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THE ILLUSTRATED POLICE NEWS.

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 10, 1894.

WRICK OF THE PARISH COUNCILS.

LAST week's work in the House of Lords kills for all practical purposes the Parish Councils Bill, which has been hoped to save the attack of the Lords has been developed with great haste. For awhile it looked as if the peers would be content with simply curtailing the gift of Local Government. Now there is no doubt they intend to destroy it for all purposes of social importance. The machinery of the measure was, as it left the House of Commons, simple and adequate as far as it related to the acquisition of land. The Parish Council were enabled to make a final appeal, if the land was obtained and refused to come to terms, could be made to the Local Government Board. In other words, it substituted for the impossible and costly machinery which the peers intended to place in the way of the bill, a very simple and speedy inquiry by an impartial official, and it seems strange now to be told by those who have themselves held official positions that no official can be trusted to do anything of the kind.

As the society of the parish is divided against itself, the person against the labourer, the tenant farmer against both, and the landlord for himself. This, if true, is a charming object-lesson of what rural life is like, and how, whether the land is owned by the Parish Council or the Lord, the result is the same. The Parish Council Bill has been evidently drafted so that nothing shall be done to alter and improve the status of the labourer, at the smallest risk of cost to those who would, for themselves, be placed in a position to do so. The Gift of Land, which seemed so near both to the individual labourer and to the new organs of local government, has been cruelly snatched away, and the Act as it leaves the Lords will be a barren gift to the labourer. As the House of Commons must now, we are afraid, make up its mind to the fate which we think, have brought peace and prosperity to many rural districts.

It is with regret we notice the impossible provisions with which the bill is to be weighed down, popular control of the ecclesiastical charities is to be undone, the franchise on which the Parish Council is based is to be narrowed, four thousand four hundred and forty-three parishes, which would have had a statutory right to a Parish Council under the bill, have already been deprived of that right, because the noble lords who supported them have considered that the population of five hundred had a right to a Parish Council. The public-house is to be installed as the centre of village life through the instrumentality principally of the bishops, who strongly objected to the bill, the object of bestowing and improving the condition of the labourer—being held in any of the school-rooms connected with the Church. We now hope that, taking into consideration the honourable compromise which has been made between the bill in the House of Commons with regard to the gift of land, no compromise or concession will be made with those who are trying to wreck the same in the House of Lords.

A BOY CHARGED WITH STEALING WHISKY.

At the Croydon Borough Police-court, George Killick, fourteen, of Farnley-road, Croydon, was charged with stealing two bottles of whisky, value 7s. 10d., the property of William Baines, of the same place.

The statement of the prosecutor, who is a licentiate, was that on January 28th he was out driving a horse and carriage, and was followed by a man who he knew was a thief.

He saw the man take a bottle of whisky and run off with it. He called to him in pursuing the thief, but he did not stop.

Detective-sergeant Thomas Stamp came to arrest the prisoner, who did not have any of the whisky. The witness asked for a remand in order that he might be able to give evidence.

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TERRIBLE TRAGEDY IN A WORKSHOP.

[SUBJECT OF INVESTIGATION.]

A SUICIDE tragedy occurred in Goldsmiths'-row, Hackney-road, on Thursday, at a wholesale hat manufacturing establishment, when a man named Wilson, of the premises, took his own life. The man, who was a workman, was found dead in his workshop, and the cause of death was ascertained to be a bullet wound in the head.

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TRAGEDY AT OLDHAM.

[SUBJECT OF INVESTIGATION.]

A CORONER'S jury at Oldham on Friday returned a verdict of suicide in the case of a woman named Alice O'Neill, who was found dead in her workshop. The woman was a workman, and the cause of death was ascertained to be a bullet wound in the head.

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THE MURDER OF A POLICEMAN AT CONGLETON.

[SUBJECT OF INVESTIGATION.]

A CORONER'S jury at Congleton on Friday returned a verdict of murder in the case of a policeman named William Jones, who was found dead in his workshop. The man was a workman, and the cause of death was ascertained to be a bullet wound in the head.

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