TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Dwight—Your letter was insufficiently stamped, and cost us ten cents.

Australians Radical—Our manager complains of irregularity in your supplies, which causes disappointment to customers.

Australians Travels and Labour Journal—You do not address our comrades with the object of this paper? If possible, also with a specimen of the manuscripts.

Revista da Florida.—Freedom's address is: 7 Cancel Street, Merrow Street, Walworth, London, S.E.

NOTES ON NEWS.

Mr. Gladstone's speech to the working-men of Saltley last week, though as long as need be, and doubtless as attractive to the patriotic lover in its oratory as its utterances usually are, scarcely needs much comment in detail; it plays the same wearisome tune which we have been used to hear played from the period of "loose bounds" onwards. It is called a strain but really and truly is in the depths of pessimism; for this is the meaning of it.

"Friends, we are very comfortable, and we should be glad if you also could be so, always so long as your comfort takes away nothing from us. To say the truth we fear that you are not living in comfort, but since it is for our good that you should go on living as you do, perhaps you would not mind, and do not try to alter matters. Meanwhile we do you this service, if no other; we will pretend that you are getting better and better as the days go on, and that really compared with what you had been a half century ago (when you were all but in universal revolution), we are quite happy, or at least ought to be. So be contented, thrifty, and hopeful—of our continued prosperity."

This sort of poisonous and lying twaddle was what was always said by Liberal politicians when addressing the workers twenty, ten, yes years ago; it now needs a G.O.M. to say it in its completeness. Does the dim old man believe it, I wonder? Perhaps he does, as much as a hardened politician can be said to believe anything. But just fancy this preacher of contentment, this old Conservative gentleman, being the dangerous revolutionary person who used to terrify the Tories! He has been for years the ardent moral leader of his party, and now a stationary milestone on the road, marking the rate of progress which live men are making.

The Art Congress just over at Edinburgh was on the whole but a dull affair, and would have been very dull indeed but that a Socialist its speakers gave some signs of the times. It goes without saying, that though there were people present who were intent on playing the part of the art-philanthropists, all the paper-readers, except the de- letes the Socialists, showed an absurd ignorance of the very essence of economics; and also, of course, that the general feeling was an ignoring of the existence of the working-class except as instruments to be played on.

Education was much talked of; but it was not understood that if you had condemned a man to be a slave, his education must be that of a slave. Art for the working-classes was talked of by men who chose to ignore the fact that men anxiously facing starvations, or weakly bear it, are not free to receive pleasure from a work of art; although at the Congress meetings the clock-hands pointing to lunch-time at once emptied the room of the well-fed audience. Socialist artists and craftsmen (since there were none but Socialists capable of taking up the job) were set to lecture audiences of Edinburgh workmen on the due methods of work for producing popular art, though both lecturers and workmen audience knew but too well that such art was impossible for wage-slaves either to make or enjoy.

However, the said lecturers did not hide this fact under a bushel; and since a reactionist Edinburgh evening paper angrily declared that the Socialists had ruined the Congress, it is probable that their plain speaking had some effect. It must also be said that the working-men audiences received any allusions to Socialism, or any teaching founded on it, with more than an assent, with enthusiasm. The Socialists, Socialism, meetings held under the auspices of our Edinburgh friends, were very successful, and the local Socialists are well satisfied with the result of the week.

Last week saw another horrible proof of the reckless greed with which capitalists pursue profit as their sole aim. The Glasgow "accident," "fatality," or "disaster," as the newspapers have been calling it, the Glasgow "disaster," as the newspapers have been calling it, and it would have killed and startled everybody. Everybody, that is, but the people responsible for that and similar events. They regard it, as indeed it truly is, as only an unavoidable incident of commercial methods. To get profit you must work cheaply; to work cheaply you must run risks—or rather, make your slaves run risks; running the risk long enough means that sooner or later the crash comes off and your poor slaves suffer.

But if you have only been careful enough in arranging and distributing the risks, the "catastrophe" is put down to "Providence" or some other irresponsible cause, and you escape all punishment. Nay! if you only weep and wail a little, a spend a fraction of the blood-money you have made out of the sacrifices which you state were made for their sake, the bloody and deliberate murder, or in burying one or two of its victims and healing the bruises of one or two more, there will be few but will do you reverence as a more than perfect man. Only the bad and wicked Socialist will call you murderer and so spoil by a discordant note the chorus of your praise.

But the people are listening more and more to the bad and wicked teachings of the right of man as against the powers of property, and they will soon demand that whenever such a thing as this in Glasgow occurs there shall someone hang for it—even if they have to do the hanging themselves!

If the London Trades Council were anything other than a discreditable gang of ring-runners and place-makers, it would have long ago started a paper somewhat after the pattern of the Newark (N.J.) Mutual Aid. This is a small four-page journal co-operatively printed and published, and devoted to the positive side of co-operation as a weapon against sweaters and rat labour. It gives a list of fair houses and co-operative associations, as well as of news of the trades union and co-operative movements generally, so that although it is not exclusively with fair houses for all things. Failing the Trades Council, why does not the Labour Association take it up? By the way, can anyone tell us what the Labour Association is doing, if it does anything?

Another sign of the times is the public prayer in churches for the recovery of Mr. Bradlaugh. What would have been said a few years ago in reply to a prophecy that this would take place, will hardly bear imagining! I am glad to see that there is a chance of Mr. Bradlaugh's recovery (by virtue of the prayers!) because he is an open and unashamed enemy of the working-classes and therefore to be prized in these days of man friends and would-be patrons.

THE COMMONWEAL

November 9, 1889.

THE COMMONWEAL
 ONE PENNY WEEKLY.