WHAT 1887 HAS DONE.

The year 1887 is come to an end, a year in many respects eventful; what will it be chiefly known by in the future, when it has become mere history? To some it will be the Jubilee year; to some the central year of the great Tory ascendancy; to some, it may be, for a little while, the last of the thoroughly bad years of the depression of trade. Yet again it may be known hereafter as the last year of the European armed truce; and to others it will be remembered as the great year of Coetzenberg. Which will it be? Another question can be our only answer.

Is our future to be a year of slaves bearing hard lot, apathetically, and idle and vacant lords who live by their labour, with no thought but for the follies and toys with which they kill the days and unhaply hours of their dull lives? Is the knowledge of the world still to bring a new generation of wealth and misery, its other collector, the Jubilee of slavery! If that is to be so let us remember the past year as the year of the Queen's Jubilee, and be mildly satisfied at the thought of the hundreds of thousands of slave-holders who turned out into the streets to witness the symbolic procession of the triumph of Capitalism, Dishonesty, and let us note the year as the first of a new epoch of "Resolute Government," the rule of tyrannous fools and pedants over helpless and unthinking wights. But if, on the other hand, our year is to be the struggle of slaves to free themselves, however interminable it may be; although that struggle be irresolute and unorganized, at whiles timid, at whiles rash — alas! the rebellion of slaves is too last to be — if rebellion is to be our future, then we must look back at the past year with hope as one of the noteworthy landmarks on the road of revolution.

Let us briefly review the events of 1887, then, and see whether anything in them points to the conclusion that we shall be driven to forget our hopes, and accept the prospect of the immediate future as one of apathy and despair.

From the "political" point of view the Irish Question has been the only one of the past year; and no doubt there will be many in these last days of 1887 who will both say and think that the Irish are further from reaching their goal than ever; that Resolute Government will keep the excitement under till from sheer weariness and despair people yield, and sit still in sullen discontent, and that the hopes of the Home Rule bill are completely dashed in the early past of the year, are now clouded over. This opinion is not without some foundation in reason, and would be amply justified if the only point in the Irish question was the establishment of an Irish Parliament in Dublin with more or less real authority over the Irish people; but, as has often been pointed out in these columns, the question goes much deeper than that, and necessity will compel either or both of the political parties to act in a way more or less revolutionary, and to do some things which the Dublin parliament if established would have to do. For the questions in the livelihood of the Irish peasantry, the relations of the landlord and tenant, the position of the Irish workers shall be allowed for ever to squeeze their incomes in the shabbiest possible manner out of the poverty of these poor people, so that the great question is this: is there or is it of any moment to Socialists or sensible people alike which of the two parties in the game of politics gives way and yields some practical measure of home rule as a step towards the attempt to deal with the question. Between a "dishonest" monetary system and a compromising Gladstonian one there will be little if any difference.

Meanwhile the Tories, in following out their natural course of upholding the shabby landlord tyranny in Ireland, have passed the Coercion Bill usually in dealing with the question, and circumstances such a measure would have received little notice in England; but with the present revolutionary feeling that is in the air, there will have been much discussion and much agitation if measures are used to be. Although the Gladstonians resisted it feebly enough in Parliament, and no determined protest was made against it except by the Socialists and extreme Radicals, yet the carrying out of its provisions in Ireland itself have been reviled alike by the whole body of the poor as a banner for all revolutionary-minded people to rally to.

The imprisonment of Irish members and the Lord Mayor of Dublin, and the arrest of Mr. Blunt, merely as a piece of arbitrary high handedness, and the quashing of the case against the police murderers at Mitchelstown, have forced the dull to see that Ireland is in rebellion against the Government, not the people of Ireland; and if anyone goes forth to seek the cause for rebellion he will find that it is with the Irish landlord, as with the French seigneur before the Revolution, according to Carlyle's epigram: The widow is gathering flowers for herself and her children, and two out of every three, has she to yield up the lordship of the soil. Is it to this question that our enquirer who has thus got to the bottom of the Irish question will follow the enquiry up to as the condition of the workman throughout the world, and will get to know that it is the condition of the poor man, and in the way in which the respective class work them thus the Irish question will educate many in revolution, and the events of 1887 will certainly help on his education in this direction.

There is another special point of all revolutions that they set forth as the obvious malfunction and vindictiveness, shown by the sentences on the men who fall into the power of the authorities. The game began with Spence Grantham's sentence on our comrades HURL Мак MVorswarry at Norwich, in which, as usual in such cases, the judge made himself an advocate for the prosecution. Then came the sentences on the members of the S.D.F. and other men (not Socialists) who got entangled in the police-manufactured riot at the gates of Hyde Park in March. At this the general public kicked somewhat, and the magistrates sentences were impossible to be wholly upheld on appeal. The sentences were confirmed by the Court of Queen's Bench, and it became clear that we were to have the usual unemployed demonstration of great regret at the release of more than ever, the respectable classes took the alarm, and the police were set on to make the attacks on peaceable citizens who had committed no offence of being poor, the case which was not tried until November 13th, and the still more shameful scenes in the police and law courts which followed it. This time the Socialists found themselves in the hands of the extreme Radicals, as in the affair of Dodd Street. But the allies were never disheartened, and we can give the Irish party (with the single exception, as far as I know, of Michael Davitt), although they are suffering from the same tyranny themselves, to praise the Dublin police officers, as far as it has gone, for being the usual flash from the smouldering volcano of class war which underlies modern sham-society. This has been so well felt that all respectability promptly sided with the authorities in their elementary political rights, and outside the definite Socialist workers who have had the whole of their life in this country, except the Pole Mail Gazette and Reynolds; while on the other hand no one who witnessed the sympathetic demeanour of the huge crowds of strike-companied or looked on at the scenes of this police prosecution could venture to deny that the masses in London are on our side.

To turn to the struggle of the workers in the net of capitalist oppression. The year began with the abortive strike of the Lanarkshire miners, in which our comrades at Glassford and Uphall were active, and considerable, and thereby did much to forward the work of propaganda. This was followed by the strike of the Northumbrian miners, which was taken advantage of by the Socialists, with most encouraging results. These have been the most typical struggles of labour struggle; but the whole year has been full of labour disputes, which is more the remarkable since up to the present time it has been a year of great depression in trade. In the early part of the year, the process of revolution could venture to deny that the masses in London are on our side.
the workman's side in a bitter Chicago labour struggle,—nor will they
know till the revolution is upon them how deeply their revenge will
cost them.
Belshazzar had had one or two triumphs: won a huge majority in the
spring; carries his army bill easily now; he has reduced the number
of Socialist members to five, but has not succeeded in reducing the
number of Labour seats.
It is interesting to note that, by strengthening the law against the Socialists, as a counter-stroke to the
international congress which is to come off this year.
France having disappointed her enemies and the enemies of progress by adding a pat to revolution which has been both cultural and
only, is still busily engaged by means of her bourgeoisie in contributing to her share to the embroilment of corruption which must end at last
deadlock and the future break a new record.
In Russia the universities are closed in order to damp down the revolutionary fire spreading so swiftly among the students, and every-
thing grows more and more unbearable.
Alas, with all this the year has ended as it began with the terror of a
great European war, concerning which Lord Salisbury, wishing to
make the best of it, could say little more than that he didn't think it would
end.
Certainly it must be said that the past year has not been of such a
kind as to give confidence to the upholders of the stability of the present system. Democratic ideas tending towards Socialism have been
evolved from the Irish struggle, and men's minds have been
tampered with the resistance to authority; the precariousness of livelihood under the capitalist has brought home more and more clearly the
wrongfulness of Socialism has been brought to them with hope to change all that; the special tyranny of the last two
months has embittered the Radicals against the Government, and also
shown them how little they can depend on their so-called leaders among the
people. They have seen that even their fellow countrymen, to whom they
had always claimed the right to work; they have shown them that they as working men must be true to
to their class or be of no account in politics at all; the sentences passed on
some of their men, which one would have expected even a lawyer to reject, have shown the “lower classes” that the
boasted equality before the law is a gross sham; that the law is made
for the rich man and the master and against the poor man and the
worker, and that when the class war rises to its natural strength, the
socialistic prigs of “culture” make so much of is but a measure of the
advantage of the tide of the new social life. “Progress” no longer
means a political change in which these highestrated people could take
part without any danger to their position, or offence to their sensi-
tibilities: the “common people” have now to be dealt with as real per-
sons threatening real things, and respectability shrinks back from them,
partly in fear, partly in hatred. This explains the recrudescence of
Toryism, the apparent victories of reaction. Once again the
war is becoming obvious to all, and 1887 has done a great deal to
make it so.

WILLIAM MORRIS.

LITERARY NOTES.

Was it a Fair Trial? by Gen. M. M. Trumbull, is a telling exposure in
pamphlet form of the racially and murderous conduct of the whole trial of the
 Completely a work from Lucy E. Parsons, 275 Mil-
waukee Avenue, Chicago, Ill., td. a copy, 10 for 3s. 6d. post free.
We have not yet seen the Letters of David Ricardo to Thomas Robert
March, 1827-1835, edited by John H. P. Carter, 4s. 6d.

The Royal Irish Constabulary, Col. R. Bruce, C.B. (late Inspector-General
of the force), and the “Donna” of the Doncaster Field, is a
Chamber Journal, “Why is Wheat so low in Price?” Fortnightly, “Chas
Destress in London,” Earl Compton and Cardinal Manning: Contemporary:
The Workless, the Thriftless, and the Worthless,” by the author of “Social
Writings,” 6d.; Vernon Lee has a Moral Aspect of Socialism,” Prof. Caird.
National Review: “The Poor Law and
Rev., Morris Fuller, M.A.

MAGAZINES.—Those who remember the country made by Jas and the party
it speaks for against the “Act for the Better Prevention of the Fraudulent
Sales of Margarine,” will find in The Universal and the Daily News a
story, in a stamped wrapper to Eyre and Spottiswoode (East Harding Street, Fleet Street), and receive in return a copy of the Act. Then it will be seen that the “actively engaged” in the campaign against the
the latest with the sale of margarine, except as better. Margarine may
still be sold without let or hindrance, but it must not be palmed off on an
unsuspecting public as if it were otherwise. Of course fraud is recognised by
and the L. P. D. L., among legitimate means of competition which
are naturally soile at the little game being hindered.—S.

EVILOUTION.

All life is progress: that which growth not
Is dead or dying.

The happy footsteps of our infant race,
Who seeks for man no fairer future lot.

Or soining or the waste one pleasing spot
Does it indeed, see the wondrous creation?

8 Essays to close his hand on time and space,
And when the world stands still the world will rot

Fight them beneath this banner, and be bold,
Knowing that Fate, though silent, never sleeps

Though pacing long into the mists of old,
And far into the future sweep.

Frigid-vision thou mayst but behold
One of its slow gigantic spiral sweeps.

RUSSELL A. KIRBY.

SAMUEL FIELDEN.

SAMUEL FIELDEN was born on February 26th, 1847, at Todmorden, Lan-
cashire. His father, Abram Fielden, was a weaver. The Fielden Brothers' 
mills were the largest in that part of the country, and they contained two
thousand looms. His father was a man of more than ordinary intelligence,
A person of deep thought, with whom few of his ideas words in an argu-
ment. Samuel says: "I remember that the most intelligent people of our
acquaintance instead of going to church on Sunday used to meet at
our house to discuss politics, religion, and the social and political issues of
the day." These meetings carried on in the rich Lancashire accent con-
tained a peculiar charm for me, and gave me my first taste for the study of
history and philosophy. I used to listen to them with the greatest interest.
They were peculiarly eloquent conversationalists, and the recital of the most
ordinary incidents from his lips bore the stamp of the highest culture and
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