NOTES ON NEWS.

Parliament has met once more, and to all appearances the coming session will be as hopelessly barren of any performance as the most stodgy Tory or the most constitutional Whig could desire. The overwhelming majority in favour of "resolute government" is still there, of course, and is not likely to be altered by the results of the by-elections. But that is not all: the minority, if it had any cohesion or strength, might have made itself felt, and would have been obliged to put forward his Home Rule measure, no doubt as strenuously as he knows how, since the rest of his life is pledged to carrying the matter through. But, unfortunately, he has not, apparently, the strength of numbers; and the instinct towards absolutism, the instincts towards revolution are growing on the one hand, just as the reactionary elements, the instincts towards absolutism, are growing on the other, and between them they make Lord Gladstone's constitutional position an impossible one.

What could he do this session? It may be said. Well, two courses were open to the minority if they had (as they have not) any heart in them. In any case they could have said, How can this be a parliament when its very members are lying in goul and are liable to be arrested on the threshold of the House for asserting their elementary rights as citizens? We do not acknowledge the authority of such a parliament. Then they might have proceeded to systematic obstructions and aspersions and attacks on the hands of all parties in Parliament, we are not so used to the assertion of the power (and therefore the right) of the Executive to treat us all like puppets, and our constitutional safeguards as pretty pictures. In order to understand what real freedom is it was necessary for us to learn what real independence means by freedom, and to feel the full weight of the tyranny of a parliamentary majority, and to learn by bitter experience that it may be as tyrannous as the rule of any despots of the earlier days. We are likely to grow wise in this knowledge before the end of this year.

Mr. Shaw-Lefevre has held his meeting without interference, can it be really true that the "man who is to be our twenty-one-Cabinet Minister" is not only capable of being "baffled by such mingled shabbiness and stupidity.

Bismarck's new Socialist-Coercion Bill has missed fire, and our friends in Germany are not to be subjected to any more stringent repression than they are used to— which is stringent enough, which regards all. There can be no question but that Singer's and Bebel's speeches in the Reichstag, mentioned in our columns last week, and their showing up of the interior working of Bismarck's police, have been in the main the cause of what under the circumstances is a Socialist victory.

The Benchmorey Board of Guardians have been making a good thing out of the "milk" of the poor men employed in their stoneways,buying cheap and selling dear to them, as the way of the world is. The chairman thinks that the question was who should reap the benefit of a fall in prices—the rapscallions or the men! He was more of a man of the world than another member of the Board, a Mr. Bedding, who cried out, "Then we are actually making a profit out of our own poor on our own goods. I call it a robbery on these poor people!"

It is creditable to Mr. Bedding that he could not take the matter coolly, and that this piece of shabby extortion startled him; but pray how can all capitalists, with exemption for their own poor on their own goods? May we not call it, like Mr. Bedding, "a robbery on those poor people!"

The jury finds Arthur Gough guilty of "assaulting" the police (according to the story of the police), but think he did it "in a moment of excitement," i.e., "Guilty, but we don't think he did it." W. M.

An instructive example of the way in which bourgeois law regards woman is furnished by the action which Lord Howard de Walden brought against Major Burrows on the 4th inst. The "noble" lord was lying at death's door with peritonitis. The least excitement might have been fatal to her. Lord Howard de Walden is given to drink, and when intoxicated insists on entering his wife's room. As this might cost her life, her brother, Major Burrows, finding other means of argument of no avail to induce the inebriated peer to remain outside his wife's door, knocked him down. Hence the prosecution.

The magistrate thought the assault justified it would appear. But the husband was not bound over to refrain from molesting his wife. It is apparently one of the privileges of maltrievant that the husband, no matter how drunk, has a right to force himself upon his "property," even if he knows that fatal consequences may result. "May not a man do what he likes with his own?"

Last week also was raised the question whether a husband can rob his wife? Baron Huddleston on the 9th inst. answered this by saying (1) he cannot rob her at all under the common law, and the wife's property as the husband; and (2) theft is only robbery under the Married Women's Property Act when the wife is living apart from her husband or when he is preparing to desert her.

Whereupon the Pall Mall comments: "It is really quite amazing how many advantages a mistress has over a wife in all matters relating to property and to person. It almost seems as if the object of the law was to inflict such disabilities on wives in order to induce the fair sex to prefer concubinage to marriage." But even the Pall Mall, brave as it is, would shrink from the notion of all and carrying the question to its logical conclusion.

These anomalies and worse must last as long as private property exists in the means of life and therefore in those that live on them.

British pride has just received a severe shock from a curious dispute between a Japanese railway company and a German firm which contracted to supply rails. The company contracted for German rails as
A further point of importance is, that the theological or mystical moralists, while recognizing the incompleteness of the individual—in other words, the incompleteness of the individual per se—as the crucial fact in the moral and religious consciousness, seeks to obviate this incompleteness, and to resolve this contradiction, by asserting that neither individual or individual cannot be an end or telos to himself, it rightly concludes; but his end it seeks to realise by a magic key which eliminates the concrete world altogether from the calculations of the moral reason. The most, the greatest possible case and logicality. The ethical consciousness having disposed of the real world of concrete relations, proceeds to create an ideal world of abstract relations, in which it seeks satisfaction. And it must not be supposed there is any arbitrariness in this proceeding. The social medium in which morality first arose has changed; the individual has supplanted the community economically, socially, and politically; hence the ethical consciousness finds satisfaction in the real world of concrete relations. The most that reason can do for it is to seek to explain away by Epicurean or Benthamite theories of enlightened self-interest and the like (the one point for the most part, the other point, the moralist of leisure, and exercise but little real influence on the world at large. So that it is what we have termed the mythical or theological morality which alone really holds the field. And the apparent satisfaction which the latter carries with it only exhausts itself and passes away with the conditions which have given it birth. It was more or less in abeyance during the Middle Ages, when the social ethics of the German races asserted themselves concurrently with the remains of their primitive communism, which entered into the composition of the feudal system. But it existed nevertheless, and under Protestantism sprang up in rank luxuriance. It is the only moral theory the modern middle-class individual can appreciate, with the exception of that of Benthamite theory, which in some cases is even more to his taste. But the Individualist ethics, whether mystical and introspective, or empirical and based on common observation, is to-day rapidly supplanting its economic basis is dissolving. While the middle classes can conceive of no morality, of no godhead, that is not centered in the individual—be it in his soul or pocket—the working classes find their individual existence in the collective existence of the collective and to which they belong. Their whole life is, under the conditions of the Great Industry, a collective one, so far as the labour of the individual is merged in the labour of the group, the group again in that of other groups, and so on throughout the entire industrial and commercial system. The workman of the Great Industry has never, as a rule, paid much regard to his soul, to the good, the beautiful, the true, the charitable—Puritanism is its salient feature, and this the highest morality to consist in a continual mortification of self—in Asceticism. But as we before pointed out, while it seeks to kill one limb, it only “working righteousness” and making the man more exacting self. Its object is only the individual in another form. Its great bogey is pleasure; its great end the annihilation of pleasure. Now the new ethics, in opposition to this asceticism, in the first place, it grudges the amount of energy expended by the individual in the effort to acquire the “self-discipline” so-called, which is only another name for moral tight-rope dancing which the ethics of inwardness postulates as its end. It despises the Introspectionist love of “striking an ethical attitude.” The mere discomfort, or the sacrifice of the individual per se, is for it no virtue, but a fault, unless it be a part of the means to a clearly defined end; nor does it like to see a working class, the “initiator Christi” the other side of the Individualist ethics, the latter-day counterpart of Epicureanism—namely, “enlightened self-interest” that, like its forerunner in the classical world, is essentially the formulated ethic of the full belly and the satisfying of the body. The point of view from which it may be judged, would be that of the man’s necessity, the satisfaction of the theory, would not be “enlightened.” On the other hand, “enlightenment,” in the bourgeois sense, would lead the workman (see Professor Huxley, “Lay Sermons”) to strive rather than “stir-stew” from the workman’s point of view, however “enlightened” it might be. So that, altogether, the workman seems rather “out of it” in so far as the gospel of “enlightened self-interest” is concerned. A-a

"not only cheaper, but superior in quality to English nails." (See article.)

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THE NEW ETHIC.

(Continued from p. 64.)