NOTES ON PASSING EVENTS.

The democratic side of the new Tory Democracy will be severely tried by the new development of the land-war in Ireland, of which the "battle" of Clonakilty was a dramatic incident. Whether the plan of campaign given in the United Ireland be carried out or not, we may be at least sure that the resistance to rent will take a savagery more organised shape. Under these circumstances the Government will doubtless find the Closure a necessity to them, and Lord Randolph Churchill may well bid a high price for it, and Tories and Whigs of all shades must put up with it.

Or is his lordship really going far on the democratic path? If so here is an opportunity for him. Let him fly the Home Secretary to release the lately imprisoned crofters, and administer a good spell to the judge for his vindictive and cruel sentence; some of us might be shaken in our views of him then, and suppose him capable of something else than the most baroused chicanery.

"The quality of mercy is not strained," says Shakespeare, apparently thinking of the Lord Chief Justice, but on this occasion the judge must have strained it very fine indeed, since the immediate concern was mercy, and the judge admitted that those who had the lighter sentence were little more than lookers-on. Perhaps taught by this judicious champion of common sense and a familiar proverb never to live, and do something more than look on.

According to the story given of an incident in the Caor's life those who are engaged in defending his dastard's life to stir up Russian Jingoism to the utmost, and that the risk, fearful though it is, must be borne. Whatever may happen, the advance of Socialism is not likely to help a case in which it is decisive - that a war must inflict a terrible wound, and probably a fatal one, on a policy or part of the great reactionary powers. Nevertheless, from the point of view which is presented to us English Socialists a war is to be deprecated for other reasons than the natural human horror at increasing misery. It is rather the miseries of bourgeois peace than those of war which will force on the workers perception of the fact that our commercial system is rotting into a chaos which, but for the steady advance of Socialism, would mean a return to a condition which, on one or the other of the social classes, would fold worse than that from which mankind has slowly and painfully emerged.

For if Europe were to be at war again many worthy persons would point out that all our misfortunes were due to it, and that peace obtained once more all would be well again. Moreover, the pleasant excitement of reading every morning stirring news of the hopes and fears of the contest, while we sit safe at home, would arouse our latent Jingoism, and would take people's attention off the really important social matters which they are now forced to consider, and the pressing nature of which is now educating the people surely if slowly.

But that is not all, nor the most important side of the matter. It is a frightful thing to have to say, but a true one, that a war at first benefit those of the workers who were not immediately concerned in it: it would "give employment" by destroying before they were used some of the commodities made by the workers, not for their own livelihood, but as counters for "making money." The miseries of war would not really be felt till peace came again, the shame peace of our class society, bringing with it once more lack of employment, over-production, over-population, and the rest of it, till men at last, unable to bear the consequences of their own folly any longer, would in a body and accept the social revolution, thrusting aside the turnip-lantern begy of fear so sedulously held up to them by interested fools, secondrates, and cowards. When they do that they will find no tremendous difficulty in making what they want for their own use, and using it.

But all that they might come to without the intervention of war and slaughter, and perhaps, sooner, since, as aforesaid, they will feel the pinch more speedily, and see the only remedy more clearly.

Meanwhile, it is a favourite amusement with the middle-classes to try to prove to the workers that they do not suffer, or that if they do, yet things are getting better in spite of the depression of trade. Lord Derby (who, though an earl, is mentally as complete a specimen of the bourgeois as could be wished at the last instant player in this game. He professes, however, that he is perplexed at the figures that show that our prosperity is increasing while our trade-profits are falling off. It might be suggested to him as a solution of his "perplexity" that the unusual ring of prosperity of labour, of course, and increasing cheapness in the processes of manufacture, is telling more and more in favour of the "haves" and against the "have-nots"; that the tendency is for the middle-class, now that it has embraced the aristocratic ascendancy, to turn their backs on the lower orders, and so to widen the basis of class-robbery or property; so that at first sight Lord Derby has some reason to be reassured as to the stability of the Robber Association, orclass, which is his sole business to uphold.

Nevertheless, this very process of the extension of the class to which his lordship (mentally) belongs, tends also to consolidate the government in the hands of a small body levelling them; and his lordship, in his perplexity, it may be said in passing, by confusing some of the working with the middle-class. But the great difficulty is now arising for the middle-class, which would increase Lord Derby's perplexity if he could turn his attention to it. The middle-class exists only as an employing class, and their success in cheapening the processes of labour is making it difficult for them to employ their—slaves. And unless they can get over that difficulty the days of class-robbery of our modern sham Society are numbered. Nor can they get over it; because competition will force them to go on cheapening manufacture in the teeth of an ever-increasing "reserve army of labour," which will last (and surely before long) be forced to employ itself—and where will the middle-class and its economical ears be then?

Will Lord Derby explain a thing which one would think might perplex many people? Optimist economists are apt to show with great glee the advantages of our present working population in the cheapness of living, on account of the low price of necessities and small luxuries; but the very same persons are not so glib, and deduce the same lesson of the general rise in the comfort of the people when they are able to show that the prices of commodities are rising. Lord Randolph Churchill, for instance, often says on safe ground at least when he encouraged the Kentish latitudes (beg pardon, Tories) with the good news of the rise in pepper and quicksilver; and a writer in the Daily News gets really quite jolly (there is no other word) in recommending the fact that Cheshire cheese is rising beyond all manner of doubt. What does it all mean? Is it good that prices should rise, or that they should fall, or that they both rise and fall! Here is perplexity for you, surely worthy of Colney Hatch—or Kent!

The Lord Mayor's Show is to change its character somewhat this year; there will be the usual sheriffs' and aldermen's carriages, and the company handsome and the usual circus show, and no doubt the usual amount of spectators, or perhaps more; but in addition there is to be a show, organised by the Social Democratic Federation, of the unemployed of London, which is likely to be a curious part of the proceedings. What are the real differences of opinion amongst the general tactics of the Federation as to the matter of the unemployed (and I for one do not agree with them), the demonstration will no doubt show the dominant classes the "difficulty" above mentioned in an impressive manner. Indeed, the mere announcement of the intention to organise the procession has set the whole of bourgeoisdom in a twitter, and has drawn from its press various oracular articles which betoken a bad conscience at least; the general tone of them, stripped of their verbiage is really "Can't you let it alone!" The bourgeois is hard to convince that what is on the whole a pleasant world to him is not as good for those whose misery makes his case; and his peevish anger at any one trying to lift a corner of the curtain for him knows no bounds, unless it is done in a merely dramatic manner, with no hint at ulterior consequences.
Colonel Fraser's letter to the Council of the Federation is not a satisfactory piece; it seems at least possible to read between its lines a threat of letting loose the indifferent rough on the procession. Anyhow, since it is clear that the Federation will do their utmost to make the demonstration of labour as attractive as possible, it is an orderly and dignity in the way of the police ensuring that result if they are in earnest in wanting to do so.

Meantime, the commercial classes are so nervous about the affair, that one gentleman has written to the Daily News proposing to withdraw the show this year, which a leader-writer in the same paper, with a statement of the association of the value of words, calls a bold proposal. The truth is that Colonel Fraser's force is so farcical, and so many people suffer from it, that the rich and well-do-to must expect to have their follies and pleasures interfered with by the necessities of those who have been so ill treated; but perhaps we are operating on too fine a basis, for since it is a good thing to reach their feelings through the tough hides of use and want, by any means that will do so without doing damage to the Cause in other ways.

WILLIAM MORRIS.

SOCIALISM FROM THE ROOT UP

CHAPTER XII.

THE UTOPISTs: OWEN, SAINT SIMON, AND FOURNIER.

It is now necessary for us to turn for a while from the political progress of Socialism, to note the school of thinkers who preceded the birth of modern scientific or revolutionary Socialism. These men thought it possible to regenerate Society by laying before it its shortcomings, and its social inhumanities. They proceeded through reasoning and argument to show the existence of classes of talent as expressed by the motto of Saint Simonists, "From each according to his capacity, to each according to his needs." In spite, however, of the tendency to mysticism, he omitted singular flashes of insight in matters historical and economic, and intellectually was certainly ahead of Robert Owen. He may be said to have set himself the task of learning all life by whatever means and at whatever expense, in order to devote himself to the new religion, "whose great aim is the widest possible amelioration of the moral and physical condition of the poorest and most numerous class." Thaddeus Frederick Engels, as well as of him: "As early as his Letters from Geneva, Saint Simon laid down that all men ought to work, and that the Reign of Terror had been the reign of the non-possessing masses. To face the fact in 1802 that the French Revolution was a struggle among the classes, the bourgeoise, was the discovery of genius. In 1816 he asserted that politics were but the science of production, and predicted their absorption by economy, and that the knowledge of the nature of wealth which institutions only shows itself here in the germ; nevertheless, this proposition contains clearly the conversion of the political government of men into an administration of things and a direction of the process of production; that is to say, the abdication of the State, of which such a noise has since been made."

Internationalism also was clearly enunciated by Saint Simon. We quote Engels: "With an equal superiority to his contemporaries, he declared in 1814, immediately after the entry of the allies into Paris, and again in 1815 during the war of the hundred days, that the sole guarantee of the peace and prosperous development of France, and the permanence of the union between France and the two countries with Germany. Certainly it needed a courage by no means common to preach to the French of 1815 alliance with the victors at Wagram."

It is worth noting that one of the schemes of the Saint Simonians, which was most ridiculed at the time, was the cutting of the Isthmuses of Suez and Panama, and that M. de Lesseps was a Saint Simonian.

Saint Simon died in great poverty in 1825, with words of hope for the future of the party on his lips.

Charles Fourier was born in 1772 at Lyons; his father was a draper. He set his hands to business in the Rue Montmartre as a business as a broker. Amidst his dealings with Society, he was early struck by the shortcomings and injustices of individualism and competition. In his first book, 'The Theory of the Four Movements; he establishes the position that human nature can be brought to perfection free play of the appetites and passions, and asserts that misery and vice spring from the restraints imposed by Society. His criticism of society's institutions was of the most valuable to the further progress of socialism; unlike his contemporaries he has an insight into the historical growth of Society: 'He divides it into four periods of development, Savagery, Barbarism, Patriarchalism, and Civilisation, meaning by the latter the Bourgeois Civilisation.' His saying, "In civilisation, poverty is born even of superabundance," may well be noted in these days, and compared with Robert Owen's in 1816, "Our best customer, than, is distress."

As a basis of the reconstruction of Society, Fourier advocated Industrial Co-operation; but here his Utopianism led him to the trap of formulating dogmatically an electorate scheme of life in all its details, and a system which would never be carried out because of the fact on which it was based might be. His scheme arranges for phalansteries as the unit of co-operation, in which all life and all industry, agricultural and other, should be carried on. He proposed that the object of each phalanstery be settled at 1600 souls. His most valuable idea was the possibility and necessity of appointing due labour to each capacity, and thereby assuring that each child should be always occupied. He proposed that the children, who generally like making dirt-pies and getting into a mess, should do the dirty work of the community, may at least be looked on as an illustration of this idea, though laid down as a formal law. His theory was that the condition of pure equals, that is to say, rich (and comparatively) poor; and advocated a fantastic division of wealth between labour, capital, and talent. The abolition of marriage was based on this doctrine.

In 1812, Fourier's mother died and left him some property, and he retired into the country to write his 'Treatise on the Association of Domesticity and Agriculture.' Afterwards he came to Paris again, became a clerk in an American firm, and wrote in 1830 his 'New In-