May, 1885. 

The Commonweal.

35.

he should consider whether murder is a crime simply because it is forbidden by law, or whether it would be so equally on some desolate island where no law existed. From that he may go on to consider slighter and more complex cases of interference with person or property, and in due course come to his conclusion that there must be laws of ethics as certain as those of mathematics, though the factors in any given problem may be more complicated. On the second question, his reasoning appears to me quite unanswerable. He is, I think, lacking in a certain objectivity. We entirely agree with him that "the education of the so-called upper or wealthier classes (on this subject) is an imperative necessity;" and we ask him what more potent factor in that education can be conceived than a demonstration that the living on the backs of others are acting unjustly? Those amongst these classes who desire to do what is right will need no further argument, and even those who are careless of any moral considerations incline to reason more because they find that those others are awaking to the sense of their rights. Then with regard to the workers themselves, unless we are very much mistaken, they would scorn to live in comfort on the charity of others, and it is certainly a wonderful piece of folly, or of justice that they receive a larger share of the proceeds of their own labour. If they are not justly entitled to it, they will neither demand nor accept it; but if they are entitled, why should they not demand it? As a matter of forlorn remonstrance, both are generally exaggerated; or if not, the evils which led to them, and their good results are too much left out of sight. But it does not at all follow that men who are aware of their rights will always violently insist upon them. As a matter of fact many of those who are the most firmly persuaded that Socialism rests on moral bases are also the most desirous of avoiding violence. They know there must be a revolution, but they know also that the revolution must be by a physical and not by a moral process; and in proportion as the mental one is complete will all danger of a sanguinary one be averted. We hope Professor Pearson may yet go a step further in his scheme of social betterment, and that any evil upon which they rest on a basis of justice will have as little success now as they have had for the last 150 years.

F R A N K F A I L M A N.

SIGNES OF THE TIMES.

The subjoined paragraph from the Manchester Evening News is a fine sample of modern philanthropic Charismatism. It is a pity the Mahdi does not understand Political Economy. "If we can do anything to rescue the poor Souls and Cows from the clutches of the moneylenders and the Koworough, and give them the blessings of English Government, we ought, on grounds of common humanity, to do it. The Souland might have been a profitless possession to Egypt, but it would be profitable enough to those who would holier mankind. If a Pacha, in the course of three years, can squeeze £60,000 out of the helpless people of Khartoum, and if some of the merchants who sit all day in their little stalls in the bazaars are really millionaires, and could buy up many of our London merchant princes, there must be many opportunities for making money in the Souland, and under English rule it would prove a valuable opening for English commerce. The money which now swells the ill-gotten gains of Pachdonth would then, by the legitimate operations of trade, find its way among our English manufacturers and workmen. The Berber railway may yet repay our military sacrifices." Amen.—W. S.

The infamous Ferry is at last exposed in some measure. He has been hounded and branded as a liar. The following passage from the address of the International on the Commune of 1871 reads significanitly. The Radicals of England in 1871 were rightdefinitely independent with Marx for his pitiless denunciation of Ferry. Let them whether he was not in the right. "Jules Ferry, a penniless barrister before the 4th of September, contrived, as Mayor of Paris during the siege, to make himself a fortune out of famine. The day on which he was to have an account of his mail-administration would be the day of his conviction."—M. Vambecy is to deliver lectures on "Herat from a Commercial and Industrial Point of View." It will go hard but the English capitalists, Syloks in all the bad and in none of the good qualities, "will bite his instruction.

The new book by Stephani, "Russia under the Tsars," will appear about the beginning of May. Socialists who know how much Stevenson, Maude ‘Odette, and the like, are on the spot, may be eager to see a work that promises to be even more interesting than "Underground Russia." Some of our readers will remember the part played of late years in our "politics" by Mr. Gladstone's Egeria, Olga Novikoff. A certain coquette, Mademoiselle Valtesse (Mademoiselle, because she had as many husbands as she had days), has, in the course of a shamful Tonkin expedition. She was it who suggested the idea to Gambetta, "Mlle. Valtesse, summoned "The Union of Painters," became the leading spirit of food-feeding accommodation and sleeping, prompted by certain speculators, announced that gold could be picked up for the stooping at Tonkin. When the expedition was dismissed in the Chamber, the same speculators proved that the same men have been, and that gold is enough to make all investors millionaires. Gambetta repeated the lesson learned from Mlle. Valtesse, and really believed he had hit on a means of saving his fastwaning prestige. Gambetta dead, M. Ferry accepted his policy. Hauss the whole shameful "war." Madame, Novikoff and Mlle. Valtesse! Vive l'ordre et la familicule !

In delivering his charge, the Bishop of Bath and Wells said that the growth of Socialism was deepening both the Church and the State. Opinions were now widely spread utterly inconsistent with notions of property, and the people were demoralised by their preva
cence. Several recent acts of the Legislature were striking evidence from this loosened sense of the sanctity of the rights of property, and to have prepared the way for still greater departure from ancient principles. A school of thought had arisen whose scheme for getting rid of poverty and removing all social inequalities, was for the State to act of confiscation and plunder, to take possession of the land, to abolish private property, and to divide the produce of the soil among the people, and this insane and iniquitous scheme actually found favour with a large number of working men, alike blind to the first principles of honesty and their own interests, and even, with some clergymen. Such a spirit was one of the most dangerous features of the last time, and if it were to spread it would be the destruction of Society.—E. A.

In declaring for Socialism another member of the "respectable" class has fallen out of the ranks, and denounces the competitive system of economic production. Says Mr. Charles Rowley, junr., of Manchester, in a speech on the "Disorders in Spain and the Belgian Revolution": "Let us each decide what is just in the matter, and then give ourselves no rest until we achieve, or hope to achieve, a better state. Our suppositions on most of these vital social questions is simply inade
cquate. Why do we keep on a footing in the case, that is, the number of shipowners who send ships and men to sea for the sole purposes of being lost? The facts are incontrovertible, and yet we never hang a shipowner for a stint of murder, or make a law against a pollution of rivers, or a mill owner who fattens on a high death-rate among chimney sweepers. We hang a few poor and wicked wretches who are born and who are made so by our vicious arrangements. The real criminals escape, and yet we know them perfectly well who do it, but yet they escape. But of be good cheer! The time is evidently coming when we shall "suit the word to the action and the action to the word." Then a thief will be called a thief and treated accordingly. This "better state" we hope and think you will help us to achieve.—W. M.

REVIEWS AND NOTICES.

The Socialism of To-Day. By ENRILE Des LAVALLETS. Translated by G. B. Thompson. Fielding and T. Sampson, 1 vol. 8vo, price 7s. 6d. known work, "Le Socialism Contemporain." The space at our disposal will not permit us to enter upon an elaborate criticism of the bourgeois critic's in many respects distorted exposition of the different phases of modern Socialism. Needless to say, we have the all too apologetics of the capitalist advocate trotted out. M. de Lavalette's mild refutations of the economic and political claims of the Socialists must serve, with those acquainted with the subject, to while away the tedious day. We are at a loss how to treat the general German can have some sort of sympathy for the French Utopian, Friedon, Proudhon, etc. They are, after all, amiable visionaries, who have often descended from the clouds to earth, and have hobbled, in the interests of the people, the national and the personal in their immoralizing doctrines of economic revolutions. Turning to Mr. Orpen's share of the present work, his translation, we may observe, is worthy of a better editor. The naturalising of English terms shows an evident desire to be fair, though it is not entirely accurate as to facts. It might be made fuller with advantage in a second edition. E. B. B.

Social Politics. By CHARLES ROWLEY, Jun. John Haywood, Manchester. There is an allusion in the "Signs of the Times" to this pamphlet, which is undoubtedly a sign of the times, and a cheering one. Mr. Rowley as by no means mean-minded, and the lucid sense he is to the inside of the cover show to his grasp the essential facts of the class struggle, and knows that the worker's lot cannot really be better except at the expense of the exploiters. It is a pity, since this is what he should have taken the word "expansion of England" into his mouth except to condemn it, and that he favours emigration as a remedy for class evils, if he really means this. If those who are most keenly stung by the evils of class domination, and at the same time have energy to resist them, leave the country which is the very forge of class domination, their destruction will surely put off the Revolution which Mr. Rowley desires, and make it more disorderly when it comes, as it must come. "The expansion of England" means capital expansion, and that immensely adverse to other countries and the perpetuation in our own of those horrors, of that tyranny in life, which we are beginning to undermine. In the course the expanded England of Professor Seeley is by no means the England which Mr. Rowley hopes for, and which will be certainly attained at the cost of the workers. It is a scheme that goes roundabout to avoid the entire abolition of classes.—W. M.

"We have too much rather too little business... The business world has been labouring under the effects of over-production—production which has paid the labourers delightedly—and has left little for rent and interest on capital."—Trade and Finance. Despite the economical falsehood in the last phrase, the two earlier statements are significant.