

SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

As a consequence of the crisis, the shower of "Court holy-water" has been falling pretty heavily, and has even reached artistic circles in the form of baronetcies for Mr. Millais and Mr. G. F. Watts. Mr. Watts has declined the "honour" however, a fact which artists must rejoice over, as Mr. Watts, in spite of his being a member of "Society," has always shown real enthusiasm for his art. Mr. Millais, once a great painter, now a great picture-dealer, seems to have accepted. His acceptance does not disgrace his second calling.—W. M.

A new Socialist paper, the *Worker's Friend*, has been started by the Jewish section. This journal, which is printed in Hebrew character, and appears monthly, promises, so far as can be judged from the first number, to be a very useful co-worker in the cause.

At a meeting held at Morley Hall, Hackney, on July 1, in favour of — Russell, Q.C., M.P., as candidate for that division, the chairman, in introducing him to the audience, informed them, among other extraordinary things, that he (the chairman) was not in favour of the State lending small farmers money to buy land, as he believed that to be rank Socialism. There is evidently ground for good work in Hackney.

The second volume of Karl Marx' work on Capital is now out in Germany. It is on the circulation process of capital and is almost purely scientific. The third part, the manuscript of most of which is in hand, will be the most lively reading of the three. Those who know the verve and play of passion and humour with which certain parts of the first volume are written will know something of what to expect.—E. A.

BRANCH REPORTS.

INTERNATIONAL EXCURSION.—On Sunday, July 19, an excursion of Revolutionists, organised by the International Club, Stephen's Mews, went to Epping Forest. They were conveyed in twenty large brakes and a few smaller vehicles, all of which were gaily decorated with red flags and liberty caps. A good band was in attendance and played revolutionary airs on the route. The day was merrily spent in various open-air amusements. William Morris and F. Kitz delivered short speeches in the Forest, which were enthusiastically received. Nothing of an unpleasant nature occurred to tarnish the day's pleasure, and the Socialists of London have good reason to be proud of the large and orderly company which turned out at their invitation.—J. L. M.

BLOOMSBURY.—Since the public meeting in June, this Branch has started a series of meetings for discussion in Soho. The first, held on Thursday, July 16, took the form of a talk on "What is Socialism?" followed by a series of interesting questions and answers. On the last two Thursdays in July the members and their visitors will take for discussion the Bradlaugh and Hyndman debate. The help of Mahon and Charles from the North London Branch was very useful.—Thomas E. Ward.

OXFORD.—This Branch of the League has met weekly, and has had discussions on Socialism, in which most of its members have taken part, and some good debates have followed on the subjects.—F. Martin, Sec.

LEEDS.—At a meeting held on Sunday, the 12th, at the Vicar's Croft, the following resolution was unanimously adopted by an assembly of about 500 working men: "That we heartily admire and applaud the brave stand made by the conductors of the *Pall Mall Gazette* in exposing the criminal vice which obtains throughout London Society." A quire of the *Commonweal* was sold.

STRATFORD.—This Branch is progressing slowly. We have no meeting-place yet, but hope to get one for the winter. On Saturday, July 11, a most successful open-air meeting was held, at which Comrades Banner, Nicoll, Lyons and Sparling spoke. We are causing great excitement.—H. H.

NORTH LONDON.—During the past month the open-air meetings have been carried on with great success. At every meeting there have been interesting questions and lively discussion. Literature has sold well, over three quires of the *Commonweal* having been disposed of. Two indoor meetings have been held, at which papers on "Co-operation" and "The Wages Question" were read by L. Grünlund and J. L. Mahon. In addition to this the members of the Branch have attended two political meetings, Radical and Conservative, and by asking questions and raising discussion excited the interest and sympathy of the audiences. Of course the attitude assumed at political gatherings has been non-political. Sporting Conservatives, wealthy Radicals, and Labour Candidates—who have turned against their class—are all alike subjected to our criticism, which always turns upon purely social questions.—J. L. M.

MANCHESTER (Socialist Union).—On Saturday, July 11, the Manchester Socialists had a great field day. At the invitation of the M. S. U., William Morris delivered a lecture at the Memorial Hall on "The Hopes of Civilization," and comrades and friends assembled in force and gave him the heartiest of welcomes. An animated discussion followed the lecture. Several old Owenites asked questions, one alluding to E. T. Craig; the Co-operationists pleaded their scheme as a solution, which the lecturer controverted; a feetotaller bored the meeting with a long and pointless harangue; but on the whole the discussion was good, and throughout the greatest interest was shown in Socialism. All the newspapers here give excellent reports of the proceedings, and the M. S. U. has enrolled a long list of new members.—Thomas Ewing.

PECKHAM.—A. Scheu lectured on Owen, Marx and Blanqui, on July 19, at the Chamberlain Club, Peckham, to a good audience who received the lecture well, and an interesting discussion followed.

ROYTON.—William Morris lectured on the afternoon of Sunday, July 12, at the Cucumber Gardens at Royton; subject, "The Depression of Trade," Mr. Lord, an old Owenite, taking the chair. Several members of the Manchester Socialist Union were present. The audience, largely composed of young men, was attentive, but the subject of Socialism was clearly quite new to them, and they did not know what to think of it. In the discussion which followed the opponents showed their usual inability to grasp the subject from the class point of view, clung fondly to the humbug of Parliament, and, though themselves the obvious victims of physical force, were very anxious that the lecturer should pin himself to the Quaker doctrine of peace at any price.

OLDHAM.—It had been announced that William Morris would address an audience in the Old Market Place, but the authorities had thought fit to veto the right of public meeting there. The members of the Manchester Socialist Union, with Morris and other friends, waited in a coffee-room overlooking the market-place, and watched an excited crowd gathering there, and "law and order" moving them on. On the Socialists going out into the square they were received with applause. Comrades Oldman and Morris then led the way to "Thomasfields," the present market, where a thoroughly good meeting was held, some 1,500 being present. Comrade Oldman presided and opened. Morris followed, speaking altogether of Socialism, as did T. Ewing, who gave a lucid speech. Oldman wound up proposing

a resolution condemning the authorities for their interference with the right of public meeting, which was carried unanimously, and it was announced that the question would be fought out to the end. Comrade Sellar, an indefatigable worker in the cause, had his name taken by the police for selling the *Commonweal* in the market. The meeting throughout was most orderly and attentive; and much assent was shown to the Socialist arguments. The Manchester Socialist Union is working enthusiastically and with judgment, and is doing good work in the neighbourhood.

DESBOROUGH.—William Morris gave an address on July 14 in this village, which is inhabited by shoemakers and iron-stone quarrymen. The audience was mostly composed of workers, only some half-dozen of the middle class being present. The working part of the audience was very sympathetic. What opposition there was came from two middle-class persons, one male, one female. Their arguments were quite beside the point, and were received with emphatic signs of dissent by a large part of the audience. The general feeling here is very good, and some of our friends are most enthusiastic and are working with much intelligence in the cause. Our delegates could always be sure of a good reception in Desborough, and it ought to be cultivated and made a rallying-place for Socialism in those parts.

BRADFORD.—On Sunday afternoon, July 12, Midgley lectured at Laycock's Temperance Hotel on "The Robbery of Labour, and the Remedy." Referring to the existence of the widespread poverty and misery which was known and acknowledged by all parties in the state, he, as a Socialist, affirmed that the cause was simply labour-robbery. In the evening Mitchell lectured at the "Royal Oak," Shipley, on "The Principles and Aims of Socialism," which he defined as "the nationalisation of thorough co-operation and the institution of real Democracy." He drew attention to the present position of Socialism in England and the large amount of notice it was receiving in the higher-class magazines and reviews. He explained that Socialism was the natural evolution of society. Rawlings and Bamford opposed; Bland and Minty also took part in the discussion. Rawlings undertook to deliver an opposition lecture on Sunday evening, August 2, at the same place. We believe we have opened up good ground for propaganda at Shipley.

HAMMERSMITH.—On Sunday, June 28, J. C. Foulger lectured on "True and False Freedom," combatting the received Radical opinion that political freedom would emancipate the workers. In the course of his instructive address, he showed clearly that we never shall be really free until we have equal political freedom. In the discussion which followed comrades Craig and Grünlund spoke, the latter criticising a statement of the lecturer, who had said that he thought society would follow the ordinary law of development—centralisation, followed by de-centralisation and ultimately by communism. On July 5, in consequence of the Conference, no meeting was held, many of the members attending it. On July 12, W. Bridges Adams lectured on Emigration. Beginning with an able retrospect of the colonisation of classical times, the lecturer gave a mass of statistics from the most worthy sources, proving beyond the possibility of doubt, that an enormously larger population might live, and in comfort, in this country if the labour-power of the whole of its inhabitants were organised for useful production. A considerable discussion followed, to which two returned colonists contributed some facts, which, however, only served to strengthen the lecturer's position. On July 10, G. Brocher lectured on "The Icarian Communities in America," founded by Cabet about 35 years ago. The history of these communistic societies shows how, notwithstanding almost every imaginable debt, unskilled labour, most of the original emigrants being makers of articles de Paris, artists, literary men and the like, and the strong attraction which boulevards, cafés and theatres have to draw Frenchmen back to their native land, notwithstanding all these difficulties—difficulties which would certainly have broken up an ordinary colony—the communistic principle has been so strong that the communities, though small, are in a flourishing condition to-day. Our comrade's most interesting lecture was followed by considerable discussion, in which comrade Beasley made a brilliant reply to questions on competition and compensation. The out-door meetings at the top of Weltye Road have been continued every Saturday. Comrades Rock, Donald, Beasley, Morris, Kitz, Mowbray, Lane, Banner and others speaking. The want of intelligent opposition at the out-door meetings is much felt; the sort we have been most favoured with being rather of the braying order.

LECTURE DIARY: August, 1885.

- Sunday 2.—Hammersmith, J. L. Mahon, at 8.
 —Hoxton, C. W. Mowbray, "Co-operation for Production," at 8.
 " 9.—Hammersmith, G. B. Shaw, at 8.
 —Hoxton, W. C. Wade, "The Cry of the Children," at 8.
 " 16.—Hammersmith, Laurence Grünlund, at 8.
 —Hoxton, W. Morris, "Commercial Depression," at 8.
 " 23.—Hammersmith, William Morris, at 8.
 —Hoxton, David Nicoll, "Socialism and Political Economy," at 8.
 " 30.—Hammersmith, E. Marx Aveling, at 8.
 —Hoxton, E. B. Aveling, "Curse of Capitalism," at 8.

BRANCH MEETING ROOMS.

- Hoxton (L. E. L.)—Exchange Coffee House, Pitfield Street, opposite Hoxton Church, N.
 Hammersmith.—Kelmescott House, 26 Upper Mall, W.
 Merton.—High Street, Merton Abbey, Surrey.
 Bloomsbury.—Stanley Coffee House, 183 Wardour Street. Every Thursday at 8 30 p.m.
 North London.—"The Locomotive," James Street, Camden Town. Wednesdays at 8 p.m.
 Leeds.—54 Myrtle Street. Meets every Wednesday. Open-air station, Vicar's Croft.
 Edinburgh (Scottish Section).—4 Park Street. Meets every Saturday at 7.30 p.m.
 Bradford.—Laycock's Temperance Hotel, Kirkgate. Meetings every Wednesday. Sympathisers invited.

- Manchester Socialist Union.—County Forum, Market Street, Manchester. Meets each Tuesday at 7 p.m.
 Oldham.—Coffee Tavern, Yorkshire Street. Meets every Monday at 7 p.m.

OPEN AIR PROPAGANDA.

- (Socialist literature should be on sale at all the meetings. Each speaker will always carry a supply of the COMMONWEAL.)
 North London.—The Cobden Statue, Hampstead Road. Meetings every Tuesday at 7.30 p.m. 4, C. W. Mowbray; 11, H. H. Sparling; 18, D. Nicoll; 25, W. C. Wade.
 Hoxton (L. E. L.)—Pitfield Street, opposite Hoxton Church. Every Thursday at 8 p.m. and every Sunday at 11.30 a.m. 2, H. H. Sparling; 6, W. C. Wade; 9, Nicoll; 13, Mowbray; 16, Mahon; 20, Nicoll; 23, Lyons; 27, Lane.
 Mile End Waste.—Every Sunday at 11.30 a.m. 5, Nicoll and Mahon; 12, Lane; 19, W. C. Wade; 26, Lyons.
 Hammersmith.—Every Saturday evening at 6 o'clock. Speakers from the League and the Branch.
 Stratford.—"Argument Lamp," end of churchyard. Every Saturday at 6 p.m. Open-air speakers will meet at 13 Farringdon Road on Wednesday, August 19, at 8 p.m., to arrange lectures for September.