SCOTTISH NOTES.

The labour vote did not make much of a show at the recent (and first) County Council election in Scotland. Every one of the labour candidates was defeated, some of them very badly indeed. It is significant of the growing respectability of those who were most advanced or Socialistic in their utterances far better than the mere trades-union apostles. Small, of the Lanarkshire Miners, who is an avowed Socialist, ran his campaign on the principle of the “absentees,” and the other candidates of the “socialists” had also the fame of being a Socialist (of the parliamentary school), was well up in the list.

The crofter candidates in the Highlands were very successful, however. In Sutherland the Duke's factors and agents were all defeated, and crofters returned.

The Free Church is being shaken to its base by the heretical utterances of two professors—Dr. Marcus Dods of Edinburgh and Dr. Bruce of Glasgow. As at least one-half of the ministers and laymen of the Free Church believe in the “infalibility of the Church” (i.e., the Confession of Faith and the Shorter Catechism), the orthodox party will have some difficulty in bringing the culprits professors to a sense of the error of their ways.

I used to consider myself a pagan, but since I have read Dr. Dods' definition of Christian belief I consider myself a tolerably good Christian; indeed, quite up to the mark at least of standing at the church door on Sundays and watching that none of the members of the congregation takes shillings out of the ollterary plate instead of putting halfpence into it.

One has not, however, much sympathy with professors or any other folk who accept salaries to preach or teach doctrines which they do not believe. Of course the world's all wrong: and while workers have to slave for employment, and all sorts of men have in some degree or other to lie, cheat and injure their neighbours for a livelihood, we must not be uncharitable in our judgments upon professors or preachers. Of the masters of the “straight and narrow” path, endeavouering to the best of their powers to do away with the conditions that make hypocrisy and all other social crimes necessary. But Dr. Dods is not of this stamp. He wallows about in his hypocrisy as a swine wallows in its filth, and he is mightily ignorant when some people venture to suggest that he is not perfectly pure and unselfish. Worse than that, he is a trader of the poor, and a barker of false wolves against the unemployed.

As a patron of the Charity Organisation Society, which has revealed the frauds of our industrial despotism as loafers and knaves, and warned the well-to-do plunderers of our cities and towns against yielding to the temptation of shedding them from the winter's cold or allaying the pang of their hunger.

Had the Professor confined his mince-deeds to milking extracting money from the churches under false pretences, he might have continued his time-honoured occupation without protest from me—the more the churches are swindled the merrier am I; but since he has set himself up as an arbiter of the priggishness of the rich who rob the poor and kick them afterwards, I fervently trust he may lose his comfortable crib and have to do a month or two's penal servitude tramping the country in search of manual employment at fifteen bob a-week—the experience would modify his conceit a bit.

Professors as a rule are just about as much loafers as need be, and divinity professors are the most lazy and least amiable loafers of the lot: angular of the priviledged to go out of his way to denounce tramps and beggars is much in need of a sound lesson in good manners and Christian sociology lumped into one.

Sir William Arrol, the Forth Bridge contractor, whatever ability he may possess as a practical engineer and as an architect of his own fortune, does not appear to hold views whit above the selfish money-making of his class. In a speech which he gave at Ayr, on being presented with the freedom of the town, he warned working-men against demanding high wages lest they make it impossible for employers to compete successfully for contracts. He advised to the working-men to be contented, if refused contracts amounting to over a million and a quarter pounds because of his uncertainty as to the probable rise in the wages of labour.

I do not say that this statement is untrue; but I do say that Sir William Arrol, despite his hypothetical loss of contracts to the value of a million and a quarter, has, on hand about as much work as he can possibly undertake, and that during the last year he has increased his works at Bridgeton to the utmost extent of the available space.

Sir William complained that certain working-men could actually contrive to work on Thursday mornings and lift £5 and £6 on Saturdays. Presumably the object was to fill the pockets of steel-workers. It may be true that in some instances that may be done; but is it not grossly unfair to refer to such exceptional cases as typical of the privileged position of workmen generally? I venture to assert that Sir William has more men in his employment working for 10s. or less per week than for £5 or £6 per week, not to speak of £5 or £6 for two and a-half days. The great mass of his labourers receive 17s. per week, and his skilled workmen from 2s. to 3s. per week. His firm is notorious for its system of suppressing skilled unskilled labour.

Sir William told his hearers that thirty years ago he had sought employment as a working blacksmith in the town of Ayr without success. We are informed that during Ayr week, some £20,000 or more. Sir William's wages must have been a deal more than £5 or £6 per week in the interval to have enabled him to accumulate even that portion of his property. How much that sum he honestly wrought for, and how much of it was gained by flogging the labour of others, might be approximately gauged by learning what he considers a fair wage for a working blacksmith to-day.

J. BURCH GLASGEAR.

THE GREAT COAL STRIKE.

The great coal strike is ominous of coming changes, and cannot be looked on as even a great strike might have been a few years ago. The demands of the miners are so moderate, and so uncomplicated with any difficulties as to method of employment and the like, and moreover, the business facts on which the strike is based are so clear and so much in favor of the men, that it was expected in many quarters that the masters would give in at once, and in ordinary times they would have done so. The fact that they are preparing for an obstinate resistance shows that they are not so much thinking of the present strike as of their ground of the present system of Labour. The red spectre of Revolution looms threateningly in the distance before them, and instinctively they are prepared to fight.

We look at it from the same point of view, and understand that it is a battle, not a mere business dispute. If the masters are not well together, and if they are supported by the sympathy of their brother workers, even those who will suffer by the strike, they will now for the first time understand their power, and the hoped-for result of the strike will be fashionable, which will be irresistible; which can only be resisted by the brute-force in the hands of the upper classes—i.e., the army and police. This instrument, the striking power of the working-class, can only be utilised when the working-class have utilised the power of the vanguard, and are prepared, on a new rising one day, there will be nothing between us and revolution but a knowledge on the part of the workers of what to claim, which can be nothing short of an abolition of the monopoly of the resources of nature—i.e., the land and all that is on it, which is used for the reproduction of wealth.

This, and not a pitiful rise in wages, is what in the long run lies before the strike of the coal miners: let us hope that the events of this strike will show them how to make this claim, however feasible to get what they demand. W. MORRIS.

INTERNATIONAL NOTES.

GERMANY.

When on the 24th of February the Boulangists met in the Balle Goguet at Paris, they decided to send a conspiratory address to Bebel on the result of the German elections. Before even the address was gone, Léon Blum left Paris for London under the Commune, published Bebel's reply, which ran as follows:

"Dréssel, Plauen, March 2nd, 1890.

"My dear Fränkel,—I have not yet received the announce-ments of the Boulangists. Probably they have thought the matter over again. If, however, they still think it is factually to their idea and the cases of a strike, I will have nothing at all to do with them.—Yours ever faithfully,

"A. Blum."

The Jena workers, near Berlin, the general association of farmers has been closed by the police, and besides, the whole committee, consisting of Marie Tünnis, John, Weiss, Falhner, Anna Schütte, and Jolke, will be prosecuted for having made an energetic propaganda on behalf of the Socialist candidates to the Reichstag. The trial will begin on April 10th.

DENMARK.

The revolutionary Socialists of Denmark have just issued a manifesto to kindred sects of Europe and America, setting forth the reason why they have come to the constitution of a new revolutionary Socialist party in their country. They also tell us that it has been resolved to transact a possible organisational matters of the revolutionists by a daily paper, and therefore ask the moral and material support of all their friends abroad, especially of all the Scandinavians.

ITALY.

Comrade Amilcare Cipriani has left England and gone for Paris, where he is going to face the new propaganda against him by the Italian government. He is to be tried for exciting to revolt, whatever that may be.

HOLLAND.

Comrade J. Schötting, who has been prosecuted by the Dutch government for his writings, has been acquitted. Schötting denounced the various atrocities of that system, has now at last been acquitted by the superior tribunal of the Hague.

AUSTRIA-HUNGARY.

A new monthly review is to be published at Reichenberg on April 1st, under the title of "Zeitschwingen" (Time Wriggles). Comrade Joseph Vey- nek is attached to his editorial board of eighteen, whose offices are situate at Reichenberg, Ledeagase, No. 22.

NOTICE.-Next week there will be an article and an allegorical sketch dealing with Mr. Stanley's "heroic efforts in the cause of civilization."