

# THE COMMONWEAL

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WEEKLY; ONE PENNY.

### NOTES ON NEWS.

"THEY ordain the unjust to minister justice, and do injury to them that be just." Judges are, like policemen, the paid upholders of things as they are, eager to avenge any onslaught upon property or privilege. So that when Mr. Ernest Parke, editor of the *North London Press*, came before Mr. "Justice" Hawkins and was found "guilty" of libelling a lord, everybody knew that his punishment was not going to be a light one. For it is to be remembered that Mr. Parke was sub-editor of the *Star*, and honoured in that capacity with the fear and hatred of the class whom their servant Hawkins was defending. Whatever quarrel we may have had with the *Star*, or with Mr. Parke himself, for occasional unfairness to Socialism and Socialists, we can have nothing but praise for their part in forcing something more than mere politics upon public attention.

If Mr. Parke had been connected with any other paper than the *Star*—outside of declared Socialist journals—he would have been let off with a quarter of the penalty to which he has been condemned. This was the universal opinion among press-men when they heard the verdict. And that if he had been a Socialist writer the penalty would have been doubled several times over I am equally confident. I do not yet know what his colleagues of the *Star* intend to do in the matter, but I hope that they are going to do something, and that they will allow the Radicals and Socialists of London to help them in doing it.

In the early days of the League, a then comrade raised a laugh upon one occasion by declaring that "his mission in life was to smash the British Empire." He has since become an "extinct volcano," as a contributor to "a contemporary" signs himself, and has apparently neglected his mission for a long time past. But there are innumerable signs that although he is not likely to carry out his threat of smashing the British Empire, the British Empire is fully capable of smashing itself, and further, that it will perform the desirable operation at no very distant date.

Despite the smooth prophecies of the Imperial Federationists, and the loud shouting of the Jingo mob, there can be no doubt in the mind of anybody who watches at all closely the course of Australian affairs that the birth of the Australian Republic is drawing very near; so near that men are counting the possibilities of repression, and preparing for their Bunker Hill. As Chief Justice Lilley, of New South Wales, said the other day:

"In truth, Australian Independence is in the air and in the hearts of men, and although no man can foretell the hour of its birth, its advent sooner or later is sure."

It will be many a long year yet before Australia will satisfy a Socialist by its administration of public affairs; a republic with private property, it will be like France or the United States; but all the same, there will be few Socialists who will not rejoice when the—well! when the republican flag replaces the Union Jack.

Rather different will be the case of the South African Republic, which is also trembling on the verge of actuality; for, in that case the rebellion will be in defence of the right of "whacking their own nigger." Brutal as is the British treatment of all subject races, including their own working-classes, there is yet some restraint imposed by the English Government upon the cruelty of the Africanders towards the poor devils of natives whom they exploit. English or Dutch, Gentile or Jew, whatever the blood may be that runs in the exploiter's veins, it makes no perceptible difference in his attitude towards the "nigger." The white folk of South Africa are nearly as degraded in that respect as those of the Southern States of the Union are now, and would soon be as bad as those were before the war without any very great trouble.

After Australia and South Africa have departed—I don't know much about New Zealand—we may begin to expect the absorption of

the West Indies by the United States. Canada, too, is not far off throwing in her lot with the States—and where will the Empire be then, poor thing? where will the Empire be then?

A Mr. Sidney J. Thomson wrote as follows to the *Pall Mall Gazette* the other day:

"Some weeks ago you published an article on the Aërated Bread Company, and mentioned that the average wage of the waitresses is 9s. a-week. I, as a holder of a few shares in the company, could not at first believe this statement; but subsequent inquiries confirm its truth. It seems to me monstrously unjust that a company earning a dividend equal to 25 per cent. should be satisfied to pay its servants so poorly. It must never be forgotten that every shareholder is himself an employer, and as such is, to the extent of his holding, responsible for the wages paid."

It is evident that he is not far from "finding salvation," and if he can only get his fellow shareholders to agree with him will have done some good in his day and generation.

Amid all the froth and splutter about Mr. Parnell as a co-respondent, there has been only one utterance on the subject which was characterised by anything like sense; and that was the letter of our old friend and foe, Mr. Auberon Herbert, which appeared in the *Pall Mall* the other night, and which we reprint elsewhere. But then Mr. Herbert is honest and fearless, while all others who have written or spoken on the subject, being politicians, are also "formalists, out of fear and base flattery . . . a rout of temporisers, ready to embrace and maintain all that is, or shall be proposed, in hope of preferment."

S.

### NEWS FROM NOWHERE:

OR,

### AN EPOCH OF REST.

BEING SOME CHAPTERS FROM A UTOPIAN ROMANCE.

CHAP. III.—THE GUEST HOUSE AND BREAKFAST THEREIN.

I LINGERED a little behind the others to have a stare at this house, which, as I have told you, stood on the site of my old dwelling.

It was a longish building with its gable ends turned away from the road, and long traceried windows coming rather low down set in the wall that faced us. It was very handsomely built of red brick with a lead roof; and high up above the windows there ran a frieze of figure-subjects in baked clay, very well executed, and designed with a force and directness which I had never noticed in modern work before. The subjects I recognised at once, and indeed was very particularly familiar with them.

However, all this I took in in a minute; for we were presently within doors, and standing in a hall with a floor of marble mosaic and an open timber roof. There were no windows on the side opposite to the river, but arches below leading into chambers, one of which showed a glimpse of a garden beyond, and above them a long space of wall gaily painted (in fresco, I thought) with similar subjects to those of the frieze outside: everything about the place was handsome and generously solid as to material; and though it was not very large (somewhat smaller than Crosby Hall perhaps), one felt in it that exhilarating sense of space and freedom which satisfactory architecture always gives to an unanxious man who is in the habit of using his eyes.

In this pleasant place, which of course I knew to be the hall of the Guest House, three young women were flitting to and fro. As they were the first of the sex I had seen on this eventful morning, I naturally looked at them very attentively, and found them at least as good as the gardens, the architecture, and the male men. As to their dress, which of course I took note of, I should say that they were decently veiled with drapery and not bundled up with millinery; that they were clothed like women, not upholstered like arm-chairs, as most women of our time are. In short, their dress was somewhat between that of the ancient classical costume and the simpler forms of the fourteenth

century garments, though it was clearly not an imitation of either: the materials were light and gay to suit the season. As to the women themselves, it was pleasant indeed to see them; they were so kind and happy-looking in expression of face, so shapely and well-knit of body, and though they were healthy-looking and strong. All were at least comely, and one of them very handsome and regular of feature. They came up to us at once merrily and without the least affectation of shyness, and all three shook hands with me as if I were a friend newly come back from a long journey: though I could not help noticing that they looked askance at my garments; for I had on my clothes of last night, and at the best was never a dressy person.

A word or two from Robert the weaver, and they bustled about on our behalf, and presently came and took us by the hands and led us to a table in the pleasantest corner of the hall, where our breakfast was spread for us; and, as we sat down, one of them hurried out by the chambers aforesaid, and came back again in a little while with a great bunch of roses, very different in size and quality to what Hammersmith had been wont to grow, but very like the produce of an old country garden. She hurried back thence into the buttery, and came back once more with a delicately made glass, into which she put the flowers and set in the midst of our table. One of the others, who had run off also, then came back with a big cabbage-leaf filled with strawberries, some of them barely ripe, and said as she set them on the table, "There, now; I thought of that before I got up this morning; but looking at the stranger here getting into your boat, Dick, put it out of my head; so that I was not before all the blackbirds: however, there are a few about as good as you will get them anywhere in Hammersmith this morning."

Robert patted her on the head in a friendly manner; and we fell to on our breakfast, which was simple enough but most delicately cooked, and set on the table with much daintiness. The bread was particularly good, and was of several different kinds, from the big, rather close, dark-coloured, sweet-tasting farmhouse loaf, which was most to my liking, to the thin pipe-stems of wheaten crust, such as I have eaten in Turin.

As I was putting the first mouthfuls into my mouth, my eye caught a carved and gilded inscription on the panelling, behind what we should have called the High Table in an Oxford college hall, and a familiar name in it forced me to read it through. Thus it ran:

*"Guests and neighbours, on the site of this Guest-hall once stood the lecture-room of the Hammersmith Branch of the Socialist League. Drink a glass to the memory! May 1962."*

It is difficult to tell you how I felt as I read these words, and I suppose my face showed how much I was moved, for both my friends looked curiously at me, and there was silence between us for a little while.

Presently the weaver, who was scarcely so well-mannered a man as the ferryman, said to me rather awkwardly:

"Guest, we don't know what to call you: is there any indiscretion in asking you your name?"

"Well," said I, "I have some doubts about it myself; so suppose you call me Guest, which is a family name, you know, and add William to it if you please."

Dick nodded kindly to me; but a shade of anxiousness passed over the weaver's face, and he said—

"I hope you don't mind my asking, but would you tell me where you come from? I am curious about such things for good reasons, literary reasons."

Dick was clearly kicking him underneath the table; but he was not much abashed, and awaited my answer somewhat eagerly. As for me, I was just going to blurt out "Hammersmith," when I thought me what an entanglement of cross purposes that would lead us into; so I took time to invent a lie with circumstance, guarded by a little truth, and said—

"You see, I have been such a long time away from Europe that things seem strange to me now; but I was born and bred on the edge of Epping Forest—Walthamstow and Woodford, to wit."

"A pretty place, too," broke in Dick; "a very jolly place, now that the trees have had time to grow again since the great clearing of houses in 1955."

Quoth the irrepressible weaver: "Dear neighbour, since you knew the Forest some time ago, could you tell me what truth there is in the rumour that in the nineteenth century the trees were all pollards?"

This was catching me on my archaeological natural-history side, and I fell into the trap without any thought of where and when I was; so I began on it, while one of the girls who had been scattering little twigs of lavender and other sweet-smelling herbs about the floor, came near to listen, and stood behind me with her hand on my shoulder, in which she held some of the plant that I used to call balm: its strong sweet smell brought back to my mind my very early days in the kitchen-garden at Woodford, and the large blue plums which grew on the wall beyond the sweet-herb patch,—a connection of memories which all boys will see at once.

I started off: "When I was a boy, and for long after, except for a piece about Queen Elizabeth's Lodge, and for the part about High Beech, the Forest was almost wholly made up of pollard hornbeams mixed with holly thickets. But when the Corporation of London took it over about twenty-five years ago, the topping and lopping, which was a part of the old commoners' rights, came to an end, and the trees were let to grow. But I have not seen the place now for many years, except once when we Leaguers went a-pleasuring to High Beech. I was very much shocked then to see how it was built-over and altered;

and the other day we heard that the philistines were going to landscape-garden it. But what you were saying about the building being stopped and the trees growing is only too good news;—only you know."

At that point I suddenly remembered Dick's date, and stopped short rather confused. The eager weaver didn't notice my confusion, but said hastily, as if he were almost aware of his breach of good manners, "But, I say, how old are you?"

Dick and the pretty girl both burst out laughing, as if Robert's conduct were excusable on the grounds of eccentricity; and Dick said amidst his laughter:

"Hold hard, Bob; this questioning of guests won't do. Why, much learning is spoiling you. You remind me of the radical cobblers in the silly old novels, who, according to the authors, were prepared to trample down all good manners in the pursuit of utilitarian knowledge. The fact is, I begin to think that you have so muddled your head with mathematics, and with grubbing into those idiotic old books about political economy (he he!), that you scarcely know how to behave. Really, it is about time for you to take to some open-air work, so that you may clear away the cobwebs from your brain."

The weaver only laughed good-humouredly; and the girl went up to him and patted his cheek and said laughingly, "Poor fellow! he was born so."

As for me, I was a little puzzled, but I laughed also, partly for company's sake, and partly with pleasure at their unanxious happiness and good temper; and before Robert could make the excuse to me which he was getting ready, I said:

"But neighbours" (I had caught up that word), "I don't in the least mind answering questions, when I can do so: ask me as many as you please; it's fun for me. I will tell you all about Epping Forest when I was a boy, if you please; and as to my age, I'm not a fine lady, you know, so why shouldn't I tell you? I'm hard on fifty-six."

In spite of the recent lecture on good manners, the weaver could not help giving a long "whew" of astonishment, and the others were so amused by his *naïveté* that the merriment flitted all over their faces, though for courtesy's sake they forbore actual laughter; while I looked from one to the other in a puzzled manner, and at last said:

"Tell me, please, what is amiss: you know I want to learn from you. And please laugh; only tell me."

Well, they *did* laugh, and I joined them again, for the above-stated reasons. But at last the pretty woman said coaxingly—

"Well, well, he *is* rude, poor fellow! but you see I may as well tell you what he is thinking about: he means that you look rather old for your age. But surely there need be no wonder in that, since you have been travelling; and clearly from all you have been saying, in unsocial countries. It has often been said, and no doubt truly, that one ages very quickly if one lives amongst unhappy people. Also they say that southern England is a good place for keeping good looks." She blushed and said: "How old am I, do you think?"

"Well," quoth I, "I have always been told that a woman is as old as she looks, so without offence or flattery, I should say you were twenty."

She laughed merrily, and said, "I am well served out for fishing for compliments, since I have to tell you the truth, to wit, that I am forty-two."

I stared at her, and drew musical laughter from her again; but I might well stare, for there was not a careful line on her face; her skin was as smooth as ivory, her cheeks full and round, her lips as red as the roses she had brought in; her beautiful arms, which she had bared for her work, firm and well-knit from shoulder to wrist. She blushed a little under my gaze, though it was clear that she had taken me for a man of eighty; so to pass it off, I said—

"Well, you see, the old saw is proved right again, and I ought not to have let you tempt me into asking you a rude question."

She laughed again, and said: "Well, lads, old and young, I must get to my work now. We shall be rather busy here presently; and I want to clear it off soon, for I began to read a pretty old book yesterday, and I want to get on with it this morning: so good-bye for the present."

She waved a hand to us, and stepped lightly down the hall, taking (as Scott says) at least part of the sun from our table as she went.

When she was gone, Dick said: "Now, guest; won't you ask a question or two of our friend here? It is only fair that you should have your turn."

"I shall be very glad to answer them," said the weaver.

"If I ask you any questions, sir," said I, "they will not be very severe; but since I hear that you are a weaver, I should like to ask you something about that craft, as I am—or was—interested in it."

"Oh," said he, "I shall not be of much use to you there, I'm afraid. I only do the most mechanical kind of weaving, and am in fact but a poor craftsman, unlike Dick here. Then besides the weaving, I do a little with machine printing and composing, though I am little use at the finer kinds of printing; and moreover machine printing is beginning to die out, along with the waning of the plague of book-making; so I have had to turn to other things that I have a taste for, and have taken to mathematics; and also I am writing a sort of antiquarian book about the peaceable and private history, so to say, of the end of the nineteenth century,—more for the sake of giving a picture of the country before the fighting began than for anything else. That was why I asked you those questions about Epping Forest. You have rather puzzled me, I confess, though your information was so interesting. But later on I hope we may have some more talk together, when our friend Dick isn't here. I know he thinks me rather a grinder, and despises me for not being very deft with my hands: that's

the way nowadays. From what I have read of the nineteenth century literature (and I have read a good deal), it is clear to me that this is a kind of revenge for the stupidity of that day, which despised everybody who *could* use his hands. But, Dick, old fellow, *Ne quid nimis!* Don't over-do it!"

"Come, now," said Dick, "am I likely to? Am I not the most tolerant man in the world? Am I not quite contented so long as you don't make me learn mathematics, or go into your new science of aesthetics, and let me do a little practical aesthetics with my gold and steel, and the blowpipe and the nice little hammer? But, hillo! here comes another questioner for you, my poor guest. I say, Bob, you must help me to defend him now."

"Here, Boffin," he cried out, after a pause; "here we are, if you must have it!"

WILLIAM MORRIS.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

INTERNATIONAL NOTES.

GERMANY.

The German Social-Democratic party has sustained a heavy loss in the person of comrade Johannes Wedde, who died suddenly last week at Lübeck. He was a clever poet, full of originality and life, whose writings, in the older papers of the party, were signed by the *nom de plume* of "Silvanus." At the time of the suppression of the last Socialist paper at Hamburg, and when all the Socialists who actually were writing for the press were expelled from that town, it was Wedde who at once started the *Hamburger Bürgerzeitung*. An article entitled "Force no Remedy" brought, however, the flourishing paper to a violent end, and Bismarck, not satisfied with the suppression of the organ, had also its editor expelled from Hamburg. Wedde went to Lübeck, where he founded the *Echo*. He was a candidate to the next Reichstag.

Another misfortune has befallen the German Social-Democratic party: Ignaz Auer, formerly member of the Reichstag, has become insane, and it is said that there is but little hope for his recovery.

It is announced in the German papers that the miners of the Lower Rhine district and Westphalia, who lately struck in their thousands, have now put forward a demand for an increase of 50 per cent. in their wages and for an eight hours shift, to be counted from the time of their entering the pit to that of their leaving off work.

The whole of the stokers and coal-trimmers belonging to the vessels lying in the port of Hamburg struck work last Thursday in consequence of the shipowners having reduced the men's wages by ten marks (10s.) a-month. The strike has already increased in magnitude, and appears likely to extend still further.

BELGIUM.

The miners of the basin of Charleroi, after a hard four weeks' struggle, have won the victory over the coalowners: 30,000 workers of Jumet-Gohyssart, Gilly, Dampremy, Chatelet, Chatelineau, Souvet, Fleurus, Fontaine-l'Evêque, Marchiennes-au-Pont, Marcinelle, Montceau-sur-Sambre, Wanfreecies, Baullet, Pont-du-Loup, etc., have compelled their greedy exploiters to reduce the work hours from eleven to ten, and to consent to an increase of their wages according to the raise of the coal prices realised during the year. The miners have been substantially supported by the Socialists of "Vooruit," Ghent, and all the branches of the Belgian Workingmen's Party. The cause of the workers was certainly a good one. In order to prove it, we need only glance for a moment at the following figures, showing how much the shares of the Belgian mineowners have increased from January to December 1889, and then compare these figures with the scanty, ridiculous increase of wages that has been realised by the workers from 1888 to 1889.

Name of Coalpit.	Price of Shares. 1889		Name of Coalpit.	Price of Shares. 1889	
	Jan. 1.	Dec. 30.		Jan. 1.	Dec. 30.
Cockerill ... ..	Fr. 995	1,280	Espérance et Bonne-	Fr. 617.50	1,350
Marcinelle et Couillet	385	1,165	Fortune ... ..	260	635
Angleur ... ..	300	600	Fontaine l'Evêque ...	1,420	2,700
Athus ... ..	1,000	1,400	Gosson-Lagasse ...	570	1,175
Charleroi ... ..	580	950	Grande Machine à feu	285	520
Espérance-Logdoz ...	95	135	Grand Mambourg en	340	755
Halanzuy ... ..	295	580	Sablonne ... ..	98	180
Monceau-sur-Sambre	620	780	Haine St. Pierre et la	2,025	2,600
Ougrée ... ..	1,250	1,850	Hestre ... ..	1,585	2,800
Providence ... ..	1,625	2,065	Hasard ... ..	200	560
Thy-le-Château ...	1,025	1,510	Hornu et Wasmes ...	2,125	3,450
Aulnoy-Vezin ... ..	350	560	Levant du Flénu ...	640	1,360
Amerceur ... ..	750	1,270	Marihaye à Flémalle Gde.	1,675	3,250
Anderlues ... ..	2,000	3,774	Monc. Fontaine et	225	480
Bonne Espérance et			Martinet ... ..	850	1,325
Batteris ... ..	200	590	Noël Sart-Culpart à Gilly	725	1,375
Carabinier ... ..	210	350	Poirier (charbonnage du)	700	1,150
Charbonnages belges	150	420	Produits du Flénu ...	2,330	4,500
Paturages et Wasmes	151	305	Sacré Madame ... ..	1,650	2,500
Réunis de Charleroi	165	400	Sars Longchamps ...	550	1,300
Chevalières à Dour ...	850	1,700	Trieu Kaisin ... ..	333	670
Concorés (Charb. réunis)	925	1,250			
Conchant du Flénu ...	210	400			
Courcelles-Nord ... ..	475	860			
Falnuée ... ..	405	660			

The average daily wages of the miners for 1888 and 1889 has been as follows (one franc equal 10d.):

	1888.		1889.	
	Fr.	10d.	Fr.	10d.
January ... ..	3.46	4.08	3.73	4.04
February ... ..	3.54	4.08	3.72	4.02
March ... ..	3.44	4.08	3.77	4.15
April ... ..	3.57	3.92	3.87	4.35
May ... ..	3.58	3.95	3.82	4.24
June ... ..	3.90	4.08	3.83	4.30

The highest increase has thus been of 48 centimes, or 4½d., or 12 per cent., whereas the increase in the shares has been on an average 50 per cent.

But the miners' strike will have a better result still than a reduction of hours and an increase of wages. The miners, having now been convinced that combination alone can help them, have resolved to unite into a vast

miners' union throughout the country, and they have already taken steps for the organisation of a general miners' congress, to be held on the first Sunday of February next, at Jumet, when the following agenda will be discussed: 1. Rules of the Association; 2. Nomination of an Executive; 3. Economical and political platform of the Union; 4. International miners' congress; 5. Eight hours work-day.

The foregoing lines were already written when we were informed that new difficulties had arisen between the workers and the pit-owners. It is now asserted that a general strike will soon be decided upon at Charleroi if the employers refuse to grant the miners 15 or in certain cases 20 per cent. increase instead of 10 per cent. The agitation throughout the whole coal-basin is becoming very serious, and the strikers seem to be utterly dissatisfied at the recent compromise. Numerous secret meetings are being held, and it is said that the Ministers, in a conference held on the 18th inst., decided to send gendarmes and cavalry to the various spots where the strike has broken out afresh. The outlook is altogether very dark.

On the other hand, the strike in the Liège coal district has now completely terminated, but it is asserted that if the miners of the Charleroi basin resort to a general strike the district of Liège will come out "on principle."

At Antwerp, where the Socialist movement has made during the last two years a very considerable progress, the Sailors' Union, numbering nearly one thousand members, has made formal adhesion to the Socialist party.

HOLLAND.

Our Anarchist comrades at Rotterdam publish a new organ for the defence of the workers' interests, under the title of *Arbeidderstolk* (The Workers' Organ). The offices are: Havenstraat, 166, Rotterdam. Good luck to the new combatant! VICTOR DAVE.

THE PRICE OF FREEDOM.

["At midnight preceding the morning of his execution, Albert R. Parson's voice rang out clear and proud through the corridors of the gaol as he sang in distinct tones the beautiful ballad, 'Annie Laurie.'"] The following was prompted by reading the above item in the daily papers, and was printed in the *Chicago Labour Enquirer* during its brief existence.]

The night is dark about me;  
I hear the midnight bell;  
Before another midnight  
It will ring my funeral knell.  
It will ring my funeral knell;  
O! the hours are speeding by  
When to win the toilers' freedom  
I shall pay the price and die.

To-night my babes are crouching  
By their weeping mother's side;  
For his country's sake the father  
Leaves his children and his bride.  
Leaves his children and his bride,  
When men for succour cry.  
Then to win the toilers' freedom  
I shall pay the price and die.

Pent in a dismal dungeon,  
Forbidden to be free,  
A slave in chains and prison,  
O what were life to me!  
O what were life to me!  
Speak out, my heart; reply  
That to win the toilers' freedom  
I will pay the price and die.

What greater love hath mortal,  
For one whom he holds dear,  
Than for his sake to gladly  
Meet death without a fear!  
Meet death without a fear—  
Yes, such a love have I,  
And to win the toilers' freedom  
I pay the price and die.

The night will soon be over;  
For me 'twill be the last;  
And the night of wrong, my country,  
From thee shall soon have passed.  
From thee shall soon have passed;  
I see the stars on high,  
So to win the toilers' freedom  
I will pay the price and die.

Weep not above my ashes,  
This is no hour for tears,  
Let every man stand ready  
When he the bugle hears.  
When he the bugle hears;  
Let every man reply:  
We to win the toilers' freedom  
Will pay the price and die!

We have received the *Trades and Labour Advocate* of Sydney (N.S.W.), which, so far as we can tell from the numbers to hand, is a thoroughly sound labour paper on trades-union lines. It is well filled with information on labour matters, and gives a good deal of space to the meetings of the various trades organisations.

SOCIALISM IN LANCASHIRE AND YORKSHIRE.—On Saturday January 11th a conference was held at the rooms of the Liverpool Socialist Society, to discuss the advisability of forming a union of the various Socialist bodies of Lancashire and Yorkshire, for the purpose of arranging for the interchange of public speakers, and generally to consider the best means of carrying on a more effective propaganda. Delegates were present from Sheffield, Salford, Blackburn, Rochdale, and Liverpool. Comrade Reeves (Liverpool) was elected chairman, and some discussion took place as to the proposed line of action; after which comrade W. H. Chapman (Liverpool) proposed: "That in the opinion of this conference it is desirable to form a union of the north-western counties Socialists, to be called 'The North-Western Counties Socialist Union.'" Comrade Sharples (Blackburn) seconded the resolution. After further remarks from comrades Bingham (Sheffield), Horrocks (Salford), and others of the assembled delegates, the following amendment was proposed by Bingham: "That this conference, being of opinion that it is desirable in the interests of Socialist propaganda to facilitate the interchange of speakers between the different centres, at once proceed to draw up a list of probable speakers, and make the best possible arrangements to give effect to that decision." The amendment having been put and carried unanimously, the original motion was withdrawn. Finally it was decided that the secretary of the Liverpool Society (E. C. Chapman) should be appointed general secretary *pro tem.*, in order to draw up a list of lectures; and those societies which are willing to co-operate in this object are requested to send in the necessary particulars as early as possible. At a later hour a conversazione was held, at which a number of pieces of vocal and instrumental music were rendered by members and friends, and a most enjoyable evening was spent; W. H. Chapman, sen., superintended the arrangements for refreshments, etc. On Sunday we held two open-air meetings—the first since the formation of our society. In the morning we met at 11.30 near the Landing Stage, when Reeves, Sharples, and Bingham delivered stirring addresses. In the afternoon Reeves, Creaghe, Bingham, and Horrocks spoke to good effect to a large gathering in the old Haymarket. A considerable quantity of literature was sold, and we are much indebted to our friends from the country for the help they gave us to make a start in this work. We intend holding similar meetings each Sunday in the future.