

public peace ought to be committed to the official guardians of the law. It is doubtful whether private detectives ought in any case to be tolerated: an armed force of private detectives is an usurpation which ought to be promptly put down.

The violent storm by which the British coast has been visited did a great deal of damage to shipping. Wrecks are numerous and several lives have been lost.

The condition of trade in the United States continues to be generally one of activity. The packing houses in the West have settled with their striking workmen, but the wool-knitting operatives of New York State still hold out. The unseasonably warm weather and the prevalence of severe storms in the West, says the *N. Y. Shipping List*, have contributed to slacken the activity in trade, and cause the transactions to fall somewhat behind the totals of the previous week. The Clearing House returns compiled by the *Boston Post* make the total clearings last week at thirty cities \$1,106,987,559, against \$993,086,377 last year. This makes the percentage of gain, compared with last year, 11.4 per cent. against a gain of 25.3 per cent. the previous week. The clearings of twenty-nine cities outside of New York show a gain of 14.6 per cent. against a gain of 23.8 per cent. the previous week. The total at thirty-two cities show a loss of \$67,750,499, as compared with the week ended Oct 9, 1886, and thirty-one cities outside of New York show a loss of \$11,150,745. Heavy stock transactions continue to do their part in helping swell the gains at Boston, New York and Philadelphia.

THE CONDEMNED CHICAGO ANARCHISTS.

The seven anarchists, convicted to be hanged in Chicago on the 3rd December, had at least the courage of their convictions. One of them, Parsons, after he was condemned, advocated the use of dynamite, though he denied that he had ever been practically a dynamiter, and proclaimed himself an anarchist. He and his associates were condemned for violating the law, and it will be interesting to see in what respect their crime differs from the practice of labor organizations which resort to violence to carry out their purposes. The anarchists differ only in degree from other law breakers who make war upon property in connection with strikes for higher wages or shorter hours of labor. The anarchist's creed corresponds with his practice; he declares war against law, and advocates the use of dynamite as a weapon of offence; trades unionism and labor knighthood have no such repulsive theory, but in practice it sometimes does not fall far behind the professional anarchist.

The Chicago anarchists have been represented as all foreigners, and anarchy as an exotic that could never take root in the soil of the United States. Most of the anarchists are foreigners, but not all of them: Albert Parsons is an American by birth, who boasts of the part which his ancestor took in drafting up the declara-

tion of independence and the service he rendered in fighting by the side of Washington. Another of the condemned men, Neebe, is a descendant of a Pennsylvania dutchman. But it is not the less true that anarchy is a poisonous weed imported from abroad.

"There is," said Parsons in his appeal to the court why sentence should not be passed upon him, "wide discontent among the working people; there is no doubt about it; it cannot be cured with bullets or clubs. We have got to remove the cause. That is the fact that is before the thinking men and the law makers to day. There is no doubt that the working people, all over the country, have reason to be discontented. Legislation in favor of the big corporations and monopolies is the fact, and no law making for the laboring classes. You must change all that and legislation, or legislators must be elected who cannot be bought by the corporations, or what will happen? The people will rise up in mobs some day, and will have to be subdued by the government, and that will be the end of free government." The existence of discontent need not be denied; but it is not always well founded, and there never has been a time when there was entire freedom from discontent. Legislation is not exclusively in the interest of great corporations and monopolies, and it is not true that there is no legislation in favor of the laboring classes. Legislation in favor of monopolies there certainly is; but it is upheld by the working men as being in their interest; workingmen are the foremost advocates of a high tariff, through which monopoly is brought into existence and sustained. Railway corporations are charged with corrupting legislatures and courts; and if this were proved signal punishment ought to follow. The difficulty is to elect men who cannot be bought; poverty in the representative would form a poor shield of protection against bribery. Legislation in favor of the laborer has been carried very far, farther than can be justified. The legislation which protects children and provides for the security of all classes of workers rests on the solid ground of justice and humanity. But legislation which prevents contracts for imported labor and which shuts the door in the face of the Chinaman, is very difficult to defend. This legislation shows excessive favoritism to the laborer; it denies the freedom of contract; it not only establishes the principle that Congress may decide what emigrants shall be received, in the United States, and what shall be refused a refuge, but it takes the initial step of the actual exclusion of one race; to-morrow the exclusion may be extended, arbitrarily, to other races, and there is no saying where it is to stop. All this and a great deal more is done in the avowed interest of immigrants who have come before and their descendants.

Parsons, like O'Donovan Rossa, advocates the use of dynamite; the difference between them is that Rossa would use it as a weapon of attack against the British government, while Parsons would employ it against American employers of labor, who did not yield to his demands. He might also, like Rossa, use it to root out

"landlordism" in America. The very first topic on which Parsons touched, in his address to the court, was the alleged evil of landlordism, in America. There was, he said, no need to go to Ireland to understand the question. "Landlordism" is the verbal battery by which one form of property is attacked by the socialists of Ireland. That Irish tenants have greater privileges than tenants in America could easily be shown; but that fact does not make landlordism—the holding of this form of property—a crime. "Dynamite," says Parsons, "is the diffusion of power; it is democratic; it makes everybody equal." Dynamite is a force; but it is not a force by which power is equally diffused; it is murderous, not democratic. The miscreant who threw the bomb, at the Haymarket, in Chicago, destroyed innocent lives, without placing his own in equal peril. A helpless person, killed in this way, would not, in his dying agony, be able to bless the democratic equality of the bomb-thrower and his victim. Murder is not democracy.

Parsons defended the anarchists' position of opposition to the laws of the land by an appeal to Sumner's doctrine of a higher law. But what Sumner meant by a higher law was that, if the constitution sanctioned slavery, the constitution ought to be changed; the moral law which condemned slavery condemned the constitution which upheld slavery. But he did not advocate the use of dynamite, or force in any form, as a means of making the higher law prevail. The constitution of the United States is wisely made difficult to change, and this conservatism saves the nation from a condition of perpetual revolution; but changes in the constitution are not made impossible. Sumner's higher law could have been made to prevail—that is there was a means by which it could be done—in a constitutional way, though a change in the constitution would have been necessary.

As anarchist, socialist, wage-slave, workingman—he gives himself all these titles—Parsons claims exemption from obedience to the law. "The conflict between us," he says, "is the conflict between liberty and authority, in any and every form." Proceeding he adds: "Of what use to us is the law? What is the constitution for us? Of what value is it to us? It certainly must belong to somebody. Yes, it is used for somebody else's benefit and protection, not ours." On these assumptions, every one of which is false, he bases the conclusion that the workingmen are authorized to refuse obedience to the law. There is one thing in favor of Parsons, and that is his outspoken candor. Others there are of his class who acknowledge the obligation they are under to obey the law, but not less than the bomb-throwers, at Chicago Haymarket, use violence as a means of regulating the difference between them and their employers. The weapon of violence was used freely by the street car strikers, in Toronto, last spring; and the fact is one in a thousand which goes to show that the wall of partition between the men who use these weapons and professed anarchists is thinner than Trades Unionists would have us believe.