NOTES ON NEWS.

MRS. PARSONS left New York on the "Arizona," which reaches Liverpool on Thursday morning, 8th, after we have gone to press, so that we cannot announce when she will arrive in London, but she is expected to do so the same evening. Her public reception on Saturday promises to be a great success, but all comrades should still keep their hardest to ensure its being so.

S.

The Echo has been kind enough to advertise our approaching celebration of the Chicago martyrs and Bloody Sunday by a forcible attack upon us, in which all the old calumnies against our comrades have been revived and nourished for circulation, and we are held up to public reprobaition as "enemies of society." All this is chiefly intended as an attack on Cunningham Graham for having the courage to be prepared to express in public what not only all Socialists, but all democrats who have enquired into the matter, must feel in their bones. For the Echo believes Cunningham Graham, though an opponent, to be on the same plane of politics as itself; in which idea it will feel sure find itself mistaken.

meanwhile let us say once more what was the real state of the case. Our comrades, the Echo says, were tried and found guilty of being privy to the throwing the bomb. By whom? By the declared enemies of the people, who for long had no word in their mouths but "shoot them down." And on what evidence? On evidence rather laughable than what would suffice for the condemnation of an English labourer before his squire of poaching a rabbit. There was no real evidence offered or required for the condemnation of our comrades; their guilt was clear already—they were the friends and fellow-agitators of the workmen on strike; that was enough.

Does the editor of the Echo know anything of that redoubtable weapon in defence of "society," the Law of Constructive Murder? It is a comprehensive one and by means of it any obnoxious person may be "removed" by the authorities in a moment. Any one taking part in a meeting at which loss of life occurs may be indicted for this wide-reaching crime. Supposing at some not very distant date the editor of the Echo, taking part in some Unionist meeting at which the audience gets excited, is thrown out, and someone is killed; how and it would be if he was put on his trial for constructive murder!

"Enemies of society!" Of what society? Of the society which enables friends and kindred and fellow-workmen to live together in peace and good-fellowship, helping one another through all the difficulties of life; the society which gives every one an opportunity for living as well as the nature surrounding him will allow him to live? We are not enemies of this society, we are now devoted soldiers of it, and some of us are not yet live to be happy members of it. For we are not Socialists,—i.e., people who want to realise true society!

But I suppose the Echo is thinking of another society; the society of classes; the society which insists that most must be poor in order that some may be rich. The society which as its culminating success in our own days takes care that poverty shall not longer mean, as it did, mere privation of life, but a lessening of possessions, but utter degradation of body and soul; the society which produces in one country, in one city, living under the same "equal" laws, the coster's barrow and the culture of Whitchurch; from which the "impurist," dweller, and the "culture" of the university superfine superior person. In a word, the "society" that produces the rich and the poor,—that is to say, the suffering of the world.

Of such a "society" as this—or rather of such a band of robbers and heap of corruption usurping the holy name of Society—every honest man must be the enemy, even if he is not conscious of it.

Mr. Balfour in his speech at Wolverhampton was very emphatic in saying that the difference between the Irish rebels of the present and the past, was that those of to-day were engaged in a socialist agitation; the Daily News in commenting on the speech was naturally anxious to disprove this, pointing out that several of the Irish leaders over the Anti-Irish agitation, that Mr. Balfour himself was responsible for nationalisation by his countrymen, and the Irish peasant is a fanatic for property in land.

All this is true enough on the surface; nor could it be otherwise, since the Irishman is conscious of having been thrust off the land by foreign overlords. The capitalist as he knows himself the victim of the blood or at least the representative of alien domination. Nevertheless Mr. Balfour is more nearly right than the Daily News, more nearly right than he knows himself probably. The agrarian agitation in Ireland is an attack on property, though its immediate results may be the establishment of a peasant proprietorship, a thing which in itself all Socialists condemn. The claim for Home Rule is an attack on the centralised bureaucracy, which is the palladium of the present robbery sham-society; although its realisation may lead at first to the establishment of another bureaucratic centre, which will be rotten long before it is ripe. And the principle for exclusive nationality is abhorrent to all true Socialists.

But the Irish are being educated into Socialism by the force of circumstances whether they are conscious of it or not, and whether they like it or not. This is what Mr. Balfour means, and he is perfectly right.

Readers need not trouble ourselves about Mr. Vintetelly's "punishment." He offered his back to the lash, and is of course a mere capitalist publisher engaged in bringing out what will sell, irrespective of other considerations. But a word or two may be said on the side of ridicule. The copy of the "Libertarian Socialist Review" which appeared yesterday is a model, even if the books are horrible. Granted—but are they as horrible as the corrupt society which they picture? What is good enough to be done is good enough to be tolerated, and if I am right the opposite of his books is not provoking of lust as the veiled corruption of the ordinary erotic novels of the day.

At any rate all this is new material for art—that is another affair. But an affair to come before a judge and jury? Preposterous! Why the very reading of detached passages from the book as a method to find criticism on, shows how entirely outside the judgment of a law-court these things must needs be. Really I think the question of the ordinary newspaper critic as compared with that of the author on whom he lives is already sufficiently imposing, without drawing him down a few notches and then giving him the power of sending his literary opponents to prison. In short, this trial of M. Zola (for he was the real person tried) is another indication, if but a small one, of the way in which our laws represent the worst side and not the best of modern law.

WILLIAM MORRIS.

METROPOLITAN PASSEUR.—The weekly return of metropolitan pauperism shows that the total number of paupers relieved in the third week of October was 2,782, of which 393 are paupers on the books of the paupers. The total number relieved shows an increase of 1,530 over the corresponding week of last year, 5,444 over 1886, and 6,933 over 1885. The total number of vagrants relieved on the last week of the year was 1,397 of whom 1,057 were men, 204 women, and 32 children under sixteen.

ARTICLES OF INTEREST TO SOCIALISTS IN THE November numbers of: