NOTES ON NEWS.

The police have been at it again, and this time, as they have been bearing false witness against "revolutionaries" or persons who happened to be mixed up with them, but against ordinary citizens not guilty a priori of the crime of "demonstrating," they have got into trouble, and the public prosecutor is to look into the matter. Couldn't he go a few weeks backward and look into the cases of the "rioters" of the past winter?

In all soberness, the attention which has been paid to Mr. Montagu Williams's sacking of the police brings out the cowardly injustice of society towards the victims of the raid on free speech into yet stronger relief than before. To judge by the tone of the press about this affair, one would suppose that no accusations had ever been made against the police, that the whole public are perfectly satisfied that their evidence against Harrison and Ellis and dozens of others was admitted to be spottlessly true, and that everybody "run in" for anything (or for nothing) connected with Trafalgar Square was even himself persuaded that he had received a perfectly fair trial. Surely no hypocrisy has ever come anywhere near the Pharisianism of modern bourgeois England!

I get papers from candidates for the vestry shoved into my door at times, besides the voting paper. Some of the former are droll. One candidate appears to me to be at least frank; he says he shall consider it one of his principal duties to see that the contracts are given to persons in the neighbourhood, or words to that effect. The same gentleman says that he will do his best to see that those unfortunate persons who are in need of relief shall, as far as possible, be treated with a fair amount of comfort and consideration. Here is qualification with a vengeance!

The economics of some of our leading papers are wonderful indeed. The *Daily News*, for instance, says, quoting Major Roe about work at Birmingham: "With a machine of power-driven output, daily increasing, with the result of increased output and the substitution of women and youths for the skilled artisan; on the other hand, the men are more than compensated by the increased demand for them in the manufacture of tools and machinery." Which must clearly mean, if it means anything, that the manufacturer, having got rid of human labour at one end of the process, mass up all the displaced labour at the other end, and has besides saddled himself with machinery which he has had to pay for and cannot use, and that he does this without compensation.

On the whole, it is easier to believe that the *Daily News* gets its minor leader-writers from Colney Hatch than to believe this.

Indeed, this explanation gathers credibility as one reads further where the writer, having informed us in the first-quoted passage that women and boys are being substituted for skilled artisans, goes on to tell us that it is the case that the days of unskilled labour are numbered. With a leer in his eye and a straw or two and a peacock's feather in his hair, he finishes by drawing a moral for us, the oft-spoken tale that all is for the best in this best of possible worlds, wherein the capitalist can still make a profit out of other people's labour. "Thanks to the Education Act, the condition of the working classes is better than it used to be; they spend both their wages and their leisure better than of old. Technical instruction and sober diligence will be the salvation of many British industry." Yes; but he means the salvation of much British capital. Make technical education so common that it is no longer of any market value, thinks the capitalist, and then we shall be able to get the skilled worker at the cost of the unskilled; let every workman (that is employed) work two hours a day more than he does now, and it will put so much more into our pockets, as we shall pay the same for the twelve hours as we do now for the ten. This is the way to safeguard British industry against foreign competition.

Yet education, technical instruction, and sober industry are good things—so good that it is grievous indeed to see them made use of to cheaper labour," that is, to make legal stealing safer and more profitable. However, let us have courage; education is a dangerous gift to give to slaves. What does our author from Colney Hatch think will be the result (if we should come to it, and we are coming to it) of a class of skilled artisans unemployed, or reduced to the ranks, and at the same time "educated" by book-learning as well as suffering? No men, surely, have ever set themselves more busily to sow the wind for the harvest of the whirlwind than our anti-Socialist "Liberal" capitalists.

W. M.

So there has actually been a plot against Mr. Balfour discovered, after all this time of coercion. Of course no sane man believes in any possible utility resulting from the use of dynamite after the manner of the American Fenians. But surely the terms of moral indignation in which the fact was chronicled by certain journalistic advocates of Home Rule partakes of the nature of "cant." Most of these journalists profess to believe in the accuracy of Mr. Blunt's charges against Mr. Balfour. Mr. Balfour on this assumption has tried to kill his political adversaries, the American Fenians do the like, only perhaps more mercifully. The only difference otherwise is that Mr. Balfour is within the law in doing what he does and acts indeed as the representative of the law, whereas the American dynamiters are without the law. But if they, being without the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, it would hardly seem that any special moral blame attaches to them—at least from the point of view of a law-abiding journalist. The American Fenian might surely say to Mr. Balfour and his friends, "How can you, possessed of such magnificence at home (i.e., for purposes of coercion)—goals, plank beds, cola 7 feet by 10, etc., etc.—eave me a humble can of dynamite?"

Freedom according to the conceptions of the modern capitalists is admirably illustrated by the proposals of the syndicate of London bankers and merchants relative to the affairs of Morocco. According to the views of those persons, Morocco is to be compelled to receive European shoddy and to "open itself up" by telegraphs and railways, on pain of forfeiting its "integrity"—that is, of being dismembered by the European band of harpies. The Moors don't want the shoddy goods or the telegraphs or the railroads, they just expend their substance on things they don't want and had much rather do without, for the benefit of the entreprenuing European capitalists, commercial and industrial, the first of whose wants to force his wares, and the second to start mining and other operations, at the expense of the unfortunate native. Even the *Daily News* is impressed with the ironical nature of "independence" on such terms.

E. B. B.

Canterbury is doubtful just now whether to laugh or cry over the alteration in its police arrangements. Among the exposures that moral-miracles have made of themselves, no scandals have come to light much worse than those of the ancient town. As a consequence the superintendent has resigned, a constable been dismissed, another degraded, and the city police will be abolished. In future Canterbury will be policed by the county constabulary, and its inhabitants are by no means sure that they will be better off.

It looks like a retrograde step on the part of the municipality, this
A LETTER FROM INDIA.

A rather remarkable Report on Taxation has recently been published by the Government of Bombay. For the eight years ending 1885-6 taxes have been levied—professors and Government servants being exempt—the maximum which any one party or firm had to pay was £20 and the minimum £1. Below I give the total amounts which had been levied for the years 1878, 1881, and 1885:

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Bombay City, Total</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1878</td>
<td>£20,000</td>
<td>£25,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>1881</td>
<td>£70,000</td>
<td>£80,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>1885</td>
<td>£81,000</td>
<td>£120,000</td>
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It will be seen that the collections from the country districts steadily declined; those in Bombay just as steadily rose; while the total collections for the whole of India (three-quarters) consist of the port of Bombay and one-half the country, two-fifths of the whole, and one-half of the country together are not improving in material prosperity under the aegis of British rule.

In 1886 an income-tax of 3½ per cent. was imposed by the then-Secretary of State for India, Lord Randolph Churchill, to help make good the deficit caused by the frantic policy of preparing to fight Russia by means of frontier railways in the mountains of Beluchistan and Afghanistan. This income-tax is levied upon trades, professions, and business incomes. It is not to be levied upon agricultural produce or exempt. This tax produced in the Bombay Presidency £300,000 only, equivalent to an average tax per head of the population of 3½. The law was based on the idea that the more money a man accumulates, the more money by the rich, who by means of usury in its many ramifications make the poor their slaves. The course of British government in India is no exception to this rule. The above Government report most insistently shows that in the country districts of the most backward—i.e., those who live by lending money to the cultivators to pay the Government land-rent, or by lending them grain for seed and sustenance. The tax has been imposed in the proportion varying from three-fourths as the maximum to one-third as the minimum in thirteen principal collects. The average tax paid by the money-lender in the country, £2, 10s., while in Bombay, it is double this amount. These figures will greatly tend to confirm the opinion, so strongly urged by Mr. Hyndman, that India is becoming the poorer under British rule.

You may perhaps have seen the Sir Lepal Griffin, who last year stumped England as Parliamentary candidate of the Jingo class, and greatly offended Americans by the irreverent remarks he expressed upon the types of civilization rumpart in the States. As a sign of the times, it is worth while to quote some passages of the speech he recently made at the investiture by one of the Indian Jubilee prancing of the insignia of the Most Emigrant Order of the Indian Empire.

The Rajah is rich, but after all, admiration for wealth, apart from its power to do good, is like the G.C.I., granted, like the G.C.I., in England, for reasons altogether apart from merit or virtue. Its insignia may be the monopoly of the Rajah of Bengal and the Rajah of Berar.

The old order changes, yielding place to the new. The idea of Divine Right, repudiated by the sentiment of civilized Europe, has taken refuge with barbarism in India. The Rajah is rich, but after all, the Rajah is only the Rajah of Berar.

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