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NOTES ON NEWS.

THERE is an exhibition on show, it seems, for "Garments for the Poor." It is a difficult thing to see how such an exhibition can be made a novelty, considering the many exhibitions in which the triumphs of cheap labour and shoddy are set forth, and which are open to all and several (who have any money in their pockets) under various glowing titles, which, however, do not conceal the fact that they are the markets of the miserable; shops where wares are sold which no one would buy if he had not been forced to labour for nothing by a robber. Really, I don't see how this new exhibition can compete with Petticoat Lane, as a remarkable object—as a sign of our civilisation.

But if I might give a hint to the promoters of this exhibition, here it is. I suppose that those to whom they give the new garments adapted to their condition of life, when they take the new will strip off the old. Well, suppose these were collected and an exhibition made of them, the garments of the poor, instead of for them. If the gift of garments were done on a large enough scale, the cast-off clothes might make an exhibition of some interest for us of the well-to-do class, and might prepare us for that Exhibition of the Poor themselves, which will take place one day, and will be an imposing ceremony for those of the rich who may chance to survive it.

In fact, if I had dropped down from the moon into a London reading-room and had got hold of a newspaper, I should have said to myself, "The Poor, who are they? They seem to be a very lucky set of people; here are folk always doing something for them, which they wouldn't do for anybody else! Why, amongst other things, here's a man given them £250,000, whatever that means!"

However, not having come into England by way of the moon, I am rather puzzled about this "magnificent gift to the London Poor," and am principally sure of one thing, that if I were a member of that much-cared-for body, I would willingly speculate on my share of the said £250,000, and take, say, a pound of sausages in exchange for my chance; and meantime, I should like to ask a question or two.

1. How is the donor going to get at the poor so that they may receive the "gift"?
2. He will build houses with it, will he? Well, when built, who is to inhabit them? and on what terms?
 - (a) Are the "poor" to live rent free in them?
 - (b) Or to pay rent below the market value of them?
 - (c) If so, who amongst the poor are to be thus favoured?
 - (d) And where are the rest going to live?
3. Or is this, after all, another building company to whom the Guinness is going to lend his money?

When all these questions are answered quite satisfactorily, and I am so far assured that a gift has been given, I have still another question to ask, namely, *Where did the money come from?*

The Brazilian revolution would appear to be, as Mr. Cunninghame Graham hints, a revolution of the ordinary political type which does not touch the workers at all, but it may turn out otherwise. If so we shall soon see. It will not be a matter of "freeing" the slaves in the bourgeois sense of the word; that may be done, as we in England know too well, without making one stroke at the slavery of poverty. If the Brazilian revolution is to be a real one, Capitalism, the root of all evil, must be attacked definitely; then we shall believe in it. "By their fruits ye shall know them."

We have lost by death an energetic worker in the Cause, William Sharman, who, although he was addressed by the title of "reverend," had long shaken off any priestly assumption of dogmatism or special holiness. William Sharman was one of those Unitarian preachers who have become entirely convinced of the truth of Socialism, and see no reason for keeping their light under a bushel; he was a centre

of Socialism in a very unsocialistic neighbourhood, and quietly and steadily did much good; a genial, unselfish man, his personal friends will miss him sorely. W. M.

Lord Melbourne's journals and papers, recently published, include some valuable contributions to the history of an interesting period (1790-1848) and many characteristic sketches of the men who made that history. One of his caustic touches is: "Dr. ——— is one of those men whom the Whigs call a Tory; whom the Tories call a fair man inclined to Whig opinions; and who calls himself a man of no politics. Such men are for the most part, if not always, really Tories."

Then, as now, Whigs were no better than Tories when the people were concerned. Here is one of the reasons urged by Melbourne himself against removing the Houses of Parliament from Westminster (italics ours):

"If a total removal takes place, and that to a situation where space is unlimited, it will be very difficult to avoid providing much larger accommodation for spectators as well as for members; and Viscount Melbourne need not recall to your Majesty's mind the fatal effects which large galleries filled with the multitude have had upon the deliberation of public assemblies, and consequently upon the laws and institutions of nations."

May not the "munificent gifts" of Messrs. Guinness and Waterlow, over which the papers have been gushing so, be merely "ransom" such as Mr. Chamberlain used to talk about when he was playing to the gallery and had not turned his face downwards to the stalls? Anyway, it is only giving back a feather from a stolen goose.

The Bishop of Manchester feels that he must move with the times. This is how he does it:

"Dr. Moorhouse, speaking at a meeting of the governors of the Manchester Hospital for Incurables, said one suggestion in the report was that they had lost a considerable number of subscribers during the year, and he must tell them that they were destined to lose more and more, not only by death, but in virtue of the great social movement which most of them regarded with the utmost satisfaction, that social movement whereby the wealth of this country was being very much more extensively distributed among the people. Only the other day a very eminent statesman, who had just received a number of returns making it perfectly plain, told him that whereas the number of smaller fortunes was largely increasing in Great Britain, the number of larger fortunes was steadily diminishing. He (the Bishop) was glad of that, because no community was in a healthy state which had nothing but a small knot of millionaires on one hand, and mostly all paupers on the other. Call this social movement what they might, there was no disguising from themselves the fact that it would make the collection of funds for institutions like that more and more difficult."

The *Omaha Daily Democrat* of the 8th prints a report on the Paris Congress—the progressive one—by the Hon. John E. Ahles, delegate of the Brotherhood of United Labour. In the course of it he complains that the *Commonweal* did not correctly describe the American contingent at the Congress. Well! the *Commonweal* deeply regrets the mistake, though from his own statement it seems to have been a natural as well as a very slight one. But he forgets to say that although the Editor and Secretary of the *Commonweal* were both there, as well as many other representatives of European labour papers, he neglected to explain to any of them the position he took up, which seems to have been generally misunderstood by the Congress.

What led to his withdrawal from the Congress was that he had been selected to report for the *United States*, but that through what he claims to have been "ignorance or dishonesty" on the part of Liebknecht, Mr. Busche, then of the *Workmen's Advocate*, supplanted him, and proceeded to misrepresent American labour. He need not now be sore, however, for the revenge of time has overtaken Mr. Busche, who has since then been cast out and discredited by the Socialist Labour Party of the U. S., by which he was sent to Paris, and in consequence is no longer in the editorial chair of the *Workmen's Advocate*, to that paper's manifest improvement. Among other things, we notice that it now acknowledges in a proper manner the source of its clippings. S.