CELEBRATION OF THE PARIS COMMUNE.

The Celebration of the Eighteenth Anniversary of the Paris Commune (convened by the Socialist League and the Social Democratic Federation) will be held on

SATURDAY EVENING, MARCH 16th, at Eight prompt, at the SOUTH PLACE INSTITUTE, SOUTH PLACE, MOORGATE STREET, E.C.

The following speakers will address the meeting—


Chairman: H. M. Hyndman

Selections of Music will be given during the Evening by Members and Friends of the Social Democratic Federation, and the Choir of the Socialist League will render the 'Marseillaise,' 'All for the Cause,' and 'When the Workers have their own again,' etc.

Comrades and friends are earnestly requested to take in hand the collection of money for the defrayal of expenses, for which purpose collection sheets have been issued. Donations may be sent to W. H. Lee (S.D.F.), or F. Kite (S.L.), Organising Secretaries, 13, Farrington Rd., E.C.

NOTES ON NEWS.

It is difficult indeed to say a word about the "Great Case" which has not already been said dozens of times. Socialists must of course join in the general rejoicing. If things had gone the other way the reactionaries would have been encouraged to more and more acts of oppression, and the Times newspaper would have been our master till we could have mustered strength to upset the whole concern. As things go the Times has been hit hard indeed; and although it is true that by taking things quietly and letting the days pass, it will in a few months regain something of the appearance of its old prestige, yet at all events its forward movement to take us all by the throat has been checked.

As to Mr. Parnell, he is not of us, and probably, in time to come, will be very much against us; but it would be ungenerous indeed not to rejoice in his triumph over such a vile crew as the Times and the Tory Government. On the other hand, we think no better of him for being cleared of the crime of being art and part with the reactionary party in Ireland; and as to the famous or infamous letter, when the facsimile first appeared in the columns of the Friend of Informers, I remember rubbing my eyes and saying to myself, "Why, what the devil has hit the Times now, where’s the harm in that letter?"

For the Government of course the blow is serious; but the hopes of a speedy dissolution in which the Star and other Radicals are indulging are surely delusive. The Government majority on the amendment to the Address shows pretty clearly that though there may be some of the Tory party who are ashamed of the tactics of their leaders (now they have failed), yet they have no choice but to vote straight on a division. Indeed, as to the shame, I doubt it; for politics make blackguards of us all.

However, when the general election does come, no doubt this defeat will go some way to overthrow the Tory party, and unless the unexpected weighs down the scales on the other side once more, we may look for a Gladstonian Parliament next time. Well, what then? As to Ireland compromise, and shelving the matter until it reappears, we may well hope, with a far more revolutionary aspect. As to the country in general? Well, what we may reasonably expect is, that the new Gladstonian Parliament will think that they have got enough for the popular side in conceding some crippled Home Rule to Ireland, and will set their face against any serious change in England. And on the whole I think that this which is likely to happen is the best thing that could happen. For there are many Radicals, and perhaps some Socialists, who expect much from a new Liberal Parliament, and if they get nothing perhaps they will besmirch themselves a little, and try to push things forward.

For just think, while all these fine ladies and gentlemen, these mirages of refinement and cultivation, were crowding into the Court as into a theatre, to enjoy themselves over this judicial drama, the point of which was to find out, whether a certain Parliamentary leader was more or less mixed up with an enthusiastic and generous act (though made on grounds that we should not agree with) on that great reactionary power, the British Empire—while all this was going on, and the corruption of well-do-do society was day by day being exposed, all around them thousands of poor people were (and are) dying of starvation and living in torment, without a hand being held out to help them. Anything is good enough to obscure the thought of that and what will come of it—though nothing worse than itself can come of it. And there is no wonder in that, for all this suffering is the foundation of "Society." Touch it, attempt seriously to remedy it, and down topples that false Society itself—and there is the remedy, and there is no other.

W. M.

As comrade John Burns well said when speaking there, the meeting of the Metropolitan Radical Federation, of which a report will be found elsewhere, marked an era in the history of the struggle for free speech. The picked men of the working-mech Libels and Radical clubs were met together, resolute, angry, ready to do anything—if they could but resolve on what was to do. They would have nothing whatever to do with the cowardly proposal to get parliament to "legalise" their meetings. The right of public meeting antedated parliament by centuries; it was one of those inexpressible rights which the people had never delegated to any legislature. They would not be "allowed" to do that which was well within their right. Such was the clearly expressed feeling of the meeting right through.

The two Liberal members who came down to direct, remained to be rebuked and badgered. They were beginning to feel a little uncomfortable, when Sir Charles Russell came in, and their faces cleared. But they soon clouded again, not to clear for the rest of the evening, when they found what futile was the would-be coup d'état, and how little even the "old lion of the law courts" could do for them. To see Mr. Pickersgill gradually lose his grandiloquent air, and plump and wriggle like a frightened pettifogger under the stern questioning of his judges! Mr. Morgan, his companion, met with a less severe reception, for he was obviously a good honest old Radical, a martyr from being dead. But more instructive than all, was to see Sir Charles Russell straining every nerve to master a hostile audience—of Liberals and Radicals!—and failing.

All his prestige and the greatness of his power could no more for him. The old familiar shibboleths fell on deaf ears—dead to everything but "Free Speech" and "Trafalgar Square." And it was by no means an audience of Socialists; the delegates of Socialist organizations were in a very small minority. The frettist speeches were made by the delegates of Liberal clubs and similar bodies; from the body of the meeting came the shouts of denunciation, the short bitter sen-
teases that stung Sir Charles into rage and whitened the face of Mr. Phelps... Mr. Morgan admitted it to a League delegate after the meeting.

It was a time to be remembered, that night on which the old party was killed. The Radicals by the thought of the tremendous weight against them dashed it to pieces, and, again, by immense effort, secured a hearing for the "accused." This was so marked that Mr. Morgan admitted it to a League delegate after the meeting.

A MINTRELL COMMUNIST.

We have suffered quite a loss lately, in this neighbourhood, in the death of our old friend, Joseph Sharp, and its shrewdness and prudence, or his kindness to the people—of native feeling, dignity, gentleness, in the very poorest walks, and of that desire for and belief in a better social life, which runs through the whole of our country. He was a great man, though little known, and the various occupations in and around Sheffield, but to give their spare time to communal work at the farm, and in some way to share its produce—the scheme including, as most Communist schemes seem to do, some project for the establishment of a school among the poorer children, and the people who were to be their teachers. He was a native of Sheffield and had lived in that town for many years. He had been a bricklayer and a carpenter, and had been deeply interested in the working-class movement. He had been a member of the Sheffield Working Men's Club, and had been one of its most active members. He had been a supporter of the Social Democratic Federation, and had been one of its most active members. He had been a member of the Fabian Society, and had been one of its most active members.

Mr. Sharp, probably, in his native way, was as much convinced that his work was right as any other man, and there was due to their not being followed, as any one. He was at this time, as at other times, a believer in the social order, and in the necessity for its improvement. He was a man of high principle, and believed in the harmonies of the spheres; but he thought, as he often said, that was very necessary in order to bring about the change he wished for. He said, with a smile: "We must create harmony; and there, perhaps, will be some of you who will say: 'Is it not a difficult task? But also, when the smile was gone, there was a deep and serious look in his eye. He laughed when he told me that he was apprenticed to a butcher, saying "I couldn't kill a goose," when he went into the police force for a time—by way of a change; and after that got employment in a factory. Factory work, however, becoming slack, and as he was now married, and a small family growing up, he bought a farm. "Do you mean," I said, "to get into farming?" "Yes, I mean to," he replied. "I thought that if I could throw over work I could make a little by selling things up and down. Having a young family makes you anxious. Well, I worked hard at the farm for three years, and could play pretty well at the end of that time, and so, for the first time, I began to be serious about playing and singing; and so that when the time came that I was thrown out I took to that entirely." There was possibly another reason for taking up his farm. The Christian mission of the day was a powerful one, and perhaps to this Mr. Sharp was a little inclined, was an ardent enthusiast for the five-point Charter—to be enforced by points of steel if necessary; he had often drilled with his comrades in the deserted granite-quarries of Dartmoor, and had been known to have been allowed, had not the unemployed come to "show their rage there." And if the Liberals want to win back the allegiance of the London workers by the next election, they will have to begin early and bid high.

Meanwhile, we Socialists should take heart from the "stirring of the dry bones," and work on unwearyed. Who knows but our day is much nearer than we dream of?