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WEEKLY; ONE PENNY.

NOTES ON NEWS.

A CERTAIN Mr. Pynes offered a petition to Lord Hartington as he made his triumphal entry into Dublin the other day, and his lordship declining in a royal way to accept it, Mr. Pynes adventurously threw it into the carriage, whereupon the police arrested him and he was brought before a magistrate next day; but luckily for him he was in Dublin and not in London (where there is no Coercion Act), so the magistrate dismissed the charge.

"The police, excited by the hooting, behaved like ruffians, and dealt blows with clenched fists to utterly harmless individuals who had remained within arm's length."—*Daily News*.

What! is the *Daily News* coming round, then? Why, we shall have Mr. Gladstone next taking some notice of the bludgeoning of "harmless individuals" by our "admirable police"—Nay, stop a little! This report is from *Paris*, not *London*!

For the information of our comrades and other readers in the country I should mention that, however incredible the account of the behaviour of the police to the prisoners of Bloody Sunday, as published by the *Pall Mall*, may seem to them, there is no doubt that it is true, and they must believe in it. Indeed, after all, is there anything to wonder at in it? Such brutality is the blossom of the slum-life enforced on the "lower classes" by our civilisation. Enlist that brutality in the service of a class whose one business is to uphold the oppression on which it lives; when occasion demands it, harass your enlisted brutality by sending it fools' errands up and down, and down and up; make it clear to the servants of law and order that in such service they can only commit one fault—to wit, behaving civilly and decently; promote men like Mr. Superintendent Shepherd, to show your "admirable police" what model they should follow; and then sit down quietly and without fear, enwrapped in your respectability, and you may be quite sure of the results.

The preliminary trial of Cunninghame Graham and Burns in Bow Street was curious to witness and sufficiently damaging to the Government and its tool Wooden Warren—*i.e.*, it would have been if the evidence for the defence had not been suppressed by the daily papers. Of course if Mr. Vaughan had not been practically under orders he must have dismissed the case, but equally of course it was more than his place was worth to do. The police gave their evidence in the usual way, and if there is any truth in an old saw, there must be few pots in the neighbourhood which have kept their legs, especially after Shepherd had done *his* duty. He was well "sorted" by Mr. Asquith in cross-examination: the latter, by the way, was a brilliant contrast to that Knight of the Doleful Countenance, Mr. Poland, and I am really sorry that he is a lawyer.

The evidence for the defence was so clear and unanswerable that Poland had nothing for it but the regular traditional brow-beating, which served his turn very poorly, not only, as was to be expected, with such an old stager as Mr. Bradlaugh, or with Mr. Hyndman (who he had the impudence to ask to give the names of the others who formed the group about Mr. Graham and Burns), but even with the ordinary witnesses. In short, Poland tried hard to establish that the Government had with great difficulty quelled a dangerous riot headed by the defendants, and only succeeded in showing that the police attacked Graham and Burns as they attacked other citizens on that day.

Of course, unless the jury is very well packed, our friends will be acquitted; but one can't help asking, supposing Burns had been by himself, what would have happened? And again, how about the victims of the drum-head court-martial, with no clever Mr. Asquith (he is clearly very clever) to defend them, and no respectable witnesses like Sir E. J. Reid and Mr. Bradlaugh on their side? We shall have to ask, as we asked before, if these men are acquitted or only have a formal sentence, what is to be done to compensate the defenceless men who have been sentenced, and what ignominious punishment is to be meted out to their sentencers?

I came in for a quaint little piece of coercion last Friday. I had been invited to lecture on Socialism and the "disturbances" in London in the parish school-room at Buscott, a little village high up the Thames, by the rector, our friend Mr. Oswald Birchall. It had been

agreed some little time back by the squire and other village magnates, who at the time wanted the said school-room for Primrose League purposes, that it should be free to speakers of all parties; so I went down expecting the usual quiet meeting; but at the last minute the said magnates forbade the meeting, I believe on the grounds that they expected a riot if I showed there. Then they stole a march on Mr. Birchall by locking up the room and taking the key away and "picketing" the room to send away anyone who might come to the meeting. We tried to get the publican to let us have a room, which, however, he declined to do, fearing, not without reason, the wrath of the squire and farmers. However, things went pretty well, as, in spite of all precautions, a few of the right sort had gathered round the school-room and with these we adjourned to the rectory, where we had a very useful meeting, the men listening very attentively and sympathetically. The true story of the "riots" was clearly quite new to them, the *Pall Mall* (not to speak of the *Commonweal*) being of course tabooed in the neighbourhood; but they were clearly much impressed by it, and will spread it about wherever they go. I may say that men like this are not slow to learn the facts of their present position, their slavery to the farmers being so direct that it presses on them every day. A good distribution of leaflets would be fruitful among such men: though many of them cannot read, they would get them read to them.

Mr. Thompson did his best to get a mandamus to compel Mr. Vaughan to hear evidence about the police attack on November 20th on a band of harmless processionists. It was a matter of course that the two "Justices" stuck close to their brother Nupkins of Bow Street, but it is not a very cheering prospect for those who believe that the law will do anything to protect "discontented" people; whether they are "discontented" at having the results of their labour stolen in the lump, or at having their musical instruments stolen every now and then directly to the tune of "Wigs on the Green."

A show of pet dogs opened at St. Stephen's Hall is a good example of the way in which labour is organised amongst us at present, to produce luxuries and to stint the people of necessaries, to say nothing of comforts. Perhaps Alderman Knight will suggest that some of the unemployed should have the job of combing the dogs.

Meantime, poor Linnell lies dead, slain by what I suppose the bourgeois press, when they are forced to say something about it, will call a "lamentable accident." It is, however, the kind of "accident" which is likely to become common enough as, on the one hand, the workers become conscious of the fact that they are robbed of the greater part of their earnings, and become less and less inclined to put up with it, and as on the other hand those who live by the robbery get more and more frightened and therefore more and more repressive.

The Lord Mayor of Dublin is sent to prison, in spite of all his state in a sort of mediæval fashion: but the authorities have been afraid of sending him as a proper prisoner, and so have spoilt their joke in a very contemptible manner. I remember when I was a boy I used to hear a good deal about "gentlemen-farmers" (a profession which I suppose has now ceased to exist, what between agricultural depression and the elevation of all farmers to the rank of gentlemen). It seems as if a similar addition must be made in these cases also, and that some people must serve their time as gentlemen-prisoners. The Lord Mayor deserves and has our condolence in having to submit to this insult of gentlemanliness.

WILLIAM MORRIS.

A VOICE FROM AMERICA.

[The following brief account of the events which led to the murder of five working-men and the living death of three others, shows how seriously this terrible and shameful event has stirred people in America in contrast with the interested lying silence of our bourgeois press and the lamentable apathy (the result of ignorance one would fain hope) of our working-classes.—Ed.]

THE EIGHT HOURS' MOVEMENT.

In October, 1884, the Federation of Trade and Labour Unions of the United States and Canada, then in Session in Chicago, resolved that on and after the first day of May, 1886, eight hours should constitute a day's work, and determined to use every endeavour to make the movement a success. In November, 1885, a few individuals in Chicago met and organised the "Eight Hour Association of Chicago." They issued a manifesto, and concluded with the following words, to-day full of significance: "Do you think that capitalists are justified in using