LOOKING BACKWARD.

said that the signs of the spread of Socialism among working people are both abundant and striking. This is true; year after year the word Socialism was known in this country, yet no popular political movement were more aloof from the masses than Mr. Bradlaugh, Mr. Gladstone, or Admiral Mazzini knew nothing. Yet, whereas at present it is fashionable for even poor boys like myself to show all the signs of this new knowledge, it indicates a wide and deep public interest. This interest is obvious in literature perhaps than in anything else, quite outside a propagandist tracts issued by definitely Socialist societies. A certain amount of men, of which very few are almost an necessary ingredient nowadays in a novel which aims at being at once serious and life-like, while more serious treatment of the subject at first ensured that whatever one might ask of socialism should prove the golden key of self-satisfaction and content and with the best of all possible societies is rolling away before the sun-beat bred of misery and aspiration, and all people above the lowest level of intelligence (which I take to mean, as a matter of fact, people who are used to reading anything new, some timely, some anxious, some hopefully.

It seems clear to me that the reception which Mr. Bellamy's 'Looking Backward' is part of that great mass of people who are hopeful in regard to Socialism. I am sure that ten years ago it would have been very little noticed, if at all; whereas now several editions have been sold in America, and it is attracting general attention in England, and to anyone not deeply interested in the social question it could not be at all an attractive book. It is true that it is cast into the form of a romance, but the author states very frankly in his preface that he has only given it this form as a suggestion of the pill, and that he is not even himself be of a new world has grown so common, and has been done with so much more care and art than Mr. Bellamy has used, that by itself this would have done nothing for the sake of the Socialist cause. But now, with the growth of romance which people have found interesting to them.

Since, therefore, both Socialists and non-Socialists have been so much impressed with the book, it seems to me necessary that the 'Looking Backward' should be written down. It is a 'Looking Backward' that can be written in the year 2000, and to describe the state of society at that period after a gradual and peaceful revolution has realised the Socialist scheme which we see in the beginning of the present century. It requires notice all the more because there is a certain danger in such books as this: a twofold danger: for there will be some temperaments to whom the answer given to the question "How shall we use this new world?" will not be very attractive. It is possible that the danger is no longer so great, but it is still there.

As an illustration it may be mentioned that nowadays it is to begin the serious work of production at the age of twenty-one, work for a laborious life, and then, when he is forty-five, when he is to knock off his work and amuse himself (improve his mind, if he has one left). Heavens! think of a man of forty-five changing all his habits suddenly and by compulsion! But there is something more. He would have to change his thoughts; he would have to form a kind of aristocracy (how curiously old ideas cling) for the perfection of certain judicial and political functions.

Mr. Bellamy's conception of life on Bellamy's world; he has no idea beyond existence in a great city; his dwelling of the future in the home of an American. In one passage, indeed, he mentions villages, but with unconscious simplicity that they do not come into the scheme at all. But the whole plan of the machinery of great centres of civilisation. This seems strange to some of us, who cannot help thinking that our experience ought to have taught us that such aggregations of population afford the worst possible form of dwelling-place, whatever the second-worst might be.

In short, a machine-life is the best which Mr. Bellamy can imagine for us on all sides; it is not to be wondered at that his only ideal of the perfect labouring man of the future is a machine. Bellamy's utopia must be still called very interesting, as it is constructed with due economical knowledge, and with much adroitness; and of course his temperament is that of many thousands of people. This is the only real importance of the book, for its false and unartistic; it makes its own (if a Socialist) perfectly satisfied with modern civilisation, if only the injustice, misery, and unhappiness of the other side of the coin, which half-change seems perfectly

The only ideal of life which such a man can see in this thought of the industrious professional middle-class men of to-day purified from their crime of complexity with the monopolist class, and become independent instead of being as they now are, parasitical. It is not to be denied that if such an ideal could be realised, it would be a great improve in the present society. But can it be realised? It means in fact the alteration of the machinery of life in such a way that all men shall be allowed to share in the benefits of that life, for the production and unifying of which the machinery was instituted. There are clear signs to show us that that very group whose life is thus put forward as an ideal of a future life can be called upon to say, and they also demand a revolution. The pessimistic revolt of the latter end of this century led by John Ruskin against the philistinism of the triumphant bourgeois, bawling and stumbling as it necessarily was, shows that the change in the form of civilisation has begun, before any one seriously believed in the possibility of altering its machinery.

It follows naturally from the author's satisfaction with the best part of modern life, a society which is not a true socialism, which is not the essential part of it. The essential of monoply is, "I warm myself by the fire which you have made, and you (very much the plural) stay outside in the cold."
THE STRENGTH OF TYRAN.

(From the Chartist Circular, 1841.)

The tyrant's chains are only strong
While slaves submit to wear them;
And who could bind them on the throng
Determined not to bear them?

They seek your poor; but, even though the links
Were light as fashion's feather,
The heart which rightly thinks and feels
Would feel no force, but only seize.

The lords of earth are only great
While others clothe and feed them;
But what were all their pride and state
Should labour cease to feed them?

The swain is higher than a king:
Because the laws of nature
The monarch were a useless thing,
The swain a useful creature.

We toll, we spin, we drive the mine,
Sustaining each his neighbour;
And so we can show a right divine
To rob us of our labour!

We rush to battle, bear our lot
In every ill and danger;
And who shall make the peaceful content
To wish all tyrants far and near,
Beneath the chains that bind us;
And perish, too, that servile fear
Which makes the slaves obey us?

One grand, one universal claim,
One peal of moral thunder,
Vendred by the peasant's name,
And rend our bonds asunder!

CHARLES COLK, A London Mechanic.

REVOLUTIONARY CALENDAR.

WEEK ENDING JUNE 29, 1889.

23 Sun. 1789. King declares proceedings of the National Assembly void, and orders them to disperse. 1848. W. C. Parnell made his great speech at Paris. 1800. Obrenovitch and other workers tried in Belgrade for printing pro-Russian literature; 1837. The Russian government reprimands the leaders of the Paris Kommune. 1816. In Brazil, the book "Brazil and Her People" was published.

24 Mon. 1855. Sixty-three years after the London Diggers' meeting, the proceedings of which were suppressed, the conspirators were tried at Oxford. 1883. Louis Michel sentenced to six years imprisonment.

25 Tues. 1830. First number of Bobbsey's "Topographical Tramp," London. 1805. Louis Moreau Dupuy, who had been living in Paris since 1848, was arrested and brought to trial at Lille, where he was sentenced to three years imprisonment.

26 Wed. 1794. Trial of William Drennan, the British revolutionary, at Liverpool. 1794. Balloons first used in warfare by French Republican army of the Netherlands at Austerlitz. 1900. James Hadfield tried for shooting at George III. in Derry Lane Theatre, 1921. Motion in the House of Commons for a "Commission to investigate New Laws, to examine the conditions and treatment of the working-classes in that Establishment, to enquire into any future arrangements which Mr. Owen may propose for the benefit of labourers, and to report the same to the House," received without a division. 1821. Robert Owen, introduced by Lord Melbourne, presents to the Queen, at her levee, the address adopted at the Birmingham Congress. 1840. Weeria Ruder, a German socialist, was imprisoned at Paris. 1970. Armand Arbaud died, 1881. Edmond Bontje died, 1881.


28 Fri. 1712. Rouen born. 1792. Lafayette attempts to reinstate aristocratic privilege in France. 1793. Middelton magistrates pronounce certain inciters "treasonable and seditious," as they bear the cap of liberty. 1836. John Dennis, George Crewe, William Pennington, and Nathaniel Halsey hung for their part in the Fen Riots. 1881. Susilinovitch, a German socialist, was exiled from Russia; three others were imprisoned.


The wages of furnace hands in the Chenango Valley, Pa., were reduced 10 per cent.

INTERNATIONAL SOCIALIST WORKING-MEN'S CONGRESS.

TO THE EDITOR OF JUSTICE.

DEAR SIR,—In your issue of June 15—namely, in H. M. Hyndman's article entitled "The International Working Men's Congress and the Marxist Movement," I find it asserted that "both Stekendroff and W. Parmelee declared in writing that their names were appended to the Marxist circular without their consent." Allow me to state that such declaration had been made to me by one of the secretaries of the Organising Commission, who informed me that the Commission will make allowance for the peculiar conditions of countries like Russia, and only proceed to decision in cases where the proceedings in question are submitted to the Congress, and of which I was very happy to have the benefit. I think that we, the so-called Russian nihilists, must take every opportunity of showing our solidarity with the great international socialist movement; and cannot, I believe, be excused, for refusing to admit that William Morris, Engels, Lassalle, and Co., with the body of German Socialists, have no claim to represent a huge part of this movement.—Yours truly, W. STEKENDROFF.

THE following further adhesions have been received:—

ROMA—For the Russian Social-Democratic Union: Axelrod, Plechanoff, Vera Sazonovitch.

SWEDEN—For the Social-Democratic Party: Brandtling, Danielsson, Palm.

EAST-END CAPMEN.—These sweatied workers have formed a union on advanced lines, contrived Rochdale being elected honorary president. Meets at "Black Swan," Hanley, every Saturday night. Sixty-three joined at the first meeting, and it is fast growing.

POISONED AT WORK.—In a Nottingham paper is an account of how a workman—Arthur Meakin—committed suicide at his work on nitre. Arthur Meakin had the job of cleaning out condensing chambers at Old Barford Chemical Works, where the frames of the gas were strong. He started for his work on Wednesday, June 12th, in his usual health and spirits. He went into the deadly chamber, and on retching home complained of his wife of a pain in his heart. By morning he was dead. The doctor said he died of congestion of the lungs, which he believed was brought about by his breathing noxious fumes while at work. The coroner, in his charge, of course, had been unanswerable as possible for the owners of the chemical works. The man had not taken proper precautions, and so on; but he was forced to admit that the coroner's evidence was not a "strong" one, and the jury returned a verdict in accordance with the medical testimony. But what of the system that makes men risk their lives to polish work for a scanty pittance? Murdered by condition should have been the verdict.

MURDEROUS SLAVE-DRIVING IN SHOPS.—At a recent meeting of the Protection Association of Washington, D.C., a subsequent talk was told by a speaker, for the accuracy of which he vociferated—"I was in the employ, some years ago, of a man who was a regular slave-driver. There was a young lady who was worn out with work. I have seen her drop down behind the counter, and have carried her out myself twice in one day. Well, one day I saw her looking very white and, I said to her, "Sit down, you'll drop and I'll bring you a stool, and she sat down. And just then the employer came up and saw her sitting down; and he said, 'We can't have these lazy ways; we have to work,' and he picked her up by the arm and she fell on the floor. I saw it myself, and she managed to keep account to till the end of the week. She had a widow daughter depending on her; they had nothing to eat. They had to live on that. On this morning she was ill, and he brought up and told her it was time to go to the shop, and she said, 'Shop! Oh, mother, it's time to go; I can't do it.' Her mother said: "Well, mother, it means if you don't; you'll be turned off, and we shall have nothing.' But then he saw how ill she looked, and said, 'Come on, now; a bit by and by; and I'll be there by and by; never mind if you are late.' And she went up half an hour after and found her lying dead. And that man goes on, and has a large business, and he goes to see us Sundays and have our own: 'There shall do no murder!' But if ever there was a murderer in the sight of heaven, that man is a murderer."—WILLIAM MORRIS.