WOODEN LEGS.

We have had our Bank Holiday; the clerk is back to his bank or shop stool, the factory hand and seamstress to their machines, the housewife to her common drudgery. They think, perhaps, of the advantages of the single day's festivity, of cheap trains and omnibuses to carry them into towns, or out of them, into such country as is left.

Before dinner I paid a visit to the outskirts of the Canadian Blackwoods. There was sitting there a sturdy-looking man with his back leaning against one end of a bench; he had a rough cloth lying across his knees, and all that I could see of his legs as they lay there was a length of about three inches, and they were covered with a mass of greasy hair and ended in wooden stumps. I began to express sympathy for the calamity from which he had suffered. "Calamity is a strong word," said he; "I know, I think my condition was worse than much." I admired the bravery with which he looked on his loss, and asked him how it had happened. "Why," said he, "I had been working all alone at clearing a place out in the forest, and as sunset just as I was about to leave was going down, and over the edge of the rough path the feller unawares knocked me down and the trunk fell across one of my legs." "How horrible!" said I. "Horrible is a strong word," said he, "I wish you had seen it. I had nothing to offer it but my arm. So seeing there was no chance of help in that out o' the way place and at that time of night, I just chopped off the leg that was held fast by the tree-trunk." "Brave, bold man!" said I. "Bold is a strong word," said he, "it did not need much to cut it off. I cut straight across with the axe." I sat in amazement, but said nothing. "I got up," he continued, "and, tried to walk, but found it awkward work with one short and one long leg. So I just put the long one across a log, and my axe so made it as short as the other."

It shows what an advantage it is always to have your axe by you. I grasped his hand and cried, "Heroic man! Scowls was nothing to you, he put one hand into the fire, but you smile at the sacrifice of both legs." He stared and said, "Well, captain, I don't know what you are at with your bold men, and the fellow who burnt his hand, but if chopping through a bit of stick is thought so much of in your country, I wish you had not one hand, since you have no advantage to have wooden legs for trees to fall across!" "Ah!" said he, "they told me what an advantage it was to me that my legs and not my head were in the way of the cannon-ball at Gettysburg. I don't think much of that, but I'd rather have my natural feet to stand on, and to help me out of the way of danger." The advantages which we now enjoy seem to be of the wooden leg kind. The sewer railway, and the other stuffy means of locomotion in and about London, are an advantage perhaps in so widespread a desert; but it would be better that our towns should only be so large that we might easily get from end to end of them on our own legs. There is more reason for doing so in a more homogeneous population.

He can ease himself by means of the "free breakfast table" and of the free trade supply of margarine for butter. If, however, he had his own natural powers of mind to help him, instead of the artificial substitute of prejudice and custom, whereby he is caught under the heavy hand of the master, he would be still better off. His reason would tell him that free interchange between all peoples should be an instinct of their national life, and that we may make a clearing in the dense thicket of ignorance and sectarian jealousies.

C. J. F.

POOREES!—In addressing the British Medical Association, Sir Thomas Cavendish, Bart., M.D., showed that in the opinion of specialists, there is an unmistakable deterioration in the physique of the "lower" class. The evidence adduced seems to fully bear out this view. Professor Douglas, of King's College, said that nearly half the patients in the army surgeries and from out of this number the rejections were 3716 out of 1000. The chief cause, he said, was syphilis. By a large proportion made of rejections had risen to 4158 per 1000. Sir Thomas maintained this was good proof that during the last twenty-five years the general physical physique of the people had very much fallen. A peculiar eye disease due to vitiated atmosphere resulting from overcrowding is very common although quite preventable. The recruit drawn from the towns gave the largest proportion of rejection.

THE COMMONWEAL. August 20, 1887.

FEUDAL ENGLAND.

The Norman Conquest found a certain kind of feudality in existence in England; a feudality which was developed from the customs of the tribes that inhabited the land. The administration of the State was in the hands of the Normans, and the Conquest was thus made responsible for the Monday morning festivities of the Daily News! Here is solidarity with a vengeance.

WILLIAM MORRIS.
August 20, 1887.

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"AWKWARD FOR THE COO."

STEPHENSON, before the Board, ist constituted by a noble little lord—

"But suppose a cow should stray in the locomotive's way!"—answered a twinkle in eye, chuckled, too, with humour sly;

"Yes," said he, "that's very true, will be awkward for the coo."

Pompous dull capitalist, see the moral be not missed; resolution and discipline: the forward goes the New Crusade, seeks instead of care and strike fellowship and joy of life.

Awkward will be you if you choose to play the "coo."

C. W. BROCKET.

ON THE IRISH EVICTIONS.

As when a haunting person of shame Broods, a grim night-hag, on a sleeper's soul, Who sees and hears, yet vainly would control Some monstrous visioned of East and West, Of corporeal unity of sharing in the mechanical civilization of the peoples originally dominated by the Arabs, and infused by the art of Byzantium and Persia, without some tincture of the cultivation of the later classical period.

The stir and movement also of the Crusades, and the necessities in which they involved the princes and their barons, furthered the upward movement of the clergy, and placed into the hands of the secular clergy little; the principal opportunity for movement, however, in England, was given by the continuous struggle between the Crown and Church and Barons.

The early Norman kings, even immediately after the death of the Conqueror, found themselves involved in this struggle, and were forced to avail themselves of the help of what had now become the inferior clergy—the native English, to wit. Henry I, an able and ambitious man, understood this so clearly that he made a distinct bid for the favour of the inferior clergy by marrying an English princess; and it was by means of the help of his English subjects that he conquered his Norman subjects, and thus laid the foundations of the Church, which put the cogs in his success, was felt by the English people as an English victory over the oppressing tribe with which Duke William had overthrown them. The great shift, however, lay beyond the horizon of the clergy; it was during this king's reign and under these influences that the trading and industrial classes began to rise somewhat. The merchant guilds (of which subject of guilds more hereafter) were now in their period of greatest power, and had largely bought up the trade of England. The closing up of the liberties of the feudal lords, lay or ecclesiastical: for as to the latter, it must be remembered that the Church included in herself the orders or classes into which class society was divided, and while by its lower clergy of the parishes and (for the bishops) the clergy and people, it was the actual policy of the simply feudal lords; and as the religious fervour of the "cultivated clergy," which was marked enough in the earlier period of the Middle Ages. They were not only, but it is the practice, the alliance between the landlords, and more and more landlords, although from the public sense of fairness, markets living as they did on their land and amidst of their tenants, less oppressive than the lay landlords.

**Open Letter.—To Seab Carpenters and Renegades from a Boss.**

**BELIEVED SARES.**—I am glad to know that you are with us, i.e., that you favour the combination of your employees. We are organised for the purpose of looking after you and your welfare. You are the right hands that the executive board has now, and we are eager to help you. The reason for this is that we cannot crush out (and with your aid we will soon accomplish our object) those societies which are in conflict with the interests of the working man. We are pleased to know that you have taken a stand against such extortions. We are with you all the time and will continue to be so. We are made up of a number of carpenters that have been suspended for non-payment of dues. Sensible men are they! We are gratified to know that you are in like situation. We have to thank you for your sympathy among the building trades. Why should the painters on a job quit work because the tin rookers on the building are scale? To do so is to mercy on strangers, it is not for the good of the whole. We will not do this. We have organised in order to assist you, not to crush you. If you are willing to work for starvation wages, who shall attempt to prevent you? Your skill and labour is your own, and you should be let alone, too. We will redouble our efforts to assist you. We have been organised, that we have put a price on labour. They should be content to take what we offer. The time in coming, if you scale do your duty to us and yourselves, when there will be perfect harmony in the building trades, no strikes then, you know. You may all work then on the go-as-you-please plan, every one for himself, as he will. No one will be called a "seab" when we all get there. And we will get there if you will persuade those who are opposed follows that the Knights of Labour and trade unions are no good. The good old days of peace, hours, and low wages will then have been restored, and strikes, lock-outs, and all that sort abolished. We are not only to be the same, but are also to try and get a better condition in the building trade. We are the last vestige of an organisation in your trade, and then—you will be able to care of yourselves. —*Baltimore Free Press.*

*Now and then we see some smart twaddler talking about the community of interest which there is between Capital and Labour, and nine times in ten he don't know there is any difference between the associating of labour by capital, and the plundering of labour by capitalists.—*Canada Labour Reformer.*

The Socialists have been accused of "warring against the family." But you, comrades, should know that all well-conducted families are governed on communistic principles. Each member is expected to work according to his or her ability, and each receives from the household stock according to his or her needs. Therefore it is not so much a family arrangement, but our calumniators and antagonists. We wish to extend the family arrangement, not to destroy it. So much for one of the everlasting lies—*Radical Jack in Chicago Labour Engineer.*

**TO THE ANGLICANS.**

We can understand that there is something wanting in the moral make-up of a Reformer who is less anxious that the right shall triumph, than that the cause in the winning of a victory shall be duly recognised. 

Grants Labor Reform.

The Midland strike has collapsed. The last hope of the men was exting- uished, and the employers declared their acceptance of the conduct of the directors. It was part of the condition that he had agreed to hand when he politely told the memorialising members of Parliament who attended his meeting to lay before the members of the trade the conditions under which mediation or further conference, to mind their own business. The strike, which was doomed from the first by the men's want of courage and of ability useful in rendering the men's grievances known, and then so severe a check to the progress of the organisation and extended union. It is not yet apparent why the company seeks to get height of the prosecution season to drive their engine-men to revolt —unless it was to do them any other damage than that easily they can afford to be autocratic. The mere money loss it will take them a much longer time to get over, and then the saving needed to the arrangement. But the moral injuries of requiring the men to hold them- selves at the call of the company from week's end to week's end, and yet paying them only by the piece as they happen to be employed—that the company will not get over at all; it will stand recorded against them for ever. The need of support that the men have received from those engaged on other railways will do them no harm. But the above prove effective in ways that the Midland does not now think it necessary to include in its calculations. Moral principles live long, and they have showed ways of avenging their violation.—*Weekly Dispatch.*

**WILLIAM MORRIS.**

*(To be continued.)*