THE REVOLT OF GENTH.

The events of which an account is here given took place towards the close of the Middle Ages, among the people of Ghent, a city of kindred blood to ourselves, dwelling not many hours' journey (as we travel now) from the place where we dwell; and yet to us are wonderful enough, if we think upon them.

Few epochs of history, indeed, are more interesting than this defeated struggle to be free of the craftsmen of Flanders: whether we look upon the story as a mere story, a true tale, of the Middle Ages at their fullest development, rife with all the peculiarities of the period, exemplifying their manners and customs, the forms that their industry, their religion, their heroism took at the time; or whether we look upon it, as we Socialists cannot help doing, as a link in the great chain of the evolution of society, destined by omission of instruction, in the class-struggle which we have now recognised as the one living fact in the history of the world, since civilization began, and which will end when civilization transforms something else.

If we look upon the Revolt of Ghent as a story of the past or as a part of our own lives and the battle which is not wasting, but using them, it is one of the phases of the history of the workingman.

On the one side of good fortune also it has, that, as Horace says, it has not lacked a sacred poet. As the tale is here told, its incidents, often the very words, are taken from the writings of one of those men who make past times live before our eyes ever. John Froissart, canon of Chimay in Hainault, was indeed but a hanger-on of the aristocracy; he was in such a position as would in our days have prevented him from principle from admitting any good story. But he was enterprising also and elsewhere; he must have been called an epic poet; and in the name of Froissart's days gave people intense delight in the stories of deeds of arms, admirations, nobility of character, hardihood. And in the name of the present day, such a story as the present is not without a poet. I think you will say before you have done with him that he could even see the good side of the revolutionary characters of his time, so long as they were not black in noble deeds. The result of a low standard poet you say, and I may; and indeed I have noticed that a would-be high standard of morality is sometimes pretty fertile of lying, because it is so anxious that every event should square itself to an a priori right, and that which has been a fact is an error.

The characteristic aspect of the feudal society was not available in the Middle Ages, since, owing to the form feudal society had then taken, what we now call patriotism was a national or race-interest based and sustained by a militarism.

The result of the above condition of the craftsmen was, at least in part, the growth of the municipal power, or the making of Ghent into a self-governing community.

New words and ideas of the political-sanctity of the citizen and municipal power took root from the four hours' day, and full advantage is taken of the concession. A garden seat has also been provided. Dr. McDouall takes great interest in his histriotic patient, and has friendly chats with him. Two local justices who visited Mr. Dillon state that he is in a cheerful mood, and appears entirely recovered from the excitement of the trial.

WILLIAM MORRIS.

(To be continued.)

NEWSPRINT WAR IN WALES.—The proceedings in Anglesea are being characterised by scenes almost identical with those which followed the advent of Mr. Pethick at the beginning of the present session. The district is in a state of great excitement. Crowds of men have taken to the streets; and the result is that a sort of police bodyguard for Mr. Stevens, the acting agent for the Commissioners; thirty police constables under command of Mr. Thomas, chief constable of Anglesea; and a half company of the Cheshire Regiment from Chester Castle, under charge of Captains St. George and Lawrence. The country is thus in a state of high equipoise. No one makes any attempt to molest the men, and police are armed with the regulation batons, and the rifle and an ample supply of ball cartridge. During the past week an extraordinary series of events has occurred. Every imaginable instrument with which to create a noise. Free fights were indulged in, and during the afternoon the aspersion against the paper was howling in English and in Welsh. Many farms were visited, and twenty miles of ground were covered, but the only result was that the submission of a two-pound note to the one point on the lining the road was set aside, and some inconvenience was caused while marching through the stifling smoke. Cheers were given for Mr. Gladstone, and Messrs. Gare and Parry, the anti-tithe leaders; and exultation was expressed everywhere at the failure of the authorities to secure the tithe.

1 The lesser crafts were the weavers and fellers, that is to say, the workmen of the staple industry of the country.