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NOTES ON NEWS.

THE School Board election for London has passed over, leaving behind it the usual electioneering dregs of defeated ambitions, empty boasts, compromises which no one believed in when they were made, and which will be sorely regretted hereafter by many who made them. As for the results, they are little except the dregs. For what does it all come to, this virulent storm in a saucer? In any case the children will be taught something; in no case can there be any satisfactory education under our present sham society; and the whole theory of School Board education is a bad one, even for our present system.

Setting all other considerations aside, is it worth the wear and tear for Socialists, who have so much work before them in merely putting before people the bare elements of their creed, to spend their energies, first in electioneering and next in the committee-room grind, in doing work which would be done quite as well, if external pressure were put upon them, by Radicals and Secularists, who otherwise hinder the work of propaganda?

The one thing of any real importance which could be done at once for the children is getting them the free meal, and it seems to me that with moderate pushing from the outside this could be got; not, of course, from pedants of the Lyulph Stanley kind, but from Radicals or even Tories not desperately committed to party shibboleths. The late cartoon in that very bourgeois print, *Punch*, in which the poor little advanced scholar claims something to still the cravings of hunger before going on with his "intellectual" work (save the mark!), is sufficient indication that the suggestion of this piece of elementary humanity and common-sense is not so terrifying to the general public as it used to be.

Lord Salisbury has been bidding high for Whig abuse, and will probably have his belly-full of it in these current days. And indeed he may be always trusted at a crisis to say the most snobbish thing that can be said, and his "Black-man" utterance quite comes up to the standard expected of him. The jeers at the Irish members, though rather stale now, and the heads on Temple Bar, are also reasonably good in the blackguarding line, and probably show that the most noble is not very hopeful of the coming election (when it does come).

But attack on this stupid reactionary "splitting of the ears of the groundlings" does not come with a good grace from journals which are revolutionary in Ireland and Whig in England. Until the *Daily News* breaks the conspiracy of silence on the judicial murder of Socialists or Anarchists who were slain for their opinions in a crisis that coward society thought dangerous, it ought to hold its tongue on Lord Salisbury's ferocious but harmless hints. Until its brother Whig the *Star* has learned that the whole duty of man is not limited to the returning of Gladstonian Whigs to Parliament at any cost, it ought also to hold its tongue; unless it is prepared to admit the fact that as to morals and principles it heartily agrees with Lord Salisbury's "short way with revolutionists" though the exigencies of party warfare compel it to pretend to be his opponent.

W. M.

Replying to a protest against his slanders upon the Chicago martyrs, the editor of the *Star*, Mr. Thomas Power O'Connor, says of them: "They did not deny that Lingg handed about his consignment of bombs at their meeting, just as they did not deny that they shot the policemen before the policemen shot them." Now, it is not too much to say that of all the fictions and forgeries of the *Times*, over which the *Star* has been shrieking so pitifully, not one is so gratuitously mean and false as this. Neither of these things were denied, because neither of them were asserted. Until the *Star* took it in hand, there was not found a creature foul enough to father such a lie. Even the Chicago blood-hunters and Pinkerton thugs recoiled from such a task; it has been left to the magnanimous, the enlightened Thomas Power O'Connor, parasite of the Liberal party and editor of the *Star*.

As he has made an assertion never made before, as he has gone even beyond the disproven indictment, will he now condescend to give some rag or scrap of reason for saying what he does?

Will he also condescend to reconcile the apparent contradiction between his notes on the Chicago affair with the following note, cut from his consistent columns?—

"It is difficult to feel angry with a man who, so to speak, 'gives himself away' like this. But let it not be forgotten what a light this throws upon the true inwardness of coercion, upon the animus which actuates the present rulers of this country towards their political opponents. A line further on Lord Salisbury is speaking of 'political murderers,' and the usual mode of dealing with them. Whether he has any particular political murderer in his eye at this moment is left in doubt, but we cannot forget the inquiry proceeding simultaneously with this speech, the efforts of Lord Salisbury's Attorney-General to fix on the Irish Parliamentary party the responsibility for the crimes of the Moonlighters. Political murderers! Yes; in the eyes of Lord Salisbury and those of his school of political thought, whenever the opposition of the privileged classes to a movement of the people has resulted in bloodshed, the leaders of the people (not the leaders on the other side) are 'political murderers.' Mazzini was a political murderer; John Hampden and George Washington were political murderers, and had they been unsuccessful would doubtless have been condemned by the Salisbury of the day to lose their heads or be blown from guns."

S.

It is asserted by a Glasgow paper that sailors *can be well fed* for 11½d. per head per day, and an instance is quoted of a long voyage where it was done for 10½d. The editor did not say what the men, for whom the sailor toils and risks his life, "can be well fed for," but it is obvious that his code of right would allow as much to the ship-master's dog as to the sailor. Sailors take note.

Railways are the favourite investment of clergymen in Scotland for their surplus "earnings." To put their spare cash in such a safe investment is better, in their eyes, than lending it to the Lord (giving it to the poor), for they are certain it will return to them *before* many days. It gives them also the soothing satisfaction that they are providing work for working-men. The providing of wages is another matter.

Those clergymen who grow rich and important by speculations of divers sorts never think of providing work for themselves. Neither are they concerned whether the employments their pious investments provide are profitable to the workers, or whether their dividends are not the transformed life's-blood of the workers they allege to benefit; thus making such clergy accessories to slow murder, which is more cruel than sudden death.

When I hear, as I have done, those clergymen, with their safe investments, denouncing from their pulpits the victims of their dividends for their scanty church collections, and the pulpit unctuously assuring the pew that the latter by its want of practical enthusiasm is undermining the power of the former for "good," I cannot refrain from letting the sun go down upon my wrath.

A glance at the wages paid to the people in the pews and the dividends paid to the parsons in the pulpits, will explain the scantiness of the church collections and the decay of pulpit power for "good." By the bye, the church-door collections of the parish churches in Scotland belong by law and right to the poor of the parish, and, as these collections never reach the poor, it would be of interest to know who annexes them, and why they are diverted from their legitimate and lawful object.

But, to enquire into the nature of these clergymen's railway dividends, we find it stated by a booking-clerk that he has to work 12 and 13 hours a-day, and be responsible for the several hundreds of pounds that pass through his hands daily, for the handsome salary of 19s. 3d. per week. Signalmen are boxed in a cabin for 12 hours daily, constant duty, taking their meals as best they may, passing (including shuntings) 500 trains a-day, and for each train having from three to six levers to draw and put back; also block and bells to mind, book marking, and seeing that every train that passes is in proper running condition, all for a salary of 22s. per week. A railway porter on the line between Glasgow and Carlisle says he does 15 hours a-day, no