Deputies form the Socialist vanguard in France. They, for the first time in the annals of French Socialism, have formed a distinct Socialist party in the House of Commons.

This does not mean, however, that they are the leaders of the great revolutionary party; in all the meetings the first name which is called out as that of chairman is Vaillant, town councillor; the second name is always that of Jules Guesde; Chauvière and Daumas come after. At one meeting, the hall was so crowded that it was impossible to count the difference in the number of hands lifted for Vaillant and Guesde respectively; so they took the chair or chairs, jointly!

Let us remember, in passing, that when, at the last election for the Presidency of the Republic, Ferry scored the highest vote on first trial, on that same day General Eudes, now dead, Vaillant, and Chauvière were at the Hotel-de-Ville watching the ballot. A hundred thousand revolutionaries had received the *mot d'ordre* to come down at once in case Ferry were elected. The barracks were surrounded and preparations made; on hearing which, the congress meeting at Versailles, in the twinkling of an eye, cast their vote for Carnot. The capitalists got frightened, and Ferry was sacrificed!

Most of these Deputies represent country towns; they are not broken in to politics; their rhetoric is without flourish, simple and honest; they speak from the heart, as working-men do. One among them, Lachize, was working as a weaver until a few months ago, and then left his loom for a strike, when his fellows were so pleased with his conduct that they sent him to parliament. Baudin is a jolly good fellow, who spent eight years in England, and speaks English like a native. He was lucky enough to make his escape after the Commune, and to save his head on English soil while 35,000 of his brethren were butchered by Boulanger and his sacrifiants. Cluseret, the Minister for War during the Commune, a soldier-like old fellow, looks none the worse for having twice been sentenced to death. Thivrier is a sturdy countryman, who makes one laugh when he says candidly that he has pledged his honour to his electors always to wear his blue blouse in the House, exactly as he did when in their midst. He is honesty itself, and quite the most beloved of any of them: blistered hands like to shake hands with such a man.

These men can do little or nothing in Parliament itself; they know that very well; but they can do a tremendous lot of good in the country by means of their free railway ticket. At twenty-four hours' notice they go to any part of the country to speak or preside over meetings, and try to arouse the indifferent, who would rather let their wives and children die in a ditch or poor-house than take the wealth they have produced wherever they can lay their hands upon it. The pay of a Deputy and his free railway pass are taken by many a bourgeois to further schemes against the workers; why shouldn't the same weapons be turned against them? And these men whom I have mentioned do this with absolute honesty and to great effect.

In spite of the intense cold on Friday, a great crowd of revolutionaries met on the heights of Pere Lachaise to pay a tribute of respect to the cherished memory of Blanqui. Long before two o'clock, which was the time appointed, men, women, and children were seen coming from all parts of the cemetery, some towards the grave of General Eudes, others towards that of Blanqui, which is not more than ten yards away. All were engaged in animated conversation; most of them having seen active service during the Commune. I heard a sturdy young fellow of about eighteen, say, laying his hand on General Eudes' tomb, "I swear here, on this our great friend's tomb, that if the tyrants of my country want me to become a soldier, I will accept their gun, not to protect them, but to destroy them!" Everyone present was carried away with his splendid enthusiasm, and rushed to shake hands with him.

Soon we saw Vaillant, then Chauvière, and everyone moved along towards Blanqui's grave. A letter was read from Blanqui's sister, saying that sickness prevented her from being there. After stirring speeches from Vaillant, Chauvière, Deputy Baudin, Féline, and Landrin, we all went to the *Mur des fédérés*—that wall against which so many thousands of proletarians paid with their lives their fidelity to our cause. Upon that sacred ground no capitalist dares to set his cursed foot. On that same ground no proletarian can tread without feeling inflamed with hatred and resolve, and being ready to sacrifice his life in a renewed attempt at revolution. The *Mur des fédérés* is for the proletaire a holy place, a place where inspiration and hope are to be sought. The moral strength such a visit gives is not to be described. We left a little after 3 o'clock, to refresh ourselves and to carry on a lively conversation about the next Commune, and how that all of us would be there and do our duty, not leaving one stone unturned till victory is ours, and ours for ever!

Paris, Jan. 5, 1890.

A. COULON.

IN CHICAGO.

THE readers of the *Commonweal* have undoubtedly heard of the murder of Dr. Cronin, the Irish Nationalist, who was beaten to death in this city on the 4th of May last. The trial of the murderers, which has been in progress for three months and is just completed, has had more than a passing interest for us Radicals, many of us hoping that disclosures of great value would be made, and a way opened for us to present the Anarchist case to the people in a new light. Our interest in this case arose from the fact that one of the murderers of Dr. Cronin, a city detective named Coughlin, was chief assistant to the notorious police-captain Schaack, who boasted that he had done more than any other man to secure the conviction of our martyrs during their infamous trial; and also because this same Captain Schaack, for seeking to hide the villainy of the fellow Coughlin, has again been dismissed from the police force, this time permanently. Schaack was in command of the district where the murder was committed, and although ordered to investigate the conduct of his man Coughlin, pretended that the fellow was above suspicion, and for this act of insubordination was dismissed from the service. The fellow Coughlin is no doubt in possession of secrets concerning the villainy of his chief, especially in connection with the conviction of our eight men, which have much to do with the solicitous feeling of the latter toward the murderer, and it was the hope that in some way these secrets might be made public which caused us to take such a deep interest in the proceedings.

The jury, after deliberating seventy hours, returned a verdict of guilty against four of the accused, fixed the punishment of three of them at life imprisonment, and one at three years in the penitentiary. This was a surprise to everybody, as the general belief was that death would be meted out to the assassins. Many people are also comparing this verdict with that against the Anarchists, and mention the significant fact that in *that* case the jury was only cut about one hour.

The mills of the gods are at work, and retribution stares the black-hearted assassins of our comrades in the face. Schaack and Bonfield have been dismissed in disgrace, though still free; Grinnell, the arch fiend of them all, is apparently at the very pinnacle of popular favour and power, but the evidence is slowly accumulating which will show him to the world in his true light. Gary also, the modern Jeffries, and others who perjured their souls on that occasion—their time will surely come. Our opportunity will be their downfall.

A significant meeting was recently held in one of the largest halls in this city. More than 3,000 people—largely conservative in opinion—assembled to protest against the interference by detectives in a Socialist meeting. The meeting was called under the auspices of the Personal Rights League, a powerful young organisation having for its object the securing to every member of the community his individual *lawful* rights. The president of the League presided at the meeting. The vice-president of the meeting was one of our best known Radical German Socialists. Two of the speakers were well-known Socialists, and others were prominent business and professional men. The Radical sentiments of the speakers were received with enthusiasm, and loud applause greeted the stinging rebukes meted out to the police authorities. Two of the Socialists at the meeting had been very roughly handled by the detectives, and the recital of their wrongs caused intense feeling. As the particulars of the dastardly outrage were recited by the speakers, I watched the press reporters; not a pencil stirred, not a line was written, and the next morning one of the papers referred to the meeting in a general way as a criticism of *police* administration, but not one of them referred to the specific object of the meeting, or narrated a word of the outrage committed upon unoffending citizens.

Surely the several incidents connected with this great public gathering ought to prove to the law-fearing people who were in attendance that the press, the church, and the state are leagued together to stifle every manifestation of growing discontent. Not the least significant feature of this affair is the fact that the Personal Rights League are prosecuting, in the courts, the detectives who were guilty of the outrage. Surely our day is near at hand when we can find able and willing champions among the bourgeoisie.

WM. HOLMES.

Chicago, Ills.

'Repairing the Idols,' by Col. Ingersoll, is the substance of an interview by the reporter of an American journal as to the colonel's views upon 'Robert Elmsmere,' which has been reprinted here as a penny pamphlet. It is well worth close reading by everybody, Socialists as well as others; for though "Pagan Bob" does not quite see eye to eye with us, he is a radical thinker and brave speaker. (Progressive Publishing Co., or this office.)

'Anarchy,' by C. L. James (author, Eau Claire, Wis., U.S.A., 25 c.), is one of the best and most interesting statements of the Anarchist position that I can remember reading. It has commanded a wide sale in America, and but for the prohibitive price, would do the same here. Like all books and pamphlets published in the States, the price is so high when compared with that of similar articles of home production, that would-be buyers here are frightened off.

YANKEE CHRISTMAS.—The following is a list of the prices paid in Boston on Christmas Eve for the materials for next day's dinners. It will afford a pretty fair basis for a calculation of the comparative purchasing power of wages there and here:—*Fruit and Vegetables*.—Lettuce, 5 to 10 cents; celery, 15 to 25 cents a bunch; radishes, 10 cents a bunch; fresh mushrooms, 1 dol. 25 cents a pound; Bermuda potatoes, 1 dol. 50 cents a peck; spinach, 25 cents a peck; watercress, 5 cents a bunch; string beans, 25 cents a quart; cauliflower, 15 to 35 cents each; egg plant, 30 to 65 cents each; green peas, 25 cents a quart; cranberries, 10 to 15 cents a quart; persimmons, 1 dol. a dozen; Jamaica oranges, 25 cents a dozen; Havana oranges, 30 cents a dozen; Mandarin oranges, 40 cents a dozen; Florida oranges, 30 to 50 cents a dozen; bananas, 30 cents a dozen; Malaga grapes, 20 to 30 cents a pound; and Lisbon grapes, 1 dol. a pound. *Meat*.—Leg of lamb, 20 cents a pound; lamb chops, 25 cents a pound; leg of mutton, 17 cents a pound; extra sirloin roast, 25 cents a pound; sirloin steak, 25 cents a pound; ox tails, 20 cents each; and double sweetbreads, 50 cents. *Poultry*.—Green ducks, 25 cents a pound; green geese, 25 cents a pound; chickens, 25 cents a pound; turkeys, 17 to 25 cents a pound; squab, 35 cents a pound; canvas-back ducks, 7 dols. a pair; black ducks, 1 dol. 75 cents a pair; mallard ducks, 1 dol. 50 cents a pair; and teal ducks, 1 dol. 25 cents a pair. *Evergreens*.—Princess pine festooning, 4 and 5 cents a yard; evergreen festooning, 3 and 4 cents a yard; laurel festooning, 6 and 12½ cents a yard; laurel wreaths, 25 to 40 cents each; princess pine wreaths, 10 to 20 cents each; fancy wreaths, 15 to 50 cents each; and crosses, anchors, etc., 25 cents to 1 dol. each.

THE LABOUR STRUGGLE.

The Gas-stokers' Strike.

Henry Weir was committed for trial on Thursday at Bow Steet on the evidence of the voracious policemen and the reporter of a Tory paper. Thomas MacCarthy, the chairman at the platform where Weir spoke, states that Weir said that "if Mr. Livesey was in Brazil he would have been got rid of, and the man who did it would have been looked upon as a hero." This certainly seems the most probable account we have yet heard. It is certainly rather funny that the Government should go in for all the parade of an Old Bailey prosecution because a man endeavoured to explain to the audience what he believed to be the manners and customs of the Brazilians. According to McCarthy, Weir stated that he had introduced these observations upon the "tricks and manners" of the people of that far distant country as a kind of padding in his speech, or as he himself expressed it, as "something to fill up." Under these circumstances, the Government prosecution is simply ridiculous.

Probably, however, even the members of a Tory Government would not have made such fools of themselves if it had not been for the advice and encouragement of the *Star*. That paper shrieked itself virtuously hoarse over Weir's speech. It was "horrible," "wicked," he ought to be kicked out of his trade society, etc. Still one fails to see that if even Weir had recommended the removal of Mr. Livesey, whether his advice would have had such serious effects among phlegmatic Englishmen as, say, a recommendation to "shun a man like a leper" among excitable Irishmen. As the latter advice has frequently been given by friends of Mr. T. P. O'Connor, and "over-zealous" persons have not alone been contented with shunning the denounced person as a leper, but have occasionally shot him like a dog, one fails to see where the *Star's* virtuous indignation concerning Weir's speech comes in. It seems that some people want to make up for occasional lapses into unconstitutionality in Ireland by an extra assumption of Pecksniffian respectability in England. In this, however, they only succeed in arousing general laughter at their contemptible hypocrisy. But there is something even worse than this, and that is a "democratic" newspaper acting as jackal to the Public Prosecutor. That is just what the *Star* has done, whether willingly or unwillingly.

The strike seems to have taken a turn favourable to the men. Although it has now reached its fourth week, Mr. Livesey is as far off victory as ever. The coal boycott is beginning to take effect; two vessels bringing coal for the works have been totally abandoned by their crews, while others have been partially abandoned, the men being drawn off by the pickets of the Seamen's and Firemen's Union, despite the efforts of the Thames police to hinder them in their work. The blacklegs are also finding that their position is not too comfortable. At the beginning of the strike, Mr. Livesey paid them £1 weekly in addition to their usual wages, but on Friday Jan. 3 this was stopped, and the blacklegs were ordered to get lodgings outside. They found this to be impossible, as owing to bills issued by the Strike Committee, they were refused admittance by every lodging-house keeper, even the common lodging-houses refusing to take them in. So they were forced to go back to their piggery inside the works. As five of the blacklegs are in Guy's Hospital with Russian influenza, it is possible that Livesey was afraid of an epidemic breaking out in his crowded dens. Indeed, this is pretty certain to happen soon, as the blacklegs are living under frightfully insanitary conditions. They still work twelve hours a-day; in fact, according to Mr. Livesey, at one of the works they have "unanimously elected" to continue the system. But the loss of their extra money has made them rather mutinous, fifty men leaving Rotherhithe on Saturday. At East Greenwich also they refused to go on with their work, and with difficulty were persuaded to take up their tools again. There are still continuous complaints on the part of the public as to the bad supply of gas; even the *Echo*, which is on the side of Livesey, admits that in South London, thanks to the blacklegs, gas-stoves won't work, streets and railway stations are left in semi-darkness, and tradesmen are forced to buy paraffin lamps. So, unfortunately for Livesey, facts give the lie to his repeated declarations that "the supply of gas is satisfactory, and the work of manufacturing proceeds without a hitch." For a pious person, Mr. Livesey shows a remarkable capacity for telling lies.

An agent of the company has been visiting Yarmouth after scabs, but several local comrades watched his movements all the day and managed to hamper him considerably. In the morning he took down forty or fifty names, and promised to meet the scabs again at 4.30 p.m. on the Hall Plain. This is the place where several of our comrades suffered imprisonment for meeting, and have not since been allowed to meet there; only very recently they were moved by the police whilst holding a meeting there. However, directly this scab-monger appeared on the ground, the police, instead of moving him on, protected him, and allowed him to stand in the middle of the road (a main thoroughfare) under a large lamp-post for over twenty minutes with a crowd of 600 or 700 people round him. The scabs left Yarmouth at 8.15 a.m. on Tuesday morning, but shorn of their fair proportions, for a lot had disappeared in the night. They were given a warm farewell groan by our comrades and others who had assembled at the station to see them off.

Firewood Cutters.

On Monday, December 29th, five thousand firewood cutters struck work in London. They demanded an advance of 2½ per cent., which was three-pence an hundred bundles more on their wages. In a very few days most of the masters yielded, and nearly all the men have obtained the advance.

Strike of Irish Railway Men.

Since the strike of the porters of Cork, which resulted in a victory for the men, there has been considerable ferment amongst all the workers employed upon the railways in Ireland. In consequence of this agitation, a strike of guards, porters, and signalmen broke out on Friday at noon, on the Dublin, Wicklow, and Wexford Railway. It did not last long, for at seven on Friday night the directors gave in, and the men gained an advance of wages.

Shop Assistants, Warehousemen, and Porter's Union.

We have received the manifesto of this union which is an attempt to unite of all sections of workers employed in all stores of the Whiteley pattern. This is an effort which we should like to be successful, although the obstacles are great. The worst being that excessive snobbery, which

often even flourishes among aristocratic trade unionists, has unfortunately, a far greater hold upon the ordinary shop assistant. It is precisely this snobbery which had made the shop assistants cause such a hopeless one. The objects of the above-named union are to obtain less hours of labour, proper meal times, better wages, to prevent sweating, and to organise action at Municipal and Parliamentary election in the interests of labour. Speaking of the wages and conditions of labour of these oppressed workers, the manifesto says:—"The correspondence that has reached us from all parts of London, confirms the existence of a hideous mass of real grievances. *Wages* As low for porters as 14s. a week, and ranging for all these classes from 18s. to 24s. a week. *Hours*—from seventy-six to ninety-six, pulling down these wages—less fines—to 4½d., or even 2½d. per hour. *The effect of the cruel conditions*, especially upon young women, and in regard to future generations deleterious to the highest degree, as acknowledged unanimously by medical science. *Legal protection is only provided up to the age of 18, but it is never enforced.* We must therefore procure ourselves the necessities of healthy enjoyment and rational living." The clause about legal protection might teach those who clamour for eight hours' legislation, how very valuable are any measures of that kind. We think also it might teach the trade union to drop their clause concerning Parliamentary and Municipal action. All communications regarding membership are to be addressed to George Edwards, Secretary of the Union, at Lockhart's Coffee Rooms, 35, Aldersgate Street, City, E.C. The committee which is fairly representative of all sections of the workers, meets on Wednesdays from 8 to 11 p.m. for the enrolment of members and other business. N.

The Surrey Labourers and Allotments Association.

Since the union of labourers has been started, we have received several applications from the Allotments Association to take up their cause. Now our comrade Kitz proposed this some time ago, but he being engaged in London had not the time to do it, so it has fallen on the local branch to do the work, which we hope will end in lowering the colours of the local authority. Now the programme of the association takes up the Allotments Acts passed in 1887, which empowers the local authority to provide land at prices suitable for cultivation. But so far they have entirely ignored the wants of the people. They have purchased land from some local freeholder, giving him £280 profit over that which he gave himself for the said land, and also two acres to hold as his own freehold in remembrance of the purchase. Now the association demand land at agricultural value, viz., 6d. per rod or under, but the local authority want for their purchase 10d. per rod with land tax and title for the parson. Now they also call on the Local Government Board to give power to take the Consolidated Act of 1845, whereby they can utilise common land for the purpose of agriculture. I will report progress later on as things develop, but I may say that the work of the League has not been in vain, for it is now bearing good fruit. We have a great live M.P. coming amongst us on Wednesday evening, this being his first address to the electors since his election, and some critical questions will be put for him to answer, let us hope he will be equal to the occasion. S. G.

LITERARY NOTES.

Mark Twain, in his description of the adventures of his imaginary Yankee visitor to King Arthur's court, has produced a striking and powerful satire upon things as they are. He goes about with the Knight. One day they come upon a group of poor, ragged creatures mending the thing they called a road:

"By a sarcasm of law and phrase they were freemen. Seven-tenths of the free population of the country were of just their class and degree—small, 'independent' farmers, artisans, etc.—which is to say, they were the nation, the actual nation; they were about all of it that was useful, or worth saving, or really respect-worthy, and to subtract them would have been to subtract the nation and leave behind some dregs, some refuse in the shape of a king, nobility, and gentry—idle, unproductive, acquainted mainly with the arts of wasting and destroying, and of no sort of use or value in any rationally constructed world. And yet, by ingenious contrivance, this gilded minority, instead of being in the tail of the procession, where it belonged, was marching head up, with banners flying, at the other end of it; had elected itself to be the nation, and these innumerable clams had permitted it so long that they had come at last to accept it as a truth, and not only that, but to believe it right and as it should be."

Such paragraphs are plentiful; nor is any opportunity missed of marking their application to present circumstances.

Many of the woodcuts in the book also embody instructive allegories; as, for instance, in a cut of Justice, with her scales, one containing the heavy hammer of Labour and the other the baubles of Aristocracy, but the latter made to outweigh the former by means of the string of Self-interest artfully attached to the toe of Law, who stands by. Another, in a similar vein, shows the Justice of the nineteenth century and Justice of the sixth century standing opposite each other, and simultaneously remarking, "Sister, your blind is disarranged," for, with the same manner of string attached to the toe of each, Money is made to outweigh Labour by the former, just as titles are made heavier in the balance by the latter. One little cut shows "Decorations of Sixth Century Aristocracy" as "Rewards for all Babes Born Under Specified Conditions," such as "Slave Driver," "Robber of Unarmed Savages," "Robber of Orphans," "Absorber of Taxes," "Murderer of Rivals," etc., the whole supported by "*Honi soit qui mal y pense!*" Another illustrates the remark of the King concerning a peasant—"Brother! to dirt like this?"—by depicting the three phases of oppression of man by man, first by violence under the sword of royal power, then by the book of "law," making man subject to the slave-driver's lash, and last, the the subjection of the working-man to the millions of the monopolist. A strong and spirited picture of an arrogant slave-driver shows in its face the unmistakable portrait of a notorious American billionaire and stock-gambler.

It is instructive to notice that a good many paragraphs have been cut out, and more been weakened, by the English publisher.

The first number of the *Phonetic Journal* (Isaac Pitman's weekly shorthand journal) for this year is particularly interesting. In addition to the usual five large pages of shorthand, with key, it contains an amusing article from the pen of the well-known phonographer, Mr. T. A. Reed, on "How to save 6,000 years" by means of shorthand, and a chapter on the "Early Days of the Newspaper Press," forming the first of a series of articles on the "Newspaper World." Mr. Pitman, in his "Annual Address," records a most remarkable extension of his system of shorthand during the past twelve months, and promises an enlargement of his journal next year, when it will enter on its 50th volume. S.

THE SOCIALIST LEAGUE.

OFFICES: 24, GREAT QUEEN ST., LINCOLN'S INN FIELDS, W.C.

The Offices of the Socialist League will be open for the sale of *Commonweal* and all other Socialist publications from 8.30 a.m. to 9 p.m. every day except Sunday. The Secretary will be in attendance from 10 a.m. to 9 p.m. daily.

Central Reading Room.—The Hall at 24, Great Queen Street, will be open to all Members of the League every evening from 7.30 to 10 p.m. Members must show their cards to the steward.

Branch Subscriptions Paid.—1888:—Oxford, to end of September. 1889:—Bradford and Hammersmith, to end of April. Norwich, Glasgow, and Yarmouth, to end of May. Manchester, to end of September. Clerkenwell and East London, to end of October. North London, Mitcham, and Leicester, to end of November. St. Georges East, to end of December. 1890:—North Kensington, to end of January.

Propaganda Committee.—The Propaganda Committee meets on Tuesday, Jan. 14, at 8.30 p.m. Special meeting; important business; all members of the League interested in the propaganda invited to attend.

Notice.—All letters on League business, except those intended for Editors of *Commonweal*, to be addressed to me. No other person is authorised to sign any official communication. FRANK KITZ, Secretary.

"COMMONWEAL" GUARANTEE FUND.

The following further sums have been received towards this fund:—Webb, 1s.; J. R., 2s.; H. R., 1s.; H. Rogers, 1s. 6d.; F. C. S. S., 1s.; and C. Saunders, 1s.

REPORTS.

MITCHAM.—Gregory lectured Sunday evening for the association on "The Future Programme"; room crowded to excess and great sympathy shown. Comrade Kitz paid us a visit and took part in the discussion. Things are beginning to show that the work of the Socialist League members has not been thrown away.—S. G.

NORTH KENSINGTON.—No meeting at Latimer Road on Sunday morning owing to wet. At room in evening, R. Catterson-Smith gave an excellent lecture on "Individual Liberty"; good discussion followed and collected 1s. 7½d.

ABERDEEN.—The Christmas and New Year holidays have rather interfered with the holding of meetings, but Leatham has opened a correspondence in the local Radical weekly, which promises to turn out well. By the time this appears meetings will have been resumed with increased ardour.—L.

GLASGOW.—On Hogmanay night we held our annual social meeting to bring in the New Year. Between fifty and sixty were present, including ladies. After the tea, the evening was devoted to songs, readings, and dancing. At 12 o'clock comrade Leo Melliet delivered a short and stirring address, and the new year was inaugurated with three ringing cheers for the Social Revolution. "La Carmagnole" was then sung by Melliet, and danced by the whole company. "Das Proletariat" was sung by our German comrade Derwald, and dancing and song thereafter continued till 3 o'clock in the morning. The songs sung during the night were almost entirely Socialist ones, including "The March of the Workers," "No Master," "Ye Poor of Wealthy England," "Annie Laurie," and "When the Revolution Comes"; Miss Hendry, Dan. McCulloch, Arch. McKechnie, J. Gilbert, and Jas. Thomson being our chief vocalists, while Joe Burgoyne and Shaw Maxwell gave the readings. In every way the meeting was a most pleasant and successful one.—On Sunday evening at 5.30 we held our first open-air meeting for the year, at Paisley Road Toll, where Glasier spoke to a very attentive audience of about 200.

LEEDS.—On Sunday morning at Vicar's Croft a good meeting was held, when Rogers spoke to an attentive audience; Devily opposed; 'Wools' sold out and small collection made for local propaganda. In the Socialist League Club in the evening, T. Paylor lectured on "Socialism and the New Labour Movement" to a crowded room; had a good discussion after and literature went well.

LEICESTER.—On Jan 3, we had a social evening, about 50 comrades and friends sat down to a tea in the Spiritualist Hall. After tea an agreeable entertainment was provided. We anticipated "the day after the Revolution" by one and all thoroughly enjoying ourselves. Barclay, in especial was, to use a pre-resolutely phrase "all over the shop." Great credit is due (bearing no interest of course) to Comrade Chambers, who did most of the catering.

MANCHESTER.—Being favoured with a fine day, we held a good meeting in Stevenson Square on Sunday afternoon, Stockton, Bailie, and Bullock (of Hammersmith) speakers; 2s. 2d. collected for local propaganda.

YARMOUTH.—Next Tuesday night is our anniversary; the yearly report will be given, and secretary and treasurer elected for the next year. We intend trying to start a branch or sub-branch in Goleston, the first business meeting will be held at comrade Brightwell's, Pier Place, on Monday next.—J. H.

NOTTINGHAM SOCIALIST CLUB.—On Sunday morning Councillor Sanders of Walsall, addressed a large meeting in Sneinton Market on "Municipal Socialism." Peacock presided; 4s. 6d. collected. In the evening Sanders lectured in the Socialist Hall, Woodland Place, on "Trades' Unionism from a Socialist Standpoint," Proctor in the chair. A collection realised 6s. and the lecture was much appreciated. Next Sunday night, at 8.30 p.m., quarterly meeting at Socialist Hall.

EDINBURGH (SCOTTISH SOCIALIST FEDERATION).—Comrade J. Tate lectured on Sunday, in the Moulders' Hall to a good audience, his subject being "The People who have no Rights." A very interesting discussion followed, in which comrades Smith, Davidson, Hamilton, and others took part.

CHELSEA S.D.F., Co-operative Lecture Hall, 312 Kings Road, Chelsea.—Sunday January 12, at 8 p.m., Frank Podmore, "Robert Owen."
MANHOOD SUFFRAGE LEAGUE, "Three Doves," Berwick St., Oxford St., W.—Sunday January 12, at 8.45 p.m., Charles Murray, "The Gospel of Discontent."

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LECTURE DIARY.

LONDON.

Battersea.—All communications to E. Buteux, 20 Abercrombie Street, Battersea Park Road.

Clerkenwell.—Sidney Presberg, Secretary.

East London.—Crown Coffee Tavern, 2 Columbia Road, Hackney Road.

Hammersmith.—Kelmescott House, Upper Mall, W. Sunday Jan. 12, at 8 p.m., Sydney Olivier, "Approaches to Communism." French Class, Friday, at 8.

Merton.—3 Clare Villas, Merton Road.

Mitcham.—"Lord Napier," Fair Green. Meets every Sunday at 12.30, to enroll members, etc.

North Kensington.—Clarendon Coffee Palace, Clarendon Road. Meets every Wednesday at 8 p.m. On Sunday evening, Jan. 12, a lecture.

North London.—6 Windmill Street, Tottenham Court Road. Meets every Wednesday evening at 8 o'clock.

Southwark.—Secretary, George Evans, 56 Lucy Road, Bermondsey, S.E. Hill's Coffee Tavern, Great Charlotte Street, Blackfriars Road, S.E.

Streatham.—Meets every Thursday at the "Leigham Arms," Wellfield Road, at 8.30 p.m.

West Central.—Socialist League Hall, 24 Great Queen Street, Holborn, W.C. On Sunday January 12, C. W. Mowbray, "Reform or Revolution."

Whitechapel and St. Georges in the East.—Branch meetings at International Club, 40 Berner Street, Commercial Road. J. Turner, organising secretary.

PROVINCES.

Aberdeen.—Organiser, J. Leatham, 7 Jamaica Street. Branch meets in Odd-fellows' Small Hall, Crooked Lane, on Monday evenings at 8. Singing practice at 46 Marischal Street on Thursdays at 8 p.m.

Bradford.—Laycock's Temperance Hotel, Albion Court, Kirkgate. Meets every Tuesday at 7.30.

Dundee.—Address to W. Cameron, 17 Laurence Street, Dundee.

Glasgow.—Ram's Horn Hall, 122 Ingram Street. Branch meets on Thursday evenings at 8 o'clock and Sundays at 7 o'clock.

Halifax.—Socialists meet every Sunday at 6.30 p.m. at Helliwell's Temperance Hotel, Northgate.

Leeds.—Clarendon Buildings, Victoria Road, School Close. Open every evening. Business meeting Saturdays at 8 p.m. Sunday January 12, at 7.30, lecture, T. Maguire, "John Morley and the Liberal Programme."

Leicester.—Exchange Buildings, Rutland Street. Branch meets on Monday and Thursday, at 8 p.m.

Manchester.—Branch meets temporarily at the Secretary's, 52 Miller Street, on Tuesdays at 8 p.m.

Norwich.—Sunday, at 8, Gordon Hall. Tuesday, at 8.30, Members' meeting. Thursday, at 8, Discussion Class. Saturday, Social Meeting. Hall open every evening from 8 p.m.

Oxford.—Temperance Hall, 25½ Pembroke Street. First Friday in every month, at 8.30 p.m.

Walsall.—Socialist Club, 18 Goodall Street, Walsall. Meetings every night.

Yarmouth.—Branch meets at comrade Headley's, near Co-operative Stores, every Tuesday evening. Elocution Class Friday at 8 p.m. On Sunday afternoons during winter a Discussion Class will be held at 3 o'clock.

All persons who sympathise with the views of the Socialist League are earnestly invited to communicate with the above addresses, and if possible to help us in preparing for the birth of a true society, based on equality, brotherhood, and freedom for all.

OPEN-AIR PROPAGANDA.

SATURDAY 11.

8.30..... Mile-end WasteCores and Presburg

SUNDAY 12.

11 Latimer Road StationDavis, Dean, and Crouch
11.30..... Kilburn—"Old Plough," Kilburn LaneMainwaring
11.30..... Commercial Road—Union StreetCores
11.30..... Mitcham—Fair GreenThe Branch
11.30..... Regent's ParkCantwell and Nicoll
11.30..... Southwark—Flat Iron SquareThe Branch
3.30..... Hyde Park—Marble ArchCantwell and Mowbray
3.30..... Victoria ParkThe Branch
7 Weltje Road, Ravenscourt ParkHammersmith Branch
7.30..... Walham Green—back of ChurchHammersmith Branch

TUESDAY 14.

8 Walham Green—back of ChurchHammersmith Branch

THURSDAY 16.

8.15..... Hoxton ChurchThe Branch

PROVINCES.

Glasgow.—Sunday: Jail Square at 2 o'clock; Paisley Road at 5 o'clock. Tuesday: Cathedral Square, at 8 p.m.

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

Manchester.—Sunday: Philips Park Gates, at 11; Stevenson Square, at 3.

Norwich.—Sunday: St. Faiths, at 11; Market Place, at 3.

Sheffield.—Sunday: Monolith, Fargate, at 11 a.m.; Gower Street, at 3 p.m.; Pump, Westbar, 8 p.m.

Yarmouth.—Sunday: Priory Plain, at 11; Colman's Granary Quay, at 7.

WEST KENSINGTON PARK RADICAL CLUB, 80 Faroe Road, West Kensington.—Sunday January 12, at 8 p.m., R. E. Dell, "How to Get what we Want."

EDINBURGH—SCOTTISH SOCIALIST FEDERATION.—In Moulders' Hall, High St., on Sunday January 12, at 6.30, Comrade Hamilton, "The Spirit of the Age."

LIVERPOOL SOCIALIST SOCIETY.—Delegates and friends from societies in Lancashire and adjoining counties are invited to meet the members of the above Society on Saturday January 11th, 1890, at 1 Stanley Street, Dale Street. At 4 p.m. a conference will be held on the desirability of united action; and at 7.30 p.m. a Social Gathering, when a programme consisting of vocal and instrumental music, etc., will be gone through. Any assistance in this will be cordially accepted from delegates. On Sunday January 12th, a public meeting will take place. Secretary, E. C. Chapman, 1 Stanley Street, Dale Street.

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TWENTIETH CENTURY.

HUGH O. PENTECOST, EDITOR.
T. L. M'CREADY, ASSOCIATE EDITOR.

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Motto: "Hear the other side."

THIS Journal advocates Personal Sovereignty in place of State Sovereignty, Voluntary Co-operation as opposed to Compulsory Co-operation, the Liberation of the human mind from Superstition, and the application of the principles of Ethics toward Social Regeneration.

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Some Contributors.

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STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLES.

THE Socialist League advocates International Revolutionary Socialism. That is to say the destruction of the present class society, which consists of one class who live by owning property and therefore *need not work*, and of another that has no property and therefore *must work* in order that they may live to keep the idlers by their labour. Revolutionary Socialism insists that this system of society, which is the modern form of slavery, should be changed to a system of Society which would give every man an opportunity of doing useful work, and not allow any man to live without so doing, which work could not be useful unless it were done for the whole body of workers instead of for do-nothing individuals. The result of this would be that livelihood would not be precarious nor labour burdensome. Labour would be employed in co-operation, and the struggle of man with man for bare subsistence would be supplanted by harmonious combination for the production of common wealth and the exchange of mutual services without the waste of labour or material.

Every man's needs would be satisfied from this common stock, but no man would be allowed to own anything which he could not *use*, and which consequently he must *abuse* by employing it as an instrument for forcing others to labour for him unpaid. Thus the land, the capital, machinery, and means of transit would cease to be private property, since they can only be *used* by the combination of labour to produce wealth.

Thus men would be *free* because they would no longer be dependent on idle property-owners for subsistence; thus they would be *brothers*, for the cause of strife, the struggle for subsistence at other people's expense, would have come to an end. Thus they would be *equal*, for if all men were doing useful work no man's labour could be dispensed with. Thus the motto of Liberty, Fraternity, and Equality, which is but an empty boast in a society that upholds the monopoly of the means of production, would at last be realised.

This Revolutionary Socialism must be International. The change which would put an end to the struggle between man and man, would destroy it also between nation and nation. One harmonious system of federation throughout the whole of civilisation would take the place of the old destructive rivalries. There would be no great centres breeding race hatred and commercial jealousy, but people would manage their own affairs in communities not too large to prevent all citizens from taking a part in the administration necessary for the conduct of life, so that party politics would come to an end.

Thus, while we abide by the old motto:

Liberty, Fraternity, Equality,

we say that the existence of private property destroys Equality, and therefore under it there can be neither Liberty nor Fraternity.

We add to the first motto then this other one—

**FROM EACH ACCORDING TO HIS
CAPACITY, TO EACH ACCORDING
TO HIS NEEDS.**

When this is realised there will be a genuine Society; until it is realised, Society is nothing but a band of robbers. We must add that this change can only be brought about by combination amongst the workers themselves, and must embrace the whole of Society. The new life cannot be *given* to the workers by a class higher than they, but must be *taken* by them by means of the abolition of classes and the reorganisation of Society.

COUNCIL OF THE SOCIALIST LEAGUE.

NOTICE.

Subscribers who find a **red** mark against this notice are thereby reminded that their subscriptions have expired and must be renewed immediately if they wish to continue to receive *Commonweal*.

Printed in the Socialist League Printery, and published in the name and on behalf of the Socialist League by FRANK KITZ at 24 Great Queen St., Lincoln's Inn Fields, London, W.C.