SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 1887.

WILLIAM HENRY THOMAS.

The Official Journal of the Socialist League.

VOL. 3.—NO. 58. SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 1887. WEEKLY; One Penny.

NOTES ON NEWS.

SIR CHARLES WARENS (no doubt in self-defence and defence of the police) has given a blow to contemporary history as written by the daily newspapers. The very latest number of The Wicked Socialist and the Heroic Butcher, which is, after all, perhaps the very latest chapter of the solar myth. The bright and ruddy face of the daily papers, the cloudy night with the glittering bright of its bright rays must be, according to the solar theory, what is really typified by this apparently historical incident. Mr. Andrew Lang perhaps could tell us what it might signify according to the explanation of the "customary" theory of myths.

To one person it must have signified victuals and drink, temporarily at least; to wit, to the ingenious gentleman who produced the detailed and delightful account of a Bowling Game in the Daily News. I hope I have all due professional sympathy with our injured contemporary, but I really cannot help saying with Mr. Bounderby in "Hard Times," "We are walking to hear what apology you are going to offer us for going about the country express with no other luggage than a story of a cock and a bull!"

The Pall Mall Gazette gave us lately the account of interviews with various business men as to the present condition of trade. The views of these gentlemen were mostly what will appear under the present circumstances may be called optimistic, that is they all seemed to think that things were mending a little. But, after all, what they said amounted to little more than that the public were getting rather easier for investments, which fact may mean nothing more than the beginning of a brief swindle-period.

Judging by the condition of production, which is indicated by the plain statement of facts given in the columns of our own paper under the heading "The Labour Struggle," it seems to be the case that it does mean. The hunger-riots of the Scotch coal miners also do not point to our nearing a period of want-sufficing prosperity.

Mr. Bright "is at it again." He really does seem as if he were determined to show that his claim to have been a popular leader was mere moonshine; it would be difficult for any enemy of his to be successful in this demonstration as Mr. Bright himself.

The Daily News the other day was righteous indignantly with the sentence of a country magistrate on a labourer, convicted of the terrible offence of setting traps to catch wood-pigeons, for which in the upshot the poor man got two months' imprisonment. Probably, however, such sentences are as common as frosts in winter, and not nearly so much noticed. Our own experience has taught us that, since neither the Daily News nor any other bourgeois paper made any comment on Judge Napkins-Grantham's sentence on Mowbrary and Henderson; the Pall Mall Gazette joining in the conspiracy of silence, although when convenient it can say a good deal about the doing of one section of the Socialists.

The Chiswick poisoning mystery has been explained, say the daily papers: the Government analyst has failed to detect any traces of irrotant poison of the contents of the stomachs of the two children... having regard to the fact that the mother and six children slept in a single bed in a room only measuring 8 ft. by 9 ft., and that the cold and the scanty covering on the bed and the clothing generally in the house compelled them to huddle together to keep themselves warm, etc., etc. At one time all ingress of fresh air into the room where for hours there had been a loud breathing he has, it is reported, come to the conclusion that the cause of the death of the children was vitiated atmosphere. Misery is a shorter word than vitiated atmosphere, and yet a more explanatory one. I suppose these victims of vitiated atmosphere will not be set among the record of those who were starved to death! (I have not patience to remember the euphemism for that), but starved to death they were.

In his first debate with Mrs. Besant Mr. Foote affected (surely it was affected) scorn at those who distinguish between competition and emulsion, and asked what was the difference between them. Mr. Foote knows well enough that in combination, as the word is used in English, means seeking one's own advantage at the expense of one's neighbours (compare the French "concurrence"). As to emulation, judging by the tone of his attack on Socialism, it is probable that he does not understand what that means, as it is certainly a generous quality. To give the difference between the two, shortness emulsion means making the best of one's own capacity; competition, making the worst of one's neighbour's.

Mr. Bradlaugh was enthusiastically cheered at a meeting held on behalf of the crofters for saying amongst other things, "that we have no right to pauperise the crofters by law and sentience them into other lands to die." Most true; but how strange that Mr. Bradlaugh should object to the substitution of the word "working-men" for crofters! He has been lately taking some trouble to attack those who are trying to show that we have no right to pauperise, not the crofters only, but all workers, by forcing them to yield to "capital" a tribute for leave to work—that is, to live. How utterly illogical is it in him to attack also a small section of the monopolists of the means of production!

They have exactly the same "rights of property" as every one else has, neither less nor more; and those rights leave them free to use or abuse their property according to their own will. If the abuse of their property should be interfered with, why not other abuses of property? And is it not an abuse of property to employ it as a mere means of compulsion to force other men to work for the compeller—or private thief? How can it matter whether the instrument of violent robbery is called "land" or "capital"?

One of the signs of the times is the manifestation of decadence in the superstitious reverence for "law" which was afforded several times during the debate on Mr. Parnell's amendment. Two lawyers, one the senior Chief Justice, led the attack upon "law", and put very plainly and well the position that a "law" is an abridgment and a crime unless "approved by the moral sense of the community at large." Mr. Holmes, the Attorney-General for Ireland, was—and the Spectator lamented it piteously—in despair over ever again getting people to obey laws in which they do not believe.

Mr. John Morley put into a phrase the other day the history of the people everywhere. It was much more than "the history of Ireland in a nutshell" that he called it. "Unredressed grievances, moral wrongs without a legal remedy, and then the resort to illegal acts to secure justice." 8.

The Criminal Classes of the Future.

A RETROSPECT AND A PROSPECT.

The persistent preaching of Socialist principles had leavened men's minds with new ideas, and the old prejudices of our jails and convict establishments had given place to a feeling that they were more sinned against than sinning. Bad training amidst filth, squalor, and manifold temptations, were held as (outside the judicial bench) excusable condonement of offences against property. There, on the contrary, the feelings of the people became more liberal, the harshness of their decisions became more marked. Shameful sentences and gross partiality were the order of the day. Prison discipline bore the marks of the haters of the people, and the brutal tortures of the past were replaced with refined cruelties. That made a sentence of imprisonment, in many cases, a sentence of death. Paucity cases of half-starved desperate men sent to jail for stealing food, with the brutal comments of the well-fed magistrate ringing in their ears, of paupers ill-treated with impunity by workhouse jaiers, and of myriads preferring to live and die by the roadside rather than accept the brutal charity of a convict society, were the order of the day. The mass of unemployed workmen were insulted by the paid hirelings of the alfrighted bourgeois with schemes of dietetic reforms, sterilisation, etc., etc. It seemed that the old saying that those whom the "Gods seek to destroy they first make mad" was having its illustration in Old England. Alternating with the insults as to raggedness, laziness, and depravity heaped upon the dispossessed, were demands for bludgeoning and coercion; and the Russian legislation, hitherto confined to the sister island, was made applicable to the whole kingdom. The police, acting on the cue of their em- ployers, changed their tactics of petty spydom for wholesale arrests, and plots smacking of the "Woolf and Bondurand" flavour were common discoveries.

FOOTNOTES.

1. This is not the time to enter into a detailed discussion of the question of the crofters. It is sufficient to say that the crofters are not only justly entitled to their claim, but that their cause is one of the noblest in the world. They are struggling against the most cruel and inhuman oppression, and their struggle is a noble one. The crofters are men of the highest moral and intellectual qualities, and they are struggling for the rights of all the working-people of the world. They are fighting for the right of all men to live, and to live in peace and tranquility, and their cause is one that shall be heard and acknowledged by all men who love freedom and equality.

2. It is a question of great importance whether the crofters are to be permitted to live in the most. The question is one that shall be decided by the government, and the crofters shall be permitted to live in the most. The question is one that shall be decided by the government, and the crofters shall be permitted to live in the most. The question is one that shall be decided by the government, and the crofters shall be permitted to live in the most. The question is one that shall be decided by the government, and the crofters shall be permitted to live in the most.

3. It is a question of great importance whether the crofters are to be permitted to live in the most. The question is one that shall be decided by the government, and the crofters shall be permitted to live in the most. The question is one that shall be decided by the government, and the crofters shall be permitted to live in the most. The question is one that shall be decided by the government, and the crofters shall be permitted to live in the most. The question is one that shall be decided by the government, and the crofters shall be permitted to live in the most.