TO CORRESPONDENTS.

NOTICE TO ALL SOCIALISTIC NEWSPAPERS.—The Commonweal will be regularly sent to all Socialistic Contemporaries throughout the world, and it is hoped that they will all regularly provide the Socialist League with their papers as they may appear.

Questions bearing upon the principles propounded and the objects had in view by the Commonweal, will be welcomed by the Editor.

Workingmen and women in factories, workshops, stores or mills, are requested to send in account among their comrades and get up a list of subscribers for the Commonweal, and send a helping hand in the struggle for labour's freedom.


INDEPENDENT IRELAND.

Mr. Gladstone's measure has at last seen light, and it must at least be conceded that under the circumstances it has been accepted joyfully by the people whom it was chiefly meant to serve: the Irish at least are pleased. This is an improvement on the character of most measures of reform, which usually rather err in defect than in excess of that ancient vice and modern virtue, cowardice; and which consequently discourage friends while they fail in conciliating enemies. To find the irreducible minimum has been Mr. Gladstone's aim, and according to the verdict of both friends and foes he has succeeded. A simple-minded man might have expected the Radicals, at any rate, to be pleased at this, but he will by this time be disillusioned. Some of them do indeed eat the leek thus presented to them by the Celtic champion with a tolerably good grace, but a great many insist on being thrashed before eating, which grace before meat they are, I think, not likely to lack.

The fact is these worthies were quite prepared to give Ireland Home Rule so long as Hambourg accompanied it, so long as the grant of it did not enable the Irish to manage their own affairs; and they have hoped (not perhaps without some reason) that Mr. Gladstone would contrive this trap for their benefit. It would indeed have been a triumph for modern bourgeois legislation to have been able to say, "We have done what you wanted, we offer you Home Rule, and now you won't take it." And that would have been quite in its manner too. But they have been disappointed and are forced to face a measure which the Irish believe will make them practically independent, and whether the bill passes or not, there is no doubt that they will not now accept anything less than it. This is grievous enough for our Federation of the Empire, friends, but if they are Radicals to boot, what are they to do? Mr. Chamberlain sees that he cannot, as yet, join the Tory-Whig coalition, and consequently, in spite of the almost unanimous agreement of the London Liberal press, including the once anti-Tory Zécol, to wait till they now see the error of his ways, he will probably be content to himself with looking on a Gladstonian trade union as a Whig protest, without sharing in either. This bill will pass the Commons either now or after a coalition muddle, or else the Irish will in some way or other rebel.

Under these circumstances it is not worth while to look into the details of Mr. Gladstone's bill, even if such matters could concern one so little at all. It means the Independence of Ireland and nothing less for which the greater part of his Party intended it to mean. This is clearly shown by the fact that while Radicals cry out on injustice to the Irish in excluding them from the Westminster Parliament, these themselves will by no means accept the honour if they can help it, as they perceive it to tend towards Federation. One remedy at least they might have, of the kind known to the unthirsty horse when brought to water; they need not drink of the stream of the English, but like every one else propound the prophecies of their enemies by drowning usually amidst their difficulties, when they have the power to manage their own affairs. But this is only by what it is a common practice for every nation is to make something a good instrument is to use a nation is to find a way of bringing the to the country and to have it well in the hands of Ireland. They will then surely begin to find out that English rule was as disastrous to them, not because of the difference of race between the governors and the governed, but because a crude form of arbitrary authority was practised on the inferior race; because England represented landlord and capitalist oppression, which, to say the truth, would not have lacked a representative even if she had not been paramount in Ireland.

Home Rule for Ireland is not of itself necessarily a revolutionary measure, but will clear the ground for sowing the seed of Revolution; and that all the more as the problem in Ireland is simpler than elsewhere, owing to its being chiefly an agricultural country. The patience and good humour of the people may help its new rulers to subvert the great change which shall make Ireland free by freeing all its inhabitants; and their terrible apprenticeship in misery may help in restraining them from claiming that decent and happy life which will be easier for them to get for the claiming than it is to most peoples; but the claim will certainly be made, and can only be crushed by a bogus English triumph over its enemy—the People.

WILLIAM MORRIS.

AN EXPLANATION.

The change of the Commonweal from a monthly to a weekly prevents my retaining the responsible position of one of its editors, as the necessary demand of the new position; which might have been expected by the editor's time. This position is more fortunate. The amount of time and work given by me to the paper in its new form will be not less than have been given herefore.

EDWARD AVELING.

This Government were badly beaten in the Socialist trial, and in fact it is difficult to understand why they persisted in it after their breakdown in the Birmingham one, which shows how little the bourgeois press can make as little as possible of the defeat, but most people with whom I can compare it with the police defeat of Ded Street last summer. The result shows that the general public are not prepared as yet to attack the local and dangerous it may seem, and should encourage all Socialists to speak plainly to the people; though it must be admitted that those who are fairly entitled in the cause do not want much encouragement on that side. On the other hand, if our bourgeois have not the heart to resist such plain attacks it shows how bad their conscience must be.