NEWS FROM NOWHERE:

OR,

AN EPOCH OF REST.

BEING SOME CHAPTERS FROM A UTOPIAN ROMANCE.

CHAP. VI.—CHILDREN ON THE ROAD.

Past the Broadway there were fewer houses on either side. We passed by a brook that ran across beds of land dotted with trees, and while a while after came to another market and town-hall, as we should call it. Although there was nothing familiar to me in its surroundings, I knew pretty well where we were, and was not surprised when my guide said briefly, "Kensington Market."

Just after this we came into a short street of houses; or rather, one long house on either side of the way, built of timber and plaster, and with a pretty arcade over the footway before it.

Quoth Dick: "This is Kensington proper. People are apt to get here before I go, for they like the romance of the wood; and natural facts count too, and it is a wild spot, even here, which is in fact not so far to the south; it goes from here northward and west right over Paddington and a little way down Notting Hill: thence it runs, doubling upon all the hills and valleys, to the Thames. Kensington and Paddington are both fine walks, and they get through Kingsland to Stoke-Newington and Clapton, where it spreads out along the heights above the Lee marshes, on the other side of the river. You may be passing on in a few days, perhaps, Dick." This part we are just coming to is called Kensington Gardens; though I am not sure how to pronounce it."

He longitude said, "Well, I know; but there were so many things about me which I did not know, in spite of his assumptions, that I thought it better to hold my tongue.

"O, yes," he, "I mostly learnt Latin and Greek along with the moderns, when we did nothing more than merely pick up the latter."

"And history!" I said: "how do you teach history?"

"Well," he, "when a person thought the history was of little use, he read what he liked to, and he can easily get someone to tell him what are the best books to read on such a subject, or to explain what he can make of them."

"Well," I said: "what else do they learn? I suppose they don't all learn history!"

"No, no," he said: "some don't care about it; in fact, I don't think many do. I have heard my great-grandfather say that it was mainly in periods of turmoil and strife and confusion that people cared much about it; and you know," said my friend, with an amiable smile, "we are not like that now. No; many people study facts about the make of things and the matters of cause and effect, so that knowledge increases on us, if that be good; and some, as you heard about that person before, will spend time over matters that do no use forcing people's tastes."

"You don't mean that children learn all these things?"

"Well," said: "That depends on how you mean by children; and also you must remember how much they differ. As a rule, they don't much read, except for a few story-books, till they are about fifteen years old; we don't encourage early book-reading; though you will find some children who will take to books very early; which perhaps is not good for them; but I use the word 'them' and very often it doesn't last long with them, and they find their level before they are twenty years old. You see, children are mostly given to imitating their elders, and when they see of people about them engaged in amusing work, like gardening, and street gardening, and the like, that is what they want to do; so I don't think we need fear having too many book-learning men."

"What do you say? I said to the boy, I think I might take a great pleasure..."
February 8, 1890.

THE COMMONWEAL

IN AUSTRALIA.

The Western Queensland drovers are organizing; and the following notices are to be submitted to a general meeting of drovers called for their 86th, at Tambo.

RATES OF WAGES, AT TAMBO.—For sheep, 10,000 on, not less than 1s. 6d. per head; over 10,000, not less than 1s. 2d. per head; over 5,000 head, not less than 1s. 1d. per head; over 1,000 head, not less than 1s. 6d. per head; over 500 head, not less than 1s. 3d. per head; over 50 head, not less than 1s. 6d. per head; over 10,000 on, not less than 1s. 2d. per head; over 5,000 head, not less than 1s. 1d. per head; over 1,000 head, not less than 1s. 6d. per head; over 50 head, not less than 1s. 3d. per head.

WAGES RATES.—For cattle, as per hundred miles, for 500 head, not less than 1s. 6d. per head; over 500 head, not less than 1s. 2d. per head; over 10,000 on, not less than 1s. 1d. per head; over 5,000 head, not less than 1s. 6d. per head; over 1,000 head, not less than 1s. 1d. per head; over 50 head, not less than 1s. 6d. per head; over 10,000 on, not less than 1s. 2d. per head; over 5,000 head, not less than 1s. 1d. per head; over 1,000 head, not less than 1s. 6d. per head; over 50 head, not less than 1s. 3d. per head.

As considerable enthusiasm prevails successful organization seems certain.

The Daintree Downs grazing district disputes still drag on, several stations being considerably crippled by the severe little run of the "Fires." Some good "Merino" cattle have not got over, as the union rules do not prevent the manager buying bosh of his own, but simply prevent him from using the same. Some of the sheared rules have been the greatest imposition, notably one clause which enabled an overseer to strip a whole pen of ten or twelve sheep if in his opinion one was improperly shorn. Such a rule is one of the many reasons why the shearers are sticking to the union.

The conference was held at the Masonic Hall, Brisbane, on Saturday last, to discuss the starting of a labour paper, which was attended by delegates from the Queensland and New South Wales unions, Queensland railway employes, variousrganizations, such as the Sydney Trades and Labourer's Union, Carpenters, Building Trades Council, Australian Labour Federation, social clubs, and various working men's clubs.

After a long discussion a scheme was recommended to the various unions which provides for a monthly journal to be circulated free of charge among all members of co-operating unions, to be published by a co-operative company, one and a half per cent. per annum from each societv. This paper will be the sole organ of the federated bodies, and all other bodies having similar objects will be required to be elected by the societv. The question will be submitted to the members, and if carried, the printing and management of the paper will be carried on by a company to be set up for the purpose.

The Australian Trades and Labour Journal, of Melbourne, has gone to the press on the financial road. The Sydney Trades and Labour Journal celebrates its tenth weekly issue by announcing the receipt of a gift of £500. Its editor, W. G. Higgin, was for a long while a secretary of the Typographical Union, and was greatly desired by Sydney unions for long and good service.

At the meeting of the Council of the Queensland Labour Federation held on November 28th, the secretary was elected delegate to attend the annual meeting of the National Labour Federation, which is to be held at Brisbane and Blackall on the 4th and 5th of January next; he will endeavour to secure the affiliation of some societies, and, if possible, to persuade the working men in all parts of the colony, to come together in a federated body.

On Saturday, a meeting of the Operative Bakers' Association and non-union men connected with the trade was held in the Masonic Hall, Temperance Hall, Blackall, about 400 being present. The object was to urge the Operative Bakers' Association in consequence of the declared attitude of the master bakers towards trade-unionism.

The following resolutions were passed:

1. That the non-union bakers of Sydney and suburbs agree to join the Bakers' Union; that five non-union members be appointed from the meeting to meet the committee of the Bakers' Union to arrange for entrance fees and any other business necessary to further the object they have in view.

2. That the committee appointed report to the Executive of the Trades and Labour Council and request them to take the matter up, and get an interview with the employers with the object of clearing up of this question.

3. That the union men band in their names to join the union, and a committee of five was appointed to meet the union committees, and the operative bakers now in a fair way of being united at last.

The movement for Australian independence is growing fast. This is the sort of paragraph one comes across:—"France has recognized the Belgian claim. Of course it has, but Belgian independence is nothing; the French have long been in the saddle, and many Belgians would rather be Frenchmen than independent Belgians, or at least not be recognized as such.

Before Mr. O'Malley, P.M., at the Police-court, on appeal, the charge of Mr. A.—was dropped with the proviso that the man should not again be arrested. His name is in the pocket of one A. for a cock in the Cairns hotel.

With wages and everything else at their lowest point, the workmen will have to be much better off for their new regulations than had been the case in the past.