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NOTES ON NEWS.

THE tremendous mares' nest of the *Times*, big enough for the hatching of a division of cavalry, about the New York Dynamiters, is at first sight only a cause for laughter. One need not suppose that the wonderful and mysterious correspondent mentioned by that voracious journal manufactured the lie himself. He was (if he existed) probably some egregious fool on the hunt for something to please his employers, and glad enough to accept the wildest yarn of a Yankee joker. That is all very funny: but when one remembers that there are men on their trial for suspicion of plotting dynamite this idiotic lie wears another garb, let alone the convenience of pretending to believe anything that may be used as a weapon against the Irish party. However, it may be hoped that this time the story is too preposterous to have much effect.

The war scare is not subsiding—indeed, is rather on the increase; but perhaps, as was said last week, Bismarck's army bill will account for it. It is not easy to believe that the absolutist governments are really inclined to court the dangers of foreign war, with the ever increasing discontent which their armies must leave behind them when they march to the frontier; nor is it easy to see at present anything to force them into war.

But besides his army bill the German dictator has another bill on hand, a bill to make the anti-Socialist law still more stringent; amongst other matters in it is a provision for the International Congress of working men which is being organised for next year: it will be a penal offence involving loss of citizenship to take part in any Socialist congress. Perhaps some of our German friends can tell us what is likely to come of this. Meantime our own government is requested to take note and to learn something new from this passed master in it.

The police are to have a medal for their services in last summer's Jubilee raree-show. Here is a chance for the Government: why don't they strike a medal and present it to the force for their services on November 13th? It would be quite according to precedent: the Treasury honouring the first Commissioner of Police; two such dignified powers as that. In like manner the Pope struck a medal in honour of the French King after the massacre of St. Bartholomew. If the medal is struck (and by the way, King Warren's face should be on the obverse), the poor specials also ought to be decorated with it.

Mr. Justice Stephen's sentence on Harrison, convicted on police evidence of attacking and wounding the police, is the most infamous deed yet done in the infamous chain of injustice and cruelty of the present Tory Terror. The cold and cruel pedant Stephen has at last earned a title to distinction. It is true he is well known to a limited circle as a specimen of legal shoddy yarn, and I believe has enthusiastic admirers of his very commonplace feats in that line; but these fools, who are but few, will die presently and their hero will be forgotten as a pettifogging writer: as a cold and cruel pedant and enemy of truth and reason he may yet be remembered.

Yet if one could forget his existence it would be happier for us: so let us consider one or two things this soulless pedant said as spoken by the chair he sat on, and then say a word about them with less disgrace than if we spoke of him. The *Thing* laid down the doctrine that the "law of England undoubtedly was that if the police or any other authority gave notice that any particular proceeding would not be permitted to take place it was the duty of the parties concerned to obey the notice and then to take any remedy which the law might give them if the notice was illegal." Might I ask the *Thing* what remedy it advises Alfred Linnell to take?

It is well that we know the law, however, and that we understand how far we have drifted from the rough days of our forefathers, who with all their shortcomings never meant this, which simply implies that persons in authority by reason of their authority are free from the responsibilities of citizenship. The hide-bound pedant above-mentioned does us some service in stating this so clearly.

The coercionist rag the *Daily News*, with all the fervour of a new convert, very naturally highly approves of the law-grinder's sentence; which doesn't look well for the attempt which is to be made in Parliament to call attention to these shameful pieces of legal tyranny. Can-

not we turn from such sneaks and try to find an enemy with some spark of generosity in him. Is there not some stout Tory hard-hitter to say, "Stop that, you legal fools! The man held principles that I loathe, and if I had come across him in the row I would have given him one for his knob; but after all he did what I would have done, struck a good stroke or two in a shindy in which he was excited by seeing all sorts of violence going on. Don't be fools and call it a crime: say you have got him and mean to serve him out—though I should let him go since he got out of the scrimmage unhurt." That's what a generous enemy lighted by the light of reason would say. Is there nobody to come forward and say it?

c The bourgeois press is very naturally spiteful over the great success of Linnell's funeral, and of course the procession and the spectators are called roughs, rowdies, thieves, and the like. What a lie this is those know best who were eye-witnesses of this great demonstration, and saw the quiet but sympathetic behaviour of the crowd, incalculable as to number. However, let us not trouble as to the lie, for if all that crowd were rowdies and roughs, the *Times* supporters should be shaking in their shoes—as one hopes they may one day have to do with better reason. Meantime the words rowdy, rough, and thief are clearly changing their meaning, and are coming to signify an honest and hard-working man, as opposed to a useless person who lives on other people's labour; for such worthless rags who are our present rulers it is not worth while finding a name. W. M.

Last week, the *Pall Mall* in a spirited rough sketch contrasted the position at the present time of the two Sullivans—one, the bully and bruiser, an honoured equal of the future king of England—the other, poet and patriot, within four walls for having published reports of "suppressed" branches of the National League in his paper. By the idlers 50 guineas are paid readily to see the illegal prize-fight which will gratify their degraded lust, and on which the vigilant police will keep a blind eye steadily—two years' amount of an agricultural labourer's wages given by those who did not produce it to see this brutal exhibition!

Not that boxing is necessarily brutal, or fighting to be condemned. But when it is done for pay it becomes debasing both for those that hire and those that are hired. Informers, policemen, and prizefighters are not only themselves lowered by being the mercenary tools of others, but those others in their turn are injured far more by the vicarious gratification of their blood-lust, than if they themselves "defended law'n'order" or pounded one another in the ring.

The working-men of Prague held a meeting on Sunday, the 11th, when a resolution was passed to the effect that the Czech working-men will show their superior culture by holding aloof from all national squabbles, and by refusing to become the tools of selfish persons who trade on the Home Rule movement in the country. They may not be Socialists, but this looks on the surface as if there were a strong infusion of international feeling among them.

Moscow University has been closed, in consequence of the recent "riotous" conduct of the students, who beat an inspector, and insulted their rector. The papers have been strictly forbidden to mention the occurrence, and are obeying, of course. The fact is, as Prince Bismarck long ago advised, that all the Russian Universities should be abolished; they are institutions incompatible with autocratic rule, and must either be ended by despotism or they will end it.

It was very funny to read of the conference of landlords in Dublin on the 13th, and their declaring that compensation was due them "on various grounds." They decided to await awhile before deciding what form it should take. That men so crassly stupid should exist is rather depressing than amusing, but one cannot help a smile when looking at the colossal impudence of their demand. If they put off the decision as to the form they would have it take for very long, it may be decided sharply for them!

The *Globe* was deeply exercised over the announcement that William Morris, Malcolm Lawson, and Walter Crane had joined in the commemoration of poor Linnell's fate. But it was easy to see from whence the sorrow arose. If only all men of recognised standing would keep aloof from such movements, it would be easier for the *Globe* to sneer them down; even the besotted readers of that "respectable" paper cannot fail to see through its hollow pretences when they are given the lie by so many men whose reputation compels a hearing. S.