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WEEKLY; ONE PENNY.

NOTES ON NEWS.

GLADSTONE-WORSHIP is well on now among the faithful of the Liberal party, and is carried to such lengths that one cannot help thinking that some of the party must have doleful forebodings as to its future when their god takes his departure from the earth. What will be left of Liberalism when this one old man has gone; with his astonishing physical vigour, his belief in himself, his capacity of shutting his eyes to everything that his momentary political position forbids him to see, and his keen delight in playing the political game?

However, at present, there seems little need for us to speculate on what is to happen after him, and one is tempted to think that he may out-live the present political and social system now growing so crazy. May it be so!

His Dover speech will be thought a fine specimen, I suppose, and indeed it was brisk and combative enough from his own point of view, though he announced his intention of fighting after the fashion of the pre-Napoleonic generals and keeping all rules of the game: he boasted of his doing so in the Jingo period and chuckled over the result. Well, his soft fighting was discouraging enough in those days, but after all it was perhaps good enough for the occasion, for the Jingo and Dizzy at their head, never intended to go to war; they only meant bragging—I admit that we didn't know it at the time.

After all this rhetorical oracle of the Liberal Idol, in spite of all its words, was as far removed from any practical and social aspect of things as if it were delivered in another planet: except perhaps when he touched on the Protection v. Free Trade matter, he didn't talk about what people are *thinking* about, but what they are *talking* about, and indeed that is usual with him, and with all popularity hunters: because by the time a thing has become generally talked of the thinkers have got to the next subject.

The Tories have been trying a little "dishing" in Ireland, to see if it may count for a make-weight against their "resolute" Government there; they have reduced the judicial rents in the teeth of Lord Salisbury's declaration that they were to be considered fixed. The result of their experiment is not encouraging at present; the Nationalists do not accept it as a blessing, very naturally, looking at it as at once a blow at the Plan of Campaign and a base plagiarism on it; and the Loyalists also very naturally are in a fury at it, and are pulling themselves together to claim compensation from the British taxpayer, which indeed Lord Salisbury promised them. If he redeems his promise the Tories had best arrange for the fresh varnishing of the opposition benches for their behoof.

This matter is a fresh example of the slippery muddle which our present system of property always makes; it allows a privileged class to rob the people of the means of production, asserting in high words and hard deeds "the rights of property," and then from time to time takes arbitrarily from one group or another of the privileged some small portion of the plunder it has allowed them and encouraged them to acquire; and all the while, whatever it does, insists at least upon this, that there shall always be a class of hewers of wood and drawers of water to be benefitted by this—Socialism as some sanguine people are pleased to call it.

The death of John Frost in Pentonville prison is one of those events which would let in a little light on the public as to the prison system and its administration, if people were really trying to see; but probably as it is there will be little learned by it. An obviously sick man is condemned to 20 months' imprisonment, and when he gets to the prison is treated as if he were not sick but shamming; but at last "shams" so persistently that he is clearly at the point of death, when he is taken to the prison hospital and "treated kindly," but carries on his "shamming" till he dies. No one who knows anything about our prisons can doubt that this kind of thing is common enough; only the victims don't always die in prison.

It speaks volumes for the way in which the prison officials treat the

luckless men who have fallen into their power, that the wife after "trying to see the governor and being told that he was away," in addressing herself to one of the nurses, "*softened her communication* as much as possible, so that matters might not be made worse for her husband." And that the prisoner told her "to make no complaint to the prison authorities lest he should fare worse in consequence." Do smug moral well-to-do persons, who have little more chance of going to prison than they have of being made kings, understand what that means? It is time that they should learn this amongst other pieces of knowledge, in order that they may understand what class-hatred means and what it may lead to.

W. M.

Thos. Ansell, of Deptford, 88 years old, and his wife, who was 77, were very obstinate people who would not go to "the palatial dwelling miscalled a workhouse," because of the inhuman treatment they knew awaited them. Rather than be put asunder after 56 years of love and mutual aid by the red-tape of Bumbledom, they kept on battling against increasing infirmity until they could do no more. Then "the parish" gave them "outdoor relief."

The two poor old people were accorded the princely sum of 3s. 6d. per week, out of which they had to pay 2s. rent and "live" on the balance. Ansell is dead of hunger and cold, and his brave old wife is undergoing at last the torture she avoided so long—the slow death of the workhouse. Such things add a bitter point to Cardinal Manning's attack on the present method of "relief."

Day after day, as we have been reading on the one hand of great feasting by the fortunate, and also of their loudly-vaunted "charity" to their more hapless fellows, so on the other hand have come reports of deaths from hunger, and horrors unspeakable, the fruit of poverty and degradation. At no time is the baleful effect of the present system shown so clearly as at periods like that just past, which custom has decreed a festival-tide. But the time passes by, and the lesson is unlearned, or if learnt is unapplied. How long will it go on?

The attention of all readers is directed to the announcement in another column of the intended publication of the speeches and "trial" of our Chicago comrades. This is a work in which all should help, as it is at once raising them a monument and making good propaganda.

S.

POLICE SPIES EXPOSED.

THERE have always been found by the governments of all countries traitors ready to mingle in the ranks of every revolutionary party, including the Socialist, and by worming themselves into the confidence of the members, obtain their secrets to betray them, or by getting up dynamite plots and things of that kind, to arouse public feeling against the movement. Many other devices are there in the armoury of a tyrant, and in the days of the Third Empire they were carried, as men thought, to the utmost pitch of a devilish perfection. It has been left however for Bismark and his underlings to attain a yet higher (or lower) degree of skill and completeness of plan. Since the coming into effect of the anti-Socialist laws in Germany, 1879, police-spying, or the trade of head-monger and lie-smith, has become a recognised department of governmental work, an institution far more in vogue with the existence of the State than even in the corruptest days of Napoleon the Little. Not only does Germany look after folk within her own borders, but provides them with careful friends in every city where Socialists are to be found; thus it is really an *international political secret police* that is maintained and worked from Berlin. Our well-known co-worker, the *Sozialdemokrat* of Zürich, has always been trying to get hold of the secrets of this organisation, and has now and then succeeded in bringing facts to light, that spoiled some single plot, or exposed some spy. Of course it has had to bear the fate of the outspoken, and is often abused among a certain set as an organ of denunciation. Rather should it be praised for the courage with which it follows up a foe of the cause, and the skill with which it cuts open the disguise of a false friend, and shows the reptile underneath. *Der Sozialdemokrat* deserves the thanks of all honest Socialists for its efforts in casting light upon a hideous host of vermin, and so depriving them of their power to betray. In its issue of December 24th is given a list

of names of men who are now in the pay of the police-bureau. We assure our readers of the accuracy of the information.

The names are as follows:—

1. HERM. HEINR. SACHS, formerly lieutenant of the police at Berlin; author and professor. Police-spy in London (8 years in pay).
2. CHARLES THEODORE REUSS, formerly theatrical impresario and concert-singer, now Bismark's political agent on the *Central News* of London and the *Cable News* of New York; contributor to the *Süddeutschen Presse* at Munich and the *Berliner Zeitung* at Berlin. Police-spy in London (2 years and 6 months in pay).
3. KAUFMANN (alias Carl Morff), engineer, now partner in the "City Club." Police-spy in London (7 years in pay).
4. HEINRICH, formerly engineer, now publican at Zurich.
5. KARL SCHRODER, insurance agent at Riesbach-Zurich (7 years standing).
6. CHRISTIAN HAUPT, agent at Geneva (8 years standing).
7. MAX TRAUTNER, formerly Bavarian officer, now journalist in Paris (previously at Brussels. Military and political police-spy (8 years standing).
8. HEINR. OBERWINDER, formerly one of the leaders of the Austrian Socialist movement, now journalist in Paris.
9. H. NONNE, teacher, formerly in London, now in Paris (At Berlin, for the time being.)
10. LUDW. SCHWEINHAGEN, at Magdeburg.
11. A. WICHMANN, agent at Altona (8 years in pay).
12. NEUMANN, carpenter at Hamburg.
13. HERM. NEBEL, bookseller at Leipzig.

We need not further warn our readers against these despicable creatures, but may profitably add a word or two on those employed in London. Sachs has been for some time away doing some special political business in the South of France and on the Spanish and Italian frontiers. In London he specially took care of the German Communist Club (First Section); at the time of Most's arrest and conviction here he was a contributor to the *Freiheit*, and took away from the printing-office a lot of copy which had appeared in the paper; all of which duly reached the Berlin police. Reuss, among other things, caused the arrest of several Anarchists at Leipzig, Nürnberg, Augsburg and Berlin; was concerned in several so-called "Anarchist" trials in Vienna; and with the aid of his accomplice, Joseph Peukert, carried out the infamous scheme by which our brave comrade, John Neve, was taken and condemned. In another line of business he has to work the press in order to manufacture "public opinion" in favour of the extradition of political offenders and international repressive laws and treaties. During the late troubles in Trafalgar Square and Hyde Park, he was particularly active in this way. His blood-money is 450 marks a month (£22 10s.) It is interesting to know that he corresponds with his employer, Police-Councillor Krueger, Chief of German Secret Police, directly at Kaiserin Augusta Strasse, 72, Berlin, or indirectly through either M. Fumagalli, Court Jeweller, 138, Leipziger-strasse, Berlin, or M. Hacke, formerly Chief of Police at Frankfurt, now Police Councillor at Berlin, 31, Kulkstrasse. Kauffmann (or Carl Morff), an Austrian "Anarchist", it was who furnished, from means provided him by the police, to Stellmacher and Kammerer the money needed for the notorious attempts at Vienna. After the death of his victims he was expelled from Switzerland. Ordered to London by his master, he has lived here ever since. For a time secretary of the Third Section, he is now partner in the "City Club", a well-known rendezvous of Socialists, both English and German.

We may have to return to this theme again, but have said enough for the present.

EDITORS.

Mr. Winans, the Baltimore millionaire, now holds sporting rights over 230,000 acres in Scotland—a tract of land almost as large as Bedfordshire. This gentleman pays about £25,000 a year for the right to perpetuate solitude, and meantime help is urgently requested to export distressed Highlanders to America.

METROPOLITAN PAUPERISM.—The weekly return of metropolitan pauperism shows that the total number of paupers relieved in the third week of last month was 103,968, of whom 59,612 were indoor and 44,356 outdoor paupers. The total number relieved shows an increase of 5,576 over the corresponding week of last year, 8,429 over 1886, and 9,458 over 1884. The total number of vagrants relieved on the last day of the week was 1,073, of whom 940 were men, 116 women, and 17 children under sixteen.

A son of old John Brown writes to the *Alarm* and desires to know what Anarchism really is. He concludes his letter with the following words: "Agitate and educate, but let us mind the light. In our zeal for the cause of the oppressed labourer, let us not stumble over and put out the light we have. While we realise the truth that the destruction of the poor is their poverty, let us not forget what is equally and sadly true that the destruction of the rich is their wealth. Twenty-eight years ago my father was judicially murdered at Charlestown, Va., for his devotion to the cause of the oppressed labourers of African descent in America. Now we perceive that emancipation means more than simply freedom of the blacks from the bonds of chattel slavery. May heaven grant to all the people of our beloved country wisdom also to perceive this and to govern themselves accordingly." John Brown, jun., appears to be a true chip of the old block.—C.

FUNERAL OF THE CHICAGO MARTYRS.—At the same time that the workers of London were escorting Linnell to the grave, our five comrades in Chicago were buried. The day was bitterly cold, and the way to the cemetery long and dreary—about 15 miles. In spite of that about 5,000 persons attended the ceremony. Special trains conducted the mourners to Waldheim Cemetery. Speeches were made by Capt. Black, Paul Grottkau, and Albert Currin, and most enthusiastically applauded. J. R. Buchanan directed the crowd to file past the coffins and take the last look at the faces of the dead. The features of all the five murdered were life-like, the embalming process had been a success, and the counterfeit pink flush of life was on the cheeks; not a trace of decomposition was to be seen. Then the coffins were lowered into the grave. At the bottom of the receptacle is a block of granite, on which rests a bed of cement. Granite blocks are the walls, and the top is formed by two blocks of granite. The grave was made to fit exactly the five coffins. Mrs. Parsons and Miss Spies fainted, and had to be removed. May the silence of our martyred comrades become speedily as powerful as they desired!—C.

LAW AND WAR.

THERE are some, seeing fully the evils of our present mental and physical state and anxious to amend them, who hold that this can be effected by legislation, by the making of better laws. It is urged that this can be done peacefully, and without the dreadful wrench of a revolution. Technically it rests with the law-making class to determine the character of the change. Technically, I say, but scarcely in reality, for their education is too entirely a mere filling of the memory, and crushes the mind under a heap of question-begging phrases. They are only too likely to sit doing nothing, helplessly soothing their conscience with the thought, "the remedy is worse than the disease." I do not think, however, that the dumb millions of France, for example, even in their bungled revolution of 1789, suffered any great shock. It was not the revolution that brought misery upon them, but the anti-revolution of the Consulate and Empire, and the setting up again of the ugly idol of law and legal order.

I doubt still more whether the now existing proletariat of Europe and of the world, would find it a very dreadful wrench to be shifted to a life of decency and freedom, even at the cost of many pitched battles, more tough than Waterloo, more bloody than Eylau or Gravelotte. It seems to me that we bear with much equanimity the bloodshed required to maintain and to extend our present system of law. These battles and the hundreds of others which stain the pages of history, and of the newspapers which we handle daily, are very nearly all fought with this view. Most of them have no result beyond allowing or compelling certain millions to submit to the clipping of one king or emperor, instead of being shorn by another; a few were by way of remonstrance, generally ineffectual, against clipping and shearing in general. John Bright, alluding to all this bloodshed, said in a lecture on Feb. 22, 1887, "he found the English now just as savage on the question of war, and just as barbarous as ever. How many wars had there been during the *Queen's Reign*? There was the war in New Zealand, then the Zulu war; there had been two Afghan wars, for which there had been no particular reason; three Burmese wars, and the Crimean war, the latter costing a million of lives; then the Alexandria bombardment and the Soudan war. All these wars had helped to swell the National Debt, and there had not been one of them which might not have been, with a little trouble, prevented." And the same day at the Friends' Meeting-house, he maintained that "without one single exception all the wars since William III. were absolutely unnecessary, and their only result was an enormous national debt."

In the midst of all this bloodshed, mainly caused by the bickerings of the persons privileged to sit on the thrones of the world, we need not be flurried by the thought of the great struggle which shall put an end to it all, by rooting out the evil from which it all grows, the evil of privilege and privileged classes whether great or small. When this is gone not only will the cause of the great periodic wars be removed, but of that more terrible internecine war which goes on always between classes in the same or different countries, and even between the members of the same family, and is the outward expression of the spirit of privilege and competition, which is the characteristic of an established legal system.

It seems to me that it is our legal system which is the author of our evils. Each one of our multitudinous Acts of Parliament constitutes a small privileged tyranny. The legal mind of course thinks highly of them, and praises the code as a monument of the wisdom of our ancestors, as well as of our own. The code is said to supply a necessary check to the debased and cruel nature of man. The theory is that men, left to themselves, would find their principal amusement in killing their neighbours, but that this heaven-born code keeps him in the path of virtue and honour.

It is an unreal picture. It is difficult to see how institutions founded by men, and expressing the views of the founders, can set up any standard higher than that of the surrounding society. The fulsome praise poured out by the founders, their friends and dependants, on the work of their own hands, may be safely disregarded; and while the rival theories of the "Wisdom of our Ancestors" and the "Progress of the Species" debate their rival claims to the authorship of the legal system, we may without presumption attempt to judge of its value by its results. The most we can look for from any such institution is that it may be, I do not say it is, but may be a convenience, a convenience of the same kind as a house or an omnibus. These are means for serving a number of persons with less trouble and labour, than if they were obliged to supply themselves with separate huts and carts. Now, anyone who should suggest that the shape and size, the fitting and decoration, of houses and omnibuses should be settled by a Board of Directors sitting in a distant town, would be regarded as a silly person. Yet this is what an established legal system claims to do. In its origin the law was for the convenience of men; but like any other permanent institution it becomes entangled in its own arrangements, and sinks down and down, as it first of all creates and then falls under the control of the law-hampered mind. It no doubt works with great regularity, so does a sausage-machine; and our system is like this also, in that it pays little regard to flesh and bones and blood. Society under such influences tends to have all things according to pattern, and the fact that our houses and furniture and all our common surroundings are so drearily uniform, is but one out of many evidences of the decay of all original thought. Originality cannot be fostered, except by being let alone; any system, whether we call it civilisation or law or religion, must fail in the attempt to