

they caused to be arrested and condemned to fifteen months' imprisonment.

Basly had been, with Fauvian, the organiser of the great strike at Anzin of 1884. He set to work at Decazeville. In a few weeks he disciplined and organised the miners. The bourgeois journals are obliged to confess that his influence with the strikers is immense. The workmen of Decazeville began by being merely rebels: to-day they are Socialists, who know that they will not be emancipated until after they have expropriated the capitalists. The scenes of disorder which characterised the beginning of the strike have given place to order, to the great despair of the capitalists, who desire tumults in order to justify the intervention of bayonets and rifles. They have not even had recourse to the anarchist weapons—charges of dynamite—which displace innocent stones. But neither provocations nor dynamite-plots of capitalists have shaken the strikers, who continue the strike in the most perfect calm.

This firm and calm conduct of the miners has given to this economic quarrel between wage-earners and masters a great social importance. The workmen of Decazeville are no longer simply strikers claiming some ameliorations in their social situation, but champions of the Socialist idea, throwing down the gauntlet to capital in the name of the entire working-class. And in this struggle they are sustained by all Socialists and workmen; the journals have opened a subscription, and one journal alone—the *Cri du Peuple*—has already received more than forty thousand francs.

Never before has an economic struggle assumed such a character. It has separated society into two classes: on the one side the workmen and the Socialists, and even the small middle-class, who are despoiled and crushed by the great companies, financial, industrial, and commercial; on the other the great capitalists, sustained by the Government, the bourgeois press, and all political parties, from the Monarchists to the Radicals. At the recent May election the case stood thus: Gaulier, the candidate of the Government and of the great companies, was patronised by the Radical press and supported with more or less of good grace by the Opportunists and the Monarchists; Roche, condemned to fifteen months imprisonment for defending the workmen, was supported by the Socialists and Revolutionary Radicals. The Clémenceau Radicals, furious at seeing the consolidation of the Revolutionary party, attempted to sow division by running an opposition Socialist candidate—Soubrié. In this foul design they employed as tools the Possibilists, who for some years past have occupied themselves with sowing division in the Socialist ranks. But in spite of this perfidious manœuvre, of an election agitation of only eight days, and of an expenditure not exceeding £216, we succeeded in uniting under the name of Roche more than 100,000 electors.

What do the good people who breakfast on dynamite and sup on nitro-glycerine say as to the significance of these 100,000 voting-papers? It signifies that we have succeeded in penetrating the Parisian masses, in hurling them into a movement of social revindication, that we have beaten it into the heads of 100,000 electors that they are bound to protest against the present social order and its government. It is true all the voters were not Socialists, but they have performed a Socialist act; it is true these 100,000 voting-papers are not the Revolution, but they are a great step towards the Revolution. The elections of 1866 dealt a mortal blow at the Empire, from which it never recovered. The election of May has cut in two the Radical party, throwing its bourgeois elements into the Opportunist camp, and attracting to the Revolutionary Socialist party its working-class and Socialist elements. The election of May is the pick-axe laid at the foundation of the bourgeois Republic—the trumpet-call, rallying the Socialists to the final battle.

PAUL LAFARGUE.

PARIS, MAY 22, 1886.

“SUFFERING FROM HUNGER.”—With reference to our “Notes on Passing Events” last week, a correspondent sends the following cutting from the *Manchester Evening News* of June 4th:—“At Warrington, to-day, John Ward, last from Manchester, who conducted himself like a madman in the streets yesterday, was ordered to the workhouse, suffering from hunger.”

Our best thanks are due to the *Irish Times* for the interestingly skilful way in which, under cover of an alleged attack upon our leaflet “Shall Ireland be Free?” they gave us bold advertisement in their issue of Monday last.

Land will produce nothing without labour, therefore labour pays the rent. Taxes are assessed on the value which labour gives to the land, therefore labour pays the taxes.—*Labor Leaf*.

THE GREED OF MONEY.—The greed of money is most ravenous in the richest; that of despotic power in generals, kings and emperors, which is as if the more one ate the hungrier he becomes. The passion of accumulating, like that of ruling, has no self-imposed limits, and therefore dangerous to the general interests of society which now blindly legislates in its favour by class privileges. While we have been amusing ourselves with illusions of political liberty we have been pandering to the great slave power of monopoly, the stock-jobbers, the usurer, the landlords, and other industrial tyrants. While we have been throwing loaded dice for them from that child's toy, the ballot box, financial feudalism, the despotism of capital, has steadily advanced in its conquests, and now treads under foot the last vestiges of republican liberty. Change of masters avails nothing, for the true rulers do not depend for their power on the result of elections. All governments are equal before the money power, and in ours it has the option of controlling elections or buying the elected. To the people this makes no practical difference. All the arbitrary power—of the Purse, of the State, and of the Church—are at once against labour and the tributary masses.—*Gilberton News*.

## CORRESPONDENCE.

Adel, Leeds, 24th May, 1886.

GENTLEMEN,—I have just read with astonishment in your issue of Saturday the 22nd inst. the following words, referring to the closing of a large flax-mill in Leeds: “What is to become of these creatures [the women and girls employed] is a question which has never disturbed the minds of their employers.” As an inhabitant of Leeds possessed of a long and intimate acquaintance with these employers and with many of those employed in their Leeds mill, I can most emphatically deny this statement. They have always sought to keep their mills running and avoid the evils that result from irregular employment in times of bad trade, and have been able to carry this policy out (at what cost to themselves does not now signify) to an extent that is quite unusual. When for irresistible reasons they were compelled to close the mills, it was a keen personal trouble to them; and in the actual closing of the mills they made their arrangements in such a way as to minimise the unavoidable distress. The spirit of friendly liberality with which their workers were treated created a very different feeling between them and their employers from that of the bitterness and hostility described by your correspondent. Much as one may deplore the present state of inequality in wealth and in justice, and much as one may endeavour to advance the “New Life,” it is impossible to allow absolutely erroneous statements to pass unnoticed and uncorrected.—I am, etc., E. H. FORD.

[Awaiting further answer from our Leeds friends, we may point out to our correspondent that the position of the employers forces them in the long run to disregard what even they consider the interests of the workers, and that while they are employing them they are wronging them by living on their unpaid labour.—Eds.]

## THE BOYCOTT.

THIS weapon of defence and redress is no longer an experiment. While, like a strike, it is not a final remedy, it is a powerful auxiliary. It is far ahead of a strike, for many reasons. It costs those who employ it nothing; the damage is all done to the enemy, and if used judiciously, all the patronage and trade taken from the enemy can be given to the friends of labour. This makes it a tripartite weapon. It punishes and reforms the enemy, encourages and benefits the friend, and helps build up co-operation. It is the old weapon that monopoly has always used against labour, and now, when it is used against the monopolist himself, he rises up and says, “What is the meaning of this boycott?” It is not necessary for any one to answer. Let him find out the meaning when his customers leave him and he has no longer work for the scabs. Every one should apply the boycott, whether he belongs to a labour organisation or not.—*Knowville Globe*.

It is reported that Col. Carroll D. Wright says, “The man who, by boycotting, shuts up a shop is preventing some other man from getting an honest living.” It is doubtful if he made such a loose statement. The fact that a shopkeeper is prevented from getting a living by selling, for example, oleo-margarine as butter, and a dozen other substitutes for the goods he pretends to keep, is no sign he is prevented from getting an honest living.—*Boston Herald*.

Judge James G. Maguire, of San Francisco, has given an extra-judicial opinion of the legality of the boycott, as follows: “Since the legality of the practice popularly known as boycotting has been called in question, and since you have adopted that practice as the means of accomplishing your purposes, those who are charged with the administration and interpretation of the law are bound to seriously consider the question in all its phases before giving approval or encouragement to such a movement. Having carefully considered the methods and principles involved in the peaceful system of non-intercourse known as ‘boycotting,’ and especially your definition of the term as used by your association, I have reached the conclusion that the practice, as thus defined, is not only the legal, but the inalienable right of every human being, and it has my unqualified approval. The practice of enforcing conformity to the moral sentiments and material interests of communities by the social, political, and commercial ostracism of those who violate such sentiments or invade such interests, is as old as civilisation, and is, indeed, the vital principle of its growth. It has been suggested that this practice has a tendency to lead those who engage in it to resort to violent measures; but it is a well-recognised principle of human nature that an opportunity to accomplish any purpose speedily by peaceful means is the most certain of all safeguards against violence.”—*John Swinton's Paper*.

The progress of converting a boss is slow but sure, and more wonderful than anything Moody and Sankey ever did:—Chapter I.—Men ask for more wages or shorter hours or change of rules. Boss is shocked at their impudence. Won't give in. Chapter II.—Committee of Arbitration calls on him and are told to get out, after a short conversation. Chapter III.—The boycott is declared. Boss waves his bank-book aloft and swears he will sink every cent in the fight, and pretends to glory in the free advertising of the boycott. Chapter IV.—Advertising don't pan out worth a cent. Everybody gives him the go-by. Don't want to have anything to do with him. Things look awfully blue. Chapter V.—Citizens' Committee wait on him. Boss denies he knows what is the matter! Why don't the men tell him all about it? He always wanted to do the fair thing. For God's sake take that boycott off! And here is 500 dols. to pay expenses. Chapter VI.—“Boys, go back to work.” Boss shakes hand all round.—*Workman's Advocate*.

A high class without duties to do is like a tree planted on a precipice, from the roots of which all the earth has been crumbling. Nature owns no man who is not a worker withal. Is there a man who pretends to live luxuriously housed up, screened from all work, from want, danger, hardships, the victory of which is what we name work; he himself to sit serene amid downy bolsters and appliances, and have all his work and battling done by other men? And such man calls himself a NOBLE man! His fathers worked for him, he says; or successfully gambled for him; here he sits; professes, not in sorrow but in pride, that he and his have done no work, time out of mind. It is the law of the land, and is thought to be the law of the universe, that he, alone of recorded men, shall have no task laid on him, except that of eating his cooked victuals, and not flinging himself out of a window. Once more I will say, there is no stranger spectacle shown under the sun.—*Thomas Carlyle*.