

SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

THE great Whig champion, Lord Hartington, has spoken; his speech was eagerly expected by the gamblers in the political game. But when it came it was a matter of many words and nothing said; and the Liberal Party is still without a cry for the coming elections. Inane as it was, however, it has been taken as a manifesto against the Radicalism budding into demi-semi-Socialist Democracy which Mr. Chamberlain represents.

Mr. Chamberlain's Radicalism resents this and "pronounces" in its turn. Mr. Chamberlain's Radicalism, I say; for Lord Hartington's program of "nothing to be done but unite to defeat Irish Nationalism," will content ordinary Radicals well enough.

The "advanced Radicals," therefore, must prepare themselves to be left out in the cold. What can they do? Though drifting in the direction of Socialism, they are in the habit of using rather hard words against us, so I abstain from advising them to turn Socialists at once, especially as they will have to do so sooner or later, unless they are sucked into the great Moderate Party which is clearly beginning to form. Perhaps the best education for them would be for them to go in heartily for supporting the Irish Nationalists; that would at any rate cut them off from the worship of the Great Jingo, which the Moderate Party will certainly cultivate—moderately.

Curious to see, meanwhile, how anxious Liberal-Whig politicians are to assure us that they and the Tories are implacably opposed to each other; as witness Lord Cowper in the *Nineteenth Century*. A worthy parson has been trying to get the leading men on each side to tell him what is the difference between them. How glad they would have been to tell him in this electioneering season! But they could not; who can? The *Pall Mall* might offer a prize.

Mr. Chamberlain at Warrington pronounced against Mr. Parnell, and so probably sealed the doom of the Radical party for the present; all the more as he also pronounced against the "Moderate Liberals," whoever they may comprise. In spite of the conventional party twaddle of the beginning of his speech, his challenge to the Moderates towards its close was unmistakable to any one except a party optimist.

It was noteworthy that the social part of his speech was specially well received, and that the name of Socialism warmed the audience somewhat, however little they might know about its principles in detail. It is clear that everywhere the word means hope, whereas the names of the old parties, including Radicalism, mean—nothing.

W. M.

As we are going to press we find that the whole of the London Press (with the dubious exception of the *Standard*) has declared against the Police and Mr. Saunders and for fair and equal treatment of all open-air speakers. The *Pall Mall Gazette*, *Daily News*, and *Echo* have spoken out clearly. The *Chronicle* has also written, rather with bated breath, protesting but not "too much." The *Telegraph*, after a shrewd delay, gave an admirable leader anti-Saundersesque. The *St. James's Gazette*, and even the *Morning Advertiser* felt that "some one had blundered." What the Sunday journals will say, we cannot tell; but it seems possible that in view of the tremendous blundering of the police, the wicked imbecility of Mr. Saunders, the outcry in the press, and the determined attitude of the open-air speakers, matters will be arranged so that *al fresco* speaking at the East End is not interfered with. In any case, Socialism has received an impetus and an advertisement of incalculable value.

A BOURGEOIS CONFESSION.—"What a strange spectacle this country (America) presents at this very hour! Money is plenty—50 or 60 millions on deposit in the banks of New York City alone! Food is plenty; the granaries at the West are full of old wheat, and though the wheat crop of the present year does not promise well, the corn crop is likely to be larger than ever before; there is no fear of scarcity. Manufactured goods are plenty; the storehouses of the manufacturer and the shelves of the merchants are crowded with them. Labour is plenty; five hundred thousand idle men are asking for work. Yet in the midst of this abundance a great industrial and commercial depression has overtaken us. At the time of writing this, workmen are selling their labour at the lowest prices, and many are unable to sell at any price: merchants and manufacturers find a dull market for their wares; the railroads report losses instead of gains; failures multiply. The situation is not only pitiful, it is absurd."—*The Century Magazine*, September 1885.

"The question of the land lies behind half the social problems of the time."—*Daily News*, Sept. 8. If the organ of philosophical Radicalism had added "and that of capital behind the other half," it would have been more philosophical if less radical, though the proportions would have been inaccurate.

E. A.

Those who fight the reduction of the hours of labour to eight hours per day, because workingmen would spend the two hours in whisky-shops, etc., should come right to the front now, and tell us all about those who are compelled to be idle twenty-four hours in the day, and about those working half time. Where do they spend their time?—*Iron-Moulder's Journal*.

The Police and Mr. Saunders.

It is evident that the methods we have been wont to associate with the Continental police, or at least not to believe as coming nearer home than Ireland are in practice in our midst. It is evident that the police are willing in certain cases to use violence as brutal as unnecessary and to perjure themselves deliberately in order to make good their bad case. Further it is evident that in Mr. Saunders of the Police Court, they have at least one magistrate who is willing and even anxious to be their accomplice in this sorry work. The following account in brief of what took place at Limehouse on September 20th, and at the Thames Police-Court on Monday September 21st, is that of an eye-witness.

On Sunday, a very large and very orderly crowd of not less than 10,000 persons met at Dod Street, Burdett Road. This street, used for years past by all sorts of bodies for the open-air promulgation of their views, has been of late the debateable ground between the police and the public. Several arrests of speakers had been made on the Sundays preceding the 20th. On this latter day the crowd surrounding the speaker was so dense and kept so steady, that all the efforts of an inspector and fifteen policemen could not force a way through the crowd to its centre. The policemen up to this point had done their unpleasant slave-work as little unpleasantly as was possible. Once the inspector, irritated by the immovable nature of the crowd, told his men to draw their truncheons. Fortunately for all concerned, the order was withdrawn before the truncheons were. Then after the police had been separated and pushed against the walls of the street two or three times, and the inspector had been down in the mud at least once, they gave up the attempt to get down Dod Street.

The speaking continued. Presently, besides H. M. Hyndman and J. Matthias speaking successively on the drag looking up the street, Mahon and Kitz were speaking successively on the other, looking towards Burdett Road. This division of forces gave the police a chance. They suddenly reappeared at the other end of Dod Street, and the crowd not closing up, Kitz, Mahon, and Mowbray were seized in a very short time.

The speaking continued. Radicals, such as Mr. F. A. Ford of the Finsbury Radical Association and Mr. Ellis of Peckham Rye, and Socialists joined in denouncing the action of the authorities, and a resolution expressive of the protest of the meeting against what had taken place, was passed with the uplifting of thousands of hands.

Just before one, as had been arranged, the meeting was brought to an end that the solitary inhabited house, the public-house at the corner, might not have its trade interfered with. The vast crowd dispersed in perfect order and peacefulness. Presently as it was melting quietly away the police came marching back. Way was made for them, as the meeting was over. Suddenly they rushed with great ferocity at two innocent banner-bearers, and with brutal violence thrust them head first, head downwards to the station. Even then after this unprovoked, unnecessary ruffianism, the crowd kept quiet. Those that followed the arrested men to the station and asked calmly and dispassionately as to bail were treated by the police with great rudeness and roughness. The bail at once forthcoming was not accepted for some hours.

On Monday before the case came on, the police did all they could to incite the crowd to riot. They paraded up and down pushing people to right and left and telling them to go and do respectable work. This from the prostitute class of police! A podgy, red-bearded, pudding-faced sergeant, 17 H, was the most disreputable in these disreputable proceedings. He complained quite plaintively that the working and middle-class men there (the men who earn the wages for, and the men who pay the wages to, this chartered ruffian) did not treat him with proper respect.

In the Court the police lied more or less steadily. Encouraged by Mr. Saunders, they contradicted themselves, prevaricated, did everything but speak the truth. The evidence on which Lyons was convicted, was of the most unsatisfactory order. Now a statement was made that he was taken where the speakers were; now that he was taken where the banner-bearers were. He was supposed to have kicked a constable. That constable stated first that he was watching Lyons' legs, and then that he was watching Lyons' eyes when the kick was given. It was admitted that the policeman and Lyons at the time were in the midst of a surging crowd, any of whom might by accident or design have kicked the man. No marks of the kick were to be seen within less than twenty-four hours of its theoretical delivery. Mud on his trousers was the proof assigned by K 463 of the kick. My own trousers were covered with mud on Sunday morning, but no one kicked me. Yet on such evidence as this Mr. Saunders sent a young man to prison for two months with hard labour.

The honest truth is, if anything in connection with Mr. Saunders can be honest truth, that he sent Lyons to prison for his manner of cross-examination. The manner was not well-chosen with a magistrate so susceptible to everything but a sense of fairness as Mr. Saunders. Lewis Lyons examined the policeman after the fashion of an Old Bailey solicitor, confusing them and irritating the magistrate. Of course this only makes the sentence the more outrageous.

If further proof of the dunderheadedness of this magistrate is needed, it is forthcoming in the fact that the one man against whom the evidence was not contradictory, was let off, and that the evidence against two different persons was confused together and applied by Mr. Saunders to one of them.

When the case was over, a rush of police was made at those in court. It is said that some cried out "Shame." I can only answer for myself and my wife who, certainly with difficulty, kept silent. Nevertheless the jailor of the court and other constables, among whom the perjured K 463 was prominent, commenced an assault upon all and sundry. One of them who had stated in his own vernacular that he meant to "make a mark of the female," tore the "female's" cloak and thumped her at large. William Morris, remonstrating at the hustling and the thumping, became at once the chief thumpee. There has rarely been seen anything more brutal than the way in which two or three able-bodied young men fell upon the author of what one of the newspapers called the "Paradise League." A threat to summon the police for assault, was the cue for these ready gentlemen to arrest Morris for disturbance in Court. This was an afterthought and would not have been a thought at all but for his protests against ill-usage. That Mr. Saunders dismissed the charge against Morris is no fault of the police. It was the fault of the prisoner being in a "respectable position" of Society. This, possibly assisted by the better humour of Mr. Saunders after lunch, led after an interesting passage of arms, to an exit from the dock. But everyone knows, and the *Daily News* and *Daily Chronicle* openly admitted that had the charge been made against a working man, he would have, in the eloquent language of Mr. Saunders, been "locked up."

EDWARD AVELING