

## NEWSPAPER EXTRACTS and other References

**1850**

James Finlen's first appearance in the written records, that I have found, comes from the *Northern Star and Leeds General Advertiser* of **June 29<sup>th</sup> 1850**. Under the heading 'SOHO' it records;

"A crowded meeting was held in the Temperance Hall, Little Dean Street, on Wednesday evening, under the auspices of the "Democratic Propagandist Society," for the purpose of forming a Chartist locality, and otherwise aiding the National Charter Association. Over the platform gracefully floated three banners - red, blue, and white, inscribed, liberty, equality, and fraternity. Mr. **Finlin** was called to the chair, and in a brief speech set forth the object of the meeting. Mr. W. A. Fletcher, in a forcible manner, set forth the truths of Chartism, and concluded by moving the resolution:- "That this meeting is of the opinion that every man, immediately he arrives at the age of twenty-one years, should be placed in possession of his political rights, and that the withholding of such political rights, and the want of knowledge on social rights and duties constitute the main cause of disquietude, immorality, and physical want, so profusely scattered over the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland." Mr. J. B. Leno in an argumentative speech, seconded the motion, which was humorously supported by Mr. Bezer, and carried unanimously. Mr. Elliot then came forward and traced the misery, wretchedness and degradation of the People, to the present most anti-social state of society, and concluded amidst loud cheers, by moving the following resolution:- "That, with a view to the attainment of that full measure of political and social rights, propounded in the rules and declaration of the National Charter Association, a locality be established in this Hall, such locality to be called the 'Soho Locality of the National Charter Association.'...."

**July 6<sup>th</sup> 1850** the *Northern Star and Leeds General Advertiser* reported on page 1 under 'CHARTIST INTELLIGENCE';

BLOOMSBURY.- A meeting of the friends and supporters of the People's Charter, convened by Mr. Cottle, was held at the Globe Coffee-house, Red Lion-street, Holborn, on Monday evening, July 1st. Mr. Elliot was called to the chair, and briefly opened the proceedings, by pointing to the great extent of the Bloomsbury district, the vast quantities of wealth producers that resided in it, and the amount of wealth those sons of toil must annually send forth - (loud cheers) - then how necessary it was that they should be up and doing, in conjunction with the other portions of London. Messrs. D. O'Connor, Leno and Harman having eloquently expatiated on the necessity of forming a locality of the National Charter Association, on the motion of Messrs. Leno and Harman it was resolved, "That a locality, to be called the Bloomsbury Locality of the National Charter Association, be now formed." "That Messrs. Cottle, Lewis, Norman, Durant, Harman, Connor, **Finlan**, and Soley, be a Provisional Committee for conducting the same."...This is the second locality that the friends of "The Democratic Propagandist Society" have formed.

**July 20<sup>th</sup> 1850** *Northern Star and Leeds General Advertiser* - The paper recorded a meeting in Bloomsbury at the Charter Coffee House, 27, Newton Street, High Holborn on Sunday evening, July 14<sup>th</sup>. It was resolved that meetings would be weekly and the next would discuss whether the working classes should subscribe to a monument to Sir Robert Peel's memory. On the Monday, Finlen was called to the chair and it was discussed how Chartism in Bloomsbury could be more effectually carried out. Then he was appointed as delegate to the Metropolitan Delegate Council...A vote of thanks was given to Messrs. W. Cooper and Walford for their attendance, and to Mr. Finlin for the able manner in which he had presided, and the meeting dispersed.

*There is more on this meeting in same newspaper on the 27<sup>th</sup> July.*

**August 3<sup>rd</sup> 1850** *Northern Star and Leeds General Advertiser* The newspaper recorded:

"SOHO LOCALITY – A public meeting was held at the meeting room, 2, Little Dean Street, on Wednesday evening – Mr. W. A. Fletcher in the chair - when Mr. Finlen moved the following resolution: - "That this meeting is of opinion that the poverty, degradation, misery, and crime, now prevalent in this country, is caused by the people being ignorant of their natural right (*social rights and duties*) – the Charter. We therefore call upon all desirous for man's comfort and happiness to extend all political and social newspapers, periodicals, tracts, &c and to use every means likely to elevate man from his present position." Carried unanimously. Also passed "That on Wednesday next the propositions of the National Reform League be discussed."

**August 10<sup>th</sup> 1850** *Northern Star and Leeds General Advertiser* The Star reported further on the details of the meeting of the Metropolitan Delegate Council, at the City Chartist Hall, 26, Golden

Lane, Barbican on the 4<sup>th</sup>, where the matters discussed were about issuing tracts fortnightly containing appeals to start new localities, inserting announcements of public and local meetings, lectures, discussions, tracts, libraries, &c in connection with the Democratic movement in the Metropolis. "Finlen to be appointed to a committee to make enquiries relative thereto." In the following days and weeks there were meetings of the National Reform Committee also attended by Finlen, reported in *Reynold's Newspaper*, **August 11<sup>th</sup>, 24<sup>th</sup>**, though a proposal to hold public meetings on Clerkenwell-green was rejected.

**October 5<sup>th</sup>** 1850 *Northern Star and Leeds General Advertiser* - reported under 'CHARTIST INTELLIGENCE' details of the Executive Committee of the National Charter Association meeting at the office, 14, Southampton-street, Strand on Wednesday evening October 2<sup>nd</sup>. The Chartist Metropolitan Delegate Council issued the following circular;

"TO THE WORKING MEN OF THE METROPOLIS.

"Brothers, - It is said, 'Unity is strength,' 'Numbers is power' - which we veritably believe to be true - for union in purpose insures harmony in working, and thereby creates strength. Through the want of a proper union, might reigns triumphant over right. Allowing two classes to exist, that of monopolising tyrants, and slave-toiling, creating people, and these classes have existed in this country for ages past, and too well we know of their present existence. Those in the station of the toiling or working class, are surrounded with misery and poverty, and are fast sinking beneath the standard of human nature, whilst those termed the upper class, have added extravagance to extravagance, and have multiplied their despotic acts. The knowledge of this bids us seek for a change to eradicate these and still greater evils. We promulgate the principles of the People's Charter. 'Tis quite evident that the amelioration of the people's enslaved condition, cannot be effected until the evil is entirely swept away, and that through the voice of the whole people. Knowing that the happiness, prosperity, and comfort of a nation rests in the hands of those with whom its care is entrusted, we consider it but just that the whole nation's feelings should be understood and represented to ensure true happiness; but, it is not so - and it is therefore necessary that a change should be brought about - a change that will fully insure the liberty of the people. This great change can be realised by obtaining the Charter. Working men, we call upon you to study the principles we aim to establish; attend our various meetings; unite with us; work with us to obtain our political and social rights; band yourselves together in your several localities, and, each considering himself a wheel to the great machine in progress, deeming it necessary always to fill your office, never neglecting the mighty work, but travelling on boldly, in unison and harmony with each other. Working men, if you would but do this, the wrongs of the world would quickly disappear - the Charter, and all other rights and privileges naturally belonging to man, would be enjoyed by all. Then, brethren, we call upon you to be up and doing. Form new localities in every district where there are none - such as the following: - Camden Town, Hampstead, Bow, Stratford, Camberwell, Brixton, Clapham, Wandsworth, Hoxton, Kensington, Hammersmith, Chelsea, and Woolwich. Organise, organise, organise! Agitate, agitate, agitate! Cease not till ye obtain your right - the Charter! - On the part of the council, W. A. Fletcher, J. J. Brisck, E. Aleco, 26, Golden-lane, Barbican. [Working Men's Hall]"

A meeting on September 30<sup>th</sup> proposed that all trade bodies should join in union for the cause - Mr. Finlen supported the resolution, declaring an amalgamation, or fusion essentially necessary, and effort after effort should be made until success crowned their endeavours.

**November 2<sup>nd</sup>** 1850 *Northern Star and Leeds General Advertiser* Finlen attended a public supper to honour Mr. Ernest Jones at the City Chartist Hall, Golden Lane on Wednesday - where the aims of the Chartists were discussed and problems with the co-operative movement and difficulty in acquisition of land outlined.

**December 7<sup>th</sup>** 1850 *Northern Star and Leeds General Advertiser*

"Bethnal-Green Literary and Scientific Institution.- Mr. Finlin lectured on Sunday evening. Subject - "The World's Scavengers." The lecturer, in an eloquent manner, showed that our Political and Social Reformers were the great scavengers of the world, clearing away the rubbish which had been accumulating for past ages, and thus purifying the moral and political atmosphere. The lecturer was greeted with great applause, and though quite a young man, promises to be one of the most talented men amongst the Chartist ranks."

**December 21<sup>st</sup>** 1850 *Northern Star and Leeds General Advertiser* The Provisional Committee of the National Charter Association - met on Wednesday last at their office on 14, Southampton-street,

Strand. Votes for the committee stand at - G. W. M. Reynolds 1805, G. J. Harney 1774, Ernest Jones 1757, John Arnott 1505, F. O'Connor 1314, G. J. Holyoake 1021 [first nine were elected] - 14<sup>th</sup> and last was James Finlen with 44 votes.

## 1851

**January 18<sup>th</sup>** 1851 *Northern Star and Leeds General Advertiser* (ran from 1838 - 1852) - noted that on the coming Sunday at City Hall, 26 Golden-lane, Barbican, Mr. James Finlen will lecture, Subject: "The Struggle of Parties and the Position of Principles."

**January 25<sup>th</sup>** 1851 *Northern Star and Leeds General Advertiser* - noted that on the coming Sunday, "at the 'Globe and Friends', Morgan street, Commercial-road-east, Mr. James Finlen will lecture. Subject: "The English Scavengers."

City Chartist Hall - A public meeting was held on Monday evening at the City Chartist Hall, Golden Lane. Mr. Elliot moved, and Mr. Mauley seconded a resolution in favour of the People's Charter, which was unanimously adopted. Mr. Bezer in a long and excellent address moved a vote of confidence in the Executive Committee. Mr. Finlen in an eloquent manner seconded the resolution.

**February 8<sup>th</sup>** 1851 *Northern Star and Leeds General Advertiser* - A public meeting [of the Propagandist Society] was held on Monday evening at the City Chartist Hall, Golden-lane. Mr. Leno was called to the chair. Mr. Harman moved the following resolution "That this meeting is of opinion that the poverty and its attendants, misery and vice, which characterises the thorough career of the industrious portion of the English people will never cease to exist until the principles of the "Peoples Charter" in their entirety are recognised as truthful, and adopted by the country. Mr. Finlen was 'greatly applauded' when he seconded the motion. Mr. Bezer made comments about the police now being found in uniform at every Chartist meeting, sent by the Government to intimidate the workers. On the following Sunday at 8 o'clock, this paper stated Finlen would lecture at the 'Woodman Tavern', White-street, Waterloo Town - subject "Labour's Living Poets and their Labour." [also noted in *Reynolds's Newspaper* of **February 16<sup>th</sup>**]

**February 15<sup>th</sup>** 1851 *Northern Star and Leeds General Advertiser* City Chartist Hall - Golden-lane. On Sunday evening a public meeting was held to hear addresses from Messrs. Hamilton and Lockhart, of Aylesbury - Mr. Finlen in the chair.

**March 1<sup>st</sup>** 1851 *Northern Star and Leeds General Advertiser* - noted that Mr. Finlen would lecture on "The Downfall of Ancient Greatness" at the 'Rose and Crown Tavern', Colville-place, John-street, Tottenham-court-road on Sunday next.

**March 8<sup>th</sup>** 1851 *Northern Star and Leeds General Advertiser* - Cripplegate - At a meeting of members held at 26, Golden-lane--Mr. Finlen stated he had received 10s from the committee of the Institution, John-street, Fitzroy-square, towards Mr. Fowler's benefit.

Opposition to the Sunday Trading Bill - A public meeting on Monday evening at the Institution, Cowper-street, City-road - Mr. Bezer a news-vendor and street trader expressed his opposition to the laws: Mr. Finlen supported the original motion opposing the Bill which would benefit the rich but harm the poor.

**March 15<sup>th</sup>** 1851 *Northern Star and Leeds General Advertiser* - reported an election at the British Institution, Cowper Street convened by the Chartists of the City of London and Finsbury for a delegate to the National Convention. It was between Mr. Leno, Mr. Bezer, and Mr. Finlen. The latter made a speech calling for Political and Social Reformers to work together in unison. In his summing up speech the chairman mentioned that Powell, the spy, paid £200 and given a chest of

tools worth £50 had taken a free passage to Adelaide where he built three houses, but the population there levelled them to the ground, a fact the government had tried to hide. Mr. Finlen was then elected 'with a considerable majority'. On Sunday next Mr. James Finlen will lecture at the Assembly Rooms, 99, York-street, Broadway, Westminster. Subject 'England's Scavengers.'

**March 22<sup>nd</sup>** 1851 *Northern Star and Leeds General Advertiser* - notice given that next Sunday at the 'Woodman Tavern' Mr. James Finlen will lecture on "The Charter and something more." Washington Locality - Rose and Crown, Colville-place, Tottenham-court-road. Mr. Bezer lectured here on Sunday evening, subject: "The exhibition and what will be exhibited and what hidden." *The speaker talked about the wonderful exhibits but that there would be no mention of the poorly paid workers who produced them and under what conditions etc.* "Mr. Bezer, during a clever and humorous address was much applauded. Messrs Roberts, Wilson, Hoppey, Finlen and others addressed the audience which was presided over by Mr. Murray. A discussion also took place between Mr. J. Wilson and Mr. Wheeler, relative to the clauses of the bill for winding up the affairs of the National Land Company." Chartist meeting - the usual meeting was held at the Literary Institution, John-street, Tottenham-court-road on Tuesday - *A Mr. Benny who was a member of the Co-operative Association] discussed the ownership of property.* Mr. Finlen then addressed the meeting. He was opposed to the views of Mr. Benny. He believed that they must have their political rights before they could obtain their social rights.

**March 29<sup>th</sup>** 1851 *Northern Star and Leeds General Advertiser* noted that James Finlen would lecture the next Sunday on 'Purgatory of suicides, Cursory glance at the life of the author.' at the 'Rose and Crown Tavern'.

**March 30<sup>th</sup>** 1851 - the date of the **1851 Census**. James Finlen is recorded as living with his sister Catherine together with George and Hannah Hoppey at 15, North Street, St. Pancras.

James Finlen appears in the newspapers frequently from here onwards, especially in the *Northern Star*, often in disputation with other Chartists and reformers – about policy, land ownership, the means and ways of making changes. Here follows some of those records, the dates of which I used to fix his whereabouts during the year.

**March 31<sup>st</sup>** 1851 *Northern Star and Leeds General Advertiser* Monday - THE NATIONAL CONVENTION - This body assembled on Monday, at ten o'clock in the large hall of the Parthenium Rooms, St. Martin's-lane. ...Mr. Reynolds moved, and Mr. Finlen seconded the nomination of Mr. J. Arnott as Secretary. *Finlen, the representative for Finsbury, is several times referred to on the succeeding days of the Convention, Tuesday and Wednesday - on Thursday discussion centred on the Nationalisation of Land.* "This convention believes that the Land is the inalienable inheritance of all mankind; the present monopoly of the soil and its minerals is, therefore, repugnant to the laws of God and Nature. The Nationalisation of the Land is the only true basis of national prosperity." ... Mr. Finlen said, if they bought the land of its present holders, would it not give a sanction to the right they asserted to be theirs? The most just and consistent plan was to allow the rights of the present possessors to die out; not to allow them to bequeath their possessions to others, but to revert to the state, to be disposed of in a manner consistent with justice to the people. The people had been defrauded, but they were not anxious to return the injuries they had received upon those who had inflicted them. *Only Finlen and Harney were for nationalizing the land without compensation to the owners but they didn't persevere with their opposition. It was moved that a Board of Agriculture be formed and church, common, crown and poor lands become national property. The meetings went on to discuss the separation of Church and State, compulsory education and the right of Co-operative Societies to registration and enrolment. A clause was passed asserting that the poor unemployed be given financial relief and offered work on the land.*

*Assistance also to be given to the aged and infirm. The Convention continued on the Friday and Saturday in which Finlen also contributed. Other resolutions concerned the undesirability of a Standing Army and rather the training of militias, the opposition to the death penalty, taxing land and property and the extinction of the National Debt.*

CHARTIST AGITATION - a public meeting was held on Tuesday evening at the British Institution, Cowper-street, City-road, to assist in creating an improved Chartist feeling in the metropolis. ... Mr. Finlen next addressed the audience and in an eloquent manner, called upon them to second the efforts of the Convention in endeavouring once again to raise the banner of Chartism. He was greatly applauded.

A public meeting was held on Monday evening, at the Lecture Hall, Greenwich; the attendance was very good. Messrs. Capewell, Reynolds, Mantle, Bezer, and Finlen addressed the audience.

**April 5<sup>th</sup>** 1851 *Northern Star and Leeds General Advertiser* SOUTH LONDON CHARTIST HALL - A public meeting was held on Wednesday evening at (*the above*). Mr. Milne in the chair. Mr. Finlen said he came there to give his honest views on their position as working men. He had listened in the Convention with no common feelings to the description of the state of poverty and destitution which prevailed in the provinces. When such was the state of things, who, with the common feelings of humanity, could be other than a Chartist? The man who enunciated Democratic truths was the only real patriot, and they ought to destroy the present terrible system by all the means which their situation allowed them to employ. Reason was preferable to brute force, in dispelling error. He then alluded to the admixture of the social with the political question, and called upon his audience to express a decided opinion upon the false policy of the past, and to decide that their social rights should not be neglected in future. The speaker was loudly cheered.

**April 12<sup>th</sup>** 1851 *Northern Star and Leeds General Advertiser* more reports on the National Convention and mentions of Finlen. National Charter Association - On Sunday evening at the Rising Sun, Calendar-yard, Long-alley, Mr. J. Finlen will lecture.

National Convention Monday - regarding Chartist victims of 1848 - Mr. Finlen moved the following resolution:

"That in the opinion of this Convention, the sentence passed upon the political prisoners and exiles by the British Government was extremely severe - inasmuch as it was unjust; it deems it, therefore incumbent upon itself to appeal in the name of justice to the generous portion of the members of the House of Commons, to use their influence for the purpose of procuring a free and honourable release from all restrictions for all political prisoners and exiles." *Later, on the matter of the death penalty* "Mr. Finlen considered that in future times murderers would be treated as madman, and confined in a similar manner." In *Reynolds's Newspaper* of the 13<sup>th</sup> it added re political prisoners "He meant not only that those now undergoing imprisonment and transportation should be set at large but also that the mental bondage of those whose sentences had expired should be ended by the withdrawal of their bail." *Mr. Bezer's motion condemning Feargus O'Connor's letters in the Northern Star of March 29th as unjust and ant-foreign were supported by Finlen but outvoted.*

Finlen took part in other motions and resolution in this and the following days.

**April 24/26<sup>th</sup>** 1851 *Patriot, Northern Star* - 10 Chartist programmes took place and one meeting concerned "The Press" -

"Absolute freedom of thought and expression being one of the primary and most sacred of the rights of man, all restrictions on printing and publishing are unjust and iniquitous; This Convention, therefore, declares its decided hostility to the taxes on knowledge, and recommends the total abolition of "The Duty on paper; the duty on advertisements; the penny stamp on newspapers, and the import duty on foreign books and publications."

- 'James Finlen, City and Finsbury,' listed amongst those to circulate addresses on the subject.

**April 26<sup>th</sup>** 1851 *Pioneer and Weekly Record of Movements* - A New Weekly Newspaper of large size, to be entitled THE FRIEND OF THE PEOPLE edited by Julian Harney and Ernest Jones will be published immediately adequate support is guaranteed by the local committees at present formed, and in course of formation. James Finlen listed in the General Committee for the Metropolis. [*only £22 received and the project was eventually abandoned*]

Further *Northern Star and Leeds General Advertiser* in 1851 give references to Finlen:

**May 3<sup>rd</sup>** - will lecture on May 4<sup>th</sup> at the Ship, High-street, Whitechapel on "Englands Scavengers."

**May 10<sup>th</sup>** - will lecture Sunday next on the proceedings of the late Convention.

**May 17<sup>th</sup>** - report of the last lecture, at the Bricklayer's Arms. James Finlen to lecture at the Woodman Tavern, White-street, Waterloo town.

**LIBERATION OF KOSSUTH** A public meeting was held at the Literary and Scientific Institution, John-street, Tottenham-court-road on Tuesday evening to memorialise the government to take steps for procuring the liberation of Kossuth from his unjust detention in Turkey, at the insistence of the Austrian and Russian governments....Mr. Finlen moved the second resolution:-

"As the principle of international law, which it is to be presumed regulates the affairs of civilised nations, justify our interference in defence of the neutrality of the Turkish dominions, violated by the late acts of the Austrian and Russian governments, it is resolved that a memorial be presented to the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, demanding the intervention of our government, in favour of the Hungarian Refugees; at present detained in the Turkish dominions, in consequence of the intimidation practised towards the government of Turkey by the Austrian and Russian governments. The illustrious Solon said that an insult done to one individual in the community was an insult to the whole body; they had only to extend this principle to nations to which it was equally applicable. He was proud that the meeting was called by working men. He remembered the mock sympathy of the middle class during the time the struggle continued in Hungary; but when help was needed they gave it not. And now again, when their sympathy and active remonstrance might prove efficient, unlike the working men, they were absent from their posts, proving that they had feeling in common with those brave men. Their remonstrances might not have much effect upon the government, but however the government neglected its duty, working men were bound to perform theirs. All men were brethren - even the enslaved and degraded Russian - and it was their bounden duty to assist their fellow men abroad equally with those at home, and no man was more deserving than the illustrious Louis Kossuth. He trusted that the present meeting would be the precursor to meetings of the same character throughout the kingdom. He concluded by denouncing, in strong terms, the conduct of Haynau, and the Emperors of Austria and Russia. Mr. Beezer seconded the resolution.

**May 24<sup>th</sup>** 1851 *Northern Star and Leeds General Advertiser* National Charter Association Sunday next Bricklayer's Arms, Tonbridge-street, New-road, Mr. James Finlen will lecture. Subject: "Thomas Cooper's *Purgatory of Suicides*."- and on Monday at the Institution, 2, Little Dean-street, Soho, 'The downfall of Ancient Greatness.'

**May 31<sup>st</sup>** 1851 *Northern Star and Leeds General Advertiser* SOMERS TOWN Bricklayers Arms. On Sunday evening Mr. Finlen lectured on the "Purgatory of Suicides" Mr. T. M. Wheeler occupied the chair.

The lecturer commenced by alluding to the matter of fact prosaic nature of man in the present day, which rendered poetry at a discount, more especially poetry that partook greatly of ideality. Thomas Cooper had admirably combined ideality with mechanism, and addressed himself to the circumstances of the day, as well as explored the vast caverns of mythological and classical lore. The lecturer dwelt upon the high eulogisms which, even his opponents, had been compelled to pay to the genius of Cooper, and recited many of the most beautiful passages in his work with great effect. He concluded an eloquent address by giving an extract from the poem, showing the inefficiency of death punishment as a moral agent, and urged upon his auditors the necessity of exerting themselves to procure its abolition.

After the lecture, a spirited discussion took place on the merits of the different descriptions of verse, and their effect upon the general public, in which Messrs. Weekes, Hornby Slocombe, Bryant, Humphries, Higgs, Dent and Wheeler took part. The lecturer then replied and the meeting adjourned with the usual compliments to the lecturer and chairman.

The same paper has the following which probably involved Finlen and outlines the People's Charter demands;

ADDRESS OF THE FINSBURY LOCALITY OF THE NATIONAL CHARTER ASSOCIATION TO THE INHABITANTS OF THE BOROUGH OF FINSBURY

Friends and Fellow Citizens,—We claim your attention while we state our reasons for being Chartists, and why you should be Chartists also; and what other measures are in our opinion necessary to ensure the comfort and well-being of every citizen when the Charter shall be the law of the land, to the intent that you may know the truth, and not be led astray by the lies of the *Times*, or any other of our enemies' devices.

We believe, first, that God created all men free and equal, and that all men have and ought to possess certain rights, the first of which is, the right to live by labour. We conceive that when God placed man on the earth, and gave it him for a possession, that the land became the inheritance of the whole human race, and has no right to be held by a small faction of mankind to the exclusion of the majority. The labour of the able-bodied pauper is wasted uselessly and thoughtlessly in workhouses, eating up the poor rates, which are yearly increasing, when that same labour, if applied to increase the productive powers of the soil, would in a few years create and foster a good home trade, enable them to support themselves by their industry, and reduce the poor-rates to a very small amount, since they would only be required for the very young, the aged, infirm, and incapable poor, who by age or affliction are unable to labour for their maintenance. Thus, Shop-keepers, would Chartism lessen the poor-rates, and, in the same ratio, increase your prosperity.

We demand the People's Charter whole and entire: since it is, like a machine, useless unless all its parts are in their proper position.

We demand Universal Suffrage, because it is just that which concerns all, and should be approved of by all; and that as in time of war all men are compelled to serve their country by enlistment, enrolment, or impressment, it is but just and proper that they should have a voice in making the laws they are called upon to obey.

We demand the Ballot, as a shield for the honest voter, to protect him from any undue influence on the part of his landlord, employer, or others, and because such disgraceful scenes as occurred at the St. Albans and Falkirk elections lately, could not occur then, since it would be useless to bribe when all votes must be given in secret.

We demand the Abolition of the Property Qualification, on the ground that God has not given a monopoly of common-sense to the rich and left the poor stupid; and because without this the Charter would be a nullity, since it would prohibit a poor man from serving his country in parliament.

We demand Annual Parliaments, because twelve months is long enough to be troubled with a knave or an incapable member, and because an honest and useful member would be sure of his re-election.

We demand the equalization of Electoral Districts, on the ground that men should be represented, and not bricks and mortar; and because it is unjust and absurd that Harwich, a constituency under 300, should have the same weight in the decisions of the House of Commons as Finsbury with a constituency of more than twenty times the number.

We demand that the Representatives of the People shall be Paid for their Services, since it is unjust for any one to labour without being paid for it, and by admitting this principle, members would be independent of the smiles or frowns of a ministry.

We demand a General Amnesty for the Political Exiles and Prisoners of Great Britain and Ireland, believing that whatever crime in the eyes of the government they may have been guilty of in attempting to liberate their country, that the punishment they have already undergone is amply sufficient to atone for the crime of loving their country 'if not wisely at least too well.' Remembering the deaths of Sharp and Williams by starvation; honouring that great and glorious patriot John Mitchel; honouring also William Cuffay, T. F. Meagher, Frost, Smith O' Brien, Ellis, and all our other exiled brothers, - we call upon you to come forward and join us in a peaceful and constitutional agitation for the attainment of the People's Charter and a General Amnesty for all Political Offenders.

Working Men! we desire you will turn a deaf ear to those who predict that Chartists intend, in conjunction with foreigners, to revolutionise the country. On the part of the Chartists of Finsbury we repudiate the assertion as a wilful and malicious falsehood. If Englishmen, Irishmen, and Scotchmen cannot obtain their rights for themselves they are unworthy of them, and had better cease agitating altogether. We wish for a revolution in mind and knowledge; we wish to injure no one to plunder no one; to rob no one; but we wish to increase the happiness of all mankind from the peer to the peasant.

We therefore demand the People's Charter as a means to an end, and that end the social and democratic sovereignty of the people.

Whilst we respect a conscientious difference of opinion, we cannot consistently advocate or support any measure of reform short of the People's Charter, but, at the same time, will not factiously oppose those who may advocate a less measure of reform.

Advocating the absolute freedom of speech, save when calculated to cause a breach of the peace, and of the press, we shall be found zealously co-operating for the repeal of the taxes on knowledge.

We believe that many changes are in store for Continental Europe; and whilst struggling for the Liberty of our own land, we desire to assist, as far as lies in our power, all nations or peoples who may be struggling for their rights, liberties, or independence.

We propose to spread our principles by means of public meetings, lectures, discussions, tracts, hand-bills, and such other modes as may be deemed necessary.

We call upon you, Working Men, to rally as one man beneath our ensign,—the flag of a free, grand, and glorious future; the flag of the Charter, social and democratic.

The following are contemporary *Reynolds's Newspaper* references to Finlen;

**May 11<sup>th</sup>** 1851 - Bricklayer's Arms Tonbridge-street, New-road. Mr. Finlen will lecture. Subject "The present position of the Chartist Movement."

**May 18<sup>th</sup>** 1851 MEETINGS and Democratic Intelligence - Liberation of Kossuth - on Tuesday evening a numerously attended meeting convened by the Society of Fraternal Democrats, took place at the Literary Institution, John-street, Fitzroy-square, "for the purpose of impressing upon the government of this country the propriety of interfering on behalf of the heroic Kossuth and his brave associates in captivity." *Several speeches followed including a harrowing account of the trials and tribulations of Kossuth's wife and children - then -* Mr. Finlen, in a most powerful and impressive speech, moved the resolution:- "As the principles of international law... See the above *Northern Star* May17<sup>th</sup>.

**June 1<sup>st</sup>** 1851 ISLINGTON - The usual weekly meeting of this locality was held, on Wednesday evening, at the Camden Coffee-house, Camden-street, Islington-green; Mr. Finlen in the chair.

**June 8<sup>th</sup>** 1851 MEETINGS - Upper Holloway A Meeting held on Monday evening at the King's Arms Tavern, Upper Holloway to take into consideration the necessity of Parliamentary Reform. Many of the most respectable tradesmen of the neighbourhood, comprising several leaders of the Islington Parochial Reform Association were present. A vote of thanks, proposed by Mr. Finlen and duly seconded, was then given to Mr. Reynolds for his attendance; and the meeting broke up.

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At this point James Finlen disappears from London and no more mentions occur of him in the London Newspapers until **October 26<sup>th</sup>** 1851 in *Reynold's Newspaper* which simply refers to James Finlen donating 2s 6d to the National Charter Fund via his fellow French polisher George Hoppey with whom he had been living on the 1851 census. This implies that Finlen was absent from London, and we believe he was, in fact, in Butleigh, Somerset.

*During his absence, on August 7<sup>th</sup>, the Bill for winding up O'Connor's Land Bill received Royal assent. On October 20th Kossuth landed in England at Southampton to great acclaim. O'Connor who was in serious mental decline was being shunned by many Chartists and the Association was itself in decline with the executive weakening by the day. Meetings took place in November and the reconstitution of the Metropolitan Delegate Council was voted for. There was a split between the Chartists and the Middle-class Reformers and Julian Harney, stating ill-health, resigned from the NCA executive in December.*

**November 8<sup>th</sup>** 1851 *Wells Journal* – KINGWESTON – a lecture was delivered at Kingweston Inn on Monday evening last, by Mr. James Finlen, of London, on "FREE TRADE, as it is, and as it ought to be," to a very numerous and respectable audience;

The lecturer, in entering upon the consideration of so important a question, said it was necessary to do so irrespective of party feeling or party influence, for Free Trade was one of those great topics which concerned society at large, and which never should become the idol of a sect, for it was one that should have free scope, to give full development to its qualities, destined as it is to achieve and to maintain dignity and importance for our country, therefore all partisanship should be ignored – (Cheers) – and the question should be considered as one belonging to humanity at large. The lecturer then proceeded to show how inefficient the workings of Free Trade has been – how millions, great in hope, had been disappointed, that had confided in the influential champions of the system; but he would not pause on the highway of progress, to rail at men – measures were things to be considered; it was necessary to know why Free Trade had not realised so much as had been anticipated by the labour interest of the country. A principle which is introduced into a nation should be calculated to benefit the majority of the people before it becomes ratified: - (Cheers) – its propounders should be certain that existing laws and institutions are compatible with its adoption, which was not the case with respect to Free Trade. He then entered largely upon the restrictions with which Free Trade had to contend, which rendered it a thing in name, being completely destitute of reality, or to look at it in the most liberal manner possible, it cannot be considered anything more or less than Free Trade in fetters. - (Cheers) – It is a moral impossibility for Englishmen to compete with Foreigners upon the principle of economy: they can do it in genius, in stability of



workmanship, and in their industry. They have competed with them, history will tell us how successfully, in war, bloody and unnatural as it is; they can also compete with them in their love of peace – they can hold up to the world a catalogue of literary gods, before which it is ever ready to prostrate itself with reverence; they can spread civilization by their mechanism, but they cannot do it cheaply and live properly – an Englishman must be fed. An Englishman can live on bread, beef, and hope, a long time, and if he fails to procure these by his industry, the degrading badge of pauperism haunts his mind, and he stands still, undecided as to whether he shall choose the dread alternative of the workhouse, the prison, or the grave. - (Emotion, and loud Cheers) - The policy of the Manchester men, viz., that of buying in the cheapest market and selling in the dearest will not suit the requirements of English labour; taxation upon produce is too great to enable them to sell cheap enough to compete with the Foreigner, who is comparatively free of the same, and who has not eight hundred millions in the shape of national debt, to stand as a barrier to the career of his enterprising spirit. Financial reformation is needed to aid Free Trade in its struggle, and to relieve and improve the condition of those depending upon labour for an existence. The Lecturer, who devoted two hours to the consideration of the subject, then concluded, amidst enthusiastic cheering from the large assemblage.

**November 22<sup>nd</sup>** 1851 *Wells Journal* STREET. - FREE TRADE —A lecture was delivered on Monday evening in the Temperance Hall [*opened 1847*], on the principles of Free Trade, by Mr. James Finlen, of London. Mr. J. Holmes presided on the occasion, and gave an admirable address. The lecturer commenced in a flowery prosaic speech; his arguments were far from being sound, he cast an odium upon the political characters of Messrs. Cobden and Bright, as men who had injured the working classes, to some extent, by their parliamentary proceedings, the former for advocating the Monetary Bill, brought into Parliament by the late Sir. R. Peel, the latter by opposing the Ten Hours Bill. He declared that what is now called free trade was not the free trade boon the working classes expected, they had received no benefit from its workings. It was constituted for the master tradesman, it benefited not the farmer nor the labourer; if it was the means of giving the labourer a cheap loaf, it was also the means of reducing his weekly wages. He (Mr. Finlen) condemned the Great Exhibition of Art and Industry as a thing of mockery and derision to the working classes, and that the Crystal Palace stands as a monument of English folly, but for what reason the lecturer did not mention. He likewise condemned all machinery as being blasphemous in the sight of God, being the means of depriving the working man of labour, and driving him out of the country by starvation to foreign climes of more hospitable abodes. The lecture was concluded by a discussion; the Chairman wished to know if any person in the Hall had anything to say in reply to what the lecturer had said, when Cyrus Clark, Esq., stepped forward, and after refuting several assertions made by the lecturer in the course of his remarks, he brought forward the first resolution, "That in the judgment of this meeting Free Trade has tended to the commercial prosperity of this country, that cheap food has been a great blessing to the industrial classes, and, that for the maintenance of public credit, it is desirable to extend the system to its utmost limits." Seconded by Mr. J. Clough, with a few remarks on the necessity for free trade; it was carried. The second resolution was put by Mr. Ralls, and seconded by Mr. J. L. Bulleid, "That as high taxation is the consequence of *war*, it is the opinion of this meeting that free trade will tend to cement the nations in peace, to make war unpopular, and thereby enable us further to reduce taxation." The third resolution was put by Mr. A. B. Gregory, and seconded by Mr. J. A. Clark," That while this meeting regrets the existence of some distress among the farmers, it hopes that the landed interests may be further relieved from taxation."

**December 27<sup>th</sup>** 1851 *Northern Star and Leeds General Advertiser* - LOUIS NAPOLEON AND THE FRENCH PEOPLE - a public meeting was held on Tuesday evening, at the Literary Institution, Ray-street, Clerkenwell on the above subject. Mr. Osborn moved (a) resolution [*condemning his despotism and calling upon the British public to express sympathy with the cause of Republicanism in France*] "Mr. Finlen seconded the resolution.

It was the duty of all reflecting persons to examine into the history of the past; and that past would teach them that they must act decisively if they expected to reap the results of a revolution. Such was the state of preparation in which the Usurper had placed, not only Paris, but the whole of France, that it would have been madness if they had exposed their lives to the armed forces who were prepared to crush them. Louis Napoleon

depended upon French bayonets; and when he could no longer bribe them like the old Roman Praetorian guards, they would prove too powerful for him, and he would fall powerless a victim to an injured and insulted people. He did not despair of the future of France. They had only to bide their time, and the hour of vengeance would surely arrive. He did not think they need feel any alarm for the despot making an attack upon Britain, as many were ready to suggest. If Louis Napoleon and his northern allies dared to draw the sword, England would not stand alone. Hungary and Italy would rise against their oppressors, and America would not be an idle spectator of the contest. The result of the present ballot was not to be taken as a criterion of public opinion. Death was the result of an expression of freedom, and men could not be expected to give an unbiased vote under such awful tyranny. Such was the state of France that fear alone would reinstate Napoleon in power. Under these circumstances he did not look with alarm upon the votes said to be recorded in his favour. It was not in favour of bloodshed but it was far better that one tyrant should die than that thousands of innocent men should be sacrificed. The people of France must spread wider and wider the principles of social liberty until the nation, as one man, rose and crushed for ever a system by which they were bound. They must no longer be cajoled by the lip eloquence of mock patriots. Life was too precious to be sacrificed for such results as had hitherto been gained. The people were prodigal of their blood: but in future they must be prepared that genuine democracy - the democracy of Ledru Rollin and Louis Blanc, should be the guerdon for which they battled, - whether it was achieved by the power of the sword or the peaceful spread of democratic knowledge. Neither peace nor safety could be expected in France until these sentiments were made. Universal Liberty could never be permanent in France, while despotism was rampant in the surrounding countries. There must be a universal compact among the peoples of Europe against tyrants.

## 1852

**February 28<sup>th</sup>** 1852 *Northern Star and Leeds General Advertiser* Aggregate Meeting of the Chartists of London - a political meeting was held on Sunday afternoon at the Finsbury Institution, Leicester-place, Clerkenwell, to consider the propriety of calling a Convention. Speakers, Wood, Osborne, Grant, Goodfellow, Nicholls, Leno, Bryson, Knowles, Clarke, Bligh, Bezer, Murray, Wheeler, Ernest Jones (*People's Paper*) and Stratton (*Northern Star*). Mr. James Finlen said;

"he was in favour of a Convention; but did not agree with the steps taken by the party who were so loudly calling for it. He thought that the conduct of Mr. Jones towards the Executive was far from generous. His conduct in now calling a Convention against the wish of the Executive was utterly inconsistent with his previous opinions. It was the duty of Mr. Jones and those that incurred that debt to assist the Executive in getting it paid. This could not be done by denouncing the Executive. Let them prove that the Executive had done wrong before they condemned them. They had not funds in hand sufficient to pay their debts or to call a Convention, which would give dignity to the movement."

A crowded meeting of the electors of Finsbury was held on Monday at the Music-hall in Store-street. The New Reform Bill - Mr. Finlen and others were refused a hearing as they were not inhabitants of Finsbury.

**March 20<sup>th</sup>** 1852 *Northern Star and Leeds General Advertiser* page 1. Amnesty to all Political Exiles - A public meeting, called for the above object, was held on Tuesday evening, at the Scientific and Literary Institution, Little Saffron-hill, Finsbury. The first resolution was;

"That this meeting sympathising with the Political Exiles of Great Britain and Ireland, and believing the punishment they have undergone to be amply sufficient to atone for the crime (in the eye of the law), of endeavouring to achieve the liberties of their country, resolve to petition parliament, and memorialise her most Gracious Majesty for a full, entire, and complete amnesty to all political offenders." "Many of these exiles had been banished from their native land, merely for differing in opinion from the government of the day, and others had been entrapped by the agency of Whig spies."

The call was for Frost and his companions to be returned. "During the Whig administration the Dorchester labourers, the Glasgow Cotton Spinners and the Canadian rebels had all received pardons, and in the former case a free passage home and remuneration for the wrongs that had been inflicted upon them. Mr. Finlen moved a petition to the House of Commons, founded upon the above resolution. If men would not struggle to recall to liberty those who had fallen martyrs to their cause, it augured but ill for the future prospects of the human family. Thomas Cooper, in his "Purgatory of Suicides," had for ever immortalised these men, and stamped their persecutors with infamy. Each and all of these men from Frost to Cuffy, Mitchel and the Irish exiles, deserved to be separately eulogised, and their memory kept green and fresh in the hearts of all the Democratic

body. The speaker, during a long and eloquent address, was enthusiastically cheered." - the petition was then unanimously adopted.

**March 27<sup>th</sup>** 1852 *Northern Star and Leeds General Advertiser* – A public dinner, *Soiree*, and Ball, was held at the Literary Institution, Leicester Place, Clerkenwell Green on Tuesday evening to inaugurate the establishment of the above Institution. Mr. Jones was called to the chair and Mr. Brontierre O'Brien responded with; Union, intelligence and self-respect were the necessary elements to elevate the working classes." Mr. Finlen responded to the following sentiment:- "Prosperity to this and all similar Institutions," and was much applauded.

**April 10<sup>th</sup>** 1852 *Northern Star and Leeds General Advertiser*, Aggregate Meeting of the Chartists of the Metropolis - held on Sunday afternoon at the Finsbury Literary Institution, Mr. Farrar in the chair. Resolution "That the National Charter Association offered every facility towards the formation of a truly Democratic party in this country." Messrs Finlen, Chinnock and Wheeler supported the resolution.

**April 17<sup>th</sup>** 1852 *Northern Star and Leeds General Advertiser (The Star)*, Metropolitan Delegate Council - At a meeting of the Finsbury Literary Institution on Sunday afternoon, Mr. Bligh in the chair, credentials were received from Mr. Fowler of Hoxton and from Messrs. Finlen and Thompson from the newly-elected Soho Locality.

Birthday of Robespierre - A public tea party was held on Sunday evening at the Institution, Ray-street, Clerkenwell - Ernest Jones presided - Amongst the speakers were Finlen, Leno, Bezer, Wheeler.

*G. J. Harney bought the Northern Star in April 1852 and merged it with the 'Friend of the People' to form the 'Star of Freedom.'*

**May 1<sup>st</sup>** 1852 *Star of Freedom* Chartism - Propositions for the consideration of the delegates attending the conference convened by the Manchester Council of the Charter Association. To be held in the People's Institute, Heywood Street, on Monday, May 17<sup>th</sup> 1852.

1st, That the objects of the National Charter Association shall be, as heretofore, to obtain by strictly legal and peaceable means, the enactment of the People's Charter in all its entirety

2nd, To consider the best means of establishing a more efficient organisation of the Chartists throughout the country, and effectually destroying the unhappy dissensions existing among the members of the different localities

3rd, To decide upon the policy, which, as an association we ought to pursue in reference to other sections of the Political Reformers.

4th, To take into consideration the priority of electing a paid Executive, consisting of three persons, and to decide on the duties they will have to perform, together with and the amount of remuneration to be paid them for their services

5th, to determine upon some mode of concentrated action and national exertion for obtaining the restoration of Frost, Williams, and Jones, with all other expatriated patriots, whether English or Irish.

6th, To consider what course the Chartists ought to pursue at the forthcoming general elections

7th, To devise the best means of paying the debts of the Association, so that the New Executive may enter on its duties free from pecuniary embarrassments.

Metropolitan Delegate Council - the usual weekly meeting of this body was held at the Finsbury Literary and Scientific Institution, Leicester-place, Little-Saffron-hill on Sunday afternoon, April 25<sup>th</sup> - Mr. Wheeler brought up the report of the O'Connor fund committee and stated that a second edition of that day's paper announced by "Electric Telegraph" that Mr. Feargus O'Connor had left this country for America, to avoid the Commission of Lunacy which it was said was to be issued. The Observation Committee - Messrs. A. Wood and E. Jones resigned their seats - not having time to devote to its duties. And Messrs. Finlen and A. Grant were elected to fill up the vacancies.

**May 8<sup>th</sup>** 1852 *People's Paper* The first issue, [it survived until September 4, 1858] naturally, contains many references to James Finlen since he now began working closely with Ernest Jones:

At the inauguration of the paper a public tea party was to be held on May 11<sup>th</sup> *presided over* by Finlen; he is mentioned severally to do with proposing or supporting motions and wrote a letter to the editor “The Struggles of the Past and Duties of the Present.” His letter was as follows;

THE STRUGGLES OF THE PAST AND DUTIES OF THE PRESENT. (To the Editor.)

Sir,—Large must be the moral and intellectual worth of men before they can procure and preserve the confidence of a people; holy must be the principles that they promulgate and struggle to advance before success can be anticipated by the most sanguine yearners after, and lovers of, human freedom. The struggles of the past have been marked by self-sacrifice, by patriotic zeal and sturdy thinking; large brains have given birth to majestic sentiments; democracy has been the presiding genius over the region of intellect; but even yet, Liberty, that fair goddess of universal humanity, lays prostrate, weeping beneath the malignant wrath of cruel and bloody emperors, priests, presidents, kings, and woe reigns throughout the world; wives must weep in solitude o'er the fate of patriotic husbands doomed to exile, their sin being the detestation of tyranny and love of truth; mothers are wrapt in tribulation through the premature deaths of enthusiastic and heroic sons, and all is grief; but hope liveth—brains are brooding, thoughts are germinating, and honourable revenge shall, ere long, spring into being and commence effective action: then revel now, ye human butchers, while ye may, for the great tide of retribution is congregating, which in the almost immediate future shall roll throughout the world with irresistible impetuosity, and in its course it shall hurl you headlong into the depths of that oblivious hell, which is the sphere of your nativity!—never again will imprudent mercy be practised by those that have felt your envenomed sting. Democracy demands that the world be free of fiends—it must be so before it can reign and spread its glorious influence. To practise mercy to ingrates is unwise—the past attests it, millions of lacerated hearts admit its truthfulness; so we glory in the sanguine consciousness of a benignant future when humanity shall exult in the overthrow of wrong, and the supremacy of the good and true. Whilst doing this, ye must not be apathetic; it is necessary to watch events in these times of vicissitude, when political parties are fast springing into existence, with peculiar nostrums as palliatives to the effects of our mammoth evils; quacks are bidding for popular patronage again, whose frauds have been recently discovered through the tact of their darling project, Free Trade: they are again alarmed, and are endeavouring to alarm us; they demand that political power be extended to a portion only of those that have a right to it; they resort to this as clap-trap in connection with their war-cry, cheap bread, which is synonymous with cheap labour, and consequently with cheap human flesh. They must be spoken plainly to by those whose support they solicit; they must be boldly asked what they mean this time.

If it is to aggrandise themselves, or to confer upon labour its natural dignity, every wise-and honest man well knows that they mean nothing good for the English toiler—that they merely desire, in the words of their chief, "to garrison our institutions." Oh! then, list all of ye that depend upon your toil for bread, learn the doom of coming generations. as dealt by those cheap-bread factory demons or slave-kings. Toil, babes and women, that ye may heap their coffers—that they may gorge, fatten, and legislate to bequeath eternal thralldom as a legacy for the coming armies in coming times of dear old England's industry. Garrison our institutions —garrison all that is wrong, vicious, corrupt, and corrupting; garrison earth—hells, ye mammon-hunters—and offer up humanity as a sacrifice to your glittering deity, that ye may grow rich and paramount—that ye may wage war with the lords of lands and come off victoriously.

Shall it be so, working-men? Will you, in your moral might, allow such powers of tyranny to be perpetuated? Will you not be determined that no party shall have your confidence or support that will not battle for the entirety of your political liberty? Will ye not, all of you that live in the midst of social woe—that have worked—will ye not still be prepared to work in that good, old, and glorious enterprise—the advocacy of the People's Charter? If so, you must now proclaim yourselves determined to cleave with the zeal of zealots to your political virtue—to stand with antique heroism within the domain of your heart's good, to repel the incursion of enmity, and by your diligence to frustrate the machinations of your foes. James Finlen.

To a proposal that ‘the liberal electors of Lambeth.. resist by every constitutional means any attempt to re-impose a bread tax..’ at a meeting of the Lambeth Parliamentary Reform Association, an amendment was proposed

“That this meeting is of opinion that no measure short of the principles embodied in the document entitled ‘The People's Charter’ – securing male adult suffrage, vote by ballot, annual parliaments, equal electoral districts, no property qualification, and payment of members (of Parliament) – will really and truly benefit the great mass of the unrepresented millions.” Some financial and political reformers were prepared to water down the demands in order to make progress but the more ardent wouldn't support them. “Mr. J. Finlen, after repeated attempts to be put down by the chairman, proceeded, amidst great applause, to second the amendment. He said an amendment had been proposed embodying principles conducive to the political emancipation of the people. Mr. Townsend had made a clever, sophisticated, cunning speech. The Chartists, might well say, “Save us from our friends!” Here was a declared Chartist in speech, coming forward to stab those friends with whom he had acted for many years, enveloping himself in an organised hypocrisy, on the grounds of expediency. (Cheers) The people were invited to spend their intellect, energy, time, and means, on mere minor questions; whereas, if their

united strength was concentrated in one grand focus, they could secure the enactment of universal right, instead of bolstering up a mere clique. Political agitation would never cease till political wrong and villainy were annihilated.” (Cheers) The people stood up for the principles of the Charter, because they had a tendency to elevate them socially in society, and would enable them to send to the House of Commons those champions who would fairly and honourably represent England’s great industrial army, who would never have an opportunity of doing so till the People’s Charter became the law of the land. (Cheers) There was a need of abolishing the property qualification, when such men as Cobden and Bright pretended to legislate for the interests of their crushed factory-slaves. When a measure to limit the hours of labour in factories, and to prevent Sunday trading, was introduced, these money and cotton lords opposed it, on the ground of interfering with “private interests.” They pointed the finger of scorn at those who toiled to maintain them in luxury and splendour. (Cheers) The principles embodied in the amendment were endeared to the people by the memory of their martyrs – they were sown in blood and tears – they were rendered sacred by the cries of the widow and orphan. For love of those principles England’s best and noblest sons were exiled to penal settlements, because they loved their country, “not wisely, but too well!” We cling with the zeal of zealots to our principles’ and are prepared at all hazards to do battle for the supremacy of right. (Loud cheering) The chairman then put the amendment, when nearly every hand in the meeting was held up for it. The resolution being also put, seemed not more than half-a-dozen supporters. The amendment was therefore carried amidst loud and hearty cheering.

The **May 8<sup>th</sup>** issue *Star of Freedom* also reported on the above events.

**May 15<sup>th</sup>** 1852 *People's Paper* – Metropolitan Delegate Council meeting on Sunday May 9<sup>th</sup> Finlen took part as member of the Observation Committee. - *votes on which paper to support, the Star of Freedom or the new People's Paper*. Mr. Finlen rose, and after much fulsome adulation of Mr. Jones (Mr. Jones being present) proceeded to thunder his eloquence against all the writers of the "*Star of Freedom*" and denounced Mr. Harney as being "a renegade to his former convictions and unworthy of the confidence of the people." A public meeting, convened by the Metropolitan Council was held at the Finsbury Literary and Scientific Institution, Little Saffron-hill, on Tuesday night, May the 11<sup>th</sup> 1852. The meeting was preceded by a tea, *soiree*, at which sixty persons sat down, presided over by Mr. Finlen. *After the tea the numbers present increased to over 200* - Mr. Bligh was called to the chair. Messrs Jones and Finlen were elected to act as delegates to the National Charter Association conference in Manchester.

**May 22<sup>nd</sup>** 1852 *People's Paper* – The Chartist Convention at Manchester on May 17<sup>th</sup> – attended by Jones and Finlen from London [arrived on the 18<sup>th</sup>], both played major parts in the several resolutions and discussions.

Executive salary – James Finlen drew attention to the amount of salary fixed for the executive. He contended that men of talent could not be obtained for 30s per week. Better have an unpaid executive of efficient men, who would devote their overtime to the movement, than an inefficient one, which would be too dear at even 30s. Talent was unfortunately a mercantile commodity in the eyes of most. Ernest Jones said the object was, not to enrich men, but to enable men who were willing to work for the sake of a great cause, to do so. Thirty shillings would enable them so to work. It was not assumed to be an adequate payment for the work performed; but it was all the movement could at present afford. Men who did not love the cause sufficiently to work for it at that remuneration, would not be worthy of being allowed to work for it, at even half that. As to overtime, it was all their time the movement wanted, or they were not the men for us. The Committee agreed to the appointment of a paid executive of three persons, and fixed their salaries at 30 shillings per week, with travelling expenses when lecturing - the executive to be appointed provisionally by the Conference for three months, and afterwards elected every six months by the members. R. G. Gammage was first elected. Cittee moved and Cockroft seconded the appointment of Finlen. Jones, after asking if Finlen would devote all his time to the movement - declared that he knew him well, and knew that there was not a more truthful Democrat, or a more talented man in the movement. He hailed the acquisition of such an advocate with delight. Finlen having answered satisfactorily, was elected unanimously [at 30/- per week]. Robert Crowe was elected but declined to serve and Ernest Jones was therefore elected. *The Northern Star* reported that Finlen was asked, if he was appointed would he, fund or no funds, go into the country? He replied saying he knew where he had most influence, but if they could not find another man he was ready to serve them in

the true **apostolic** style. It was suggested that Mr. A. Robinson be appointed to the executive and Finlen asked if it was the Robinson who represented Bradford in the last convention. It was. Finlen said he was satisfied that Mr. Robinson was a very clever man; in fact he was too clever - far too clever - for he was an Atheist, and he was too clinching a reasoner on that question. They had already received too much harm from having men holding those opinions on the Executive. Metropolitan Delegate Council - Sunday May 16<sup>th</sup> - Mr. Finlen moved that the council should support the "*People's Paper*" - contentious but passed. See also *Northern Star* of same date.

**May 29<sup>th</sup> 1852 *People's Paper*** - The Chartist Convention at Manchester - *The People's Paper* is made the organ of the Chartists, to the resentment of other newspapers.

The COMING ELECTION - J. Finlen proposed the following resolution:

"That we recommend the Chartist localities throughout the country to forthwith resolve themselves into election committees, to procure fit and proper men to be put in nomination, where practical, at the forthcoming general election; to immediately commence canvassing the votes of electors, and arranging the influence of the non-electors in favour of Chartism; to collect money to defray the expenses consequent upon the contest; and, furthermore, that we earnestly desire that no man will be brought forward or be in any way supported by the Chartists that will not pledge himself to the entirety of the People's Charter." Finlen urged the Association to devote 2s 6d from every pound received, for liquidating its debt - but wasn't seconded. "That as soon as the association has sixteen pounds in hand, the debt be immediately cancelled." - Seconded by C. Cotte.

**May 29<sup>th</sup> 1852 *Star of Freedom*** – includes a reasoned letter from A. Robinson, Wilsden, *against* the comments by Finlen “..Mr. Robinson was a very clever man – in fact by far too clever, for he was an atheist, and he was too clinching a reasoner on that point. They had already received too much harm from having men holding those opinions on the Executive.” Robinson takes him to task for his bigotry and intolerance, claiming his own right to vote, to think and to express his thoughts. “Free the mind from the thralldom of superstition and its social and political freedom will follow as a matter of course. None are slaves – as a people – but those who are slaves in mind.” [*Finlen was probably a Catholic by upbringing and though he may have rejected the church was still a Theist?*]. A Report on the Manchester Conference held by the Metropolitan Delegate Council on Sunday May 23<sup>rd</sup> saw disputes between the newspaper editors of the "*Star of Freedom*" and the "*People's Paper*" and dissatisfaction with Ernest Jones. Other Chartist meetings expressed dissatisfaction with the Manchester Conference and the delegates sent. Rivalry between the *Star* and *PP* takes a turn – the *Star* on p. 1: Mr. Finlen has already taken to the road. It is a pity, for that unfortunate young man has a genius for rant which would gain him honourable distinction were he to take his fitting sphere – the boards of a penny theatre. ... This mouthing rant of Finlen's is simply nauseating, and infinitely below the eloquence of 'My name is Norval' and kindred effusions. Such is not the kind of man to rouse up and re-rally the earnest, deep thinking, experienced, working men of Lancashire and Yorkshire! True, he may do for the work of his real mission, which is *not* that of organising the Chartists, but to canvass for the '*People's Paper*' and 'cadge' for the ravenous begging-box.

**(1854) The History of the Chartist Movement, from its commencement down to the present time.** Robert George Gammage 1854 p. 414

*Referring to 1852* - "The *Star of Freedom* sought to turn the whole proceedings into ridicule, and denounce the new Executive collectively, and two of them individually. Jones was continually held up to reprobation, and Finlen was compared to an actor at a penny theatre. Before Harney had written thus, he should have reflected on his own position in former times; for certainly, in the early stages of the movement, his many antics on the platform were the sport of the more sober leaders of the people: but like a ruined debauchee, who has indulged in pleasure to satiety, and shuts himself up in seclusion from the world, Harney was the bitterest in denunciation of those faults in which he formerly indulged. It should be stated, moreover, in justice to Mr. Finlen, that allowing Harney's assertion as to his being a mere actor to be true, he was an actor that always laboured

under a considerable share of feeling—enthusiastic in all that he advanced. His enthusiasm was a reality, not a sham,—which is more than can be said for some political stagers."

**June 5<sup>th</sup>** 1852 *People's Paper* – National Charter Association - Meetings at 32, Castle Street, Holborn on May 30<sup>th</sup> and June 2<sup>nd</sup> - Mr. Gammage was instructed to commence his duties at Bristol; Mr. Finlen to remain in London for a short period in order that he (in conjunction with Mr. Ernest Jones) might be at liberty to address a public meeting, previous to his going to his appointment in Lancashire and Yorkshire. Included is a long address to 'Brother Democrats' explaining why Jones, Finlen and Gammage were elected to the Executive and what duties they were to carry out with the forthcoming general election, what principles they stood by and their rejection of meeting in public houses. It is signed by all three plus W. Grocott, secretary. At the Metropolitan Delegate Council meeting at the Finsbury Literary Institution there was a large attendance including Finlen but the meeting descended into farce as Jones and Finlen were objected to sitting on the Council since they were members of the Executive. All attempts to proceed were disrupted by Messrs. Bezer and Farrah. Mr. John Arnott was reported as saying to people at the White Horse public-house that they should form a locality and send two delegates to the council "for we are going to swamp them tomorrow, and you must help us, *for we're determined to crush Ernest Jones and the People's paper.*"

**June 12<sup>th</sup>** 1852 *People's Paper* Finlen in London on 8<sup>th</sup> - protests against government efforts to prevent the right to meet in suitable places in the open air. June 12 *Star* ditto.

**June 19<sup>th</sup>** 1852 *Star* - Suppression of Public Liberty - On Monday the 14<sup>th</sup> inst. a public meeting was called in Banner's Fields, Victoria Park, to appoint a deputation to wait upon the Home Secretary to obtain the cancelling of the police order, forbidding public lectures, sermons, and discussions in the fields on Sundays. In spite of the rain, which fell heavily, a hundred or so persons were on the ground, evincing a determination to maintain their rights, which is not often displayed at the sacrifice of so much personal comfort. These adjourned to the Literary Institution, Morpeth Street where Mr. Frank Curzon took the chair....Mr. Finlin also addressed the meeting (*see next*), which then adjourned, after subscribing for payment of expenses.

**June 19<sup>th</sup>** 1852 *People's Paper* The secretary read a letter from Coventry, requesting the service of Mr. Finlen at a public meeting to be holden at the St. Mary's Hall on Monday 28<sup>th</sup> of June. Arrangements were then entered into to comply with the request – Mr. Finlen will start on his tour on that day, commencing with Coventry – and all localities in the Midland and North requiring his services, are requested to communicate forthwith to the general Secretary. Manchester, Stockport, Bradford, Halifax, Oldham, Rochdale, Stalybridge and other localities that have already signified their intention of receiving Mr. Finlen, are therefore now requested to make their arrangements. Parties holding subscriptions will oblige by forwarding what monies they may have, without delay. On Monday afternoon at the East London Literary Institution, where they had adjourned after the downpour at Bonner's Field, Finlen repeated his call for outdoor meetings to be supported, "

"he said they had not met to claim a new right but to protect an old one. When the rights of Englishmen were invaded, they would meet their opponents on the threshold. Seeing that they have to slave and toil all the week, they ought to meet on the Sunday under the broad canopy of heaven, and give expression to their sentiments in free and open discussion. Government only held its term of power from ignorance and credulity. As to the police, they were but the tools of a blood-stained despotism: and this attempt to put down open-air meetings was but a trick to take what the people now possessed to prevent them getting anything else."

The speaker, at some length and with much energy and eloquence urged upon the meeting the necessity of strenuously adhering to the plan of out-door meeting, and bringing the question to a successful issue, and concluded his address amidst great applause.

**July 2<sup>nd</sup>** 1852 *Coventry Standard* – The Chartist Candidate – On Monday a fourth candidate appeared, in the person of James Finlen who issued a printed address to the electors and non-electors, on the principles of the Six Points Charter. He delivered a public address on Monday evening, and again last evening at Grey Friars Green, both of which were numerously attended. Whatever may be said of the cause which this gentleman takes up, he at any rate is entitled to the merit of appearing without disguise, and without attempting to make out a fair case for himself, by misrepresenting or maligning other people. In the *Coventry Herald* of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Finlen is described as a very young man – his Monday lecture on the rights of labour, putting himself forward as a candidate – and then on Tuesday he enlarged upon a scheme for buying up all the land in the country and vesting it in the Government for the payment of all taxes and the good of the people. *Gammage [HOCM]* reported that the Whigs persuaded the Chartists of the town that if they took their candidate to the hustings they would have to bear a share of the expenses, so Finlen withdrew.

**July 3<sup>rd</sup>** 1852 *People's Paper* James Finlen writes an account - Mr. Finlen's Tour – written on June 30<sup>th</sup> referring to the very positive meetings in Coventry;

"I arrived here on Monday evening, and was well received. I found the town in a complete state of excitement, owing to the coming elections. Party spirit runs high—the mongrel Liberals are rife in promises, and the public houses filled with their adherents. We had a first-rate meeting upon Grey Friar's-green, immediately upon my arrival; the greatest unanimity prevailed, and it was decided that James Finlen was a fit and proper person to represent Coventry in the Commons' House of Parliament. This is a positive triumph, and proves, as the Coventry friends assert, that Chartism here is not on 'old dry bones.' I believe that a great amount of good will accrue from the true and unflinching policy adopted by the Chartists of Coventry. From this town I shall proceed to Leamington, to lecture, and thence northwards. James Finlen."

On page 7 his full address to the Coventry voters is given.

**July 9<sup>th</sup>** 1852 *Coventry Standard* reports attempts to slander Finlen by the Liberal candidate, Mr. Geach, suggesting Finlen was but a travelling lecturer, and acting for the "Tories"! The Chartists replied "Thanks to the good sense of a very great portion of the working classes of Coventry they have taken notice of Mr. Finlen and ratified all he has told them."

**July 10<sup>th</sup>** 1852 *People's Paper* Coventry - Mr. Finlen arrived here on Friday evening last...he needs to be heard to be appreciated.

The appearance of Mr. James Finlen in this town has added to the excitement already existing. *Continues to explain that the Liberal candidate wanted to get him to withdraw, then decided himself to coalesce with the Whig candidate.* Under these circumstances, finding that we had no reasonable prospect of securing Mr. Finlen's return, we decided upon retiring from the contest, and calling our brethren to follow our example. We adopted this course more readily because the expense of our share of the hustings, election fees, &c would have amounted to £70. During the last week Mr. Finlen has addressed large meetings at Foleshill, Leamington, and other places; and the brilliancy of his oratory, combined with his fearless exposure of the artful dodge practised by the Free Trade party, renders him a great acquisition to our cause, and ought to secure him engagements at the various towns in his tour.

Mr. Finlen is now at Halifax: write c/o Mr. Nicholls, Temperance Hotel, Broad-street, Halifax.  
Further Letter –

MR. FINLEN'S TOUR - in which James explains the problems of meetings, finances, and the problem of 'enmity in Friendship' from Socialists, Communists and Republicans. He will be in Bradford on 8<sup>th</sup> or 9<sup>th</sup>; The right margin of his letter is lost in the fold of the newspaper.

MR. FINLEN'S TOUR. The following letter has been received by Mr. Grocott, and is addressed to Chartists generally. Coventry 9th

Brother Chartists,—Up to the present time [-] gone on well; there is a wholesome feeling pro[-] favour of Democracy here in this place, and it is [-] wise government of good men—men that work [hard] to promote the sacred cause—that consider no w[-] connection with it too troublesome. Although they are [-] to contend with in all their undertakings, they are [-] sent labouring under the first preventive to efficient organization—the want of



a suitable place to meet in [-] no rallying point; there is no place where strang[-] men, made friends to our principles, would like [-] They don't like to go to a private dwelling-house [-] be made ever so welcome; which is the only [-] the Coventry Chartists can meet in at the present [-] they leave our public open-air meetings as friends [-] but unable to afford us aid in our organization [-] they have not the opportunity to meet our Chartist [-] here under proper circumstances, But I am g[-] you that it is their intention to remedy the evil [-] and these great difficulties in our way will be over.

There is another thing that must be overcome b[-] must be knocked upon the lend and destroyed- [THE ENMITY OF FRIENDSHIP—the bitter vindictiveness [-] that are prepared to go so much farther than the [-] if they would not go for the Charter; that say [-] Charter is a very just thing, but how much better [-] is; that say they are Socialists, Communists, [-] Republicans, but that the Parliamentary and [-] Reformers are the best, the most prudent and rel [iable -] body of political reformers; and that advise Ch[-] succumb to them, ay, and they will “*make th[-] yet,*” say they, “*for their own good,*” as they ag[-] to the People’s Charter. The men of Coventry [-] the alert, for they know them; they have a kno[-] their recent reviling, they know the authors of [-] have their eye upon the concocters of liberticidal [-] possess a puritanical horror of dividing the Liberal[-] rest; that will kiss the toe of the Birmingham [-] lists, and brand the advocates of genuine lib[-] degradation, by making current the assertion that [-] is in the pay of Toryism, and thereby doing damage[-] friends of liberty. The lie has been repudiated [-] stands unsullied and uninjured, high and majes[-] primitive nobility; above the disgraceful turn[-] hired factions, the bitter and brutal foes to hum[-] The man that those paradoxical reformers have [-] regard for is one of those that figured upon their [-] the St. Martin's Hall meeting, some months bef[-] opponent of the People’s Charter; and you may [-] amount of affection he entertains for the people [-] may guess, likewise, the character of his disciples

The three open-air meetings that I have addressed [-] I left London have been encouraging proofs of the [-]sive tendencies of our principles. There is much [-] to cement and consolidate the elements of Democracy [-] *it can be done* if we persevere—if our actions and [-] yours are buoyed by hope—if we are prepared to [-] little sacrifice for the attainment of the great ob[-] lives—the emancipation of our fellow-creatures.

I emphatically say, Chartists of Great Britain [-] anxious to be more employed than I have been [-] hour should be wasted; the time of every Chartist [-] especially of a working one, is precious; it should [-] the most of. There is an almighty work to be done.

Chartists of Lancashire and Yorkshire, I sh[-] ye while there lives one in front. Do all ye can [-] meetings forthwith. Let us to the work in earnest [-] prepare for the corner-stone; let us stand in [-] array to meet the inevitable contest. Our person[-] check the swelling tide of Democracy if we are [-] passive. It is for us to pronounce as to the[-] humanity in future; it is for us to say whether of[-]rations shall be made the hacks of the crucif[-] people—whether they shall enervate the great [-] their manhood beneath the rapacity of the capitalists [-] have done. If we are but energetic now success [-] I sec it inscribed upon the horizon of our future [-] I yearn for the time when the Herculeiæ of Chartism [-] marshal its forces beneath the large blue arch of [-] demonstrate their moral grandeur, and the [-] justice of their aspirations.

I shall be in Bradford about the 8th or 9th of [-] sent month. All letters for me must be directed via Mr. Sunderland, Joseph-street, Leeds-road [-] Yorkshire.”

Upon my return from the north I will visit [-] ton, Coventry, and Foleshill, All other places [-]land districts requiring my labours will please [-] same by writing to me here, at Mr. Hartupp's, [-] green, near the Hospital, Coventry. I am, Brother Chartists, Your humble servant in the holy cause, James Finlen

**July 17<sup>th</sup> 1852 *People's paper*** Mr. Finlen’s Tour, Halifax Jul 14<sup>th</sup> – My Dear Grocott, Things are more promising now than heretofore. I have some work cut out for me for the next five weeks. Last week I was comparatively idle, and, in consequence rather miserable. I addressed but one large meeting, and that was upon last Wednesday evening, on the large space at the back of the Unitarian Chapel in this town. There were about five thousand persons assembled; the highest spirit of enthusiasm prevailed, and a great desire was manifested by the meeting for the renewal of the Chartist campaign. Mr. E. Jones was present, and addressed the meeting; and of course you are able to judge with what success. *He goes on to describe what is taking place, his previous lecture in Odd Fellows Hall in Bradford the previous Sunday [when he discussed the 10 hours Bill of 1847], his forthcoming visit to Midgely for next Sunday, then Barnsley and Haworth etc.*” I have received an invitation from Manchester, inviting me to South Lancashire, for three or four weeks, with which I am about to comply, and I expect to commence my labours there upon the 25<sup>th</sup> instant.”

**July 24<sup>th</sup> 1852 *People's Paper*** – MR. FINLEN'S TOUR. Barnsley, July 21<sup>st</sup> 1852.

“Brother Chartists,—The work goes bravely on; new friends are coming to aid, old prejudices are fast passing away; the rugged front of opposition is being softened down by the potent power of gentle, never-erring reason;

old faces that recently looked sour and sullen are being lit up and beautified by the sweet genius of conciliation, The Dead Black Sea of political apathy is fast disappearing beneath the pure streams of returning Democracy.

Upon Wednesday last, the factory workers of Halifax met in the Odd-Fellows' Hall, to consider the best plan to be adopted for the purpose of getting an efficient Ten-Hours' Bill Act passed by the Legislature; they decided upon agitating the districts through the medium of an active, honest, and consistent committee. I was invited by the conveners of the meeting to deliver an address upon the "short-time question," and agreed to do so. The meeting was addressed also by Rushton, Elisset, Stradling, Wood, and Snowden, who seem to be confided in by the people of Halifax.

The next morning I started off by rail for Pudsey, which, is a promising place for Chartism; there are some active and intelligent members there that have had to fight through those difficulties that have been common to all active Chartists throughout the country, but their zeal is unimpaired, and they mean to "go ahead." I lectured to a Cornish audience in the Temperance Hall upon the Thursday night, that promised collectively and individually to exert themselves on behalf of Chartism. Upon the Friday night I addressed a second audience upon Weaver's Green, that rallied in its hundreds at the name of Chartism. Upon the Saturday night I delivered a third address in the Temperance Hall. The audience was more numerous than upon the previous occasion, and equally as determined to organise. I trespassed upon sacred ground that night; I exposed the fallacies of free trade; there were middle class men in the meeting. It did not please them (I never speak to please them), they dissented, they said why; their reasons were as fallacious as their system; so they could not make an impression upon the audience. A motion was made by Mr. Benfield, and seconded by Mr. Clayton, to the effect, "That as the people are destitute of political power, it is their duty to forthwith combine with the Chartists to assist them in their struggle for the attainment of their political rights," which was carried unanimously.

The next morning, Sunday, I started off soon after six o'clock, for Midgley, in company with Messrs. Mitchell, Clayton, and Benfield. I called at Halifax on my way, and some of the "good men and true" of that place bore me company to the "camp meeting" upon Midgley Moor. Upon arriving there there was a large audience assembled, over which Mr. Clayton was elected to preside, who, after commenting upon the past and present in appropriate terms, introduced to the meeting Mr. J. Elissett, of Halifax, a venerable Chartist, and an energetic worker in the movement, who spoke upon the Charter with excellent effect. He was followed by another patriarch of Chartism, Mr. B. Rushton, of Ovenden, a staunch Chartist, and an influential advocate. I was pleased that day to see such men, men far advanced in years, men whose silver locks glistened in the noontide sun, pouring forth the sweet truths of Democracy upon the attentive ears of that large assembly. It cheers us upon our march, and makes us that are young feel that we are right when such men's faith and constancy have remained unshaken. I also addressed the meeting. A resolution was passed pledging it to assist in the reorganisation of Chartism. The meeting then dispersed, and in a short time afterwards the Chartists' Meeting Room in the town was filled by friends anxious to get to business immediately. Mr. Smith was elected to preside over the meeting. It was addressed by Messrs. Naylor, Clayton, Rushton, Elissett, and myself.

The Midgley Chartists are well organised; they muster strong. Their locality has been in existence fifteen years; their meeting rooms they use of an evening for the education of the young upon the secular principle; they have a circulating library, and are in an excellent and promising position.

I left for Bradford the next day, and addressed a second meeting in the Odd-Fellows' Hall; it was a glorious one, such unanimity and enthusiasm, such an apparent determination to arouse the dormant glory of Chartism as may give us full hope and reliance upon Bradford. I had some opponents there, which are things I have and expect everywhere I go; their spokesman was a middle class man, and had been telling the meeting not to expect aid from the middle classes; that if the working people wanted to be free they must work out their own manumission by making themselves numerically strong in organisation. This the meeting appeared determined to do. It is this that the middle class dread; so their representatives were there to check it if possible; their attempt will be futile, and they will, I doubt not, be scouted upon all occasions, as they were in this instance.

The next morning I started off for Barnsley, the town from which I date this letter. There was a party of friends at the station to meet me, and we proceeded to one of their own homes and talked over political matters until the time arrived for our public meeting; it was an open air one, held upon May Day Green, a green situated in the centre of the town. The audience was very large, very attentive, and very unanimous in its resolve to resuscitate Chartism in Barnsley. I addressed it until it got dark, when a great number adjourned to a neighbouring room for the purpose of enrolling their names as members of the Association, and likewise giving pecuniary aid. A great acquisition of strength to the locality here has taken place, and the feeling is good.

I am now about to start for Haworth, where I am to lecture this night. To-morrow night I am to lecture in the Odd-Fellows' Hall; afterwards I shall be off for Lancashire. My route from that quarter, I expect, will be published with this report. I am yours, fraternally, James Finlen.

Off next to address an audience on the 25<sup>th</sup> in the People's Institute, Heyrood-street [Heyrod], Ancoats, Manchester. Charter fund paid £1 for Halifax, 3s for Midgley and 4s 6d for Bradford.

The paper also contains reports of the above meetings written by other correspondents; Bradford - "The organisation of Chartism and the Rights of Labour" - the rotten and corrupt measure of

Parliamentary Reform as proposed by Cobden, Bright, Walmsley and Co. - a promise of 5s per week towards the missionary's wages was made; Pudsey - Finlen gave three addresses including on the 17<sup>th</sup> Saturday, on "Free Trade, as it is, no benefit to the People." Barnsley - addressing 800 people - resolved "This meeting is of opinion that the People's Charter is the only remedy for the political and social evils under which the people are suffering.." In Cheltenham 3s was awarded to the three present executives - Finlen, Bligh, Gammage and Athol Wood. At Foleshill Jones, Finlen and Gammage were nominated as their executives and 4s 6d sent to the Executive.

A joint letter by Gammage, Jones, Finlen and Grocott mentions;

".. one month has elapsed since our labours really commenced and in that short time our numbers have rapidly increased. Confidence has been restored to an extent we could hardly hope for...we have been somewhat crippled in our exertions for want of funds, but even in this respect matters are improving ... In conclusion, allow us to congratulate you on the moral aspect of our movement. Almost everywhere the filthy pothouse is being superseded by the lecture-room and the library. The mere brawling Democrat is flying before the man of sound and sober sense. Again we say ORGANISE, ORGANISE, ORGANISE. A mighty revolution is before us - Despotism, rampant for the moment, will soon be made to crouch before the genius of popular power.

[see *People's Paper* page 2 for full details].

**July 31<sup>st</sup> 1852 *Leeds Intelligencer*** – Manchester meetings poorly attended, 300 - 400 at Stevenson-square broken up by a fight between two of the audience. Only 50 turned up the next day.

**July 31<sup>st</sup> 1852 *People's Paper*** Finlen's tour. Your letter arrived too late and was too long to print. However, Manchester meeting a success on the 25<sup>th</sup> with over 2000 attending in Stevenson Square but another meeting the next day on Camp Field spoilt by the efforts of the police and the officer commanding saying that Finlen would be responsible if there was any disturbance. His programme was then: Sunday August 1<sup>st</sup> at Moss Lane, Hulme, in the afternoon, Stockport in the evening; August 2<sup>nd</sup> Bacup; August 8<sup>th</sup> two lectures at Stalybridge. North Shields Finlen, Gammage and Athol Wood nominated to the executive. Haworth - Mr. J. Finlen delivered a lecture in the Temperance-room on Wednesday evening June 21<sup>st</sup>. Mr. Finlen in a masterly manner exposed the Manchester School with a brief sketch of the ten hours bill. At the conclusion he sat down amidst the cheers of the audience.

**August 7<sup>th</sup> 1852 *People's Paper*** – MR. FINLEN'S TOUR - Bacup, Aug. 4, 1852.

"Brother Chartists,—Upon Wednesday night last, the adjourned public meeting was held at the Temperance Hall, Manchester. The attendance was good, and the feeling the same. Some new names were added to the list of members, and our good old Charter was hailed with genuine gladness by all present. I judge that the public mind is settled upon it; inasmuch as it is always preferred to endorse it in its fullness. The social questions now have to be established upon the opinion of the masses as firmly as the political one has been. It is in advocating that that we touch monopoly to the quick, and arouse it to action as its positive antagonist. The cry of Social Reform is the trumpet-blast that hastens plethoric wealth from its slumber of ease.

Upon Thursday night, I had the pleasure of addressing another Manchester audience in the People's Institute, with the same success as before. The next day (Friday) I started off for Stockport, and addressed a large open-air meeting there upon Waterloo Ground. Our friends in Stockport are not so high in spirits as the generality of the Chartist body; they have had many difficulties to cope with, arising out of the recent election in their town. There are a few there that cling to the good cause in the midst of all adversity, that are determined to gather up its strength again, and give to it that dignity which it was its wont to possess in Stockport previous to the reign of apostacy. I have no doubt that such men as Benfold and Williams, who have been disgusted, in connection with the other good men of the town, with the prominent humbug of prominent men, will co-operate with such friends as Clews, Wright, Middleton, and Mather, to assist them in the good work they have on hand.

I started by rail for Manchester, for the purpose of addressing another open-air meeting there, which was convened for two o'clock in the afternoon; there were a great number of policemen present. The meeting was a good one. Mr. Wright was selected to preside over it. It was spoken to by Mr. Cropper and myself. The disposition of all present appeared thoroughly favourable to all that was advanced. Things passed off quietly, after a numerous vote of thanks being given to the Executive, which I had the pleasure to acknowledge. There is a hard working party in Manchester, calculated to do much good to our cause by their perseverance.

I had to start off soon from Manchester to address a meeting that was convened for six o'clock at Stockport. Upon arriving there, there was a good audience. It was imagined that some of the "Mongrel Reformers" would get up an opposition; they are rather strong in Stockport. Some of them were present at the

meeting. Although I earnestly invited them to defend their policy, they were mute; not a murmur of opposition was audible; Chartism was ratified by the manifested approbation of the audience.

Upon the Monday morning I started off for this place (Bacup). A large number of people congregated on an open space in the centre of the town, to hear an address from me upon the People's Charter, I spoke to them until it got dark, when some friends retired to the meeting room to enrol members, and make arrangements for future meetings in the district. They decided that another meeting should be held upon the following night—an open air one—at the same place. It was held accordingly. The attendance was larger than upon the previous night, and the interest taken in the topics considered was great; at the conclusion it was announced that we were about to retire to the Chartist meeting room to enrol members. A party accompanied us, and another enrolment took place. I am to deliver a third lecture for them upon Thursday night in the Mechanic's Institution.

Next week I shall be engaged in and about Staleybridge. My work for that quarter will be made known, I expect, in Saturday's paper. All letters for me must be directed care of Mr. Hill, Winterbottom's Houses, Cross Leech-street, Staleybridge. I am yours fraternally, James Finlen.

He lists all his appointments; two more lectures at Stalybridge August 10/11, Dukinfield Friday 13<sup>th</sup>, Ashton-under-Lyne Saturday August 14<sup>th</sup>, Hyde 15<sup>th</sup>, Newton 16<sup>th</sup>, Stalybridge again 17<sup>th</sup>, Mossley 18<sup>th</sup>, Mottram 19<sup>th</sup>, Glossop 20<sup>th</sup> and two more lectures at Stalybridge Sunday August 22<sup>nd</sup>. Then follows his letter from Bacup August 4<sup>th</sup> which summarises his work up to that date.

**August 14<sup>th</sup> 1852** *People's Paper* Reports on the Bacup meetings with complimentary remarks about Finlen and the enthusiasm he engendered being the greatest seen since 1848. STALEYBRIDGE - Mr. Finlen delivered his first lecture here on Sunday afternoon. Subject:- "The people's Charter." Mr. Finlen spoke for about two hours forcibly and eloquently pointing out the superiority of the People's Charter over all other franchise measures. At the conclusion a great number of new members were enrolled. Mr. Finlen delivered a second lecture in the evening. Subject:- "Social Rights of the People, and how to maintain them." This lecture was considered by those who heard it to be a complete masterpiece, at the conclusion of which several members were enrolled. On Tuesday evening Mr. Finlen delivered a third lecture. Subject:- "Free Trade as it is and as it ought to be." Mr. Finlen spoke for an hour and a half, and sat down greatly applauded. A great number of tracts and certificates were sold. Mr. Finlen was announced to lecture again on Wednesday evening August 11<sup>th</sup>. Subject "England's Scavengers." He will lecture on Tuesday evening, August 17<sup>th</sup>. Subject "The work of the Sword, or the Wreck of Antique Greatness." Mr. Finlen will also deliver two farewell lectures in the Forester's Hall, on Sunday the 22<sup>nd</sup> of August - Subject 1st "The People's Politics, the Big Loaf, and the State Church." 2<sup>nd</sup>. "The Struggles of Parties, and the Position of Principles." The following is the heading of the farewell lectures: "Toil, brothers, toil till the work is done, Till bondage is o'er, and freedom's won."

**August 21<sup>st</sup> 1852** *People's Paper* – Stalybridge – On Wednesday evening August 11<sup>th</sup> Mr. Finlen delivered the last of a course of lectures in our room, subject "England and Scavengers." The lecturer pointed out in strains of burning eloquence, the sort of scavengers that were needed to clear away that mass of corruption which everywhere abounds, as a disgrace to our much boasted and civilized institutions. This was one of the best lectures out of the whole course. A great number of tracts were disposed of, and many new members enrolled. Mr. Finlen has left behind him a great impression, not likely so soon to be forgotten. There is but one opinion concerning that gentleman with members here, and that is that they hope the time is not far distant when he will be with us again. *Finlen explained that he had to leave rather suddenly afterwards and in gratitude they awarded him £1. The other lectures not given.* Report of his lecture in Ashton-under-Lyne, request for him to appear in Newcastle-upon-Tyne, his votes as member of the executive [Gammage 922, Finlen 839, Jones 739 + three others with under 100]

MR. FINLIN'S TOUR August 18<sup>th</sup> 1852

"Brother Chartists - the last week of my tour I spent in and around Stalybridge with, I believe, some advantage to the movement. I spoke to six audiences there, and it was gratifying to see the favour that each of them afforded to our cause. It was the intention of the Staleybridge locality (which by the way is formed of good and noble men) to convene several more meetings for the purpose of making perfect the organisation in their district. Their plan was a first-rate and economical one, but they could not carry it out entirely, because I had to leave them somewhat abruptly in consequence of important business having to be attended to by me here in

London. I explained the nature of affairs to them, and they readily agreed that it was necessary for me to leave them as I did. I wish it to be understood that it is *private* business that hastened me here, having nothing whatever to do with Chartism. I know, from what I have heard that gossips will fain assert that I have been mistaken and deceived in my undertaking, therefore I am anxious to abandon it. It is nothing of the kind. I have been pleased and gratified by all things during the last three months. I have nothing to deplore, but much to prompt me to more energetic actions, for I have discovered that there is health and glory in Chartism which the Chartists themselves can be hardly sensible of. I came here suddenly, and in consequence, suspended a public duty that I might perform a private one. A series of public meetings will, I doubt not, ere long, be convened in and about London, for the purpose of adding to the strength of the London organisation, which I shall be able to attend for the purpose of affording what little assistance my humble abilities will allow me to confer.

We must not relax in our efforts now that we have won good vantage ground. All those districts that have been visited of late must be revisited as soon as possible; the interest that there is in them now must be made prolific of gigantic good. Its vitality must be made permanent. It must be nurtured by sense, eloquence, and unsullied patriotism, of which there is an abundance in all quarters. It must be gathered up and applied to the cause of the many. It is my aim to aid in such good work in the future more industriously, if possible, than I have in the past. I remain, yours Fraternally, James Finlen. 15, North-Street, Fitzroy Square, London.

**August 28<sup>th</sup>** 1852 *People's Paper* James Finlen's acceptance letter after being voted to the executive – his address; 15, North Street, Fitzroy Square August 26<sup>th</sup>. Note from Bacup in gratitude for his visit and reviving Chartism. Letter from Newcastle-upon-Tyne requesting Mr. Finlen to pay a visit to that locality, which was agreed.

**September 4<sup>th</sup>** 1852 *People's Paper* – Mr. Finlen's Tour - My friends – being desirous of doing all I can, I respectfully request, that if the friends in Macclesfield, Leamington, Newtown, Llanidloes, Coventry or Birmingham should desire a visit from me on my return from Newcastle-on-Tyne to London, which towns I shall on my return pass very closely by rail, they will write to me up to Saturday next, care of Mr. James Watson, Green Market, Newcastle-on-Tyne. [*could he have met the 16 year old Mary Magee, his future wife, on this trip? - James Watson was a witness to his marriage*] The executive committee (in London) had determined that Finlen should immediately proceed to Newcastle-upon-Tyne [hence his abrupt departure from Lancashire] and that on his return to London he should then proceed to the West of England, and visit North and South Wales, (&) to commence his labours in Cornwall.

Letter concerning the dispute with the Peacock Committee about the right of Finlen to be heard [London September 1<sup>st</sup>]. Finlen addressed the Eclectic Institute on Wednesday. Arranged to lecture in Newcastle-upon-Tyne on September 6<sup>th</sup>.

**September 11<sup>th</sup>** 1852 *People's Paper* Newcastle-upon-Tyne – The Chartists met in the Democratic Reading-room, No. 11, Nun-street on Sunday September. 5<sup>th</sup> – William Brown in the chair. The secretary was instructed to write to Blaydon Burn to arrange a lecture from Mr. Finlen. Mr. Finlen spoke to an excellent meeting in the lecture room, Nelson-street on Monday evening, September 6<sup>th</sup>. There was some opposition from Mr. Jude and others, with reference to the Manchester policy, which was answered to the satisfaction of the meeting by Mr. Finlen. Mr. Finlen spoke to a meeting at South Shields on Tuesday which was an enthusiastic one, both in feeling and numbers. Mr. Finlen is to speak at North Shields on Wednesday; and he hopes to address a meeting of Sailors in the Seamen's Hall at Shields on Thursday and South Shields on Friday night. John Brown, Sec.

**September 18<sup>th</sup>** 1852 *People's Paper* Newcastle-upon-Tyne – reports on Finlen's talks in Newcastle, North and South Shields – “On Thursday evening Mr. Finlen returned to South Shields, and delivered an address to the Seamen, in their large room at the Rose and Crown Inn, on the subject of ‘Labour v. Capital.’ The room was crowded to suffocation, and the audience was completely electrified by the powerful eloquence of Mr. Finlen; so much so, that at the conclusion three hearty cheers were given for the lecturer and a liberal collection made at the door as people retired. I may add, as a further proof of the high opinion the Seamen of South Shields entertained of Mr. Finlen, that they voted that gentleman's own private use the sum of 10s and what is still

better, several have come and applied to me for certificates of membership....; Amusing article on apathy and decline in interest in Chartism in the late 1840's now being remedied by Messrs. Gammage and Finlen on their tours.

MR. FINLEN'S TOUR. Newcastle-on-Tyne, Sept. 15<sup>th</sup>.

"Brother Chartists!—Upon Saturday, the 14<sup>th</sup> of the present month I left London for this town, in compliance with a request made by the Chartist Locality here. A meeting was convened for the following Monday evening in the Lecture Room, one of the finest buildings for the purpose of public meetings that I have seen. The muster upon this occasion I may say was respectable. The chair was occupied by A. F. Bain, an uncompromising democrat. A resolution condemnatory of the recent Militia Bill, and in favour of political rights was moved and seconded by Messrs. Robert Allen and James Watson, and passed unanimously. Before the meeting was dissolved some few gentlemen that "had been Chartists," indulged in a little speech-making, apparently with the desire to create division, whilst they were most solemnly deploring that such a thing existed. Some good arose out of their folly, for it gave genuine friends to freedom an opportunity of exposing their malicious policy. Many wrong impressions which they had made gave way to wholesome truths. They spoke and spoke, and persisted in speaking until the meeting got out of patience. It could not get cross, for their antics were comical—so it laughed them down at last.

Upon the following Tuesday I reached South Shields and addressed a large and attentive audience upon the Cross-stairs in the market-place, Mr. Robinson presided.

Mr. R. Allens, of Newcastle, spoke upon ultra measures in a very impressive manner. Mr. Dennie, one of the hard-working Chartists of Newcastle, also took part in the proceedings, and the highest enthusiasm prevailed throughout. The next night I spoke to another out-door meeting in South Shields, in the library. It was a good meeting, and an enrolment of members took place.

On Thursday I addressed a second meeting in South Shields which consisted principally of sailors. It was a thin meeting room. Those hardy Men, the "jolly-tars" of the North, are sturdy democrats in heart. They in connexion with "landsmen" suffer manifold wrongs under the capitalists sway, and proved themselves that night to be as anxious for thorough reform as any body of men that I have had the pleasure of talking to. They should be attended to and enlisted into the democratic ranks.

Upon the following night, I revisited North Shields and spoke to a large indoor meeting upon political and social rights. Wm. Dennie presided. The Chartists of that place are truly earnest and active, pushing along through much prejudice undauntedly, strong of heart and full of faith.

On Sunday morning a concourse of people met upon the "Quay," to hear addresses from Mr. James Watson and myself. On Monday night I delivered a second lecture in the Lecture Room, in Newcastle—Mr. Watson was in the chair. Several members were enrolled, although the same opposition was practised by the same "parties" as upon the night before. I write of them "more in sorrow than in anger," and say, that it is lamentable to find professed "Red Republicans" entertaining such high notions of middle-classism, paying homage to their natural foes, and acting as obstructives to their friends. Let us hope that they may live to learn better. I should think that the high feeling of the meeting in favour of uncompromising Chartist policy will have convinced them of their error, and prevent them making such displays again.

Such, friends, is an epitome of the last eight or nine days work. To-day I leave this town, where I have experienced the greatest kindness that it is possible for men to bestow; where I have learned that the cause has good, intelligent, and disinterested defenders, where our sacred rights will be guarded from local disease and national disgrace.

I am going, as I have already stated, to South Shields. I leave there in the morning for Macclesfield, where I am to spend two days. I have also been invited to Stalybridge, which I shall visit if possible. I have to be at Shelton, in the Potteries to address two meetings on Sunday. Then I proceed to Barnsley, where I have to lecture in the theatre on Monday and Tuesday evening. I must start from there upon the Wednesday morning, as I have to lecture at Birmingham in the evening, leaving there the next morning for Foleshill, where I have been invited to deliver two lectures. The Coventry men have likewise intimated that they desire a visit from me. I ask them to make arrangements as soon as possible. Some friends at Leamington likewise express a wish to have me there; perhaps they will make arrangements also. Friends desirous of corresponding with me will please direct (up to Tuesday next) to the care of Mr. Garbutt, Taylor-row, Barnsley, Yorkshire. After that time, to the care of Mr. Hastopp Grey, Friar-lane, near the hospital, Coventry. I am, yours in the Cause, James Finlen.

**September 25<sup>th</sup>** 1852 *People's Paper* Reports on Finlens lectures in Shelton (19<sup>th</sup>) Birmingham and Barnsley (22<sup>nd</sup>)

**October 1<sup>st</sup>** 1852 *Coventry Herald* A lecture on War and its connection with despotism was delivered at St. Mary's Hall by Mr. Finlen, a Chartist Lecturer on Monday evening last. The style of the lecturer and the manner of the lecturer were in bad taste – theatrical and stilted (!)

**October 2<sup>nd</sup>** 1852 *People's Paper* Mr. Finlen's Tour - Coventry 29<sup>th</sup> September. James' own account of all the above meetings and his arrival due in London the next Friday.

MR. FINLEN'S TOUR. Coventry, Sept. 29

"Brother Chartists, Whenever Chartist principles are proclaimed they win esteem. It matter not how great have been the efforts in opposing powers to misrepresent and belie them, the heavy weight of truth strikes down the barriers of fiction, and opens a highway to the hearts and minds of men.

Steady and unerring as the progress of righteousness, its troubles and vicissitudes may be manifold, but its ultimatum is success. So it behoves the present to prepare for the future, it is incumbent on us to set about the work in thorough earnestness. Each man in the movement has a part to play. It is not for him to decide how prominent it shall be, but no one has a right to be idle whilst there is work to be done. Too often the work of the Association falls upon the few in each district, and it is generally the case, that those who do most work have to pay most money; and, under such circumstances, men are obliged to give way sometimes. If each man was to do his share of the labour, it would be comparatively light, and more advantage would accrue to the cause. The mechanism of the organisation would be more complete, and harmony would be prevalent throughout.

Mr. Robinson, of South Shields, has had much uphill work; it was principally owing to his exertions that I had an opportunity of speaking to the men of his town; he stood nearly or quite alone in making the arrangements, but since then he has got some good associates, about twenty in number, to resume the Chartist organisation.

In South Shields I spoke to a meeting there upon the 15<sup>th</sup>, which was the third I had in that town. On the morning of the 16<sup>th</sup>, at five o'clock, I left for Stalybridge. My visit there was sudden, and sooner than the friends expected. There was no time for convening a public meeting, so with the members I spent a pleasant evening. They informed me that they were getting on well, having started an evening school and opened a library. They were likewise preparing for the reception of Messrs. Jones and Gammage.

I visited Shelton and Hanley on Sunday, and addressed a meeting in each place; one in the open-air in the afternoon, the other in the "People's Hall," in the evening. Members were enrolled. I reached Barnsley in the afternoon, and addressed a pretty good meeting in the evening in the Theatre.

Upon the Wednesday I reached Birmingham, and spoke to an excellent meeting in the Temperance Hall, Ann Street. The meeting was about one of the best I have seen for some time.

The next day I visited Coventry, and on Monday night at St. Mary's Hall, I addressed an encouraging meeting, over which Mr. Richard Histopp presided. The Hall had been granted to the Chartists by the Mayor of the Town. It is a rich specimen on antiquity hung with armour and portraits of "royal rogues," with superb oak carvings in abundance. I like the character of the meeting - it was thoughtful.

Mr. Gammage entered the town yesterday. I was glad to see him, we spent the afternoon together, and in the evening proceeded to Foleshill. We addressed a little meeting there, upon "Free Trade." I had the honour of being chairman upon the occasion. Another meeting is to be held this night in St. Mary's Hall, and another one tomorrow night at Foleshill. I shall be in London on Friday next. Friends wishing to correspond with me must direct to 15, North-street, Fitzroy-square, London. I am, yours Fraternally, James Finlen.

**October 9<sup>th</sup>** 1852 *People's Paper* An urgent appeal for funds to support the '*People's Paper*' on behalf of Ernest Jones. The cost of stamps and paper costing £18 for the first paper and Jones only having received £8 in time for publication. The delay in getting funds causing delays to publication and an existential threat.

**October 16<sup>th</sup>** 1852 *West Kent Guardian* – At a talk by R. Moore on Corruption at Elections there was discussion of why voters changed from voting Liberal (Free Traders) to Tories (Protectionists) in which James Finlen opposed some of the speakers remarks.

**October 16<sup>th</sup>** 1852 *People's Paper* – Greenwich and Deptford, Taylor's School Room, Collier Street – Discussion every Monday evening. Mr. Finlen will lecture in reply to R. Moore, on "Free Trade as it is, and Free Trade as its ought to be" (8 p.m.) Monday; St. Luke's, 9, Brick lane 10.30 a.m.) Mr. Finlen on 'Old Principles, Modern Shame, and New Moves.' (8 p.m.) Sunday. Page 7 gives a full report of what happened at Greenwich;

Mr. Finlen's speech in reply to R. R. R. Moore:—

He said that,—"He had listened with much attention to all that had been spoken by Mr. R. R. R. Moore; he could not agree with him upon many points (hear, hear), and in consequence he stood there to give his reasons for dissenting from him. The subject was of that importance which demanded the calm consideration of all men;

it was one that involved the social weal or woe of the grand industrial army of our land, and therefore one that must be considered in all its bearings. "I am a free trader," said the speaker, "but not, I am happy to say, of the Manchester school—I should be ashamed of such a connexion. (Hear, hear.) I believe in the goodness of a wholesome and legitimate system of Free Trade—a system that shall recognise the freedom of the labourer before it shall secure that of the capitalist—one that shall set him free from the tyrant's power, and invest him with the full dignity of his worth. Your present Free Trade is a sham, and it is a paradox; it is, and has been the means of turning the iron rule of the Tories into the golden rule of the usurer, the cotton princes of the north, the Manchester men. If I must be smitten, I would as soon be smitten by the iron rod as by the golden one, and as soon that the Tory wielded it as the Whig free trader, Why, Mr. Moore! your Free Trade is enslaved, —it is not allowed to develop itself—it is pent up—it is circumscribed; if it does possess beneficence it is not allowed to distribute it generally. A few greedy Manchester cotton-spinners gather round it and suck out all its luxuriousness—all its sweets—and leave the bitters for their poor drudges. (Cheers.) Its manacles must be struck off, so that it may be enabled to escape from their clutches and fly to the sphere of the poor. (Applause), You say that the people are prosperous: if by the people you mean the manufacturers, and I am afraid you do, and grant that you speak the truth, they are prosperous enough, God knows,—they can contribute twenty-seven thousand five hundred pounds in twenty-five minutes,—eleven hundred pounds per minute. Where cannot those who work for them contribute as many pence? They can build up as you have told us immense factories, eighteen of them can employ fourteen thousand hands. Is the prosperity amongst the people, or amongst the people's foes. As to concentrations of wealth, a sign of health in the labour world? You point to London as a proof of your assertions: so you know the state of the tailors there under the sweating system? (Hear, hear.) Are you acquainted with the conditions of thousands of our countrywomen? there are the sempstresses. who are necessitated to eke out by allied vice and industry, a degraded existence? Verily, you skim the human ocean like a sea gull—you flout upon its surface,—you admire the noontide sun gleam resting there?—you live in the daylight of humanity!—you go not into its night—into the depths of its dread darkness,—you hear not its terrible woe-wail,—you know not that its heart is being moved by indignant wrath,—that its pent up thunder will give the lie to the purveyors of the word "prosperity." I stand to tell you and this meeting that such is the case. (Cheering). Beneath the gaudy picture drawn by purchased eloquence, gaunt misery with her withered hand inscribes in legible characters the word "error." The farmers have to drain their lands well, you say, to make them remunerative—they have to strain every nerve. It makes them industrious; aye! and in the same way the manufacturers have to drain their "hands" well to make them prolific of quickly got fortunes for their employers. They ring the stamina from their workers, they drain their life's vigour from them—and send them adrift as candidates for the workhouse or emigration. You tell us, in the words of Sir Fitzroy Kelly, that there is an abundance of fine fat cattle in England.

I tell you in the words of truth (and that is a better authority than yours) that there is an abundance (of) lean, worn, emaciated citizens and mechanics in England in want of some of that fat cattle, What advantage is it to a hungry man to know that such things are, when they are not for him? (Cheers). Your Free Trade will not do for me, as a working man—it will not do for the working people generally—it is driving them from their country and their homes; three hundred and sixty-five thousand a year are leaving for America and Australia; is this a sign of prosperity? Will people fly from prosperity—from cheap bread, plenty of work, and high wages: A more benignant system must be inaugurated—one that will throw its mantle of protection upon the many, not the Protection of the Protectionists—not the Free Trade of the Free Traders—it must be a Free Trade that will emanate from the free will of a free people—that the people will rejoice at—they will work to win it, too, through the medium of political liberty by gaining a full measure of political justice. (Immense cheering.)”

**October 23<sup>rd</sup>** 1852 *People's Paper* Greenwich and Deptford - ‘On Monday the 18<sup>th</sup> inst. Mr. Finlen delivered one of the ablest lectures ever held in this borough, in Mr. Taylor's school room, which was crowded. The lecture was on "Free Trade as it is and Free Trade as it ought to be." At St. Luke's, 9, Brick Lane on Sunday Mr. Finlen on "Old Principles, Modern Shams, and New Moves."

**October 30<sup>th</sup>** 1852 *People's Paper* noted that Mr. Finlen was due to visit the West. “That a subscription be immediately entered into for the purpose of defraying the expenses of a lecture or lectures to be delivered by Mr. Finlen.”

**November 6<sup>th</sup>** 1852 *People's Paper* – Grocott – I beg to announce that Mr. Gammage is pursuing a most successful tour in the North. That it is intended for Mr. Finlen to commence, as speedily as his engagements in London permit, his tour in the West, and that Ernest Jones hopes to start for Scotland on the 20<sup>th</sup> inst. - Remember the fifteenth - GRAND FESTIVAL - a public tea party and



meeting at the British School Rooms, Cowper St., City Road on the 15<sup>th</sup> – R. G. Gammage, Ernest Jones, J. Finlen, E Stallwood and W. Grocott will attend and address the meeting.

**November 13<sup>th</sup>** 1852 *People's Paper* – November. 8 Metropolitan Committee in aid of the People's Paper, November 8<sup>th</sup>.

**November 20<sup>th</sup>** 1852 *People's Paper* – Since Gammage and Jones are on tour, Finlen should stay in London and tour of West postponed till after Christmas. Finlen gave a talk about "Success to the 'People's Paper,'" drawing on the history of free thought and publication since the "Weekly News" was first published on 23<sup>rd</sup> May 1622, and men were persecuted and died for expressing their thoughts. Taxes were imposed on newspapers to drive them out of circulation by Queen Anne.

**December 4<sup>th</sup>** 1852 *People's Paper* Monday 29<sup>th</sup> Finlen delivered a speech on the character and tendencies of the new Parliament.

Soho – Finlen to open discussion next Saturday on "Which Party in the House of Commons waste most time, and, does the House honestly treat the Fair Trade Question."

**December 11<sup>th</sup>** 1852 *People's Paper* St. Luke's locality – Mr. Finlen would deliver a lecture on Sunday on the 'Press as it is, as it was, and as it ought to be.' - at the monthly aggregate meeting of the Metropolitan Chartist Locality, Eclectic Institute, Denmark Street, Soho, in a discussion, Finlen said of the working classes 'that one of their greatest faults was the want of organisation.... taking too much notice of men who called themselves leaders....'

**December 18<sup>th</sup>** 1852 *People's Paper* Finlen repeated his lecture on "the Press as it is..." which lasted one hour and a half in delivery, and was one of the most able and eloquent we have heard Mr. Finlen give." - George Wells [Dec 25<sup>th</sup> report]

He commenced by saying that the reign of intellect had yet to come, the majesty of man and the glory of his forthcoming organisation, which is to place him upon the throne of universal intelligent brotherhood bedecked with the halo of truthfulness and worth, approaching to the sublime and the beautiful. Thought has been the most expensive commodity that man has ever dealt in. The man who undertook to give vent to his intellectual power, although he only aimed at giving interest to the intellectual law, had to suffer persecution. Socrates, who died by the command of the thirty tyrants of Athens, was doomed to suffer because he was intellectually great. Lycurgus, who concentrated his great intellect to disseminate political and social equality among the people, because he wished the question to be thought a natural law - not a thing of momentary utility fraught with ephemeral life, but a lasting memento of the goodness of man. He lived to witness its advent. Galileo imagined that the world went round, and he thought correctly. But persecution made him retract his assertion; and when he had signed a recantation to satisfy his inquisitorial persecutors, he said the world still went round for all that. In no country have thinkers been more wronged and oppressed than this: from Caxton, in the time of Elizabeth, when the thumb screw was applied to those who gave vent to their thoughts, if these thoughts had a tendency to enlighten mankind. During the time of the Commonwealth, after the Parliament, we find that the genius of liberty - the Press - was comparatively free. But in the reign of Charles I a censorship was established and had been victorious, because they wished to place restrictions over it. Lestranger, in the dead of night, went to the house of one Quin, a printer, in Cloth Fair, to see if he could find anything that was for the enlightenment of the people. He was dragged before Judge Hyde, who resembled the more miscreant Judge Jeffries, or perhaps it was old Nick let loose upon us; but whoever it was, he was sentenced to be taken to Tyburn, to be hung up, disembowelled, quartered, and his flesh was stuck up to rot upon the gates of Aldgate and London. All this was done by the Grace of God, though I should rather think it was by the grace of old Nick; yet this is the way men were served who propagated the intelligence of the Press. At first they imposed a duty of a half-penny upon half sheets, one penny upon whole ones, and 1s. upon every advertisement. This was after the accession of Queen Anne, which gave the rich the monopoly of the Press. Reports of the House of Commons were not allowed to be given, because the rich in power did not want the People to know what they were doing: This duty was partially evaded by neither printing their papers upon whole nor half sheets till the time of Pitt - bottomless Pitt as he was called—rose it to fourpence and it was not reduced till 1835, when it again became approachable to the proletarian classes. (Cheers.) The Press should have the people's hearts represented on its pages. It should bear the reflex of the people's minds, and the aspirations of their intelligence. Instead of which it is merely an organ of classes of the present day, to represent rapes and murders for the edification or amusement of society. Richard Cobden tells us that it is owing to the newspaper being placed upon the breakfast table of the American that

enables him to wield the hammer with such force. But I should say, this will soon enable them to wield the hammer for themselves, and not for other men. If in '48 the Press had represented the people, the pensioners could not have been marshalled against them. It is the duty of every Chartist to get a Free Press—the abolition of the advertisement, stamp, and paper duties. It is for the maintenance of the clergy we must have our newspapers taxed, and as long as these creatures are in existence, the tax must remain. Let us turn priests ourselves, and then we will save 12,000,000 to the people, and we will have a famous Press. Let us endeavour to get a repeal of all taxes on knowledge, and that will enable us to get the Charter. Let us have the freedom of the Press, and we will have such men as Ernest Jones and Bronterre O'Brien living as intellectual men ought to live. We have ten daily papers here, while in America they have 350. Three hundred and forty more than us, because their Press is free, and ours is shackled. Let us have papers in every town and village in the kingdom (for there is no difference between the force of intellect in the agricultural and manufacturing districts) so that when the radiant light, which is yet to penetrate the intellectual gloom, dawns upon the world, men must have time to read, or they cannot enjoy the blessings of a Free Press, which is destined to work out the intellectual majesty of the people.

**December 25<sup>th</sup> 1852** *People's Paper* Another appeal to support the *People's Paper*. Thanks voted on to be given to Gammage, Jones and Finlen for their noble and untiring exertions in the people's cause.

### 1853

**January 1<sup>st</sup> 1853** *People's Paper* Finlen re-elected to the executive by several chapters. St. Luke's On Sunday Evening January 2<sup>nd</sup> Mr. Finlen will lecture. Subject: "The Work of the Sword, or the wreck of antique Greatness,"

**January 8<sup>th</sup> 1853** *People's Paper* Finlen receives 1s from the *People's Paper* fund. More executive elections and Finlen nominations. Finlen states in a letter of Jan 4<sup>th</sup> that he wants to restrict his labours to London if elected.

**January 15<sup>th</sup> 1853** *People's Paper* ditto – Mr. James Finlen will lecture [at St. Lukes, 9, Brick Lane,] next Sunday evening on "The influence of Eloquence as instanced in the life of Cicero." Finlen also stated his view at the Metropolitan Delegate Council, Wheatsheaf Coffee Room, Brick Lane on Jan 9<sup>th</sup>, that the Chartists needed a hall in a central position in the metropolis and he was instructed to draw up a plan for the following Sunday. At a *Soiree* for the *People's Paper* at the Eclectic Institute 18a, Denmark St., on the programme of entertainments; Mr. Finlen's recitation "Jacobin of Paris." and his playing *Brutus* in a scene from "*Julius Caesar*." He also played Pierre in a scene from "*Venice Preserved*."

**January 22<sup>nd</sup> 1853** *People's Paper* J. Finlen received 7s 7d from the Charter Fund for Rochdale, Torquay and Thomas Paine Locality. He also received further nominations for the executive.

Letter to the editor by J. Finlen regarding the need for a central hall:

A CENTRAL INSTITUTE FOR THE LONDON CHARTISTS.

(To the Editor of The "People's Paper.")

Dear Sir,—The Chartists of London have for a long time been labouring under a great disadvantage, through not having a hall, or assembly room at their command, which they might use as the Central Institute and Office of their Association. About two years ago I introduced this matter to the notice of that Convention which assembled in St. Martin's-lane. It was approved of, and, to the best of my knowledge, entrusted to the discretion of the then existing Executive. From that time up to the present, no more notice has been taken of the matter. It is too important to be thoroughly shirked, and I am persuaded that there is sufficient energy now in the Chartist body to carry out the project.

I believe that very few arguments are necessary to prove its desirability. In the first place, a society is deficient in dignity if it is without a home—if it has no rallying point for its members—a place in which they can gather together in times of turmoil—where they can deliberate upon and propound measures respecting the interests of their undertaking—where they can mingle often with one another, and create in consequence that intimacy which possesses so useful an influence in associated bodies. At the present time the members of the various Chartist localities are almost strangers to one another. They are pretty intimate with each other's political sentiment through the instrumentality of the Metropolitan Delegate Council. But that is not enough. Men engaged as we are, outside of conventional society and warring with its many abuses, should know one another

personally. It would be better if such were the case. A goodly social feeling might be created by frequent gatherings; boundless benefit would accrue to our association through Sunday evening lectures being delivered in the Hall of the Institute, which must be capable of holding at least 500 people, to be delivered by men who have been tested by the past, and who are known to possess that intellectual greatness which must be the prevalent characteristic of all those who are engaged in a crusade against the instituted power of craft. Nights during the week could be reserved for public meetings to advance all questions of interest to the people. Classes of various kinds could be held throughout the week in the anterooms, and the large hall might be used as a school room in the day time, which would, I have no doubt, be very properly supported by the members and their friends. The advantages which would thus arise need not be noticed further here than by saying that the trash which is common in most schools would not be tolerated there. It would be the care of the directory to procure proper preceptors for the young. The Executive Committee of the Association could hold its meetings there, and then its secretary could be seen at given hours during the day, which would be very convenient for the metropolitan Chartists, and I may here state that it would be quite as convenient to the Chartists of the provinces — for many of them visiting London are anxious to meet with the London members, and likewise; with the secretary, upon society business.

The position that we are in at the present time, positively demands that we make an energetic move in this affair, for, before long, it will be incumbent upon us to have numerous meetings in the Metropolis. Political measures are to be submitted to the "house;" the people must urge their views. To do this they will have to meet often; and, when such is done, the money that is spent in the hiring of halls for a few nights during the year, amounts to nearly as much as would be required to pay the rent of a place which we then might call our own.

Who is there that will work with me—that will guarantee their services to work out this Proposition. A dozen men that are determined will be enough to make a beginning. Let those that are prepared to do so correspond, with me.

It is for the London Chartists—the most advanced political sect in existence—to pronounce immediately upon this question, Anxiously awaiting a reply (to be forwarded here),  
I remain, yours fraternally, James Finlen, 15, North-street, Fitzroy-square.

**January 29<sup>th</sup>** 1853 *People's Paper* Greenwich - Finlen elected for executive. He agreed to lecture on Monday evening the 31<sup>st</sup> at Collier-street, School Room, Deptford at 8 o'clock subject "Machinery, man, and Mammon." Thomas Paine locality, 31, Thomas Street, Hackney Road, Jan 23<sup>rd</sup> - Mr. Finlen nominated as delegate [also by Dundee branch]. At the Metropolitan Delegate Council it was reported that Mr. Finlen had made no progress yet in acquiring a hall for use by the Association. At the Metropolitan Committee in aid of the "*People's Paper*" Finlen was in the chair when the accounts were audited.

**February 5<sup>th</sup>** 1853 *People's Paper* Greenwich – 1, Collier Street. January 31<sup>st</sup> – Mr. Finlen of the executive, gave a lecture on the present position of Europe, which was listened to with breathless attention, and elicited much applause. Letter to the subscribers included; "the threatened banishment and coercion of foreign democracy. An alien bill is in contemplation. We must do our utmost to prevent it passing."

**February 12<sup>th</sup>** 1853 *People's Paper* Mr. J. Finlen received from the Charter Fund 1s 6d.

**February 19<sup>th</sup>** 1853 *People's Paper* Mr. Finlen appointed treasurer of the Metropolitan Committee for a Soiree and Tea Party in aid of the People's Paper. - Fitzroy Institute, John-street, Tottenham Court Rd., engaged for a meeting, Tuesday week, Finlen and Ernest Jones will attend.

[Public Meeting Tuesday February 22<sup>nd</sup> at the Literary Institution on the 'Aristocratic Conspirators,' The peace cloak of the cotton crusaders, the Outburst at Milan] - People's Paper fund – 4s to J. Finlen for Soho locality.

**February 26<sup>th</sup>** 1853 *People's Paper* Charter Fund - Received by J. Finlen collection at John-street [22<sup>nd</sup> inst.] £1 2s 10d, Bermondsey 1s 6d, Soho 2s = £1 12s 0d. The John-street meeting was called for the re-organisation of the Metropolitan Chartist body and the rallying of the masses around the glorious standard of the Charter. Finlen spoke 'for a long time with exciting and masterly eloquence.' - James Finlen will meanwhile devote his labours to the Metropolis and manage the correspondence of the association in the absence of his colleagues.

**March 12<sup>th</sup>** 1853 *People's Paper* A public meeting was held on Monday evening March 7<sup>th</sup> in the British School Rooms, Little James Street, Paddington to prevent the opening of the Crystal Palace on the Lord's Day. Mr. James Finlen opposed the resolution but the chairman, Mr. Cathy, insisted on passing the resolution despite the uproar. The chairman shortly after disappeared from the room.

**March 19<sup>th</sup>** 1853 *People's Paper* James Finlen is ready to start immediately for the West where he purposes spending a month, and the localities in Gloucestershire, Worcestershire, Somersetshire, Devonshire, Cornwall, and Wales, are requested forthwith to communicate with him, that the requisite arrangements may be made.

**March 25<sup>th</sup>** 1853 *The Sun* – Prosecution of Unstamped Newspapers – last night a public meeting was held in the National Hall, Holborn, Mr. J. Watson in the chair to express an opinion on the recent prosecution of Mr. Truelove by the Stamp-Office, for vending an unstamped newspaper called the *Potteries Free Press*. [other newspapers such as *The Athenaeum*, *Builder*, *Legal Times and Observer*, *Racing Times*, *Journal of the Society of Arts*, *Dickens Household Words*, etc. were permitted to be unstamped]. On the motion of Mr. Finlon (sic!) a “Free Press Union” was formed, to agitate for the repeal of the newspaper stamp, and until that was accomplished to force the Government officials to prosecute the high as well as the low priced unstamped publications.

**March 26<sup>th</sup>** 1853 *People's Paper* National Charter Association – Sunday evening, the secretaries met at 15, North-street, Fitzroy-square - Finlen represented Brick lane; also there: Mr. Bligh - Greenwich, Blackler - Stepney, Moring - City, Loomes - Soho and Ernest Jones. Monies received and paid to/by the several funds listed.

**April 2<sup>nd</sup>** 1853 *People's Paper* James Finlen is ready to commence his tour in the West as soon as the localities shall have made arrangements for the same. Exeter, Rumson's Coffee House, Sun Street, Tuesday March 29<sup>th</sup> Chairman Samuel Johns ‘resolved that the secretary be instructed to engage Mr. Finlen for two lectures....’

**April 9<sup>th</sup>** 1853 *People's Paper* The People's Paper – Mr. Finlen appointed to draw up an address to the country to be issued with the [paper's] balance sheet. J. Finlen reported that the Soho Locality would contribute £2 to the Fund. He was empowered to engage the Literary Institution, John-street, Fitzroy-square for the Anniversary Tea Party and Soiree of the “People's Paper” on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of May. – ‘*The English Press*’ Letter 1

Sir,—It is a very general opinion that the press of England is potent for either good or harm. That it has been in the past—with some few and very honourable exceptions—an instrument used in the interest of riches and power, there is very little doubt; its position at the present time is enough to verify this statement. If a nation rises to assert its liberty, to grapple with its foes, to subvert wrong and establish the reign of righteousness, it is assailed by the standing press with the most opprobrious epithets, no accusation is considered too dark, and no motive too ignoble. If bodies of working men combine to defend themselves against the influence of combined employers and accumulated capital, they are guilty of a sin too heinous to be overlooked or remain uncensured by it. Political and Social Reformers (of an ultra character) are arraigned before a tribunal of public opinion — which has been by it created—they have to submit to a verdict which it has dictated, and work without the opportunity of protest or reply beneath its wrathful reprimand. It is the subtle, silent censor of the age.

I am not sir, of course, disposed to underrate the value of the English press, because its capabilities of doing more good than it has ever done harm are sufficient to deter me from so doing; — upon the contrary, I am so fully conscious of its importance, that I am anxious to, see it placed in a higher and more independent position than it holds at present. It ought to assume a nobler attitude than that of leaning upon the whim of opulence, bearing the manacles which old laws, that were enacted by timid men under the command of a trembling monarch, fastened upon it—which has prevented and now prevents the development of its legitimate and destined greatness. No Reformer can consistently condemn it in toto, but everyone can consistently work to make it better than it is or ever has been. A storm-troubled sea destroys men and property, but it afterwards serves as a vast highway for the transmission of good thoughts, of useful commodities, and proper relations between nation and nation. So with the press: it has overwhelmed many a useful truth and patriotic man, and it has transmitted many a glorious thought given birth to by noble thinking—it has been a kind of lantern which

has protected the effulgent light of intellect from the conflicting storms of opposing sectaries, which throwing its radiant beams along the pathway of progress facilitated the onward journey of mankind.

At the end of the fifteenth century (I believe in the year 1471) Caxton produced the first printed book that appeared in this country. Printing and vending were hazardous works; and men suffered severely from them (under the reigns of 'Bluff King Hal,' and good 'Queen Bess,') up to the time of James the first, at the latter end of whose reign appeared the first English newspaper, entitled the 'Weekly News,' the earliest number of which is dated the 23<sup>rd</sup> of May, 1622. The death of Shakespear had but recently occurred;— the nation was then mourning its loss: Jonson, the poet (or Rare Ben), was laureate to the king; the illustrious Milton was but sixteen years of age; Hampden and Cromwell were but obscure men, engaged in business, when Nathaniel Butler embarked in this new undertaking, 'which gained him more notoriety than profit.' A novel project is seldom received with favour; its author is jeered by the ignorant and persecuted by the cunning. Butler was connected with newspapers up to the year 1640. The work which he commenced, viz., that of making a record of the virtues and vices of public men, was dangerous to all who were then and afterwards connected with it, calculated as it was to jeopardise those who were then powerful; truth is dangerous to those who are upheld by falsehood; and the silent agency of a true press is capable of working wonders.

When the Revolution had dispatched Charles the First, and Cromwell rose to power, the press breathed more freely: there is no account of its being interfered with during his reign; but that those men who had been hacked about by the ruthless menials of Charles the First, and sentenced to long terms of imprisonment, were liberated. The historian says that 'they (Prynne, Bostwick, and Burton) were met on their entrance into London by vast multitudes on foot and horseback, bearing boughs and flowers, and rending the air with shouts of joy.'

The restoration of Charles the Second was a signal for the renewal of those barbarities which preceded the supremacy of Cromwell, and which have too often characterised the career of kings. 'The printing of news was made a monopoly—a rigid censorship was established over all publications, and journalism became the privilege of a courtier: to go into the details of the manifold enormities perpetrated by the officials of this reign would be but the dragging forth of a ghastly and horrifying spectacle; let it be sufficient to state that men suffered the ordeal of the pillory, the rack, and the dungeons, that they were dragged upon hurdles through the public streets, that the executioners were daily at work with the victims of the law that were torn in the dead of night from their homes and families to appear before Sanguinary Hyde at the Old Bailey. John Twyn, 'A heterodox thinker' and printer by trade, was visited on an October night, in 1663 by the licenser l'Estrange, who had been informed that an illicit printing press was worked by him, and was after some trouble captured, as described by one Whickam upon the trial. 'He went with Mr. l'Estrange to Twyn's house, they knocked at least half an hour before they got in, they heard some papers tumble down, and heard a rattling above stairs before they went up. The door being opened by the unfortunate owner, the witness was posted at the back door, whilst others searched the house. Efforts had been made to destroy the offending sheets, the type had been broken up, and a portion of the publication had been cast into the next house. Twyn's apprentice was put into the witness-box to give evidence against his master, and the judges were ready to coincide with Sergeant Morton, who appeared for the Crown, and declared Twyn's offence to be treason.' The book that he was intrepid and treasonable enough to print was one of those concerning the Commonwealth which declared that, 'The execution of judgment and justice is as well the people's as the magistrates' duty, and if the magistrates pervert judgment the people are bound by the law of God to execute judgment without them and upon them.' Twyn said he had printed the sheets, 'he thought they contained mettlesome stuff, but he knew no harm in it. He said that he had got 40s. for doing it, and that he was poor, and had his family dependent on his labour for bread, any plea or excuse that he could make was useless—he was found Guilty.' 'I humbly beg mercy,' cried he; 'I am a poor man, and have three small children,' 'I tell you what you shall do,' replied the Judge; 'ask mercy of those that can give it—God and the King.' The printer repeated his appeal. The Judge cried, 'tie him up, executioner,' and then proceeded with the sentence, which was death, with all the attendant horrors that savagery could impose. It was forthwith fully carried out at Tyburn, and the mutilated remains of the murdered man were swung up to 'rot and fester,' in the noontide sun on the various gates of the City.

This is an instance of what men have to suffer when they are daring enough to be truthful. The living fact of undisputed right to print and disseminate the thoughts of men, is a boon and blessing worth even the lives of a generation (and the sacrifice has been ready; aye, and a large deposit has been made—the Shylock Princes and Priests have had their pound of flesh), but what a pity that such an emolition of humanity must occur before the light of right can come down upon us.

The battle for the freedom of the press must be resumed. It must be taken from under the control of kings and "faithful Commons." The public, by its moral energy, must make those in power cease to act upon the nostrum laid down by the 'infamous Jeffreys,' which runs:—"That no person whatsoever should expose to the public knowledge anything that concerned the affairs of the public, without license from the King." The tyranny of the seventeenth century ought to form no part of the nineteenth. When rulers dread the intelligence of the ruled, it is time that they ceased to rule. To prevent the spread of intelligence in the past, they made it expensive — they put a tax upon it. It was becoming dangerous. Newspapers were doing good work in the early part of the eighteenth century: they dealt with political questions, and men became popular with them. Addison, as the freeholder of that time, remarked, 'That there is scarcely any man in England of what denomination soever, that

is not a freethinker in politics, and hath not some particular notions of his own, by which he distinguishes himself from the rest of men. Our island, which was formerly called a nation of saints, may now be called a nation of statesmen.' Such an aspect as this was threatening. Darkness was making way for light. Queen Anne was frightened. She sent a message to parliament, stating that much scandalous libel was being circulated, which was a reproach to any government, and recommended it to endeavour to remedy the mischief. So it was enacted, that a duty of one halfpenny be levied upon every printed half sheet, and one penny upon every whole one; and also a duty of one shilling upon every advertisement.

Next week, sir, with your permission, I will analyse the workings of this regulation of 1712—see how it has fawned upon and fostered despotism, and materially retarded Democracy, and then invite the Reformers of England to bestir themselves to remove that which is a ban upon the human brain—a brand upon the medium of their thoughts—and as a libel upon their honour. James Finlen.

**April 16<sup>th</sup>** 1853 *People's Paper* London Committee in aid of the "*People's Paper*." - St. George's Coffee House, Barbican - "Mr. Finlen reported that he had secured the John Street Institution for the anniversary soiree of the "*People's Paper*" on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of May ensuing, and tickets of admission to the soiree were distributed. Finlen then brought up the 'Address of the London Committee in aid of the "*People's Paper*" to the Democracy of Great Britain' which was unanimously adopted.

**April 23<sup>rd</sup>** 1853 *People's Paper* – Torquay April 18 - Unanimously resolved that the secretary inform Mr. Finlen we are ready to receive him, and it is our earnest wish he should start on his tour directly, seeing the great necessity for his labours. *On page 4 is Finlen's; "The English Press" Letter 2.*

Sir,—Volney, in his "Lectures on History," remarked, that, "Accustomed as we are to the uniform influence of the press, we are not sufficiently aware of all the moral and political advantages it produces. To be so it is necessary to have lived in a country where the art of printing does not exist. There we soon feel what confusion in accounts, absurdity in reports, uncertainty in opinions, obstacles to improvement, and general ignorance, the want of books and newspapers create. History owes benediction to him who first published articles of intelligence in Venice, for the little piece of money, called a 'gazetta,' the name of which journals of news still bear. Gazettes, indeed, are historical monuments of infinite importance. They are instructive and valuable, even in their deviation from strict impartiality—since they thereby exhibit the prevailing stamp of the time, in which they were published, and their contradictions always afford materials for the elucidation of facts. Thus, when we are informed that the first thing the Anglo-Americans do in forming their establishments, is to cut a road and commence a newspaper, it appears to me, that in this double operation they attain the object, and exhibit the analysis, of every good social system.... ..Such is the power of the press—such its influence upon civilisation—that is to say, on the development of all the faculties of man in the manner most useful to society—that the epoch of its invention decides the political and moral state of nations, as well as the history of two distinct and different systems. Its existence so precisely marks the progress of knowledge that to know whether a people be barbarous or civilised, it is only necessary to ask the following questions: Does the art of printing flourish amongst them? HAVE THEY THE LIBERTY OF THE PRESS?"

So it seems, upon good authority, that without the liberty of the press, the freedom of a nation may be questioned. As civilisation is supposed to be ever consequent upon general freedom, the opinion is doubtless correct; and I think we may be right in coming to the conclusion, that the nearer a people approaches to refinement and freedom, the more eager are they for their utter realisation. The uncouth savage, following his wild pursuits, feels not the degradation of his position. He has never been taught the value of a higher and a better one. He has hardly emerged from a state of unconsciousness. Therefore, there can be no restless anxiety about him; but the man that bears in mind a future, brighter and better than the past and present, is impatient to enjoy it. He is active as a reformer, and even hardly brooks delay. Hence it is, that in advanced countries agitation has become a popular means of working reformation. Progressive men act in combined masses for the abrogation of a bad law. Would it not be more conducive to the general weal, and tend to the establishment of tranquillity if law makers were more careful in the performance of their work; if, instead of placing it at variance with men's requirements, they made it act in harmony with them? Has not the common error of legislators been their attempt to mould the mind and aspirations of our people to their statutes, instead of allowing the latter to dovetail as much as possible with the former? I think that such an error occurred in the reign of Queen Anne, in the attempt to circumscribe the influence of the press; for to place a limit upon man's mind, is identical with a prohibition upon the majesty of nature, which naturally begets honourable revolt, The men that flourished in her days were not such as to tamely submit to these stringent restrictions—such as Addison, Steele, Swift, and Bolingbroke. Yet, notwithstanding, the effect of the halfpenny stamp upon newspapers was very remarkable. Many were immediately stopped, whilst several of the survivors were united into one publication. Amongst those that suffered under the pressure of this new tax was the "Spectator," which

was contributed to by the "familiar Addison," and the "versatile Steele." A strong effort was made to sustain it, but it disappeared the next year (1713). Of course, those who were in the possession of the largest amount of capital had the best chances of success. Thus the press became monopolised. It got into the hands of few individuals, and its readers were of the privileged class.

As time passed on, many improvements were made in printing. The newspapers were increased in size, and improved in shape. They became well-established vehicles of intelligence, and, occasionally, of Democratic sentiments. About the year 1722, Thomas Trenchard and Thomas Gordon, procured considerable notoriety in consequence of their liberal contributions, which appeared collectively under the title of "Cato's Letters." Bolingbroke also figured as an important defender of free debate. His writings appeared in the "Craftsman," and afterwards under the title of "Letters by Humphrey Oldcastle." About this period, which was in the reign of George I, the number of daily newspapers was three, and ten evening ones were issued three times a week. In 1725—eleven years after the above king ascended the throne—the restrictive measures on the press were increased. Those imposed during the preceding reign were evaded by newspaper proprietors by printing upon sheets that were neither half ones nor whole ones; and by this means they made the circulation of the press again extensive, and once more afforded sufficient reason to justify the interference of royalty and its attendants, who, by an act of parliament, prevented the evasion.

Unstamped "illegal" newspapers, were very numerous in the succeeding reign, viz., that of George II, in consequence of which it was enacted in parliament, in the year 1743, "That all hawkers of unstamped publications might be taken into custody, by any person, and imprisoned for three months;" and it likewise provided a reward of 20s. for the informer that secured a conviction. This harsh regulation gave plenty of work to magistrates and gaolers, for countless were the victims in connexion with the "unstamped."

We come now to a more lively period—to a time, as it seems, when literary men felt and recognised their own importance. Fielding, of Somersetshire, the illustrious novelist, was for a time connected with journalism. "The Bute Ministry" commenced a journal called "The Briton," of which Smollett was the editor. This was in the early part of George III's reign. Soon after its first appearance, it found an important competitor in the "North Briton," with which Wilkes, Lord Temple, and Churchill, the poet, were connected. But the existence of this journal was of short duration; for, after a year's gallant struggle, it was forcibly put down.

Wilkes, in the celebrated number (45), declared that falsehood had been uttered in a royal speech—upon which a general warrant was issued against the authors of the libel..... Balf and Kearsley, the printer and publisher of the offending paper, were taken into custody, and, both declaring Wilkes to be the author, he was seized. and after an examination, was committed Prisoner to the Tower. The objectionable publication "was ordered to be burnt by the common hangman at Cheapside." In consequence of a vote having been come to in the House of Commons, in favour of Wilkes' release from the Tower, his opponents gathered numerous upon a subsequent occasion, and counteracted it, and also resolved, "That the privilege of parliament does not extend to the case of writing and publishing seditious libels—nor ought to be allowed to obstruct the ordinary course of the laws in the speedy and effectual prosecution of so heinous and dangerous an offence." After much anxiety - after being excluded from the House of Commons, and after having fought several duels, arising out of matters connected with the "North Briton," Wilkes had heavy damages adjudged him in courts of law, from those that were his prosecutors. In one of Walpole's Letters occur the following remarks concerning this struggle with the "North Briton"; "Williams, the ex-printer of the 'North Briton,' stood in the pillory to-day (Feb, 14th, 1766) in Palace Yard. He went on a hackney coach, the number of which was '45.' The 'mob' erected a gallows opposite him, on which they hung a boot, with a bonnet of straw. Then a collection was made for Williams, which amounted to nearly £200. The money was placed in a blue purse, trimmed with orange, the colour of the revolution, in opposition to the Stuarts." It appears that the feeling ran high in favour of those persecuted men. Excitement was at a great pitch. A lot of adventurers, according to James (*erratum: Junius*), had got hold of power. They were objectionable to the masses, and any party that undertook to oppose them was popularised in consequence.

Poor Chatterton, the unfortunate "Bristol poet," about this time was a contributor to various periodicals. His career was short and melancholy. His death even was not more sorrowful than the character of his life. His genius won him a position amongst the standard poets. His reverses brought on a premature and unnatural death. Wanting the common necessities of life—being destitute of them for days together—he committed suicide in a house in Brook Street, Holborn, not being at the time more than eighteen years old.

James (*erratum: Junius*) was the next great literary character that added to the importance of the press. His writings appeared in the "Public Advertiser," and have since been collected into a volume, that now forms one of the standard works in all libraries. He rendered himself obnoxious to those in power, by his eloquent, yet plain and blighting sarcasm. He took the popular view of things. He scouted shams, and spoke truths to "Dukes and Kings." In a letter addressed to the Duke of Grafton, upon the general topics of the times, alluding more particularly to the expulsion of Wilkes from the House of Commons, he remarks: "With every good-natured allowance for your grace's youth and inexperience, there are some things you cannot but know. You cannot but know that the right of the freeholders to adhere to their choice (even supposing it improperly exerted) was as clear and indisputable as that of the House of Commons to exclude one of their own members. Nor is it possible for you not to see the wide difference there is between the negative power of rejecting one man, and the positive

power of appointing another. The right of expulsion, in the most favourable sense, is no more than the custom of parliament. The right of election is the very essence of the constitution. To violate that right and much more to transfer it to any other man, is a step leading immediately to the dissolution of all government. So far partly as it operates it constitutes a House of Commons' which does not represent the people. A House of Commons so formed would involve a contradiction, and the grossest confusion of ideas; but there are some ministers, my lord, whose views can only be answered by reconciling absurdities, and making the same proposition, which is false and absurd in argument, true in fact."

The press progressed well, and was read with vivid interest. It set the nation thinking. The "Times" appeared in January, 1758. Its price was threepence. It was a continuation of a paper called the "London Daily Universal Register," which was started on the 13<sup>th</sup> January, 1785. In the June of 1789, "an additional half-penny tax on newspapers" was proposed by Pitt, and an increase of sixpence upon the advertisement duty. These proposals were agreed to by parliament—so, greater power was given to the dominion over the press.

I have not kept to the promise I made in my last letter, that I would analyse in this the effects of the Taxes on Knowledge, for I thought that a brief historical outline of the press would be interesting, and well worth reading in the "People's Paper;" and it; likewise seems a proper introduction to the main question, which, if favoured by circumstances, shall in due time be brought prominently forth. Next week I shall continue the narration of facts, in which many familiar names and worthy men figure and play conspicuous parts.  
James Finlen.

**April 30<sup>th</sup> 1853** *People's Paper* – Public Tea Party on May 3<sup>rd</sup> – James Finlen will be present. *He will sing*: Song (comic) "Seven Ages of Man," Mr. W. Wilson; Song, "Ben Bolt," Mr. J. W. Allen; Song. "Song of the Poor," Mr. Hubbard.

Letter – To the Chartists of the West of England and Wales – Friends, - I shall commence my tour on Monday, 9<sup>th</sup> May. *He lists the places in order* Exeter, Torquay, Totnes, Ashburton &c. While in the neighbourhood I shall complete my arrangements with **Somerton, Street, Glastonbury, Yeovil, Ilchester, Shepton Mallet, Castle Cary, Wells, Bridgwater, Bristol, Cheltenham, and Worcester**..... - he continues with his history of

'*The English Press*' letter 3

Sir,—The English House of Commons, in the past, was as much exposed to popular censure as it is in the present. It is no new fact to state "that it is not the representative of the nation;" for it has been known and trumpeted from the same period that the said institution has existed, and men figure in martyrdom for having spoken and believed it. Sampson Perry was punished for publishing it in a newspaper, called the "Argus," upon the 10<sup>th</sup> of December, 1792. Indeed, during the last twenty-five years of the eighteenth century, the House of Commons, in connexion with royalty, did all that could be done by fines, tortures, confiscations, &c., to wreck and scatter the potency of the press and its upholders. "Never did any monarch find a more able and willing functionary to promote a crusade against the press than George III. found in Scott, afterwards Lord Eldon," who made an open and deliberate boast in the "house," during a debate in the year 1795, to the effect that, owing to his exertions, there had been in the last two years more prosecution for libel than there had been for twenty years before.

Every freethinking Englishman reveres the name and memory of the illustrious Thomas Paine, for he possessed those admirable attributes which ever endear a public worker for public good to the strong affections of truth-loving men, and render him objectionable to the holders of ill-gotten prerogative. He, as most of your readers may know, flourished in the time of which I am treating, For writing his celebrated "Rights of Man," 150,000 copies of which were sold in a very short space of time, an action was entered against him in the King's Bench, on the 18<sup>th</sup> of December, 1722. Erskine was retained as counsel for the defence, but the whole of his immense oratorical skill and power were of no avail. Kingcraft had been hit, and treated unceremoniously. Truth had trodden upon its dignity—it had trespassed within the precincts of its sacred circle: therefore, it must pay the penalty. A verdict of "guilty" was pronounced against Paine, who, as he had anticipated it, took the necessary precautions, and left the country; and, in consequence, escaped the indignities to which he was sentenced.

Two writers—Rowan and Eaton—one in 1794, the other in 1796, underwent severe punishment for being the authors of "libels on kingly government." Three years after the last date, the "Evening Courier" was proceeded against for declaring that "the Emperor of Russia was a tyrant among his subjects, and ridiculous to the rest of Europe." Its proprietor was sentenced to six months' imprisonment, and to pay a fine of £100. Others in connexion with it were likewise punished.

The first French Revolution, at and about this time, was startling the world. Its shouts of victory flew far beyond the frontiers of France. The rolling of its gigantic might throughout the sphere of regal grandeur aroused the loose and gaudy denizens thereof, and heralded the triumph of an uprisen people. A people, great in heroic patriotism, unfortunate in success, and indomitable aspirants after a long sought-for, unknown millennium. The monied and landed classes were apprehensive of danger. The fact of having a Republic for a



neighbour, and a chivalrous people enjoying its beneficence, constituted a source of fear too great to admit of neutrality at home. Pitt gave them favour, and Pitt was all powerful. He acted in concert with the clergy and squirearchy, and controlled nine tenths of the politics of the press. Its aim, in consequence, was to disparage the authors and defenders of the Revolution, They were represented as “spoliators,” “assassins,” “anarchists,” and the like. The English people had to be taught to look with loathing upon the brave people of a great nation, striving, and spilling their lives’ blood to bring about the thorough extinction of cruelty—that were knit up in the same common brotherhood, and that had to contend against the same description of foemen as it has ever been their lot to do. The desired effects were produced. Animosity usurped the place of sympathy. Instead of England’s word of cheer and band of aid being given to promote and ratify the great event, its heavy, malignant anathema found vent through the greatest portion of the press, and did considerable damage to the revolutionary party. More money was wanted by the state to meet the current demands. The tax upon newspapers was increased to fourpence.

In 1803, Peltier was put upon his trial for a libel upon Napoleon Bonaparte. Mackintosh defended him powerfully, but the jury found Peltier guilty. No sentence was given, on account of the war between France and England breaking out soon after the trial. Leigh Hunt was afterwards prosecuted for saying that “the Prince Regent (afterwards George IV.) though “a dandy of fifty was no Adonis.” He and his brother John had to pay a fine of £600, and to endure two years imprisonment in Horsemonger Lane Gaol.

After the lapse of a short time William Cobbett was arraigned for seditious libel. He had spoken hard things concerning the treatment of the militia, “Some English local militia men, the sons and servants of farmers, had been flogged in Cambridgeshire.” Such Punishments were unhappily common enough, but, in the case denounced by the “Political Registers” these English conscripts had been so flogged whilst under a guard of some foreign mercenary troops then in this country. Cobbett declared this to be a national disgrace which nothing could wipe out. The lash was scandalous under any circumstances; but that freeborn Englishmen, enrolled to defend their country from threatened foreign invasion, should, for some paltry. infraction of military rule, be tied up like dogs, to be flogged under a guard of German bayonets, was a thing not to be suffered in a land that declared itself free. The comment upon this was regarded as a very shameful act, and created a great sensation, The Attorney-General, Gibbs, was set to work, a verdict of guilty was obtained, and Cobbett was sentenced to pay a fine of £1,000, to be imprisoned two years in Newgate, and to give bonds for £3,000 that he would keep the peace for seven years. This, though harsh, had no injurious effect upon the invincible Cobbett. Incarceration and robbery were not enough to subdue such a man. The gaol could not do more than enthrall his body—his mind was actively employed upon public matters, “and the government, who thought that they had shackled off a troublesome enemy, found that the press bore his thoughts over the length and breadth of the land.”

Henry Hunt, William Howe, Mr. Sherwin, T. J. Wooler, and R. Carlyle, were punished, more or less, for seditious libel, blasphemy, and seditious speeches. Richard Carlyle was tried for “blasphemous libel,” in 1819. He was found guilty, and fined £1,000, and also sentenced to two years’ imprisonment in Dorchester Gaol. In the October of the same year he was tried for a similar offence, and sentenced to one year’s imprisonment, to be served after expiration of the first term. He also had to give a security of £1,000 for his good behaviour for life. Other charges, which were subsequently preferred, and the imprisonment which he underwent, altogether amounted to ten years, His wife, his sister, and assistants, were also fined and imprisoned. They were all guilty of the grave “offence” of publishing such works as Paine’s “Age of Reason,” Southey’s “Wat Tyler,” and Palmer’s “Principles of Nature.”

The press had more to encounter than the government opposition. In 1820, a society, having for its object the censorship of the press, was started under the title of “The Constitutional Association.” Its members created a large fund, for the purpose of proceeding against what they conceived to be the objectionable portion of the press. The people generally opposed them, for the atom of freedom, that the press then retained was by them jeopardised. The went under the denomination of the “Bridge Street Gang.” Public opinion was positively against them—so they were soon driven into obscurity.

Henry Hethrington, with whom most of the present reformers were personally acquainted, did much for the liberty of the press, both in work and suffering He was proprietor of the “Poor Man’s Guardian,” which was published in defiance of law, to try the power of right against might. With it appeared the “Destructive,” “Cleave’s Weekly Police Gazette,” “Cousin’s Political Register,” the “Cosmopolite,” the “Gauntlet,” the “Pioneer,” and the “Republican.” Hundreds were imprisoned for merely vending these periodicals, because they were unstamped. In 1836 the Whigs proposed to reduce the stamp duty from fourpence to one penny. It was done. A minority in the house worked for its thorough removal—and, of course, worked in vain. The penalties to be inflicted upon the printers, publishers, and vendors of unstamped newspapers, were increased, and made too heavy to be borne—so the above journals soon expired.

A few facts regarding the origin of existing newspapers may now be interesting. I glean them, as I have done some others, from a useful work by F. Knight Hunt.

The “Morning Chronicle” is the oldest paper in London. It was started in 1769, in the interest of Whiggery, and remained so up to 1847; Hazlitt, “Boz,” Lord Palmerston, and Dr. Black, were contributors to it. The “Morning Post” is the next, which was founded in 1772. It is a high Tory paper. In 1795 its circulation was

but 300. In 1842, it was 3,850; and it is supposed that such is about its present sale. The "Morning Herald" came into existence in 1780. It is Tory in politics also, its circulation is about 7,000 copies daily. "The Times," as has been previously stated, was commenced in 1788. Mr. Walter, the father of the present proprietor, procured the best literary talent that was to be had. He was the first that applied steam power to printing. The "Times" paid for the advertisement duty, in 1849, the sum of £97,000; its circulation is between 30,000 and 40,000; its politics are too well known.

To make any mention of the "Northern Star" would, I think, be superfluous here, as most of your readers are, doubtless, well acquainted with its history—that at a future time will be properly noticed by filling its due space in the History of the Press, as well as one or two more that shall be nameless now.

James Finlen.

**May 7<sup>th</sup> 1853** *People's Paper - The English Press* Letter 4. by James Finlen – [*see below*] he deals with the exorbitant tax the papers pay – well over a million pounds. 'The Government... is fearful of the spread of enlightenment. The stamp upon newspapers militates against the morals and intellect of the great bulk of the English people.' "It is, I consider, to the interest of all men to have a press that shall be free." At the Anniversary tea, Mr. Finlen spoke to the first sentiment "The Martyrs of all Nations."

"*The English Press*" Letter 4

Sir,—As I have given the readers of the "People's Paper" some ideas of the career and origin of the English Press, and described its position up to a recent date—doing so with a desire to be perspicuous, not wishing to trespass too much upon the space of your valuable paper—I now propose passing in review the various fiscal restrictions with which it has to contend. They are as Follows:—the Penny Stamp, the Advertisement and Paper Duties.

These taxes have been imposed, and are retained, for the avowed purpose of meeting some of the pecuniary exigencies of the State. They yield annually the sum total of £1,509,582 13s. 0½d. This amount is derived in the following manner:—From duty on foreign books, £9,097 2s. 3d.; from advertisement duty, £175,094 10s. 8d.; from newspaper stamps, £396,514 2s. 11d.; from the paper duty, £928,876 17s. 2½d.

Nothing can more conclusively prove that that government which obstinately endeavours to perpetuate that which is opposed to the liberty of the press is fearful of the spread of enlightenment. The stamp upon the newspapers militates against the morals and intellect of the great bulk of the English people. Newspaper literature is most attractive to the generality of readers. It embraces a great variety of questions. In it the events of the world are epitomised and brought in a convenient manner before the reader's notice. Men are made acquainted with the moving events of the times, and are enabled to judge and decide important questions for themselves. The newspaper press of a country will serve as the source of history for future historians. Its data will be valuable. In it will be found the recorded struggles of humanity; the phases that it shall have passed through in its noble effort to make its world a better one; the brightness of its hope, and the dread darkness of its despair; the strong, throbbing throes of its revolutions; its quick, impatient rush to grasp and win a noble victory; its retreats and indecisions—all will aid the writer that shall be found prepared to pen the history of a country's people. On this account it is necessary that the press should be thoroughly free from all control, and especially that of a sectarian character. It is now subjected to a class government, because it favours extravagance. The paltry sum which it yields forms the pretext for the retention of the restrictive measures. We have the peculiar anomaly of a government granting the sum of £284,560 for educational purposes, and extorting from the means of education about six times that amount in the shape of taxation.

It is argued by some people who are sceptical as to the benefits of an untaxed press, that the tax is indispensable, on account of the large number of newspapers necessarily transmitted through the Post Office, and that we ought not to expect their transmission to be done at a cheaper rate than it is under present arrangements. This objection has been very properly met by the author of a valuable and able document on the subject. He says, "The compulsory penny stamp is retained for the express convenience of the public, in order to have the conveyance of newspapers through the post. This arrangement is unfair, unnecessary, and oppressive. It is unfair, because, while one man, in exchange for his penny, is able to transmit his paper many times, another is equally taxed who does not wish to make use of this advantage at all. About 74,000,000 of postal transmissions annually take place. If we reckon that on an average every newspaper posted at all is posted twice, we shall have:—Newspapers twice posted, 37,000,000; newspaper stamps. 95,000,000; leaving 58,000,000 of stamps paid for by those who do not use the post." If a person three or four hundred miles' distance from London wished to have a London newspaper, it might be forwarded to him through the post, having an ordinary postage stamp affixed to it; it is an unjust arrangement that makes a man pay for that which he does not want; it is a tax put upon him for the requirements of a stranger. If the purchaser of a newspaper requires it merely for his own use, having to pay a penny for a stamp upon it, it is most objectionable. That government brand gives no guarantee of truth nor respectability. There are papers in existence, now enjoying goodly reputations and equally good circulations, bearing the red mark on their corners, whose rectitude has been doubted, and that by a noted

agitator, who is supposed to know something of the matter. He declared that they had been guilty of the most reckless statements and unscrupulous falsehoods, that they were indeed the “very pinks of flunkeydom.” Working men generally know pretty well the character of the standing press. They know that if it wishes to defame, it does so. There is no tax put in force to arrest the virulence of the “*Times*,” when it lets loose its brutal malignity upon the great heroes of freedom seeking shelter as humble guests in the houses of Englishmen. There is no sin so vile as that of striking at the fame and honour of defenceless men in a foreign land—men that are fugitives from the wrath of kings, and that have an embargo upon their lives. Yet stamped legalised papers are guilty of it; and they can go on and flourish, and repeat the same offence with impunity, doing damage to our country's honour by blemishing the glorious worth of its hospitality: cases of the most disgusting obscenity are minutely recorded in them, also the details of facts, which feed and nourish morbid and vitiated tastes. Verily nothing of a beneficial character is insured by the “brand.” Therefore its removal can be justly demanded. The efficacy of a bold and honest press will not be called into question. As it is well that newspapers should exist, the more extensively they become circulated the better. A diminution in their prices would increase their circulation to a considerable extent. In America they have no stamp duty, advertisement duty, nor paper duty. They don't require them. Theirs is a Republic regulated by the most economic and effective machinery. The consequence is, that whilst we have ten daily papers here in monarchical England, in Republican America they have 350; of weekly papers, we have 557; they have of the same 2,450. Here the number of copies printed annually is about 95,163,295; in America, the number printed annually is 422,600,000, and the number in the respective countries for each man, woman, and child, are: England, three and a half; America, twenty. What a complete luxury is thus enjoyed by the people of America! What an advantage they have over the people of this “free and enlightened country!” Let your readers fancy the novel comfort that must be experienced by those that have a press thoroughly free—the working man at his breakfast table, making himself acquainted with the politics of the day, out of a morning paper which costs him one halfpenny—certainly not more than a penny; and being able afterwards to converse and discuss upon the principal topics with those whom he associates with, thereby tending to make thought the commonwealth of his country. Can the generality of working men here in England do so? Certainly not. Some of them never see a newspaper from one year to another. The extreme ignorance that exists amongst them with reference to even the most important events, is truly lamentable. Tens of thousands are shut up in a world of unconsciousness; their intellectual organisation is deadened; there has been no influence to give it vitality and wholesome development; they are led by the nose by squires and parsons; they accept all that falls from the pulpits as so much “gospel truth.” It is only necessary for the parsons to anathematise a sect or principle. “They hear no one else - they read nothing. So they store up their hatred for the subject of this anathema. Their prejudices are insuperable.

It is high time that the sense of England began to assert its power. It can do so only by the means of a cheap medium. Nothing but a cheap press can be compatible with the professed ruling policy of even our government. To have it fettered and dear, as it is at present, is opposed to the free trade notions which they that constitute the government entertain. A diminution in the price of commodities has depreciated the value of labour, and consequently made it more difficult for the labourer to purchase a newspaper for himself. Things that are necessary for his physical wants have experienced an alteration in their prices; whilst those that are calculated to minister materially to his mental requirements, have retained the same value they have hitherto possessed, and are kept far out of his reach.

It is, I consider, to the interest of all men to have a press that shall be free. It behoves every progressive man to do his best to make it so—to favour every movement that shall be made having that object in view. Without it poor men have little power. Those that have worked so well and wonderfully for the “*People's Paper*” may well understand why they have such a struggle. The duties paid for stamps, paper, and advertising, would have enabled its editor to have given all the publicity to it that would be required to make it a profitable undertaking. As the arrangements stand now, government must have as duty one penny for the stamp, three-halfpence upon each pound of paper bought. It is no matter whether it is used or not. One shilling and sixpence is paid upon each advertisement. In consequence of these taxes, all newspapers are under the surveillance of the Board of Inland Revenue. Sureties in heavy sums against “blasphemous and seditious libels,” etc., are required from each newspaper proprietor—making altogether such an amount of intricate restrictions as are difficult to overcome and vexatious to endure. I must not proceed further, now, with this question. I feel persuaded that your readers will take it into consideration, and do all they can to pluck the forbidden fruit from the “tree of knowledge.” James Finlen.

**May 7<sup>th</sup> 1853** *Western Times* [Exeter, Saturday] – Mr. James Finlen intends delivering two lectures on somewhat diverse subjects, on Monday and Tuesday evenings at the City Auction Rooms. The first is entitled “Kossuth, the Hungarian hero: Palmerston, the Head Constable of England's Police” and the other, “The relation of the Employed to the Employer.”

**May 12<sup>th</sup>** 1853 *Exeter Flying Post* – an article about Finlen's talk "Kossuth, the Hungarian hero: Palmerston, the Head Constable of England's Police" by a less than enthusiastic listener;

The attendance at first was very small, but a good many came in the course of the evening. Mr. Finlen's style of oratory is characteristic of a class. He is a young man, about 21 or 22 years of age, and an ultra democrat. He makes loud assertions, and indulges in flights of fancy; but never thinks it necessary to adduce proof of what he says. His notions are mostly of the "most advanced" kind; and those which he holds in common with sensible mortals he holds for the most peculiar reasons. He disapproves of war, but it is on the singular grounds that it "puts the moral majesty of man against his physical organisation, and sets one part in bloody and furious combat with the other." It will be seen from this that he utterly disdains all regard to physical or metaphysical propriety in his metaphors. The same power which puts moral majesty in a "bloody contest" with physical organisation, could easily make storms murmur, or streamlets roar, or stars of the 59<sup>th</sup> magnitude "blaze," or the noonday sun "glimmer," or perform any of the other little feats for which stump orators and half-fledged poets are famed. He declares that while the "Governmental portion of this country is kept in the hands of a class - while aristocrats, lords, squires, bishops, and parsons constitute the ruling power, the working men of England will never be represented abroad, and England will never have ministers anxious to carry out freedom in other countries." By this we suppose he means that he would have the cabinet composed of journeyman tinkers and cobblers, and the House of Commons of chimney sweeps. He emphatically designates Robert Owen and Feargus O'Connor "good men," and pathetically laments the untoward fate of the latter "confined in madness," while he attacks the *Times*, which, he says, "permeates every corner of the universe," for breathing a word against these excellent ones of the earth. He does not conform his principles to the commonly received rules of morality - of course he is too far "ahead" for that. He, therefore, says that if a person is hungry, and his hunger arises from mismanagement on the part of the government of his country, he must satisfy the law of nature, even if by doing so he break the law of his nation. Holding such an opinion it is natural enough that the police should be regarded as an inconvenient class of persons, and accordingly he complains that though they are employed to keep the peace they prevent anyone else from having any peace; but this may have been intended as a joke. Mr. Finlen has had his disappointments. He expected "better things" from the present Government; and as they said that they were opposed to the "black, brutal and obsolete policy which was put into the grave in 1845 (fancy putting a "policy" into a "grave"!)" he was obliged to be astonished (O, dire necessity!) when he found that they were playing into the hands of the Austrian, Russian, and French "usurers." Mr. Finlen declaims most emphatically against the persecution which has always attended those who are in advance of their age. Caxton and Galileo were persecuted, and so is every one now who is more advanced than his neighbours in "political and Social ideas." He is not ashamed of the name of Chartist, but regards all who oppose chartism and the people's rights as "foes to order, right, to sense, national honour, civilization, good, and independence." He seeks not "fawning to flatter in the sphere of fashion"; but this may be attributed to a "good reason," often assigned; and if he meets with opposition from others who are not so far on in the way of progress, it is only what he expects. Of course Mr. Finlen works himself to a climax in his peroration. He says that England is called a land of freedom, but it is "a land of shams and humbugs," and when he is told of the freedom of England he feels himself insulted, because (horribile dictu!) the remark implies that he is credulous and will believe a lie. Having reached this elevated point he draws a contribution from that unfortunate ambiguous individual whom every crack orator seems to think he may "tithe and toll" at pleasure, "the poet", and sits down overwhelmed with his own fancied eloquence, while his audience applaud him because they are glad he has finished. It should be stated that Mr. Finlen received no thanks, and we believe, but few coppers. He gave another lecture, on Tuesday evening, on "The relations of the employer and employed."

**May 14<sup>th</sup>** 1853 *Western Times* - noted – The lecturer, a chartist, condemned in strong terms the conduct of Lord Palmerston in reference to Kossuth, and the recent circumstances connected with the rocket factory at Rotherhithe.

**May 14<sup>th</sup>** 1853 *People's Paper* [a more positive account of Finlen's talk] - Exeter – This locality was favoured with two eloquent lectures on Monday and Tuesday May 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup>, by Mr. James Finlen, of the Chartist Executive. The first subject was "Kossuth, the Hungarian Hero; Palmerston, the Chief Constable of England's Police." The worthy lecturer handled this subject in a very masterly manner, and repeatedly brought forth the plaudits of the meeting. there were between 300 and 400 people present. the second subject was "The Relation of Employed to Employer, and their separate interests." There were about the same number of persons present as on the former night, consisting chiefly of the sons of toil. After the lecturer had concluded, an employer of the name of Vicary, came forward and said, that he had considered that the lecturer had made a false impression on the minds of the audience, by stating that the interest of the employer and employed was

antagonistic to each other. He believed it was identical, and hoped soon to find a better understanding existing between them; for his own part, he wished to see the workman have a fair day's wages for a fair day's labour. He did not think he could be charged with being one of the class of idlers that the lecturer had alluded to in his address. And after making a few other remarks, approving of what the lecturer had said, he sat down.

Mr. Finlen then replied, he said;

"the gentleman that had just sat down has left very little for me to answer. I can say amen to nearly all he has advanced, but it appears there are two things we seem to differ in - viz., the interest of the employer and employed, and the co-operative movement. Mr. Finlen then clearly showed that it was the interest of the employer to get his work done as cheaply as possible for his labour, and so long as this state of things existed, so long would the employer and employed be waging war with each other. With regard to the Co-operative Movement, he pointed to the societies now existing in London, to show that the working classes could as well work for themselves as they could for the capitalist, and with much more advantage to themselves and families. I may here state that Mr. Vicary is certainly an exception to the general rule of employers. I am happy to say there are a few to be found of that class that do sympathise with the working classes, and I believe he, for one, is generally liked, in return, by his workmen.

The audience gave every attention both to the gentleman and lecturer, and separated highly pleased with the information they received. S. Rumson, sec.

**May 19<sup>th</sup>** 1853 *Exeter Flying Post* – Torquay – The Employer and Employed – On Thursday evening a lecture on the above subject, was delivered at the Temperance Hall, by Mr. Finlen, one of the Chartist executive. He commenced very considerably by dealing out “soft soap” with a liberal hand amongst his audience, which consisted principally of working men, informing them that they were altogether of too exalted an order of excellence to be called by the “harsh, low, and degrading term” of labourer. *This column was possibly written by the same biased composer of the previous column of May 12<sup>th</sup> in the Exeter Post.*

**May 21<sup>st</sup>** 1853 *Western Times* - TORQUAY - Chartism. - Mr. Finlan lectured on the "Five Points," at the Temperance Hall, on Thursday and Friday last. The lecturer abused all employers, the present Government, and all newspapers, except the *People's Paper*, which he recommended all working men to subscribe to; and as a remedy against all ills past, present, and to come, to enrol themselves as members of the Chartist Club. Mr. Prowse, on Thursday evening, showed the absurdity of the lecturer's reasonings and statements. The working men present were not so enthusiastic as the lecturer evidently anticipated.

**May 28<sup>th</sup>** 1853 *Cheltenham Journal and Gloucestershire Fashionable Weekly Gazette* – a series of three lectures has been delivered during the week, in this town (Cheltenham), by a Mr. James Finlen. On Monday, at Mr. Malvern's Auction Room, North-street; on “Kossuth and Mazzini”; on Tuesday and Wednesday, in the Promenade, the subjects being “The work of the sword, or the wreck of Austria's greatness,” and “Labour and Capital – the tendencies of each and their respective merits.”

**May 28<sup>th</sup>** 1853 *People's Paper* – report of the Cheltenham lectures. ‘James Finlen's Tour’ – To the Chartist Body – written **Somerton May 18<sup>th</sup>**.

“Friends,—I left London on Monday, the 13<sup>th</sup> of May, for Exeter, addressed two meetings there upon the nights of Monday and Tuesday. They were very well attended; there was a brief discussion at one of them relative to the social question. It was opened by a gentleman of the name of Vicory—a person of a liberal disposition, and favourable, or professedly so to Chartism. It all passed off well, after the little difference of opinion was made known and adjusted. I left Exeter for Torquay. On the following Thursday, the meetings there were also of the most cheering character. A great spirit of inquiry is in existence there. There are a few individuals very fond of controversy, and upon each night I was there, they engaged in it to a great extent. Messrs. Pepprell, Stanteford, Prowse, Harvey, and others, were my opponents. Mr. Prowse is a brewer. He is in love with the Whigs, and championed their cause on the occasion to which I allude. The whole of the gentleman's objections were of such a hackneyed character that they had no effect whatever upon the audiences. Messrs. Raby, Rice, Tope, Hockin,

etc. etc., made some remarks in reference to mistakes occurring out of former meetings. The utmost goodwill and enthusiasm prevailed throughout the whole of the proceedings.

Chartism in the above towns is gaining ground in a sure and healthy way—thanks to the good men of each place. Those of Exeter have no common difficulties to meet. You may understand pretty well how unfashionable Chartism is likely to be in a place where a bishop—a servant to God, and a curse to the people—has influence; how stiffly starched every saint-like looking sinner must appear; how contemptuously he looks upon all that fail to comply with the morning summons issued from the sullen towers of St. Peter's—which, by the way, is a magnificent cathedral, and by far too good for sinners; yet, notwithstanding this, and the coldness which is even common to such towns, there are many warm-hearted men, active in the Chartist movement. S. Rumson has a noble feature in his character—he is full of energy and action, ever on the alert; and being well assisted by Messrs. Johns, Lameson, Oldridge, Brooks, Cambridge, Corry, and many others, whose names I have forgotten, a good organisation is kept in existence. Torquay being what is called a fashionable watering-place, is not a place where one could expect to find much Democracy—yet it is one of the most advanced that I have visited. This is owing, perhaps, to the sense and perseverance of the members of our association. The middle class men, who spoke there, avowed themselves, one and all, favourable to Chartism. Too much thanks cannot be given to our friends Tope, M'Cullough, Hockin, March, Wood, Patterson, Mortimer, Stocks, Raby, and the rest that have adhered so constantly to our cause. The last-named friend, Mr. J. Raby, I am sorry to inform you, is about leaving the country for America. English Democracy will lose a noble friend, and the Torquay men an intelligent and useful worker. Not wishing to deal in eulogy to too great an extent, I will merely join with those who know him, in sincere assurances of goodwill and friendship, and thanks for the services he has rendered Democracy by his espousal of our principles and by his pen as a poet.

The beauties of the scenery surrounding the above places have been so well described by my good colleagues, that it is quite unnecessary for me to attempt a description of them here. I reluctantly departed from them and friends, for this place. On my way I called at Bridgnorth, and spent a few hours with C. J. Poole. I spoke to a good audience here last night upon Chartism. It was the first time such a thing was mooted in Somerton. The audience was well disposed towards it, and I fully expect to have a good locality formed before I leave the neighbourhood tonight. I shall have another meeting here tomorrow night. I shall have one at **Street** the next night, one at **Glastonbury**, and one upon Saturday night at **Keinton**. I shall make an effort to organise this neighbourhood by forming a locality in each of the above places – so that the other places in the west may be assisted in their work by the means of general co-operation. I am engaged the whole of next week in Cheltenham and Worcester, three nights in each place. Letters for me, up to Wednesday next must be directed to the care of Mr. Brown, Raby House, Charlton Rings, Cheltenham. After that time to the care of Mr. Pegg, Victoria Place, London Road, Worcester.” - James Finlen

An account is given of his lectures in Cheltenham, dated May 25<sup>th</sup>.

On Monday evening, according to announcement, Mr. Finlen, of the Executive, delivered a lecture on “The Heroes of Hungary and Italy” to a very attentive and delighted audience; demonstrating in an eloquent and manly style the patriotism of Kossuth and Mazzini, and likewise their determination to free their respective countries from the iron heel of despotism under which she is now crushed, and also showing the impartial hospitality shown by the English nation towards tyrants as well as patriots of every other nation. He did not agree with war, but maintained that it was justified when Tyranny became unbearable, which made it a dire necessity, historical lessons having taught the people that physical force demands almost invariably prove futile, for, what said he, is gained by blood, must be by blood maintained, as, for instance, witness the position of our aristocracy; but to win European freedom blood must be shed, or Cossackism will reign triumphant. On Tuesday evening he delivered an open air meeting on the People's Charter, and the right of Englishmen to the Vote, which took place in the promenade in the centre of fashionable Cheltenham, to an eager and intelligent assembly, but during the delivery of which a policeman interfered and endeavoured to stop the meeting, but in vain, for when asked for his authority for so doing, he could not answer, but said the meeting obstructed the pathway, which was not the case, as it was held in an open space alongside of it. Such conduct on the part of the official, the meeting loudly protested against, and he withdrew. Mr. Finlen then resumed and explained every point of the Charter in earnest and dignified style. On Wednesday evening he will address the Cheltenham people again on the same spot. He will then take his leave of the Cheltenham friends on his route for Worcester, where he will address several meetings. John Doward. [This report came on *Thursday*, We stop the press to insert it—and omit much foreign news, sooner than again omit a report of Mr. Finlen's talented addresses, but we must in future beg of our friends to remember Wednesday's post.]

**June 4<sup>th</sup> 1853** *People's Paper* Worcester May 31 – On Thursday evening the 26<sup>th</sup> ult. The friends of Kossuth and Hungarian liberty assembled in the corn market of our ancient city to hear the address from Mr. Finlen, of the executive, upon the heroes of Hungary, and in condemnation of the Palmerstonian policy, in reference to that downtrodden people. After an eloquent address to an attentive audience, the meeting dispersed, and the chairman announced that on the following

evening another address would be delivered, the subject chosen being, "The Right of Englishmen to the Vote and the Value of the People's Charter." At the time appointed a large concourse had gathered, and attentively listened to the fervent appeal, which showed in an unanswerable and masterly manner, the connecting link of representation and real liberty. The other points of the Charter being eloquently expounded, and combined with the lecturer's happy and facetious style, elicited frequent applause. J. Pegg, Sec.

On Wednesday evening last, Mr. Finlen concluded his course of addresses in Cheltenham, delivering the last to a very intelligent and numerous audience on the important and interesting question of "Labour and Capital." John Howard. Sec.

Finlen returned to London, attending a meeting on 'Tuesday last' in the Literary Institution, John Street, Fitzroy Square.

**June 11<sup>th</sup>** 1853 *People's Paper* notice of meeting on Tuesday Jun 14<sup>th</sup> at Literary Institution attended by Gammage, Jones and Finlen, plus others.

**June 18<sup>th</sup>** 1853 *People's Paper* [as the last] plus meetings in Greenwich and Deptford attended by these three recorded.

**July 16<sup>th</sup>** 1853 *People's Paper* – J. Finlen signatory to an address to the readers of the People's Paper asking for necessary support. Article on the Wages Movement signed by the committee – including J. Finlen French polisher, 15, North Street, Fitzroy Square.

Gammage reported (HOCM) - pp 399/400 "The National Charter Association had ceased to exist, for it was without an elected head. After Jones, Finlen, and Shaw were declared elected on the Executive, the latter only attended two or three meetings, not through any fault of his own, but because there were no funds to enable him to lecture; but though without funds, the London Chartists had the liberality to reprimand him for not performing his duties as a member of the Executive, and they got reprimanded in turn by Jones, for not furnishing the means of agitation, a rather bitter reproach, coming from such a quarter; for such was the never-ending drain upon the resources of the body for the support of his paper, (*PP*) that it was next to impossible to find funds for anything else. As that paper showed, not much short of eight hundred pounds had been subscribed up to that time to keep it in existence, exclusive of all the gifts which Jones dignified by the name of loans. Among the latter was sixty-one pounds ten shillings lent by the Chartists of Newcastle, who had some difficulty in getting a receipt from that gentleman, acknowledging the debt. The paper was a mystery, which puzzled even some of Jones's friends. For instance, when the affairs of the paper were under discussion, in alluding to Watson's offer, Jones said that Gammage might have known that the paper was printed nearly at cost price by McGowan; yet, after McGowan's death, the paper being twice removed, a reduction of two pounds in the cost of printing was effected on each occasion; so that if McGowan printed it nearly at cost price, it must have been printed for under cost price afterwards.

For nearly three years that paper existed, and it was nearly always at paying point. Jones once announced that it actually paid its way, still the cry was "money to clear off arrears; and unless money is speedily found, the circulation will fall once more." Nothing more probable than this! Ernest Jones was not the man to lead a great movement; he had intellect and energy, but he was ambitious and mercenary. He must command the movement, or he would reduce it to nothing. He might have got up a little ephemeral excitement, but a substantial movement, never. If, perchance, he temporarily rallied a power, it would only be to inflict the same misfortunes as were suffered under the reign of O'Connor, of whom he was a ridiculous imitator. Excitement, persecution, imprisonment, transportation—and then another relapse into apathy. Surely we ought to work for better results than these, after all our years of agitation. **Finlen** had been in the country lecturing, but with no great results in the large towns, where the stillness of apathy reigned among the people. He was the only lecturer who was actively working with Jones. Thomas Cooper joined the body in the beginning of 1853, a difference, however, on the question of social rights, expressed by Gammage in respectful terms, and by Jones in very strong language, caused him to leave the Association. While the National Reform League existed in the metropolis O'Brien lectured twice a week at the Eclectic Institute. A Democratic Association, for the establishment of political and social justice, was formed in Newcastle, of which R. G. Gammage was the secretary. Julian Harney was secretary of the Republican Brotherhood, which was started in the same town. There was then no Chartist Executive.

**July 23<sup>rd</sup>** 1853 *People's Paper* nominations for members of the executive to be sent to Mr. J. Finlen on or before August 8 next.

**July 30<sup>th</sup>** 1853 *People's Paper* In a few days Mr. Finlen will commence a tour of the Midlands.

**August 6<sup>th</sup>** 1853 *People's Paper* several mentions and nominations of Finlen. At Kennington Common on 'Sunday last' several thousand people attended to listen to the addresses of several speakers. Mr. Gammage gave a rousing speech in favour of Chartism, that the press and aristocracy thought they had killed and buried. He singled out some members of the latter such as Earl Spencer who had circulated his tenants forbidding them to take into their houses a married son or daughter, or a second family of any description. Mr. James Finlen having supported the resolution in a long, forcible and brilliant address, it was unanimously adopted. Another meeting took place in Bonner's Fields, Tower Hamlets on the Monday before 4 - 5,000 people, and presided over by Mr. Ferdinando. Mr. J. Finlen again addressed the crowd with a long and eloquent speech.

**August 13<sup>th</sup>** 1853 *People's Paper* Public Meeting on Sunday morning at 11 a.m. at Green Fields, Commercial Road, Pimlico. E. Jones and J. Finlen will attend. Mr. Finlen ready to start for the Midlands. [see Gammage p. 432 - Jones had invited Finlen to accompany him to the Eastern Counties, but was jealous of his talent, and disinvented him]

**August 20<sup>th</sup>** 1853 *People's Paper* Northampton – August 13 – Meeting of the Chartist Committee, Mr. Starmer in the chair - invites Mr. Finlen to give a lecture on 'The labour question.' Revival of Chartism Meeting at Pimlico - The fourth of the London District Meetings for the Chartist Petition took place on Sunday morning last at eleven o'clock in the Green Fields, Pimlico, on the banks of the Thames, near Chelsea Hospital. Notwithstanding the early hour, and the systematic destruction of the bills by the police - one of them having actually entered a tradesman's shop, torn a bill out of the window and taken it away with him, for which, if his number can be ascertained, he will be prosecuted - notwithstanding these drawbacks, a large meeting assembled. Mr. George Wells was called to the chair, and the meeting was addressed by James Bligh, James Finlen, Ernest Jones, and others.

**August 27<sup>th</sup>** 1853 *People's Paper* Midlands towns desiring Mr. Finlen's attendance communicate with him at 14 (error for 15) North-street.

**September 3<sup>rd</sup>** 1853 *People's Paper* Leicester readers of the *PP* [paper now reduced to threepence but still in debt] would like Mr. Finlen to visit Leicester but need to pay off old debts before incurring new ones. Northampton - preparations made for the approaching visit of Mr. Finlen.

**September 10<sup>th</sup>** 1853 *People's Paper* An excursion of the London members and friends of the National Charter Association to the Rye House, Hoddesdon, Herts., will take place on Sunday September 18<sup>th</sup> 1853 – the executive committee will attend (Gammage, Jones and Finlen) and address the friends assembled. The train will start from the Shoreditch station of the Eastern Counties Railway, at a quarter before ten o'clock, a.m. precisely and return from the Rye House, at a Quarter to eight o'clock p.m. Tickets 2/- each, dinner 1/6d or Tea at 9d. Repeated on **Sep 17<sup>th</sup>**.

**October 1<sup>st</sup>** 1853 *People's Paper* Ripponden - Sunday Oct 9<sup>th</sup> resolution "that our delegate be instructed to move that Mr. Finlen be requested to make a tour of the West Riding." A. Paterson.

**October 8<sup>th</sup>** 1853 *People's Paper* Cheltenham – Mr. Finlen accompanied by Mr. Hiscox and myself, paid a visit to the Snig's End estate of the National Land Company on Sunday last, when Mr. Finlen delivered a most eloquent address on "Passing events – Home and Continental." He was listened to with great attention, and the allottees expressed a wish to have another visit from that gentleman, which was promised them – G. Brown.



**November 26** 1853 *People's Paper* The Preston "Lock-Out." - a public meeting will be held at the British School Room, Cowper Street, City Road on Wednesday November 30th - Mr. Ernest Jones will address the meeting and Messrs. James Bronterre O'Brien, James Finlen and Mr. James Ingram Lockhart have been invited to take part.

**November 29** 1853 *Sun (London)* Anniversary of the Polish Revolution

A meeting in commemoration of the Polish Revolution of 1830 was held last night at the National-hall, Holborn. The handbills announced that the chair was to be taken at half-past 7 precisely by Mr. George Julian Harney, but it was some minutes after eight before the parties who had convened the meeting made their appearance, and they were then saluted with a mingled volley of cheers and hisses, the dissentients being the partisans of Mr. Bronterre O'Brien, who mustered in considerable force. The leaders of the movement having ascended the platform,

Mr. Wood mood (?) moved that Mr. George Julian Harney take the chair, (Cheers and great uproar.) on the motion having been seconded, Mr. Heath said as Mr. Harney had betrayed the cause of democracy, he was a most unfit person to preside. (Cheers and hisses.) He therefore proposed that Mr. Ingram Lockhart take the chair. (Cheers, and cries of "No, no.")

Mr. Finlen seconded the amendment. In his opinion Mr. Harney was a most unworthy representative of English democracy, and ought not to be allowed to come forward as the representative of foreign democracy. (Cheers and immense uproar.)

A most discreditable scene ensued, which lasted for nearly half an hour, during which strenuous attempts were made to dislodge the mover and seconder of the amendment from the platform, Some of their adherents in the body of the hall managed to scramble over the railings, and interfered in their behalf, and the *mélée* then became pretty general, and did not subside until a policeman made his appearance, and succeeded either in appeasing or removing the O'Brienites, but the confusion was so great that it was next to impossible to ascertain how the affray had really terminated,

Mr. Ingram Lockhart then moved that M. Jourdan take the chair. (Cheers.)

The motion having been seconded, was agreed to, and some degree of order having been restored, the meeting was addressed by several parties in the Polish, French, and German languages, and the following resolutions were passed :—

"That the partition of Poland was an outrage of the blackest dye, both as regards that country and the entire family of nations; that tyranny ever justifies insurrection, and therefore the revolution of the 29<sup>th</sup> of November, 1830, though unfortunate, reflected glory upon the Poles, and commanded the sympathy of all people.

That the failure of the revolution of 1830-1 having been caused partly by a blind dependence on foreign Cabinets, but principally by the selfish conduct of the Polish aristocracy, who preferred their own unjust privileges to the common welfare, Poland, in her next revolution, must summon all her sons to arms in the name of the republic, and look for her regeneration through the triumph of democratic equality and social justice, principles implanted in the national character, and in which were founded the ancient Slavonic communities which up to this hour Russian despotism and Austrian bureaucracy have failed wholly to destroy.

"That the Turks, having manifested a generous hospitality to the defenders of Hungarian and Polish nationality, having always repudiated the partition of Poland, and now being engaged in a defensive struggle for their own independence, and against the arch-enemy of European freedom, are entitled to the sympathy and armed support of the European people. And this meeting, believing that the Turco-Russian struggle is pregnant with hopeful opportunities for the enslaved nations, trusts that the oppressed of all lands will march together at one and the same time to effect their common deliverance, and to overthrow their common oppressor."

**December 3<sup>rd</sup>** 1853 *People's Paper* - The Preston Strike – "Last night [*Wednesday*] a public meeting called by an amalgamated committee of working men was held at the British School Room... to support the Preston operatives in their struggle with the mill owners, and to consider the inaugurating a trade Parliament; [*on the motion of Mr. Finlen*] Mr. Campbell [a working man] in the chair. Mr. Finlen moved the following resolution;-

"That this meeting, after witnessing the numerous failures that have been too consequent upon sectional and isolated struggles of the people to maintain a proper scale of wages, and to achieve the emancipation of labour, is of the opinion that the time is now arrived when a united mass movement of the working classes, based upon a national organisation, and guided by one directing body, can alone assure adequate support to the men now locked out of employment and on strike, and enable working men, for the future, to free labour from the thralldom of capital." Mr. J. B. O'Brien seconded the resolution, observing, however, that, if fully carried out, it could not do justice to the working classes. Even the masters themselves, under the present competitive system, however well inclined, could not do anything like justice to the working classes. (Hear, hear.) Still, he would

like to see a labour parliament tried, as a great deal of good might be the result. The resolution was then agreed to, as was also a resolution in support of a labour parliament. similar to that recently resolved upon by a Manchester meeting.

A Mr. Cowell then gave an outline of the causes that lead to the lock-out at Preston, including three times when their wages had been reduced by 10%. [see also *People's Paper* p. 1 - *Mass Movement of the People - National Organisation and a Labour Parliament - public meeting held at the People's Institute, Manchester on the 20th November*]

[reported in many London and provincial newspapers from December 1<sup>st</sup>].

**December 17<sup>th</sup> 1853** *People's Paper* – Hall of Science – Public Tea Party and Grand Soiree – to celebrate the establishment of the 'People's Paper' – Wednesday December 28<sup>th</sup> – Ernest Jones and James Finlen attending – During the evening the celebrated vocalists Mrs. Blewitt ["Tell me my heart"] and John Lowry ["Toil brothers toil," and, "Scots wa hae"] will sing some of their favourite Melodies and Mr. Lombard will oblige with several Airs on the concertina [accompanied by Mrs. Blewitt on the piano] tickets 1s.

– see *People's Paper* p. 4 for question of whether locked-out workers should be entitled to Parochial Relief.

**December 21<sup>st</sup> 1853** *Express* (London)

THE LANCASHIRE STRIKES AND THE "LABOUR PARLIAMENT."

Last night a public meeting of the operatives of London was held in the Literary Institution, John-street, Tottenham-court-road, to consider the subject of the strikes in Lancashire, and "the labour parliament." The Chairman (Mr. J. Finlen) said the object of the present meeting was to afford substantial and impartial assistance to the men now on strike in Lancashire, where there were 70,000 persons out of employment and on the brink of starvation. Of the 25,000 men out of work in Preston, 15,000 only had been assisted by the parties making what they called a national appeal, whilst the remaining 10,000 received nothing whatever out of the national fund. (Shame.) The committee sitting at the Old Bailey intended mainly to assist the men at Preston, but this was not in accordance with the requirements or the wishes of the people. If the men at Wigan turned out to the extent of 5,000, they would require similar assistance, as would also the men of Bury; and for these reasons the amalgamated committee of the Lancashire operatives had determined to afford equal assistance to all engaged in the struggle for the rights of labour. There must be a great want of duty on the part of those engaged in the appeal to the working classes of London, in thus supporting one class of men to the detriment of another — (Hear, hear) and he considered it his duty to bring this fact before the public. He considered that, in order to give efficacy to strikes, it would be necessary to have a "labour parliament," and a national representation of all trades, and from every town, which would obviate the necessity and expense of sending delegates from one part of the country to another, appealing for support. (Cheers.) By this means, assistance would be fairly and equitably afforded to all engaged in the common cause. (Hear, hear.) Capital would soon have less power than it possesses at present, and labour would meet with its just reward. (Cheers.)

—Mr. C. Murray moved a resolution expressing sympathy with the operatives of Lancashire, who were on strike and locked out of employment, and pledging the meeting to sustain them during their present struggle to ameliorate their social condition. —Mr. Bligh seconded the resolution; which was carried. Mr. Ellis moved a resolution in favour of the projected "labour parliament." - The resolution having been seconded, was carried. A vote of thanks to the chairman terminated the proceedings.

[Reported in *many other papers*]

**December 24<sup>th</sup> 1853** *People's Paper* Further advert for the Soiree on the 28<sup>th</sup>

**December 31<sup>st</sup> 1853** *People's Paper* The Lancashire Strikes and the 'Labour Parliament' Last night a public meeting was held at the Literary Institution, chairman Mr. J. Finlen – see *Express* of Dec. 21. SOIREE in Honour of the "People's Paper" - a numerous company attended at the Hall of Science, City Road on Wednesday evening. The large hall was found inadequate to afford accommodation to the numerous guests, and a goodly number were compelled to take tea in the coffee room of the building. The tea having been disposed of, on the motion of Mr. Finlen, Mr. Turner, of the operative stone masons society, was called upon to preside. Speeches made. Songs from Messrs Lombard and John Lawrey followed by more speeches. Songs by Mrs. Blewitt followed by more speeches and then more songs by the artistes. Mr. Jones then spoke after which the chairman announced that all subscriptions for the locked-out operatives would be acknowledged in the *People's Paper*. Mr. Finlen, who was loudly cheered, responded to the third

and last sentiment, "The Martyrs of all times and all ages." Having mentioned the names of the patriots of ancient and modern history, and described their labours in the cause of human redemption, he alluded to the spread of Chartism in this country. No other party had progressed like the Chartist body. It was true progress to work upon the mind and conviction of a country. They did not mount a revolutionary Pegasus, and lead the people to the barricades, but they taught them their political and social rights, how to obtain them, and how to keep them when obtained. Mr. Finlen sat down amid loud cheers. After another song from Mrs. Blewit and one from Mr. Lowry, the meeting separated at half-past eleven o'clock.

## 1854

**January 7<sup>th</sup>** 1854 *People's Paper* London – A discussion took place at the Dial, Long Alley, Moorfields, relative to the Labour Parliament, to take into consideration its objects, and whether it shall be supported. Mr. James Finlen is respectfully invited to attend, as the subject is of much importance.

**January 21<sup>st</sup>** 1854 *People's Paper* A large meeting was held in the Temperance Hall, Royal Mint Street, Tower Hill on Tuesday January 17<sup>th</sup> on the Lancashire Lock-outs and Labour Parliament. - Mr. Finlen was called upon to address the meeting and was received with great applause. In a speech of one hour and a half (he) showed to the working men how capital was crushing them in Lancashire and other places, and made a most eloquent appeal in their behalf, showing how they were suffering by the tyranny of capitalists. He also showed the meeting the necessity of a Labour Parliament, and that it ought to be called into operation as soon as possible. Mr. Finlen then took his seat, amid great cheering.

[*At this time there were mutterings against Ernest Jones, rebutted by him in a letter asking for support - as an unpaid editor for two years. An attempt failed to get a joint editor appointed*] Meeting of the People's Paper London Committee on Thursday last at the Star Coffee House, 33, Golden lane, Barbican - Mr. J. Finlen moved and Mr. Garrod seconded:- "That a committee be appointed to draw up an address to the country' Carried. The Committee was appointed and the meeting adjourned to Wednesday next.

**January 28<sup>th</sup>** 1854 *People's Paper* 'Mass Movement of the People, A National Organisation and Labour Parliament. - A public meeting will be held at the National Hall, Holborn on Wednesday the 1<sup>st</sup> of February. Mr. Turner of the stonemasons in the chair.' Amongst the attendees Mr. J. Finlen.

"I fear the feeling of jealousy exists elsewhere – all the more so, as equally disparaging remarks have been made in the country by Mr. G. (Gammage) of Mr. Finlen, whose great talents and sterling democracy merit the admiration of every democrat. *I should not mention this, were it not known to Mr. Finlen already* – and as the vilest charge that can be made against any man as the most despicable feeling – is the pitiful one of jealousy of the talent and popularity of others, no warning can be too strong to check and repress such a tendency in any quarter. ....Ernest Jones."

*Jones is seducing Finlen to support him as he turns on Gammage and other members who are suspicious of Jones' motives and propriety.*

**February 2<sup>nd</sup>** 1854 *Morning Chronicle* Report on the 'Labour Parliament' meeting of the day before. Mr. J. Finlen said that nothing would ever satisfy him but the entire annihilation of capitalists apart from the rights of labour, and that was the object the Labour Parliament was destined to effect. The aristocracy and the capitalists were the allied foes of the working people on whom, however, they depended for support (Cheers). He contended that the Preston strike was made the means of benefiting the few at the expense of the many; for while poor operatives in the provinces were receiving 2s 9d a week, there were delegates in London who were receiving 6s a-day (Shame).

**February 4<sup>th</sup>** 1854 *People's Paper* – ditto the last but additional sayings of James Finlen: “It has been stated that the working men were driving the capitalists out of the country; let them go, and when they are gone we’ll have a jubilee. (Cheers) They cannot take the raw materials with them – they cannot take the land, and they cannot take our skill from us. Like Robinson and Crusoe’s diamonds, they might adorn their persons with their gold, but their stomachs could not digest it. He had no sympathy either with landlord or moneylord, and the Labour Parliament was the best means of conquering both. (Cheers) If the Bell committee were not in favour of the Labour Parliament they were doing the work of the capitalists, and the sooner they were sent about their business, the better. Mr. Finlen concluded a very eloquent speech by urging upon the meeting the necessity of affording aid to all those locked out of employment, and resumed his seat amidst loud applause.

**February 11<sup>th</sup>** 1854 *People's Paper*, Finlen receives support for his election to the executive from many parts of the country, especially where he had previously spoken – alongside Gammage and Jones.

**February 18<sup>th</sup>** 1854 *People's Paper* Article ‘A Great New Light – Working Men, Look! Last week London was flooded with bills from the ‘*Weekly Dispatch*,’ announcing ‘An Essay on the Labour Parliament.’ Our curiosity was roused – and we devoted some time to the perusal of this trebly puffed ‘Essay.’ It consists of about a column and a half. One column is made up of of personal abuse of various gentlemen of different views in which our friend Finlen comes in for a conspicuous share, for saying the Labour Parliament would aid in putting an end to capitalism *apart from the Rights of Labour* – which appears to excite the special indignation of the organ of the profit-mongers. - that very characteristically tries to *pervert* and *misapply* what he said.

[The *People's Paper* comments on 'The Reform Dwarf and its Father' about the Reform Bill going through Parliament in which there will be; no repeal of the property qualification, no payment of members and no annual parliaments. No mention of a Ballot, no equal constituencies - in other words most of the main aims of the Chartists have been removed.]

A Public meeting will take place at the St. George's Hall, St. George's Road, near the Elephant and Castle, Southwark on Wednesday February 22<sup>nd</sup> to take into consideration the best means of rendering assistance to the whole of the men on strike and locked-out in the manufacturing districts, and also to elect a delegate to the Labour Parliament on the 6<sup>th</sup> March. Mr. Ernest Jones, Mr. Finlen and Mr. Bligh of Greenwich will attend and address the meeting. The following are expected to attend and take part in the proceedings; Mr. Blow of the Sculptors, Mr. Wynne of the Plasterers, Mr. Turner of the Stonemasons, and Mr. Jeffreys of the Ladies Shoemakers (and others).

**February 25<sup>th</sup>** 1854 *People's Paper* – Finlen nominated for the N.C.A. Results of nominations from various districts given.

**March 4<sup>th</sup>** 1854 *People's Paper* To the Chartists in the Neighbourhood of Manchester – Friends – As I shall have the honour of being in the Labour Parliament as one of the representatives of the working men of London, during the week commencing on the 6<sup>th</sup> of March, I shall be at liberty to attend and address meetings in the following places, at the times stated: Stockport, Sunday evening March the 5<sup>th</sup>; Stalybridge, Monday 6<sup>th</sup> – Oldham, Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup>; Rochdale, Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup>; Bacup, Thursday 9<sup>th</sup>; Bury, Friday 10<sup>th</sup>; and Bolton on Saturday 11<sup>th</sup>..... direct letters for me to the care of Mr. Hooson, 39, Henry Street, New Cross, Manchester, Yours fraternally James Finlen. - Two delegates to be sent from the Amalgamated Trades Committee to the Labour Parliament – James Finlen and Ernest Jones.

**March 8<sup>th</sup>** 1854 *Manchester Times* – The Labour Parliament – delegates London – Ernest Jones, James Bligh, James Finlen and Harry Jeffreys.

**March 11<sup>th</sup>** 1854 *Manchester Times* – report on the LP funds to be raised and how used. Speeches by Jones and Finlen.

**March 11<sup>th</sup>** 1854 *Bolton Chronicle* The Labour Parliament.- A meeting was held last evening in the "Crystal Hall", Shambles, in connection with the Labour Parliament now sitting in Manchester. Mr. Frith presided. Addresses were delivered by Mr. Finlen, of London and Mr. Abraham Robinson, of Bradford, urging upon trades in Bolton the importance of the labour movement.

**March 11<sup>th</sup>** 1854 *People's Paper* Jones and Finlen elected to a Committee for drawing up a detailed programme of action for the Mass Movement.  
Election of Finlen to the executive in particular London localities.

**March 15<sup>th</sup>** 1854 *Northern Daily Times*

PUBLIC MEETING OF "THE MASS MOVEMENT," AT MANCHESTER,

On Tuesday night, a public meeting of working-men was held in the People's Institute, Heywood-street, Manchester, in support of the objects of the Labour Parliament. There was a goodly attendance. Mr. John Teer, secretary of the dyers' association, was called to the chair, and at some length explained the objects of the labour parliament, which was, to raise the wages and elevate the condition of the working-man. Mr. OXFORD, of Birmingham, one of the delegates of the Labour Parliament (as were all the other speakers), moved the first resolution: "That, in the opinion of this meeting, the time has now arrived that a general confederation of the working classes of this country is not only desirable, but of the utmost importance, for the protection of their labour and social elevation."

Mr. William Poole, of Exeter, seconded the resolution, which was supported by Mr. Finlen, of London, and carried unanimously.

Mr. J. Hogg, Newcastle, author of "National and Local Records," and of a treatise entitled "A Guide to the Iron Trades," moved the second resolution, which was, "That in the opinion of this meeting the measures already devised by the Labour Parliament are calculated to enlist the sympathies and gain the confidence and support of the people of this country; and that it is the duty and interest of every working man to unite and render all the assistance in his power, in order to further the objects of the Mass Movement."

Mr. Harrison, of Nottingham, seconded the resolution, which was supported, in a long and eloquent speech, by Mr. Ernest Jones, of London, and carried unanimously. Thanks having been voted to the chairman, the meeting separated at half-past ten o'clock.

**March 18<sup>th</sup>** 1854 *People's Paper* more doings of the Labour Parliament. Finlen made several addresses to the delegates, such as supporting those trades to join the union even if they were in debt [through being on strike]. He took part in discussions regarding installing managers and several other resolutions.

Mr. Finlen addressed the delegates in an eloquent speech. He considered that there was nothing in the shape of a public question that possessed so much genuine importance as the means by which the people could become located on the land of their own country. (Hear, hear.) When a man possessed a few acres of land he considered himself in the possession of that which constituted an independence for himself, he then considered himself beyond the fear of want, above the control of any undue or pernicious influence, and without the harassing thought of having woe or misery entailed on that family whom he might be necessitated to leave behind him. Private possession of land was a thing which should be avoided as much as possible; he was desirous that the land of a country should be the property of the state—(hear, hear)—not the property of individuals in that state. (Hear, hear.) And it appeared to him that they in that Parliament were going the right way to work. He declared himself to be one who was in favour of the nationalisation of the land by law. (Hear, hear.)

*Mr. John Robinson stated that he had that morning received a letter which informed him that at Coxhoe Colliery, in the County of Durham, a reduction of the wages of colliers had taken place which amounted to nearly twenty per cent.*

The following letter was addressed to the Parliament by Karl Marx.

Mr. E. Jones then read the following letter from Dr. Marx, of London :— "28, Dean Street, Soho, London.  
"9th March, 1854,"

"I regret deeply to be unable, for the moment at least, to leave London, and thus to be prevented from expressing verbally my feelings of pride and Gratitude on receiving the invitation to sit as Honorary Delegate at

the Labour Parliament. The mere assembling of such a Parliament marks a new epoch in the history of the world. The news of this great fact will arouse the hopes of the working classes throughout Europe and America.

“Great Britain, of all other countries, has seen developed on the greatest scale, the despotism of Capital and the slavery of Labour. In no other country have the intermediate stations between the millionaire commanding whole industrial armies and the wages-slave living only from hand to mouth so gradually been swept away from the soil. There exist here no longer, as in continental countries, large classes of peasants and artisans almost equally dependent on their own property and their own labour. A complete divorce of property from labour has been effected in Great Britain. In no other country, therefore, the war between the two classes that constitute modern society has assumed so colossal dimensions and features so distinct and palpable.

But it is precisely from these facts that the working classes of Great Britain, before all others, are competent and called for to act as leaders in the great movement that must finally result in the absolute emancipation of Labour. Such they are from the conscious clearness of their position, the vast superiority of their numbers, the disastrous struggles of their past, and the moral strength of their present.

It is the working millions of Great Britain who first have laid down the real basis of a new society—modern industry, which transformed the destructive agencies of nature into the productive power of man. The English working classes, with invincible energies, by the sweat of their brows and brains, have called into life the material means of ennobling labour itself, and of multiplying its fruits to such a degree as to make general the abundance possible.

By creating the inexhaustible productive powers of modern industry they have fulfilled the first condition of the emancipation of labour. They have now to realise its other condition. They have to free those wealth-producing powers from the infamous shackles of monopoly, and subject them to the joint control of the Producers, who, till now, allowed the very products of their hands to turn against them and be transformed into as many instruments of their own subjugation.

The labouring classes have conquered nature; they have now to conquer men. To succeed in this attempt they do not want strength, but the organisation of their common strength, organisation of the labouring classes on a national scale—such, I suppose, is the great and glorious end aimed at by the Labour Parliament.

If the Labour Parliament proves true to the idea that called it into life, some future historian will have to record that there existed in the year 1854 two Parliaments in England, a Parliament at London, and a Parliament at Manchester—a Parliament of the rich, and a Parliament of the poor—but that men sat only in the Parliament of the men and not in the Parliament of the masters. Yours truly, Karl Marx.

Mr. E. Jones announced that he expected Dr. Marx in Manchester—if not that week, early in the week following.

Elsewhere in the paper was the note that the Government had given a free pardon to political exiles Smith O'Brien, Frost, Williams and Jones - but not Ellis, Cuffay, Lacy, Dowling, Fay, Mullins and others and that a petition should be adopted praying for their amnesty.

**March 20<sup>th</sup> 1854** *North British Daily Mail*, & **Mar 25<sup>th</sup> *People's Paper*** – Mr. Finlen appointed missionary through the West of England, and that ..duty of starting upon ...mission with all possible speed. - More motions.

**March 25 1854** *People's Paper* The Labour Parliament - further sittings on Thursday and Friday.

The first discussion was on the payment of officers - that 4s per day be paid for travelling expenses to the executive, though some argued for only 2s [in addition to the 36/- per week]. Neither motion was carried - it was suggested that the 'missionaries' receive contributions from the places they visited. Finlen gave his opinion that Parliament should decide what should be the expenses that would be allowed by the Parliament to the Executive instead of leaving it to the Executive - otherwise the Executives would have themselves to decide what they should pay themselves. He observed that missionaries would be absolutely required in the towns that were not represented in that Parliament, for the purpose of rousing them, and sending delegates to the next Parliament. A clause in the programme considered that each collector of subscriptions, in payment of his services shall receive five per cent on the monies that he may collect until the salary thus obtained shall reach £1 16s weekly and then he shall receive two and a half percent. Mr. Finlen thought the greatest inducement should be held out to the collectors by way of an incentive for them to persevere. And he thought that after they had arrived at two guineas per week that from that time they should receive 2½d per week on the monies they brought in. He thought that it would be of the utmost advantage to have collectors all over the country. That was a plan which was successfully carried out by the Anti-Corn Law League. The amendment moved by Mr. Finlen, to the effect that each collector should be paid 5% on the monies collected, until his income reached £1 16s, and that he should only receive 2½% was carried by a majority. A discussion took place on whether they should support strikes, if the strikers had not contributed to the funds of the Mass Movement for six months. Finlen and the chairman were both of the opinion that it would be much better to leave the management of this matter to the

executive - which was agreed. They discussed how much strikers could receive and how their funds could be divided. Mr. Finlen said, if the Executive were to pay 7s, 8s or 10s per week to people on strike in one town, and to give others on strike in another town a shilling or two shillings per week, that would be proof that they were incapable of being at the head of affairs and that they ought to be immediately deposed. (Hear, hear) And again, he did not think it proper to re-open questions which had already been settled. (Hear, hear) He did not wish to see the time of that Parliament wasted, and therefore, he for one, would strongly protest against such a mode of procedure. (Hear, hear).

Mr. Jones and Mr. Finlen reported that, on the previous evening they attended a public meeting at Accrington, which was one of the most densely crowded meetings ever held in that town, and that the objects and proceedings of the Labour Parliament had been highly approved of. The Mass Movement had taken a firm root at Accrington. Mr. Finlen moved that Mr. John Matthew (Preston) be elected an honorary member of the Parliament. [carried by acclamation]

In the afternoon session Mr. Finlen rose and said, that he held in his hand an address, under the head of "Current Notes," written by their talented friend - Mr. Ernest Jones, (Hear, hear) He thought that the publication of the "Current Notes" (which had already appeared in the "People's Newspaper") would have a most beneficial effect, and moved - "That the Financial Committee give immediate orders for 10,000 copies of the document be struck off for distribution throughout the country. Mr. Hogg seconded the motion, which was carried by acclamation.

The regulation of Labour. Mr. Williams moved the adoption of the following clause:- "The share of remuneration for his labour to which the working man is entitled so long as he works for the present class of capitalist employers shall be one-half of the net profits realised by the joint action of labour and capital. This to be attained by such a gradual rise of wages or partnership in profits as the Executive may find prudent to attempt and practicable to accomplish." Mr. Finlen said he was disposed to think that they would meet with a great deal of opposition, and it was because they expected such opposition they had adopted measures to meet it. (Hear) They next discussed land schemes which involved many differing ideas, with Finlen making suggestions.

On Friday with Mr. E. C. Cropper in the chair. Ernest Jones discussed the benefits of setting up a Life Assurance scheme. Abraham Robinson moved a motion concerning Dwellings for the Mass Movement. The scheme would need stewards and managers. None of these schemes could operate without funds.

"Mr. Finlen was of opinion that the best way to get money was to get first an efficient Executive; their labours were all in vain, if they were to settle down into inactivity after the Parliament adjourned. (Hear, hear) And in order to make the work really useful, it would be requisite for the most active volunteers that could be got to assist the members of the Executive in making an active and extensive canvass of the country, for the purpose of holding public meetings. He had not so much faith in the press as he had in the platform. He thought that public meetings were far (more) efficacious in promoting a movement than the distribution of tracts, pamphlets, addresses, and so on. And he believed that an Executive Committee, of not less than five properly qualified persons, would be an effective body. And they would have to adopt a system of agitation similar to that which was adopted by the National Land Company; but for that agitation that Company would not, as he believed, have attained the position it did in this country. (Hear, hear.) The delegates then proceeded to the nomination of persons to form the executive. Mr. Armfield nominated Mr. Finlen of London as one of the executive and Mr. Goldering seconded the nomination. The vote was as follows: James Finlen 23, Joseph Hogg 20, George Harrison 19, Abraham Robinson 18, James Williams 18, George Candelet 11, John Teer 10, William Poole 4 - and the first five were elected. Jones was voted to be an honorary member of the executive as seconded by Finlen. The following individuals are appointed missionaries, with the annexed routes, and the duty of starting upon their missions with all possible speed:- Mr. Finlen (through the West of England) Mr. Abraham Robinson (Lancashire, Yorkshire and the North) and Mr. Williams (the Midlands Counties). The "People's Paper" was made the organ of the movement. It was decided that the next Parliament would meet in Nottingham [on first Monday in August]. On Saturday Mr. Jeffries hoped that the gentlemen who had been appointed missionaries would not during their tours act too much like lecturers, merely delivering addresses and then leaving the places they visited but that they would remain in each district until they succeeded in forming a local organisation in connection with the Mass Movement. It was moved that the Parliament appoint three persons who were resident in London to obtain offices for the Executive in the metropolis - Mr. Harrison moved that Messrs. Bligh, Jeffries and Finlen be appointed a Committee for that purpose. The expenses of the Parliament had amounted to upwards of £500 but that the Financial committee had a balance in hand.

**April 1<sup>st</sup> 1854** *People's Paper* Notice to the Working Classes in the West of England. James Finlen's itinerary: Plymouth, Mon/Tue April 10/11<sup>th</sup>; Devonport, Wed 12<sup>th</sup>; Torquay,, Thur/Fri 13/14<sup>th</sup>; Totnes Sat 15<sup>th</sup>; Exeter & district from Mon 17<sup>th</sup> till Thur 20<sup>th</sup>; Collumpton 21<sup>st</sup>; Tiverton 23<sup>rd</sup>; Bridgwater 24<sup>th</sup>, **Somerton** 25<sup>th</sup>, **Street** 26<sup>th</sup>; **Glastonbury**, 27<sup>th</sup>; Bristol, 28, 29, 30<sup>th</sup>; Cheltenham, May 1/2<sup>nd</sup>; Worcester, May 3/4<sup>th</sup>.

Metropolitan Defence Committee on behalf of the Preston operatives being prosecuted by the Cotton-lords of the town, to be addressed by J. Finlen on April 3rd at the Literary Institution, John-street, Tottenham Court Road.

Report on the Mass Movement inaugurated by the Labour Parliament

**April 8<sup>th</sup>** *People's Paper* [more PP matters.] Expenditure of the Executive Committee of the Mass Movement - Mr. Finlen £1 16s 0d. The Literary Institution Meeting took place on Tuesday and on the Monday several hundreds of people had to be turned away from the doors. The friends of Mr. O'Brien turned up to break up the meeting and hoot down Ernest Jones. Mr. Finlen made a very long and able speech which was much applauded. The O'Brien faction then caused a disturbance. [*Reynolds Newspaper April 9<sup>th</sup>* states the meeting ended in a riot!]

**April 15<sup>th</sup>** 1854 *People's Paper* Address to the Mass Movement Executive - a call for support ending; We call upon all friends to the Movement from East to West, from North to South, to send in money immediately, as without such aid to carry on the business, the Movement will be crippled at the onset, and our best efforts frustrated for a time. *Signed* James Finlen, G. Harrison, Joseph Hogg, Abraham Robinson, James Williams and Ernest Jones Hon. Member.

To the friends of labour in the West. I have arranged to be in Worcester during Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday the 17<sup>th</sup>, 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup>. In Bridgwater the following Thursday, Friday and Saturday. On Monday the 24<sup>th</sup>, I am to be in Exeter. For eight days I shall be engaged in visiting in that district, besides various trades bodies and public meetings in the city – Crediton, Topsham, Exmouth, Christone, &c. On Wednesday, the 3<sup>rd</sup> of May, and the two following days I will be engaged in Torquay, in attending public meetings and organised bodies of working men. On Saturday, the 6<sup>th</sup>, I expect to be at Totnes. On Monday, the 8<sup>th</sup> and Tuesday the 9<sup>th</sup> at Plymouth. Wednesday the 10<sup>th</sup>, at Collumpton, Thursday the 11<sup>th</sup> at Tiverton. I fully expect to make arrangements for visiting, and if so, certainly of organising the agricultural districts of **Somerton, Keinton, Butleigh**, Yeovil, Castle Cary, **Street, Walton, Glastonbury, Shepton Mallet** and various other small and hitherto neglected places in Somersetshire. I am in communication with friends in some of these places. My arrangements with them are not yet completed, but I think that I may with safety set apart for them the days from the 12<sup>th</sup> to the 19<sup>th</sup> of May. [*Then to Bristol 20/22, Cheltenham 23/25 including Pershore, Snig's End and Dudley 26/28, Reading 29/30*]. J. Finlen.

London Committee in aid of the "People's Paper." Star Coffee House, Golden Lane, Barbican April 12<sup>th</sup>. Mr. Finlen read a mass of correspondence.

**April 22<sup>nd</sup>** 1854 *People's Paper* Ernest Jones of the London Committee in aid of the *PP* requests his adversaries to attend a public meeting on Tuesday evening May 16<sup>th</sup> - names them as Bronterre O'Brien, R. G. Gammage, G. W. M. Reynolds, George Julian Harney, William Newton, William Peel &c. List of funds received by James Finlen for the 'Lock-out' Fund. All letters for James Finlen are to be sent to the care of William Pyne, 4, Calver Place, Exe Street, Exeter.

**May 6<sup>th</sup>** 1854 *People's Paper* –We have received a charming letter from Mr. Finlen, descriptive of the places he has visited on his tour- historically and topographically; we hope to give it next week. Advertisement for the "*United Brothers' Industrial, Sick, Benefit, and Life Assurance Society*" Established by the Mass Movement. A meeting of shareholders was held at our offices 191, High Holborn, London on Monday last. 1<sup>st</sup> announcement - signed by Joseph Hogg, George Harrison, James Williams, Abraham Robinson and James Finlen - We guarantee Six Month's Full Benefit, and Six Months Half Benefit, alternately.

**May 6<sup>th</sup>** 1854 *Western Times*: TORQUAY - The Mass Movement – Mr. J. Finlen one of the "Executive" of the Labour Parliament lectured at the Temperance Hall on Wednesday and Thursday evenings. The audience was confined to the working classes. The results were not very great.

**May 13<sup>th</sup>** 1854 *People's Paper* Torquay – On Wednesday and Thursday evenings Mr. Finlen lectured at the Temperance Hall to Attentive but not very numerous audiences on the principle of the Mass Movement. At the close of the second lecture several members were enrolled. On Friday



5<sup>th</sup> inst Mr. Finlen addressed a meeting at St. Mary's Church. The audience was very fair, considering the size of the place. On Saturday, 6<sup>th</sup> inst. Mr. Finlen delivered a very interesting lecture at the Temperance Hall on Russia and Turkey; the audience was somewhat more numerous than on the preceding occasions.

**May 20<sup>th</sup>** 1854 *People's Paper* Plymouth – Mr. Finlen on Monday evening May 8<sup>th</sup> delivered a lecture of the Mass Movement in the Temperance Hall, Devonport. Mr. Finlen addressed the meeting for an hour and a half in a most eloquent speech. Cheers and approbation greeted Mr. Finlen throughout his address. On Tuesday Mr. Finlen again addressed a much more numerous meeting in Stonehouse. He said the failure of the Preston struggle showed that it was impossible to accomplish much by local organisation. As soon as the Mass Movement had funds they would commence practical operations – he defended the land scheme of Mr. Feargus O'Connor. He spoke for more than an hour most eloquently. [*This and later PP issues give James Finlen as a Provincial director of the United Brothers Industrial, sick, benefit and Fire and Life Assurance Company – 25,000 shares @ 5s per share with power to add their number*]

**June 17<sup>th</sup>** 1854 *People's Paper* A public meeting will be held on Sunday afternoon, June 18<sup>th</sup> in the Green Fields Pimlico to explain the principles of the Mass Movement as propounded by the Labour Parliament. Messrs James Finlen, Harrison and Hogg will attend and address the meeting. Advert 'A two acre farm to be disposed of, consisting of a three-roomed cottage, two acres of land enclosed within walls of brick and flint subject to a rent charge of £6 8s per year, more than half of which is obtained by letting two rooms of the cottage and a small piece of garden ground – O'Connorville, Herts. apply Mr. James Finlen 15, North Street Fitzroy Square, Mr. Thomas Ireland, 78, Mark Lane or to Mr. P. Ford, O'Connorville  
[First settlement part of Feargus O'Connor's land plan – he died in 1855 and the land was sold off]

**June 24<sup>th</sup>** 1854 *People's Paper* Chelsea Two public meetings were held in the open air, Green Fields, Chelsea. Attended by James Finlen.

**July 8<sup>th</sup>** 1854 *People's Paper* Shortly will appear a monthly magazine entitled "*The Spirit of Freedom*" edited by James Finlen and J. B. Leno. Price one penny. An oil portrait of Feargus O'Connor, Esq will be given to the writer of the best essay. Subject – "The Justice of the Charter." - all communications to Mr. Finlen.

**July and August** 1854 *People's Paper* – only small notices mentioning James Finlen, still in London. *The editor, Jones probably miffed that Finlen was bringing out his own newspaper.*

**August 12/19<sup>th</sup>** 1854 *People's Paper* Advert. No. 1 of the Spirit of Freedom, monthly magazine edited by James Finlen and J. B. Leno ready on Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> August for September 1<sup>st</sup>. Price 1d. Contents - Breaking the ice/Rambles in the West; Exeter and its neighbourhood/ The Revolution in Spain - Royal lechery, and popular indignation/ War-Traitors in Downing Street/ The Auto Biography of a shilling, an original tale by Multum in Parvo./Poetry - the Spirit of the Czar/ Ben Adhem and the Angel etc.

**September 2<sup>nd</sup>** 1854 *People's Paper* To The Members of the Mass Movement:

Dear Friends,—Some few weeks ago my resignation, as a member of the Executive Committee of the Mass Movement, would have been published in the "People's Paper" but for one thing, viz., the existence of a debt which has been contracted in your names..

I hold that so long as there is anything owing to any one by us, we have no right to disband ourselves as a Committee, nor to sanction or bring about the dissolution of the Association, We are seeking justice for ourselves collectively—we are prone and eager to upbraid the authors of injustice—while we do so, let us avoid, if possible, being guilty of it, We owe money for work we have had done—while we continue to do so without making an effort to pay it, we will bear, one and all of us, the character of cheats.

If the Executive is broken up, there will be no head for the members of the Movement to look to, and no authority to make any claim upon them for the money required, so I shall not resign my office until I have done my work; for if, as the officer of a new Movement, I have failed, in connection with my colleagues, in procuring for my fellows the benefits I have sought, I shall certainly not be instrumental, if I can help it, in injuring those who have been kind enough to assist us in our labours by their credit.

The proper period of our office now depends upon your decision. If you are active in contributing the necessary amount of money, we can retire within a week—if not, we must wait your pleasure. But do let us acquit ourselves honourably in this affair without any further delay.

Perhaps I would not have mentioned this now, if it had not been for the untimely resignation of one of my colleagues. I am fearful if it passed unnoticed that his bad example would be imitated by others, and that the members generally would, in consequence, consider themselves freed from all responsibility.

Yours fraternally, James Finlen.

The London Committee in aid of the *People's Paper*. There was a very high attendance. Mr. Bligh in the chair. Unanimously resolved on the motion of James Finlen, seconded by George Brown:- "That this committee use their best exertions towards raising the sum of £200, for the purpose of reducing the price of the "People's Paper" to 3½d."

**September 9<sup>th</sup>** 1854 *People's Paper* Green Fields Pimlico September. 3<sup>rd</sup>. The meeting was addressed by Messrs. James Finlen, Bligh and Workman. Mr. Finlen in his usual eloquent and masterly style, explained the advantages to be derived by the enactment of the People's Charter.

**September 11<sup>th</sup>** 1854 *Northern Daily Times* – Chartist demonstration – Yesterday afternoon the Chartists of Lancashire and Yorkshire had a meeting on Blackstone-edge Moor, for the purpose of urging the formation of local societies for the advancement of Chartism throughout the country. Placards had been extensively posted in the various towns in Lancashire and Yorkshire announcing that Mr. Ernest Jones of London, editor of the *People's Paper*; Mr. J. Finlon (sic!) of London, editor of the *Spirit of Freedom*, and other gentlemen would address the audience. After announcing the various speakers, the placard terminated as follows; "Liberty is the child of oppression, and the birth of the offspring become the death of the parent. Men of Lancashire! Men of Yorkshire! Let us be the glorious task to lead the van like true soldiers of democracy....." also in the Manchester Times on 13<sup>th</sup>, Halifax Guardian and the Huddersfield Chronicle, Halifax Courier and others on the 16<sup>th</sup>.

**September 23<sup>rd</sup>** 1854 *People's Paper* A prize essay on the charter "The Justice of the Charter," by Mr. John Scott of Kingtown, near Carlisle will appear in issue No. 2 of "The Spirit of Freedom" on September 28 for 1 October.

**September 30<sup>th</sup>** 1854 *People's Paper* 'The Spirit of Freedom' In consequence of numerous applications for No. 1 - it has been reprinted.

**October 7<sup>th</sup>** 1854 *People's Paper* Green Fields, Pimlico – The last open air meeting of the season will take place Sunday October 8<sup>th</sup> in the morning at a quarter to eleven. Messrs. J. Finlen, Nash and Bligh will attend, and Ernest Jones. Ready form October No. 2 of "*The Spirit of Freedom*".

**October 14<sup>th</sup>** 1854 *People's Paper* On Sunday Morning October 15<sup>th</sup> the mission will commence their in-door meetings for the winter season at the large hall, known as the Albert Assembly Rooms, 99, York Street, Westminster, on which occasion Mr. James Finlen will lecture at a quarter to eleven, a.m. No charge for admission.

**October 21<sup>st</sup>** 1854 *People's Paper* - [on the 15<sup>th</sup>] Mr. James Finlen gave the first part of a most animated and soul stirring lecture on the war in the East, the second part being given at the evening meeting, in which the lecturer showed, in glowing colours, the disastrous or successful effect the Eastern struggle would have on British democracy, in proportion to the part which the people may

feel disposed to take in their own affairs, and that on them depend the good or evil results. On Sunday evening next October. 22<sup>nd</sup> at 7 o'clock Mr. Finlen will lecture on "Ireland, her history, Efforts and Patriots" and again on the 29<sup>th</sup>. -

Supper in honour of Mr. Thomas Antill. On Tuesday evening in the large room at the Bell Tavern, Holborn – "Songs and recitations enlivened the proceedings; and we must not omit to mention Mr. Lombard's inimitable performance on the concertina, a fine recitation by Mr. James Finlen, and a song by Mr. Leno, author of 'Herne's Oak.'"

Committee for the reception of [Armand] Barbès in England – [Barbès was a Republican anti-monarchist – pardoned in 1854 by Napoleon III.] The committee was founded upon Jones' initiative as part of the protest against an expected visit by Napoleon to England. James Finlen was elected as the treasurer of the Committee.

**October 28<sup>th</sup>** 1854 *People's Paper* Bell Tavern, Newton-street, Holborn Tuesday October 24<sup>th</sup> Banquet to be arranged in honour of Barbès and to invite him to Britain. Now called the Welcome and Protest Committee for the reception of Barbès in London. – James Finlen and others appointed to make the arrangements.

Albert Assembly Rooms, 99, York Street - On Sunday evening Mr. James Finlen gave a highly interesting lecture on Ireland, her history, efforts, and patriotism, which was received with bursts of applause.

[Ernest Jones to correspondents:] We have received fourpence for Nos. 1 and 2 of the "Spirit of Freedom." We will, when we see Mr. Finlen, give him the same; but we wish all our readers to understand that we can undertake to forward no paper or periodical, except this journal - we have neither time nor opportunity to do so.

**November 4<sup>th</sup>** 1854 *People's Paper* Highbury Barn engaged for the Barbès banquet, tickets 3s 6d and address supporting Barbès written by Ernest Jones.

Welcome and Protest Committee for the Reception of Barbès in London - Bell tavern, Newton-street, Holborn, Sunday - Resolved on the motion of James Finlen (*Treasurer*) and [Richard Wood, that, because of the rapid and constant accession of fresh members, the time for payment, by the committee, of the amount of money guaranteed by each member, be next Tuesday three weeks. Resolved that parties who pay into the committee by contributions or otherwise, sufficient money to pay for a ticket to the banquet, shall have one presented.

Finlen's lecture on 5<sup>th</sup> at the Albert Assembly Rooms on "Ireland, her history etc." [also reported **November 11<sup>th</sup>** to a numerous and delighted audience, finishing his subject of "Ireland her History, Efforts and Patriots", touching most pathetically on her present most unhappy position, blended with an ardent hope for her better future.]

**November 25<sup>th</sup>** 1854 *People's Paper* Albert Assembly Rooms November 26<sup>th</sup> James Finlan's lectures "Politics, Women, and Poets"; December 3<sup>rd</sup> "Louis Napoleon, considered as a nephew, and Adventurer and a Prisoner, as a Fugitive, a Blackleg and a Social Constable, as a President, a Perjurer and a Murderer, as an Ally, a Guest and an instance of the extent to which Successful Crime may be popularised;" December 10<sup>th</sup>, "Life, Trial and Death of Robert Emmet." Letter to the Barbès Committee from *Victor Hugo*.

**December 2<sup>nd</sup>** 1854 *People's Paper* Advert for *The Spirit of Freedom*" No. 4 for December, including "An Original Life of Barbès." 20 pages for a penny - the only Chartist Magazine in existence. Edited by James Finlen and J. B. Leno.

Public Meeting on Monday Evening December 4<sup>th</sup> at the Hall of Science, City Road on the Anniversary of Napoleon's Perjury and Assassinations - Men of London attend and Protest! [James Finlen Treasurer].

**December 9<sup>th</sup> 1854** *People's Paper* Bell Tavern refuses entry to the Barbès Committee and they move to the York-street Assembly rooms where Finlen was giving his 'powerful and animated' lecture on Napoleon III.

Mr. James Bligh then moved the second resolution:- "That the English nation desires to ally itself with the oppressed nationalities of Poland, Hungary, and Italy; scorning to grasp with apparent friendship the treacherous hand of perfidious Austria, or that of the murderer of the Boulevards".

Mr. James Finlen, who was received with loud applause, seconded the resolution, and said, "We shall, Mr. Chairman, you and I, and all of us here to night, be accused of being in the pay of Russia. The Czar must be amazingly rich, Sir, if he can afford to set aside so large a number of people, as have met here upon this occasion to enter their sober protest against the doings of an imperial miscreant; and there are those abroad, sir, in the provinces of England, and the suburbs of this, its Metropolis, who join with us in our work—our noble work—of reprehension, whom he will have to be made vote in the self same way. It is with me a matter of doubt, sceptical as I may prove myself to be, whether being in the pay of the Emperor of Russia is more disreputable than being in the pay of Louis Napoleon. But we can dare to do without either of them. Our work is not done for gain, it is engaged in for truth, for the sake of right, for the triumphs of justice, therefore we fear no falsehood, and can afford to commiserate its authors. If it was right three years ago to speak the truth of Louis Napoleon, it is, I apprehend, right to do so tonight: Truth is eternal, and that which was true upon the fourth of December, 1851, possesses the same great quality now upon the fourth of December, 1854. I will read to you a passage from a history of the half century, which is now being published. It is written by one who has endeavoured to be liberal as a historian, and who has in some instances succeeded. He is a person, I believe, prominently connected with a religious sect, and therefore one who is supposed to speak the truth. Listen! "On the morning of Tuesday, the 2<sup>nd</sup> of December, the Parisians awoke to find their city in a state of siege—the political and military chiefs of all parties, to the number of 70 persons arrested, the journals forbidden to issue, and an appeal to the people proclaimed. The Assembly, attempting to constitute itself, was forcibly dissolved, and two hundred of its members marched off to the barracks, thence to be distributed among the prisons of the city. The high court of justice, likewise, attempting to exercise its functions, and in the act of pronouncing the President a Traitor was broken up. The next morning symptoms of resistance were visible. The workmen of the Faubourg St. Antoine seemed resolved to maintain the prescriptive frontiers of the locality. But the few barricades raised were instantly demolished, and immense bodies of troops swept through the streets. On Thursday, a massacre was made on the Boulevards that will ever rank that day with the anniversaries of infamous deeds. According to a multitude of concurring and independent witnesses, a fire of musketry and cannon was suddenly commenced at noonday, by an immense body of troops, at whom not a single shot had been discharged, whose path not a hillock of stones obstructed, but whose march through the gay and busy thoroughfare, stretching from the Rue de Richelieu to the Port St. Martin, was merely looked upon from the windows and pavements as a harmless though significant spectacle. Of course the footways and doorsteps were quickly encumbered with the bodies of those who had fallen; men, women, and children stumbled over each other in their heedless flight, and were pierced by bullet or bayonet where they lay! We have all, very naturally, been shocked and disgusted by the manner—the brutal manner—the Russians treat our wounded countrymen in the Crimea;— murdering them as they lay helpless on the ground. Can we be less so when we read such a narrative as this,— when we know that not only inoffensive men, but panic-stricken, defenceless, tender women, and innocent children, as they crouched prostrate beneath their terror, were murdered in cold blood by the bloody agents of that cruel man, and at his instigations, who is now—and I blush to say it—our "friendly ally?" History must do its duty by him. Listen again: "Shop-fronts were beaten in by cannon-balls, and stray shots penetrated to the back-rooms of upper floors. Blood lay in hollows round the trees even till the next morning. The wounded crawled painfully to hiding places, and missing relatives or friends were timidly sought amid the hideous rows of corpses exposed for recognition,"

Lists and calculations, that have never been invalidated, reckon the victims of this day of terror at 1,200; and from authority that cannot be impugned, we know that the soldiers had been stimulated with money and drink." Here then, we have, corroborated all that the leaders of British democracy have said and written of Louis Napoleon. In this country its rulers think fit to hang Murderers, such as Rush, Greenacre, and Pegsworth, but they are not authorised to visit, and associate with the greatest criminal of modern time; while they court his person and assistance, we will gibbet his deeds and memory. His admirers say that he wishes to imitate his uncle. He more than imitates him in his parleys, but he is a beggar compared with him in his virtue. His uncle was a soldier. He is an assassin. His uncle reigned because the nation willed it; he reigns because a drunken army willed it. I have hopes of France. She is scarcely convalescent yet. Her scars, which Napoleon made, are not yet healed. The blood of her chivalry has hardly recovered from that chill occasioned by the 2<sup>nd</sup> of December, when hope, the mercury of life, went universally down to Zero; but the fire of war will thaw that blood, and France in health and vigour may ere long strike for right. Some of her best sons are amongst us here. Barbès, whose likenesses is before you, will be with us ere long. The British Isles, like modern oaks, float from out the deluge of French despotism the elite of that nations patriotism. Let them not be sullied, men of England! by the presence of that country's scourge. (Loud cheering accompanied and followed Mr. Finlen's speech.)

Mr. Leno moved, and Mr. Slocombe seconded the third resolution, which, like the preceding, was carried with acclamation:—"That a government acting against the expressed wish of the nation, and contrary to its best interests, should be impeached as traitors to their fatherland, and this meeting herewith advises the impeachment of the present administration."

The members of the Committee were then submitted for approbation to the meeting, and the entire Committee was recognised and sanctioned amid enthusiastic applause.

Part Column on 'this admirable magazine "The Spirit of Freedom" with extract on "The thieves of London."

The Spirit of Freedom. Pt. 4, price One Penny, December.

This admirable Magazine abounds with more than merely interesting matter this month. The life of Socrates is concluded, that of Barbès begins. From a romance eloquently illustrative of our social state, and entitled "The Autobiography of a Shilling," we extract the following insight into the doings of "THE THIEVES OF LONDON."

The tale had scarcely passed from the lips of the teller, when the party assembled, (a number of shillings in a person's pocket) were surprised by the sudden introduction of a human hand, the thin tapering fingers of which caught a delicate hold of the merchant's purse. "We are now the property of a thief," said the narrator of the tale—"and one who has no doubt served his full time at the profession."

"But surely you are not in earnest. There are thieves, I know, and many; but they are not taught thieving."

"More than any other profession," he replied. "I scarcely know what is not thieving. What is diplomacy and law but roguery, preaching but cheating, and trade a swindle!—There are two branches to the profession, consisting of those born and those forced to it—one working for the rich and influential of the more aristocratic regions, and the other for the Jews of Houndsditch. (*Sic!*) Law, does not define right from wrong. Lawyers have been established merely to see that the business done by the Houndsditch Jew does not interfere with the more legitimate branch of the profession."

The thief entered a low and disreputable looking tavern, and passing through the bar to a small and dingy parlor, well screened from observation—he entertained the party assembled with a sight of the purse, through the meshes of which I could see them elated with his success. Their language was so inundated with strange idioms that it is impossible to recount their conversation, but it seemed highly flattering to the stylishly dressed rogue and their admiration was unbounded.

I marvelled that they should partake of the proceeds of infamy, but the Old Shilling who had made himself so communicative said "that he had seen members of the more aristocratic class chuckle over a robbery, committed upon the poorest—a robbery more barefaced and less justifiable."

"Men boast of murder," he continued, where they have passed their initiation, and the greater hero is he whose crimes are the more atrocious and the more numerous: lesser villains listen to him with reverence, and would fain outshine him. It matters little in what a man is great among mankind so long as he is great. More men have boasted of the friendship of a Calcraft than in that of a Howard!

The conductors of this useful little work make the following statement to their readers. We hope the call will be responded to:

To carry on this Journal with effect and vigour we find it necessary to increase the number of Shareholders. This we have determined to do under the following arrangements :— The Shares to be increased to 200 in number, at 2s 6d, per Share, No person to hold more than 20 Shares. Profits and losses to be divided equally. Shares to be paid up by December the 20<sup>th</sup> for which Scrip will be issued. Quarterly accounts of receipts and expenditure. Editorial services gratuitous. Each shareholder getting ten subscribers will ensure the journal against any loss. All orders to be made payable to Mr. James Finlen, 15, North Street, at the Post Office Tottenham-court-road.

**December 16<sup>th</sup>** 1854 *People's Paper* Delegates of various foreign societies joined the Welcome and Protest Committee, and declared that its principal aims were: "The demonstration of welcome to the exiles of France and fraternisation with the Democracy of the Continent, in opposition to the league of kings." Letter received from Victor Hugo expressing his readiness to visit England and attend. The W&PC will meet on Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> at the Lamb Inn, New Turnstile Street, Holborn.

**December 23<sup>rd</sup>** 1854 *People's Paper* Napoleon and the English People – Great Meeting in London [on the anniversary of the Parisian Massacres]. Speech by Finlen anti-Napoleon and pro-Barbès. Reception of Barbès in London - A numerous meeting assembled at the Lamb Inn, New Turnstile, Holborn, on Sunday Evening last. After a long discussion, in which Messrs. Finlen, Slocombe, Antill and the committee took part, it was resolved, on the motion of Messrs Finlen and Slocombe that the committee should draw up a correct report of the expenses of fitting up and opening the hall, and that one hundred shareholders, of 1/- each, should immediately be canvassed for. The

report of the Organisation Committee was brought up by Messrs Slocombe and G. Brown. Upon the motion of Messrs. Finlen and Jefferies the report was received.

The Ministry and our Allies - Public meeting held at the Literary Institute, John Street, Tottenham Court Road - Mr. Henrietta moved and Mr. J. D. Leno seconded the following motion:- "That in the opinion of this meeting the alliance with Louis Napoleon is detrimental to the honour and interest of the people of Great Britain." Mr. Ernest Jones moved and Mr. James Finlen seconded the following motion:- "That in the opinion of this meeting, the Ministry have entered into a conspiracy with the enemies of freedom to crush all attempts on the part of the people of Europe to break down the tyranny of their rulers, and, having sacrificed our brave fellow-countrymen in the Crimea to uphold the present monarchical institution of the continent, we therefore for these reasons demand their impeachment."

THE COMMITTEE OF THE LITERARY INSTITUTION, JOHN-STREET, TOTTENHAM-COURT-ROAD. At the meeting on Tuesday last, in a most eloquent speech, Mr. James Finlen made the following exposure of the gross misconduct of the Committee of the John-street Institution, to which we feel bound to give publicity, and trust every reader will do the same, Mr. James Finlen said:—

"There is another question of very great importance, to every true Reformer in London at least, to which I will refer in the briefest manner possible. You are now in the Literary and Scientific Institution, John-street. You, I have no doubt, suppose it to be the rendezvous for the true hearted, enlightened, and liberal working men of London. If you are, you are mistaken, for the creatures who have power in it are the most illiberal and intolerant that are to be found in the metropolis, and consequently the place is avoided by well-disposed people. The Atheists of the place have done all they could to frustrate the praiseworthy designs of the politicians of the towns. The bills announcing this meeting have been burked by them; they have actually taken them from the places where all bills have a right to be that announce anything in connection with this Institution—and in places where they have exhibited bills announcing free-and-easys, which were to be supported by the scourgings of the cock and hen clubs of the metropolis—such things they tolerate and favour, but political matters, plain, outspoken, plucky English truths are their aversion. I tell you what, friends, and mind I don't speak at random, for I know them—the mongrel, god-hating, devil-loving rulers of this place are the most rank curs and time-serving toadies that any honest man has ever had the bad fortune to come in contact with. I see that some of them are present. I challenge them to gainsay a syllable of what I utter. I speak what I mean—what I know to be true—what I can substantiate to the letter; there is no mistake about it. Why, what do you think they have done lately? They have opposed, and, I am afraid, successfully, Mr. Ernest Jones, the man who has spoken like a sage and prophetic orator here but now, appearing as a lecturer upon this platform on Sunday evenings. And what do you think one of their reasons is? THAT HE IS A FELON! Mark how they follow up the prosecution which the Whigs commenced! Mr. Jones, for the cause of the people—for the sake of right, in obedience to a chivalrous regard for the interests of humanity, suffered, at the hands of the Whigs, two years' imprisonment. This is not enough for these gentlemen of free thought and free enquiry but they must put an eternal bar upon him, and look upon that as a crime which all good men acknowledge to be an honour.

Mind, there are exceptions to be made - there are some good men amongst them. I will name them: they are **George Hoppey**, John Reid, Edward Sibley, and William Thrower. But, take them as a body, they form an obstacle upon the pathway of progress, and they must be removed, they must be disbanded and completely dissipated as a body. This is part of the work for the pioneers of Metropolitan Democracy to do. I as an humble individual have determined to do my share of it. Counterfeits must never flourish at the expense of truth and liberty. Another hall must be got. I know that a fine large one capable of holding 1,500 persons is likely to be taken soon, it is not ten minutes walk from this one; I think that I may with safety say, that it will be taken and opened for public business, in about two months time. My advice is to you here tonight, don't enter this place again; hundreds of the Democrats of London have long set their faces against it: you do the same from this night; don't, don't sanction by your presence or your pence, a party so opposed to every atom of popular right as the one to which I have been obliged, for the sake of justice, to allude. We must free our own camp of traitors, we must have harmony in hope and unity in actions in it, before we can well march out to meet the common foe. I then, not only with energy, urge the impeachment of those connected with the electoral system, but I demand, from the Democrats of London, a censure upon the clique now spoiling this valuable Institution."

**December 30<sup>th</sup> 1854** *People's Paper* The "*Spirit of Freedom*" In consequence of the numerous letters we are continually receiving, complaining of the difficulty of getting this journal through the ordinary channel, we beg to inform all who experience such difficulty that we are prepared to send them through the post, at the following rate:- 30 copies, 1s 6d; postage, 6d - at this rate 6d would

still be saved on the retail price. The whole of the back numbers are in print, and may be had assorted. A less number may be had (the postage remaining the same) at the rate of 8d per dozen. Orders must be sent as early as possible in the month remitting the amount in postage stamps - Address: Mr. James Finlen, North-street, Fitzroy-square. NO. 5 WILL BE READY BY THE 1ST OF JANUARY. Parties desirous of taking shares in this Journal are requested to write early. Shares 2s 6d each. May be paid by instalments. PAVEY, Holywell-street, and all agents of the People's Paper. [*signs that the Journal is struggling*]

WANTED, TWO HUNDRED SHAREHOLDERS, for THE HALL FOR ALL!

Shares, 10s. each. Deposit, 2s. 6d. Weekly Payments on each Share, until paid up, 6d.

THE FRIENDS OF PROGRESS IN LONDON

are informed that the members of the Welcome and Protest Committee are desirous of procuring in London a HALL capable of meeting the wants of the People, who are now unable to engage any hall which is possessed by parties at all favourable to their views of reform.

It is intended by the promoters, that the Institution shall be used for the purpose of advancing every principle, political and social, which has been espoused by all advanced reformers.

It is proposed that the directors of the Institution shall be elected, by ballot, by every member and shareholder of the Institution, for six months; but that they shall be eligible for re-election.

Any number of shares can be held by one person, but not more than one vote upon any one question.

Lectures upon popular and instructive questions are to be delivered every Sunday evening, by lecturers appointed by the directors.

The Hall of the Institution may be used during the week for Public Meetings, Trades' Meetings, Temperance Meetings, Lectures, and other elevating purposes. Classes for mutual instruction in Grammar, Languages, Rhetoric, Music, Drawing, &c., to be held during the evenings in the week in the ante-rooms of the Institution.

\*.\* The Committee apprise the Public that they are now about taking a spacious Building, upon a lease of 21 years, which has attached to it a Hall capable of holding 1,500 persons. - They are desirous, if it is taken, that it may be ready for public use on February 22<sup>nd</sup>, that they may celebrate by a PUBLIC SOIREE,

THE FRENCH REVOLUTION OF FEBRUARY, 1848;

So all parties are urgently solicited to take up the number of Shares required without delay.

Signed on behalf of the Committee,

William Slocombe, Robert Cumming, Thomas Antill, J. B. Leno, James E. Moring, R. V. Wood,

George Browns, James Finlen.

Further particulars may be obtained by applying to the Committee on Sunday evenings; or to Mr. J. E. Moring, 31, Camomile-street, City.

Finlen was still working for the committee trying to support the "People's Paper" through the "Two Hundred Pounds Fund" and passed on 2s 6d donated by a 'Sea Captain'.

**1854** *The Reasoner - Gazette of Secularism* ed. George Jacob Holyoake. Vol. XVII - p. 163 *The Spirit of Freedom*, edited by J. Finlen and J. B. Leno cannot be expected greatly to resemble the above Journals (*The Political Examiner* and the *Englishman*). These latter editors belong to a school which counts moderation (the golden word in politics) as synonymous with treachery. Yet their paper is a great deal quieter than anything we have seen of Mr. Finlen's before. He even praises the men of Exeter for 'straightforward *civil* independence.' This is the right sort of independence that makes true way - but we should have expected Mr. Finlen to denounce a civil politician as a parasite. *The Spirit of Freedom* adopts an old and fatal maxim for English politicians - viz., 'Only by making the ruling few uneasy, can the oppressed many obtain a particle of relief.'

## 1855

**January 6<sup>th</sup>** 1855 *People's Paper* Brickfield - A meeting of the members of this locality took place Sunday the 24<sup>th</sup> of December 1854, at the Duke of Norfolk; Mr. Jacob Hawcard in the chair. Moved by Mr. James Holt, and seconded by Mr. John Fielding, that a vote of thanks be given Mr. James Finlen for his noble and gallant conduct in exposing the vile conduct of the men belonging to the Literary Institute, John-street, as practised towards Mr. Ernest Jones.

The "*Spirit of Freedom*" No. 5 ready by 1<sup>st</sup> Jan.

Re-Organisation and Permanence of the Welcome and Protest Committee – (officers James Finlen, Ernest Jones and W. Slocombe) – banquet in honour of the Proscribed of all Nations should be held on February 22<sup>nd</sup> the 7<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the 1848 French Revolution.

**January 13<sup>th</sup> 1855 *People's Paper* FORTHCOMING MEETINGS.**

**MR. JAMES FINLEN'S TOUR.**

TO THE CHARTISTS.

FRIENDS! I am desirous you should know that I am prepared to visit any locality in any part of England, Scotland, Ireland, and Wales, whenever I may be required to do so, for the purpose of aiding the organisation for the Charter.

If you can make arrangements for me to enter upon an extensive tour, I shall hold myself in readiness to commence it upon any day between this and the 19<sup>th</sup> of February. So there is plenty of time for you to think it over and decide.

I have already arranged to visit Halifax, Leeds, Staleybridge, and Shelton. I prefer commencing my tour in either Coventry, Birmingham, Bedford, Lincoln, Northampton, or Nottingham, and thence to proceed northward.

If I enter upon it—and it remains with yourselves—I shall require to have an interview with the Chartists of each town I visit, either upon a night set apart for the purpose, or two hours or so before the commencement of the meeting. This is very necessary, as I shall have to introduce to them questions of much importance. I wish you all to understand that I prefer delivering more than one discourse in a town; a series of meetings in each place is always of most advantage to us, for then the public mind become familiar with what we mean. This, of course, will depend entirely upon your respective means.

There is no occasion for me, I think, to advance reasons in favour of a missionary going amongst the people at the present time, for all of you are observers; you know what is taking place, and what is likely to take place; you know also that as a body, although the strongest in existence, we are not by any means strong enough; my duty, and consequently my desire, is, to strengthen it—yours, I apprehend, is the same.

By writing to me you will learn more particulars, and also the questions upon which I wish to talk.

If I am to visit you, do not delay in making the-necessary arrangements, for it will be much more difficult to leave London after the time stated, than before. Yours, fraternally,

James. Finlen, 15, North Street, Fitzroy Square, London

Wanted, Two Hundred Shareholders for the Hall for All! The Friends of Progress in London are informed that the members of the Welcome and Protest Committee are desirous of procuring in London a Hall capable of meeting the wants of the People... The Committee (including Finlen) apprise the public that they are now about taking a spacious building upon a lease of 21 years...if taken, it may be ready for Public Soiree on Feb 22<sup>nd</sup> to celebrate the French Revolution of 1848.

**January 20<sup>th</sup> 1855 *People's Paper* WELCOME AND PROTEST COMMITTEE.**

IMPORTANT MEETING. On Sunday, January 14, the members of this Committee (*inc. Finlen*) met in large numbers. The Committee, which exists for the purpose of procuring large hall in London, gave in a very favourable account of their progress.

A deputation from the French refugees attended to inquire whether the Committee would admit five of their body to act in co-operation with them in getting up the proper demonstration upon the 22<sup>nd</sup> of February.

It was unanimously resolved that the delegates appointed by the refugees be requested to join the Committee next Sunday evening. All persons are specially invited to attend to the notices of the next two meetings of this Committee, as advertised in the *People's Paper* [on our Leader page].

FORTHCOMING MEETINGS. NEWCASTLE-UPON-TYNE.

JUSTICE TO THE SOLDIER.

Chartist Institute, 11, Nun Street—On Sunday evening, the 14<sup>th</sup> of January, there was a discussion on the life and character of Robespierre. After an animated evening, it was adjourned to next Sunday evening, to be opened by Mr. Gammage. The Committee of the Chartist Association is preparing to get up a public meeting, to take into consideration the army taken from the article in the *People's Paper*. Resolved, that the Committee collect all subscriptions they can to defray the expenses of the meeting; that the Secretary write to Mr. James Finlen in reference to a visit to Newcastle. Other localities in the district would do well to avail themselves of Mr. Finlen's visit, as the expenses would be light if a few localities took it in hand to bear the expenses amongst them.—John Brown, Secretary.

**January 27<sup>th</sup> 1855 *People's Paper* Sunderland** – meeting “to prepare for a lecture from Mr. Finlen on the six points of military reform suggested in the *People's Paper* of the 13<sup>th</sup> inst.



The friends and Readers of the People's Paper are earnestly requested to attend at the house of Edward Irvin, to take into consideration the propriety of engaging the services of James Finlen upon Justice to the Army and also Chartism. A report will be read from Newcastle on the probable expenses connected therewith – Thos. Thompson.

**February 3<sup>rd</sup> 1855** *People's Paper* Coxhoe [Durham] – The committee met – Mr. Farnish in the chair – when the secretary read Mr. Brown's letter from Newcastle. Moved by Mr. Burdess, seconded by Mr. Bryden, that we have Mr. Finlen two nights at Coxhoe, and any locality that cannot engage Mr. Finlen will please to send a deputation as Mr. Finlen has something particular to communicate to the young guards of this county. Mr. Finlen will one night be requested to take part in the public meeting on behalf of the Army and Navy Charter. ...business of great importance will be put forward. [Letter included from Mr. John Brown of Newcastle-upon-Tyne from the Chartist Institute] + Sunderland invitation.

#### WELCOME AND PROTEST COMMITTEE

The sub-committee met, pursuing to announcement, on Thursday, January 25. In the absence of Ernest Jones, Mr. Steacher (a German) was called to the chair.

Resolved, that the name of the sub-committee be, for the present, the "INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE." A deputation from German exiles attended and was accepted on the committee. Mr. Bleay was elected to act as German secretary. Mr. Herzen (a Russian exile) volunteered to sit with the committee. Accepted. It is particularly requested that the committee meet punctually at eight o'clock on Thursday evening next.—R. Chapman, Secretary.

On Sunday evening there was a large attendance of the general committee at the Lamb Inn. Important business relative to the new Hall was transacted. The report of the International Committee was brought forward and accepted. A recommendation was carried that the banquet be held on Monday, February 26th, and the following motions and amendments were made :—

Motion by Mr. Slocombe: That the amended programme of organisation be adopted.

Amendment by Ernest Jones: That the original programme, as prepared by the Programme Committee, be adopted.

Rider by Mr. Moring: That the organisation be postponed till the first meeting after the banquet.

2nd rider by Mr. Finlen: That a new programme be adopted. Mr. Finlen expressed himself in favour of reconstructing the Metropolitan Delegate Council. Mr. Moring withdrew his rider in favour of Mr. Finlen. All discussion on the various motions was postponed until Sunday next (to-morrow).

Our readers will perceive the great importance of the vote that is to be taken. The foundation of a great metropolitan organisation is to be laid—an organisation starting under more favourable auspices than any before known, and an organisation having a new element, that of an international union of the democracy of England with that of continental Europe. The whole question turns on these two points: shall a new association be formed, or our glorious old movement be rallied under a renewed and vigorous organisation? We say the latter. No new moves, splitting us up into sections. Again, shall it be purely and selfishly English? or shall it be so constructed, as to fraternise with the democracy of other nations? and thus array the league of Peoples against the conspiracy of Kings? We say the latter; and on the vote adopted on Sunday evening next will depend the issue. The question to be solved is this: Can the original programme, the amended programme, or Mr. Finlen's motion, best secure the great object in view?

**February 10<sup>th</sup> 1855** *People's Paper* No. 6 of Spirit of Freedom now ready. Contents: The French Loan, and popularity of a Rogue - The autobiography of a shilling - Life Assurance - Capital punishments - Cotton Bales or Cannon Balls - Correspondence - The Labour League - Poems by Ernest Jones, Thomas Cooper, Gerald Massey and J. B. Leno.

Newcastle-upon-Tyne – Mr. Finlen booked for Cornforth (2 Lectures), Sunderland (2) and Newcastle (3). Finlen due at Coxhoe on 11<sup>th</sup> inst at 17, Long-row.

#### THE ALLIANCE OF THE PEOPLES. THE INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE.

This committee, appointed by the "Welcome and Protest Committee," met on Thursday evening (last week) Ernest Jones in the chair. A letter of thanks for his admission, from A. Herzen, the Russian exile, was read.

The Germans,—A committee of five—from the German emigrants attended, and took their seats as members of the International Committee.

The Spaniards.—A delegate from the Spaniards took his seat.

The Italians.—A special meeting of the committee was called for Tuesday evening, to receive a delegation of five from the Italian exiles, who would attend on that night.

The Poles.—it was announced that a meeting of the Poles would take place on Wednesday night, to elect their legates.

Arrangements for the great banquet was actively proceeded with. It was resolved that the Committee meetings should be held on Tuesday evenings, instead of Thursdays.

LONDON ORGANISATION COMMITTEE.

On Sunday, pursuant to notice, the "Welcome Protest Committee" met at the Lamb Inn, Holborn, for the purpose of finally considering the programme for its permanent organisation. There was a very large audience.— Mr. George Harrison in the chair.

On Mr. Finlen's motion, the committee resolved itself into a committee of the whole house.

Mr. William Slocombe moved the adoption of the amended programme; and, in most able speech, observed that the original programme brought up by himself, Mr. Brown, and Mr. Ernest Jones, was neither one thing nor the other; it made them neither a part of the National Charter Association, nor did it properly create a new association. It was a new move, against which Mr. Jones had always so much struggled, without the advantages of a regular association. It was, moreover, incomplete, because it provided banners without cards, an executive without a name, and payment without receipts.

The motion was seconded by Mr. Leno, who remarked strongly on Mr. Jones' sending in his resignation because the amended programme was, according to him (Mr. J.) a new move, calling on the latter to show wherein the original programme differed so from the amended one, that Mr. Jones could withdraw from the one as hostile to the Charter, and support the other as favourable to it.

Ernest Jones moved, and Mr. Moring seconded as an amendment, the adoption of the programme as originally drawn up by himself, Mr. Slocombe, and Mr. Brown.

Mr. James Finlen moved the following rider: "That we have nothing to do with either programme. That as we cannot properly designate ourselves a delegate council, not having been duly appointed as representatives, we here undertake to form ourselves into, and adopt as our name the "London Auxiliary Committee of the National Charter Association," and that we have as our objects the forming of localities in connexion with the Association, the convening of public meetings to promote, and the providing of lecturers to explain, its objects." He said: I object to both programmes. Why shall I urge this? Because I do not want to sail under false colours, I dislike expediency. If a proposition is a Chartist one, let it be called so; if it is not, let us know, by its proper name, what it really is. There is nothing to be ashamed of in the National Charter Association A man, when he becomes a rogue, gets rid of the name, and is ashamed of it, by which he was known. Our association has never been disgraced, therefore there is no occasion to obscure its name. My proposition pledges you to the immediate support of the Association, without any mistake whatever. The other propositions, I submit, do not; they partake, both of them, of the character of new associations. Let us examine them. In the first place, they do not mention the National Charter Association; in the next place, they provide for the formation of a general committee, and of branch committees. They provide also for "distinctive banners," for distinctive payments by distinctive members, for distinctive meeting places and also for a general enrolment "under the banner of European Republican Democracy." One of them, the amended one, which is undoubtedly the best of the two proposes to furnish members with cards of membership. Well, then, what, through such features, are their tendencies? Why, in the first place, there is betrayed a disposition to shirk the name of our memorable Association; in the next place, there is, by the proposed formation of branches which have a centre, which is now the National Charter Association, but which is called by one programme the "General Organisation Committee," and by the other the "London Central Democratic Association," the introduction of an element which, to all intents and purposes gives to the undertaking the air and the character of a completely new enterprise. Then comes the show, the paraphernalia, in the shape of banners; then the levy for the payment of such sums as our old organisation does not recognise; then the several meeting-places of the members which are to be converted by them into reading-rooms, libraries, &c.; and then that which is most foreign to our old plans and regulations, the mustering "under the banner of the European Republican Democracy" whomsoever we can. Now, then, things, so far as they go, tend to prove to my mind that their supporters are dissatisfied with the National Charter Association, and that they are bent upon having a new association, They have a perfect right to be dissatisfied with it, certainly, if they please, but they have no right to suppose that I and others are such fools as to be dragged by them from the course which it has been our duty to pursue, into their course, under the representations that they are precisely similar. Not by any means. I will have nothing to do with their programmes. I have yet found nothing superior to the plan of organisation which we have been acting upon for years past. It is as perfect as mortals can make it; and the objects of the Association which owns it are such as cannot be superseded. You disclaim the idea of forming any new association: well, then, if you do you must give up your programmes, or else violate those rules that have been prepared for our guidance by the several Chartist conventions that have met, for you cannot, without doing so, attach them to the National Charter Association inasmuch as they affirm new objects and furnish us with new plans. A man can consistently be a Chartist without being a Republican, and he can now join the Association without enrolling himself "under the banner of European Republican Democracy"—but he will not be able to do so if you arrogate to yourselves the right to give such a fresh distinctive phrase to the Association. I maintain that in doing so you are going far beyond your promise. The Chartist body has not been consulted upon the question, and I hold that you have no right to tamper with the plans which conventions have

laid down. If you want alterations and amendments, seek them in a proper way—canvass the body's opinion upon your suggestions, and then call upon the executive, if necessary, to convene a Chartist Convention to consider them forthwith. You must not think that I, as an individual, am opposed to European Republicanism, for I am as great an admirer of Republicanism, and as industrious a worker for it as any of you are. I only argue that as our Association has never embraced as one of its objects a Republican form of government, that we are not competent to make such an addition to its objects here; but that it must be the work of a National Convention. You gentlemen, who are supporters of the original programme seek the assistance of the refugees who are in this country. Now, I have a great admiration for the refugees; I admire them because they are democratic socialists, and because they have considered their principles worthy the jeopardy of their lives. But here I beg leave to stop, as far as our Association is concerned. I shall feel ashamed of myself and my countrymen when it has come to this, that those men who are here, not because of choice, but of necessity; men who have dared in their own lands to meet in open combat the foemen who oppressed them, and who are now impatient for the hour when that combat shall be resumed, shall be solicited to help us in effecting an international reform. I hold that those are unworthy of liberty who cannot win it for themselves. My conviction is that Englishmen can, if they like, effect just what reforms they please; it requires but the will upon their part and it is done. If they are not industrious enough to work for what is needed to make them free, they are unworthy of freedom, and I should be truly sorry to see the men who have jeopardised themselves through fighting the battles of their own countrymen, make their lives more comfortless by bringing down upon themselves an Alien Bill, through fighting the battle or doing the work of my countrymen. I tell you that the founders and supporters of the National Charter Association never calculated upon such aid, and your doing so now is a miserable declaration of weakness. Let your programmes if you please, form the basis, as they will inevitably do, of a new association, which will have for its object (which will be a laudable one) the fraternisation of the democrats of all nations; then you will be consistent, then you will be straightforward; then you will not be getting members under false pretences; then I might be able to agree with your programme; but now as you stand, so inexplicable, so full of expediency, so far from the Association which my conscience and my convictions make me serve and champion, I must with all my heart and soul oppose you. In making these remarks I have done my duty. I leave the rider with you.

Ernest Jones, in supporting the original programme wished to call to the minds of the committee the purpose for which they were constituted. They had been formed to welcome an illustrious exile, and protest against an infamous tyrant, The tyrant shrunk from coming to this country, and, as time rolled on, the committee took larger and nobler views; they looked away from the tyrant, and towards the people. They raised their eyes from the person of the exile, to the principle for which he was exiled and, instead of being a mere protest against a perjurer's visit, they wished their demonstration to found the union of all peoples—to make it a banquet of all nations -and array the alliance of the world's democracy against the conspiracy of the world's oppressors. Therefore they had decreed the permanence of the committee. But if they were to be permanent, it must be for something more than a mere banquet; and for that permanence some plan of organisation was, of course, indispensable. On what basis were they to organise? That was the great question at issue. They had two points to keep in view:—1st. The furtherance of the democratic cause at home. 2ndly. The alliance with the democratic cause abroad. To assist the first, they must form no new movement—they must not break up and divide their noble old organisation, or they would do more harm than good; to achieve the second point, they must hold out a connecting link beyond the limits of the organisation itself. The continental refugees could not join a chartist committee, such as Mr. Finlen proposed to form—the alien laws would immediately seize them—it was the very thing Government desired them to do. It would give the Whigs the handle they wanted. Mr. Finlen's motion virtually said, “Go away from us; we sympathise with you—we invited you to our alliance, but now we'll tack such conditions to it, as render it impossible for you to come.” Just at this moment, when the tyrants of Europe were trembling at the idea of any such alliance,— just at the moment when it was being founded on the open ground of England—when, from that bold and brave beginning might spring a power, the democratic glory of an age of peace, were we to say with Mr. Finlen: “No! we'll surround ourselves by the selfish isolation of our English movement only—we'll talk fraternity, and act selfishness—we won't join with you for universal freedom, and we don't want you to join with us for British liberty.” I wholly disagree, continued the speaker, with Mr. Finlen's remarks about his being ashamed to ask the help of foreign democracy, and those being unworthy of freedom, who can't conquer it for themselves. We do not ask the help of the refugees to win the Charter, because we are strong enough to get it without them, any moment we choose. But, if we were not, I should be proud of their assistance; I should think it a right to demand it—they should think it a duty to afford it, for that is one great element of real democracy, fraternity—the mutual help of all who are oppressed. I repudiate Mr. Finlen's assertion that those are unworthy of liberty who cannot get it for themselves. Will he say that to the Hungarians, weighed down by half a million bayonets? No! they are not unworthy, because they could not achieve more than a mortal can—but we are unworthy because we allowed them to be murdered. Thus then, in the face of every crowned brigand, we formed the alliance of the peoples—we do not seek help, but we offer it. This committee forms the connecting link between the Great democracies of Britain, and the Continent—between the Charter and the world's Republic. If we make ourselves a committee of the National Charter Association, not a refugee dare join us—the law prevents it. If we make ourselves a new Association, we strike

a blow at the Charter, and throw the same difficulty in their way. To avoid these two dangers, the programme I support has been especially framed. It is a mere programme of organisation—to *organise* the democratic power of London—not to *associate* it into a new movement. There lies all the difference. You merely organise a number of men, so as to make their public opinion, the demonstration of their power, and a certain fund, available on any great occasions on which it may be desirable. You do not officially interweave it with any existing agitation for home purposes, for that would subject the refugees to penal laws—but you at once boldly recognise principles—politically—the People’s Charter, socially the programme of the Chartist Convention of 1851, and of the Labour Parliament of 1853, and universally, the Democratic Republic. Mr. Slocombe says we do not define principles—I should like to know what he calls that? He sneers at banners and the other details of organisation. They have been sneered at too much, and neglected too long. It is one thing to create a mind, and another to organise and demonstrate the power of the mind created. The principles were laid down in 1851 and 1853—the organisation has languished. Now let us create it. The time may come soon, when it will be necessary to openly display our power, when the vast gathering or the long procession may have to strike conviction to our oppressors’ minds. Then I hope to hear our bands peal out a Marseillaise of England—then I hope to see the peaceful army of democracy march beneath the banners on which its rights and principles are raised before the fan of heaven; not skulking in disorderly and ill-regulated masses, here and there; but, disciplined and marshalled like the armies of kings, the hosts of liberty should march as well. Depend upon it, without organisation you will do nothing—without the details of organisation, you never will have the organisation itself. Mr. Finlen says this committee cannot found a union with continental democracy on the broad principle of universal brotherhood, and cannot adopt its programme of organisation without calling a convention; that it is treason to the Charter to do so. Now, will any reasonable man tell me that there is treason to the Charter in recognising every foreign democrat as a brother, and founding an alliance with the democracy of Europe. Give us more of such treason! Will any one tell me that a number of sterling men in London or anywhere cannot meet together and say, “we see organisation prostrate; we see you all divided and disorganised; we’ll help you to unite; we’ll form no new association, but will assist you to unite and concentrate your power; you shall no longer be waifs bandied to and fro at faction’s breath; but we’ll supply the means of organising you—we’ll create a fund—we’ll discipline your numbers, and we’ll concentrate your force.” There’s much harm in that—is there not? It is the very thing we wanted; and for want of which we have been languishing in weakness. “But, lest there should be any mistake, we at once recognise the Charter and the social rights of Labour, and set out with the solemn disclaimer of forming a new association. But we do more—we are the connecting link, the only one, between the Chartists of Britain and the Democrats of Europe. That link Mr. Finlen’s rider would snap, and Mr. Slocombe’s motion would make impossible. Mr. Leno asks me to point out the difference between Mr. Slocombe’s amended programme and the original one: it is vital. The very name defines it: Mr. Slocombe’s is called The London Democratic Association; the one I support is called the “London Organisation Committee.” The one is a new movement that I repudiate. I resigned the instant it was adopted; the other is a mere subordinate committee emanating from existing elements. It is, in reality, an “Auxiliary Committee,” such as Mr. Finlen proposes; it is the very thing he wants, with this difference, that his at once prevents the great union of all democracies now sought to be established; but the one I support lays the basis of that glorious union, while it ensures a vigorous assistance to our own old movement too. The speaker then went into further details respecting the programmes, and observed: Mr. Finlen and Mr. Slocombe seem to shrink from the word REPUBLIC. It is not illegal to avow yourself a Republican, or to inculcate republican principles. I am a Republican—we are all Republicans and shall we shrink from avowing it when we seek to form the alliance of all democracies? It is one of the essential elements of democracy. There may be a Republic without Democracy, but there cannot be democracy without a Republic. I support the programme, because I think it is high time to lift London from its disorganised impotence, because it is the only plan on which an alliance of all peoples can be effected, because now is the hour above all others for union and energy, because I see no other means by which that energy and union can be so promptly effected, because an example must be given, and I trust the country will follow that example.

Mr. Searle cordially supported Mr. Jones’ motion. He could not conceive how any one could hesitate on the subject. The amended programme was a new Association—Mr. Finlen’s a practical repudiation of the refugees. Mr. Workman had been in the Chartist movement for twenty years, and he strongly supported the motion of Mr. Jones. He felt it the duty of every Chartist to support it; and protested against the rider as being couched in a spirit of selfish isolation.

The motion, amendment, and rider were then put. For Mr. Finlen’s rider there were 4 votes; for the original Programme, 18; for Mr. Slocombe’s motion, 3.

Mr. Finlen then gave notice that as the original programme had been carried, he should resign as soon as the banquet was over, but would work with them until then. The Committee then adjourned to Sunday (tomorrow) evening, at the Lamb Inn, New Turnstile, Holborn.

“The International Committee” met on Tuesday evening. Present: the English Committee; the French Committee; the German Committee; and Alexander Herzen, the Russian exile, Ernest Jones in the Chair. Reports were received from the Poles and Italians. The meeting of the former had to be postponed till

Wednesday, owing to the Hall in which they usually met in being pre-engaged. A circular to the Poles was drawn up and signed, and joint deputations of French and English appointed to visit them.

#### THE DEMONSTRATION.

The Following resolutions were unanimously carried:—

- 1)— That the Demonstration take place on Monday, February 26th.
- 2)—“That St. Martin’s Hall, Long Acre, be forthwith engaged for that purpose.
- 3)—That Messrs. Slocombe, Finlen, and Domenge, be deputed to engage that Hall.
- 4)— that the Demonstration consist of a tea party, to be followed by a public meeting.
- 5)—That the admission to the tea party and meeting be 1s. 6d for a single ticket, 2s. 6d. for a double one, (admitting a lady and gentleman, or two ladies.)
- 6)— That the admission to the public meeting be threepence.]
- 7)—That 1000 posters, and 20,000 handbills be issued announcing the Demonstration, and that the same be advertised in the papers.
- 8)— That, Alexander Herzen, Ernest Jones, and one of the German Committee form a sub-committee to prepare the announcements.
- 9)—That a special meeting take place on Thursday evening, to receive the reports of the two sub-committees, and forward the other details.

MR. JAMES FINLEN’S TOUR – he will leave on the 26<sup>th</sup> or 27<sup>th</sup> February– his route to be published the coming week.

#### MR. JAMES FINLEN’S TOUR. - TO THE CHARTISTS.

Friends,—By all I see and hear of your movements, it is quite certain that I shall be in the provinces before long. In Durham and Northumberland arrangements are being made for my proposed tour, which must necessarily insure economy and effect. The indefatigable secretaries there are corresponding with the Chartists in all the neighbouring towns concerning my visit, and asking them to co-operate in practically promoting our cause. This is as it should be; I am glad of it, for it shows a goodly and a cheering earnestness.

Now when I leave London to be with you in the country, I shall want to do something more than talk; and I shall want you all to do something more than listen. A man standing upon a platform for a couple of hours or so, is not enough on his part; neither is the sitting down to listen to him for the same time enough on yours. I must meet you, confer with you, and canvass your opinions on plans of action; and effect a truly solid organisation—such a one as will afford strong aid when wanted so to do.

No place that can possibly manage to convene a meeting ought to omit doing so. The season for our work is most opportune: the people generally are discontented, they are disgusted with the present rule; the rulers are weak, they are divided: so the occasion demands that the people shall be undivided, that they may be strong. Advantage must be taken of the foe when and where he is most vulnerable; he counsels us wrongly who says we must, we ought to be quiet now, because the Government is in difficulty. If a robber runs away with your property, and after you have chased him until he drops down exhausted with his run and the weight of the booty, will you pardon and sympathise with him because he is in difficulty? Of course not; it is then your opportunity to get your own, and handcuff him. Serve the present robber rulers the same; they have had their run, they are exhausted, they are worn out, they have tried to wear you out in the chase, they have robbed you of your birthright, your liberty, they have starved and galled you with their tyranny, they have attacked you when you have been weak, and murdered and exiled your best defenders. If you can overcome them now, do so by all means; have no sentimental mercy now, for it would almost amount to treason. Let every Chartist of every place do his best to convene meetings without the least delay.

We want cards of membership. I must have some before I begin my tour. For the last twelve months, or thereabouts, you have contributed no money to the funds of the Association, so you must have some by you in your localities by this time, I should think. If you have, send what you can to me immediately; if you have not, why then you must contribute some when your next meetings take place; for the cards must be ready, every thing must be in order, and promptly, too, or we shall never flourish. Do attend to this matter, WITHOUT ANY LOSS OF TIME WHATEVER.

I trust that the friends of the towns in the neighbourhood of Halifax and Leeds, such as Bradford, Pudsey, Ripponden, Todmorden, Hebdenbridge, Huddersfield, Midgley. and Barnsley, will not fail to make arrangements for me to visit them after I have completed my arrangements in those two places. They will understand how much more convenient it will be for me to do so then, than to have to come back over the same ground again; and they will also understand how much less the expenses will be to them.

Your movements ought to be almost simultaneous; they must be so, if you mean work. The same remarks apply equally to the towns in the neighbourhood of Staleybridge and Shelton, which places I have, with Halifax and Leeds, arranged to visit on my way to Durham and Northumberland.

I hope to be able to publish my route next week. There is plenty of time for you to prepare—a week longer than I first proposed, on account of the great demonstration in commemoration of the French Revolution of '48, which is to take place on or about the 24<sup>th</sup> of February. But if I am wanted to attend any special meeting

between now and then, I shall hold myself in readiness to do so. My tour I shall commence on either the 26<sup>th</sup> or 27<sup>th</sup> of February.

Now, while I am writing to you, I may as well give an answer to the resolution which has been submitted to us by the friends at Birmingham. I think that we have already made enough, if not too many, overtures to the men to whom they have alluded. If those men—"the leading men of all democratic societies"—are sincerely desirous for a gathering up of the scattered elements of democracy, let them voluntarily come forward and do; I have neither the time, the strength, nor the inclination to hunt after them. I sue to no man to do his duty; I will tell him of it if necessary, but then it remains entirely with himself whether he performs it or not. Our Association offers full facilities to the most ultra reformers; if they want ultra reform in reality, let them win it. I do not think it possible to have a better Association, one whose objects shall be more comprehensive, more rational, more endeared to the people; therefore I do not, for the purpose mooted, agree to the convening of a convention. We must really leave off waiting for other men. Some people say, we must wait before we do anything here until a revolution breaks out on the continent, until the Frenchmen are once more on the barricades, or until Mr. So-and-so appears amongst us again. Such a course is altogether wrong: it is an abnegation of faith in ourselves, an expectation of too much from others. Wherefore seek the return of those who have become apostates to our cause, or who have all along been too artificial to win it? Those who want revolutions, must help to make them; and it is a cowardly spirit which actuates men to wait until others shall bear the brunt of danger. My advice is: go right ahead, wait for no one, adhere to a true policy, keep the right road, and thus you will see that those who want coaxing now will be eager to join you.—Your's fraternally,  
James Finlen. 15, North-street, Fitzroy-square, London.

### February 17<sup>th</sup> 1855 *People's Paper*

Chatham – Mr. James Finlen lectured at the Mechanic's Institution, Chatham, February 7<sup>th</sup> on the People's Charter., when, notwithstanding the severity of the weather, a respectable and attentive audience had assembled. The lecture occupied upwards of an hour and a half, and was delivered with surprising energy and animation. Mr. Finlen, in a very logical and pleasing manner, advanced some original ideas in explanation of the People's Charter. The audience was highly delighted, and manifested their satisfaction by frequent bursts of applause. George Pattison, Hon. Sec.

On p. 5 a letter from James Finlen to Jones, the editor;

THE VOTE OF THE LONDON ORGANISATION COMMITTEE.

[The editor received the following letter addressed personally to him, but forwarded for insertion in the paper.]

Of course I did not expect that you would be satisfied with the speech you made in defence of your programme, on Sunday, the 4<sup>th</sup> of February, and in opposition to my rider. So I was not at all surprised when I saw by a leader in our paper of February 10<sup>th</sup> a further effort made to better your position. I would most willingly, if it had not been for the appearance of that leader, have left our speeches to the judgment of those by whom they might have been read, without offering another syllable upon the questions to which they refer; but as its insertion will probably have an improper influence, I seek the insertion of a few remarks in reply.

The leader states that I accuse you of adding "a new point to the National Charter Association," and then enquires "Can anything be more unfounded than such a charge?" I am not in the habit of making "unfounded charges," and that this one is not "unfounded" I think I have very clearly shown. Mind, I do *not object* to the point, or the object which I say your programme has added to the objects of the National Charter Association; I only mentioned that the addition was made in an *informal and irregular manner*, that no new committee, self-instituted, has any right to take upon itself, and especially when it is only a *local committee*, the altering of the constitution of the *National Association*, but that the change sought ought to have been effected by a delegated body. Such were the views I took of the matter then, such are the views I now hold.

If you have not tacked "a new point to the Charter," what have you done? If republicanism is not a new "point," then I will give up the point and be satisfied, but everybody will say that it is; so there is no use saying and there is no use saying anything more about it than this, that Republicanism is what I am working for,—THAT I DO NOT shrink from the word Republic,—that it was not one of the objects of the National Charter Association,—*that it will be one, if your programme becomes a supplement to the rules of the Association*, and that, therefore, many charges "can be more unfounded" than the one I have made."

But it appears to me that you have gone further still—that you have got a *new charter altogether*, and that the old one is unfit for use at present, according to your own showing. This is what appears in the leader: "Can we form the alliance with the men of France, of Germany, of Italy, of Hungary, of Poland, on the basis of *England's Charter*? No; we take the common ground of the wide world's Charter, the Republic, Democratic, and Social." Now this is very candid. I can understand your position, when you talk in this manner. But you have said that we "must form no new movement," and that we must not break up or divide our noble old organisation. How will you act then, with your new programme, "The World's-wide Charter?" which is now to be used instead of "England's Charter," or, as I understand it, the "People's Charter?" I am fearful that our "noble old organisation" will have to suffer materially through such a substitution. I told you that the People's Charter

would not give you the scope you wanted, and that to get that scope you would have to "tack" a new point or points to the Charter, and had no right to do so. You then replied in a very improper way to my remarks, but since then you have apparently discovered the truth of them and acted upon it. But your "World's-wide Charter" is open to just the same objections that you urged against my rider; it will not embrace the refugees any more than the People's Charter would, which my rider would have pledged the committee to. You said "the Continental refugees could not join a Chartist Committee, such as Mr. Finlen proposed to form; the alien laws would immediately seize them; it was the very thing the government desired them to do." Acting upon your programme will endanger them more, for, besides the objects of the Association, it has the programme of the Labour Parliament and the promotion of European Republicanism for its objects; unless the government are favourable to the latter object, you place a greater barrier between us and the refugees than existed with our old organisation. You must certainly see this; if you do, say so at once, and let the matter drop. As you seek so much more by your programme than our Association does, you must necessarily incur more opposition than the Chartists even have ever had to meet, and the refugees will be more exposed to alien bills, and every species of aristocratic tyranny, if they enroll themselves under it, than they would if they joined the National Charter Association.

Just a few more words and I have done. I have to express a hope that those who read your speech will not form from what you said, their opinion upon what I said. I pity the man who MERELY TALKS. I apprehend that I do something more, and that I have given no one reason to think that I am one who "talks fraternally and act selfishness" towards the refugees, or any one else. The refugees did win, and, for a time, enjoyed freedom, therefore they have a right to it now, and I will help to take it from those who have robbed them of it, that they may enjoy it again. But I believe that a people in fetters, as the British people, are not in a position to take the fetters from others, therefore my work as an Englishman is to aid in freeing the English people first; for if they attempt, with all the present power of the former arrayed against them, to form a formal alliance for proletarian freedom throughout Europe, that foeman would put them down. They must take the power out of the opponent's hands and become strong with it themselves, before they can employ effective means against the oppressors of other nations. The Charter will give them the power, AND THAT MUST BE GOT,- Yours, fraternally, James Finlen.

*[followed by a rejoinder from Ernest Jones pushing his HOLY ALLIANCE and further attempt to divide the factions by calling for his form of union. The well-sounding, stated aims of Jones' International Committee lead to an important beginning, with a meeting held in St. Martin's Hall on February 27, 1855, commemorating the French revolution of 1848. However, it was used by Jones more as a vehicle for self-promotion rather than the grand and ideal aims he proposed and his behaviour alienated many of his fellow Chartists including Finlen.]*

**February 24<sup>th</sup> 1855 *People's Paper*** The United Brothers' Sick Benefit, Life and Fire Assurance Company - We have the pleasure to communicate that we have made arrangements with Mr. James Finlen, one of the directors, who is about to make a tour through the country, to visit all our agents in the various districts have to pass through...

ALLIANCE OF THE PEOPLES - Commemoration of the Great Revolutionary Movement of 1848 - The International Soiree, to be followed by a public meeting, will take place at St. Martin's Hall, Long Acre on Tuesday Evening next, the 27<sup>th</sup> instant. Ernest Jones will preside. The following are amongst those invited - French: Barbes, Louis Blanc, Victor Hugo, Pierre Leroux, Felix Pyat, Ledru Rollin, Eugene Sue. Italian: Mazini, Saff, Pianciani. Hungarian: Kossuth, Teleki. Polish: Worcell, Zeti. Russian: Herzen. English: J. Beale, T. Cooper, J. Finlen, Gerald Massey etc....Alfred Talandier, French Secretary, Pizzi, Italian Sec., Dombinsky, Polish Sec., M. Bley German Sec., Salvatello, Spanish Sec., R. Chapman English Sec.

**February 28<sup>th</sup> 1855 *Globe***

THE REVOLUTIONS OF 1848. (From The: *Times*.)

Yesterday evening a large meeting composed of English and foreign democrats, was held in the music room at St. Martin's Hall, to commemorate the "great revolutionary movement of 1848." The entire duties of the evening consisted of a "tea," which was served on long tables to seated guests, at the early hour of five o'clock. and of a political "meeting," which commenced business at eight. The temperate repast was well attended, but the assemblage did not become extremely numerous till the time for politics arrived. The tables were then glided away from between the satisfied guests, and the benches, which had hitherto stood at right-angles to the orchestra, were shifted round so as to become parallel to the same. As this operation took place while a number of politicians were pouring into the room, it was by no means an easy one, but with skill on the part of the operators, and good humour on the part of the assemblage, it was accomplished with a minimum of inconvenience, and those who had sat down to eat and drink found themselves rightly placed to hear.

When the serious business began, the audience occupied a number of benches that covered about two-thirds of the hall floor, the whole of the three galleries, and the whole of the orchestra, the front of which was devoted to the leading gentlemen and the speakers. That the meeting might not want a symbol of its definite purpose, a large red flag, inscribed "The Alliance of the Peoples," was set up at the back of the orchestra.

Although the frequency of the continental beard and wide-awake showed that the party at St. Martin's Hall was, to a great extent, composed of the same foreign refugees who, in former years, have celebrated the events of "the '48" and the death of Robert Blum, it was less foreign in its character than its predecessors. The chairman was Mr. Ernest Jones; the chief speaker after the chairman was another celebrated democratic orator, Mr. James Finlen, and we shall not be very wrong if we say that the French, the Germans, the Italians, the Hungarians, the Poles and the Russians who assisted on the occasion were rather the auxiliaries than the principals, although, perhaps, they may have formed the majority in point of number.

The meeting was also distinguished, from those of former years by the definite nature of its object. The old Blum festivals were generally marked by vague expressions of abhorrence against the House of Hapsburg and other German dynasties, without much to direct the practical application of the hatred, or even to form the sentiment into a tangible theory. These festivals were all held in a time of peace, expounded a theory, derived its distinction from its connection with the existing war.

The opening speech of Mr. Ernest Jones, the president, was the most important of the evening, as, in fact, it set forth the whole purport of the assembly so clear and forcible a manner that other orators could do little more than expand on detached portions of the whole, as already propounded Mr. Jones, Addressing his hearers as "men of Europe," he said that the universal fraternity of mankind had been set at nought by tyrants, who engaged different nations in wars with each other, and that the only true basis of peace was to be found in an alliance of the various peoples among themselves, as distinguished from an alliance between Sovereigns. An union of interests with despots was particularly to be shunned, and Mr. Jones contrasted the conduct of Queen Elizabeth, who withdrew her Ambassador from France after the massacre of St. Bartholomew, with that of the present government, which maintains friendly relations with the Emperor Louis Napoleon after the *coup d'état*. While on this subject, he went so far as to say that the British army in the Crimea had been deliberately destroyed by the machinations of our ally, and that all the difficulties in the way of transmitting provisions and clothing might be traced to his malevolence. The "oppressed nationalities" came in for a large share of his sympathies; but he dexterously contrived to enlarge the expression, and give it a home application, by declaring that the working men formed an "oppressed nationality" in every country where labour was not the master of capital. This violent speech, which was a singular compound of precision and enthusiasm, was followed by thunders of applause, and the "Marseillaise Hymn" was sung (in French) by the whole of the company.

The business that immediately followed was rather an anti-climax. Apologies from absentees, including MM Barbés, Victor Hugo, Mazzini, and Freiligrath, were read, and the speech of the Italian triumvir, M. Safi, was delivered by deputy in a voice almost inaudible. It was therefore a refreshing event when Mr. Jones, after this somewhat tedious episode, set forth in his own articulate manner the resolutions that embodied the business of the evening. These were to the effect that alliances with despots and usurpers ought to be repudiated; that an alliance of peoples should be formed in their place; and that for the same purpose of controlling this new sort of alliance an international committee should be established. That the whole proceeding should bear a strictly international character—it was arranged that the resolutions should be moved by an Englishman, and seconded by a foreigner.

The Englishman, Mr. Finlen, was, perhaps, the most remarkable speaker of the evening. He began in an almost inaudible voice, and with no more animation than had marked his reading predecessor, but as he warmed into his subject, his voice came out, and of the latter portion of his speech there was not a sentence that did not reverberate through the walls of the building. In abusing the French Emperor, to whom he gave the odd name of a "slip-gibbet," he set no bounds to his indignation, and he astounded his hearers by suddenly coming upon a home topic, and declaring that he (Mr. Finlen) was a Chartist, and that England would never die as long as the name of Mr. Feargus O'Connor was mentioned, although she had made but a sorry figure in 1848 as compared with France and Germany. The Russian gentleman, M. Herzen, who seconded the resolutions, was welcomed with enthusiasm, on account of the chairman's statement that he had been confined for five years in a Russian prison by the tyranny of the Czar. His speech, which was in French, was the most elaborate of all, being an attempt to explain at great length the natural tendency to democracy in the Russian people, and the prospects of this tendency reaching its maturity, but it lost a great deal of its effect by being read in a not very articulate voice, and would, we apprehend, make a better pamphlet than an oration.

The adoption of the French language by the foreigners generally, who, where they were not French themselves, read their speeches, placed them in somewhat disadvantageous contrast with the English orators, who, unembarrassed by written words, were highly successful in keeping up the zeal of the audience; but a decided exception must be made in favour of Mr. Alfred Talandier, to, whom French was of course a native language, and whose speech in favour of Socialism was a good exhibition of the most fervid and ejaculatory style of eloquence. After his speech was ended the assembly began to disperse, although formal business of the evening was not concluded till some time afterwards.



**March 3<sup>rd</sup> 1855** *People's Paper* Immense Demonstration in St. Martin's Hall – On Tuesday last one of the greatest Demonstrations, in favour of Democracy, that the Metropolis has ever seen, took place at St. Martin's Hall London.

[see the 'Times' article above] The long galleries were festooned with crimson. During the tea-party a body of German exiles sang a number of democratic choruses with a taste and vigour that drew forth the enthusiastic plaudits of the audience. [*It was raining outside and crowds were admitted prematurely until the hall was 'filled by one of the largest audiences it had ever contained'*]

Mr. James Finlen moved, and several voices seconded that Ernest Jones preside. Jones made a significant speech and rousing speech condemning Napoleon III's domestic and foreign policies, including the complicity of the government in the deaths of thousands of British soldiers in the Crimea. Letters were then read from Barbes, Victor Hugo, Wrozell and Swiatoslowski, excusing themselves for not being able to attend. The Marseillaise was then sung;

The Chairman then said that the resolutions embodying the practical business of that demonstration would, as the meeting was held in England, be moved by an Englishman, and seconded and supported by democrats of other lands; and he would now introduce an English workingman, a noble young worker in the cause of truth—James Finlen. (Immense applause.)

Mr. Finlen then read the following resolutions, which excited tremendous plaudits.

Resolved—1, That this meeting, in which are the representatives of the Democracies of France, Germany, Italy, Poland, Hungary, Spain, Russia, Great Britain, and other countries, repudiates the alliances between crowned despots and usurpers, which are falsely ratified in the names of the Peoples on whom they trample; and desires to substitute for the same the alliance of the Peoples, based on mutual interests and tending to universal brotherhood.

Resolved—2, That the alliance of any government or nation with despots and criminals like Francis Joseph of Austria, Louis Napoleon Bonaparte of France, and Nicholas of Russia, is a flagrant disgrace. That such alliances are as unwise as they are immoral, being dependant on the caprice, self-interest, and vile ambitions of men who have proved themselves perjurers and traitors already—and who are as likely to betray and ruin a nation with whom they ally themselves, as the people and the laws whom they had sworn to serve and defend.

Resolved—3, That the only guarantee of peace and progress, whether as between the French and English, or between any and all countries, is by the strict alliance of the Peoples. That this meeting therefore desires to inaugurate and ratify such an alliance—and for that purpose recommends the establishment of a permanent International Committee, consisting of the Representatives of the Democracies of Great Britain, and various countries of continental Europe. That the Committee be open to every nation.

Resolved—4, That the International Committee call a Conference of the Representatives of all Democracies, to proclaim and indoctrinate the principles, and promote the advent of the Democratic and Social Republic.

After the cheering had subsided, Mr. Finlen said: We have not much to commemorate as Englishmen.\* Certainly we did begin what promised to be a great revolutionary movement in '48. The 10th of April of that year, is a day never to be forgotten by the men of England, but upon that occasion we did not do enough. What we did we are proud of—that we did not do more was a fault, but we must in the future make amends for our remissness in the past. This we purpose doing, and this night we commence the work. Now, although it is a fact that we did not do much for European freedom in '48, that we were prepared to co-operate with those who did, is a proof that we approved of their great efforts, that we coincided with them then, that we have honoured them since, and that we shake them heartily by the hand as our fellow-workers, our noble and our common brothers. It is now time that the people were united—the people's foes have been united through all time: and they have triumphed. Priests, kings, soldiers, emperors, and other right reverend and right royal vassals, always act together. You have had instances of this in the conduct of Louis Napoleon, Pope Pius the Ninth, Francis Joseph, and Nicholas. If when they began to outrage the peoples of France, of Italy, of Hungary, and affrighted this really civilised portion of the universe, the peoples had been united, they would never have been allowed so to act with impunity. But there was no understanding then—there must be a common one henceforth. We have no occasion, because we form an alliance, to sink one atom of principle, or forego one holy hope. Our measures must be to liberate—to give to the people of every country, as far as in us lies, just what form of Government they are persuaded would be conducive to their common interests. I am not prepared to compromise my principles, neither is there a man with whom I am acting who is prepared to do so. I am now, and always will be—Chartist. (Immense cheering.) Yes; a Chartist. I know that it is unfashionable to be one in certain quarters, or at least to say that you are one; but I say it here now, as this is the commemoration of the great revolutionary movement of 1848. Chartism contributed somewhat to that movement. A poet has said that "Good things never die." Then, as it is, undoubtedly, one of the good things of this world, it can never die—either while there is a slave in this country, or the name of Feargus O'Connor is a "household word." (Loud cheers.)

In promoting the alliance of the peoples, we must promote, as a consequence, the Charter, which is the political creed of the poor of this country. Therefore, I propose these resolutions. I augur worthy advent from the work now begun. I am proud to be here to-night in the presence of those men who mounted the barricades—those ruddy portals-beneath which wrong perishes, and patriotism is deified. Mr. Finlen resumed his seat amid loud applause.

*\* Reynold's Newspaper of March 4th added - Mr. Finlen...urged that nothing could be expected from Lord Palmerston of a truly liberal character, as he was nothing more than a servant of the aristocracy. He declared that no sympathy could exist betwixt the people of England and the slip-gibbet Louis Napoleon.*

Alexander Herzen seconded the resolutions and gave a long speech about Russia. He was followed by G. J. Holyoake, Alfred Talendier and Kardetzki. - After a vote of thanks to the chairman, which was carried by acclamation, three cheers were given for the Democratic and Social Republic - they were cheers that made the very building vibrate - and the vast assembly dispersed in perfect order.

JAMES FINLENS TOUR – From Monday 5<sup>th</sup> to Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> of March, at Leamington, Warwick, Coventry and Rugby; the 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> at Lincoln; the 11<sup>th</sup> at Leeds; the 12<sup>th</sup> at Ripponden; the 13<sup>th</sup> at Leeds; the 14 and 15<sup>th</sup> at Halifax; 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> Bradford and its vicinity, the 18<sup>th</sup> at Stalybridge. Address to Mr. James Finlen, No. 3, Leam-terrace, Leamington, Warwickshire. After I have left Leamington, care of Mr. William Codd, 40, Newland Street, Lincoln. After Lincoln, care of Mr. George Shaw, newsagent Park-lane, Leeds.

**March 10<sup>th</sup> 1855** *People's Paper* London Organisation Committee – Lamb Inn, New Turnstile, Holborn, Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> March 1855. Ernest Jones moved – “That this committee hold, with the least possible delay, a great demonstration in London for the People’s Charter, whence a petition for the same should be forwarded to Parliament, and a recommendation emanate for the assembling of a national conference at the first sitting.”....Mr. James Finlen seconded the motion –“It represented his own views and feelings, and he thought not a day, not an hour should be lost in taking our stand before the world, and resuming our position as the founders and leaders of real reform in England.” Mr. Finlen with great fervour and eloquence, pointed out the paramount necessity for the step, and for immediate energy and action; and stated that on his mission in the country he would investigate and endeavour to organise the means for a conference of the representatives of democracy.

**March 17<sup>th</sup> 1855** *People's Paper* James Finlen’s Tour – Sunday the 18<sup>th</sup> (afternoon and evening) Stalybridge; Monday 19<sup>th</sup> – Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> Stockport, Oldham and Manchester; Thursday/Friday 22/23<sup>rd</sup> Bolton; Sunday 25<sup>th</sup> and Monday 26<sup>th</sup> Newcastle-upon-Tyne; Tuesday 27<sup>th</sup> and Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> Anfield Plain; Thursday 29<sup>th</sup> and Friday 30<sup>th</sup> Durham; Saturday 31<sup>st</sup> South Shields; Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> April Newcastle-upon-Tyne; Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> and Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunderland; Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> Monkwearmouth; Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> and Friday 6<sup>th</sup> Coxhoe. Communications c/o Mr. James Watson, bookseller, Green Market Newcastle-upon-Tyne.

Ripponden - Two brilliant meetings have been held at Ripponden. One to petition the army; the next to hear a lecture by Mr. J. Finlen on the War. Both times the halls were crowded, and Mr. Finlen's addresses both nights elicited thunders of applause.

**March 17<sup>th</sup> 1855** *Halifax Courier* – Ripponden - On Monday evening last a public meeting was held in the Working Man's Institute, Ripponden, for the purpose of petitioning Parliament to do justice to the British Soldier. At half past seven about 300 persons were assembled. After a speech and resolutions by Mr Joseph Barrett, Mr. Finlen was introduced;

"who, in an able address, gave a brief sketch of the present war, and the hardships to which the British Soldiers have been exposed by the incapacity of those at the helm of affairs. In speaking of the heroism of the soldiers he stated that the successful attack at Alma had scarcely a parallel in history, and the noble charge at Balaklava was equalled only by the heroic Spartans at the Straits of Thermopylæ.

Tuesday last Mr. Finlen gave a talk on “The War, and its influence on Free Trade.”

Halifax – Wednesday, On Wednesday evening in the Old Assembly Rooms - Mr. Finlen gave a lecture on “Our Alliance with France and Austria: its probable effects on the future destinies of Europe.”

Mr. John Snowden presided.

Mr. Finlen commenced by drawing an historical parallel between the ambitious Philip, of Macedon, and his bequest to his son, Alexander, to conquer Persia, and that of the late Czar and his bequest to his son, to conquer Turkey. The one sought his ends by openly declaring his motive to be his love of conquest, whilst the other sought his ends under the garb of zeal for religion, pretending to be defending the interests of the Christian population in Turkey. He considered that the late government of this country was to blame for the present war, for not offering resistance at the first intimation, and he denounced them as being in league with the peace movement, at the head of which was Messrs. Cobden and Bright, who would make a halter for the nation out of cotton bales. If the government had required allies to carry on the present war, he considered they should have chosen Hungary and Poland before France and Austria, nations governed by despots, who had trampled upon the rights of the people. The Emperor of France, especially, he roundly denounced as a coward and a murderer. The lecturer dwelt at great length on the spoliation of France at Algiers; and of Austria in destroying the nationalities of Hungary and Poland; condemning the policy of this country in strong language for maintaining a pampered and "dandified" aristocracy. He concluded by observing that the land of this country belonged to the people. There were thirty thousand landlords out of a population of thirty million people; yet this thirty thousand held the land which belonged to the thirty millions. If the people were proprietors of the land, then they would fight for their rights, as they then would have something to lose. But they were now called upon to defend property and interests in which they had no portion. After a few remarks from the chairman, who announced that another lecture would be given the following evening, by Mr. Finlen, the meeting separated. —The subject of the second lecture, on Thursday evening, was "The people, their position, prospects, interests, and duties." The attendance was somewhat less than on the previous evening, Mr. J. Snowden again presiding. The lecturer contended that the people had the power to make themselves whatever they might wish to be! It was, however, lamentable to know that there were people in this country who were sensible of wrongs, and yet at the same time were insensible of the power they possessed to abolish those wrongs. There was on the one hand an excess of wealth, and on the other an inordinate degree of poverty. The lecture consisted of a tissue of denunciations against all possessors of property, and every institution in the state, beginning with Her Majesty the Queen, whom the lecturer declared to be the 'greatest beggar and pauper in society.'" The remedy for ills complained of consisted in an universal confiscation of property, and the return of such men as Ernest Jones to parliament. The chartists complain that their cause makes no progress. But how can they expect to obtain confidence, whilst they take such men as the lecturer for their guides? There was a very small attendance at each lecture, at the Old Assembly Rooms, and it is quite evident that the men of Halifax have no confidence in such leadership, and that the doctrines enunciated by Mr. Finlen find but little favour with the working classes, whatever that ancient demagogue, Mr. John Snowden, may say to the contrary.

**March 24<sup>th</sup> 1855** *People's Paper* Stalybridge – Brilliant lectures have been given by Mr. Finlen.

**March 24<sup>th</sup> 1855** *Bolton Chronicle* Lecture on the War:-

On Thursday evening, Mr. J. Finlen, editor of the '*Spirit of Freedom*,' delivered a lecture in the Temperance-hall, on the war and the policy of the Peace Society; Mr. N. Frith in the chair. The attendance was scanty. The lecturer justified the interference of England in the dispute between Russia and Turkey, on the ground that such interference was not only necessary for the maintenance of our own safety and the safety of our Indian possessions, but that it was calculated to arrest the progress of despotism; and on that ground he justified the alliance with France and Austria. He quoted at length the will of Peter the Great, and showed that the aggressive policy there sketched out had been most consistently followed by the successors on the Imperial throne; and he held that it was essential to the peace and safety of Europe that Russia should be crippled in her territory, compelled to make restitution of the various places absorbed within her empire, and confined within due and legitimate bounds. The lecturer somewhat roughly handled the Peace Society, and after a reference to the Free-Trade policy of this country, which he held was unsound, contended that the only hope for an improved state of things lay in the diminution of aristocratic influence, and the extension of the electoral privilege. At the termination of the lecture several questions were put and it was ultimately agreed to invite Mr. Finlen to give a further exposition of his views on the war question, in the course of two or three weeks, when steps will be taken for securing an expression of public opinion on this momentous subject.

**March 31<sup>st</sup> 1855** *People's Paper* – Bolton - arrangements made for Mr. James Finlen to deliver a second lecture in Bolton around the 12<sup>th</sup> or 13<sup>th</sup> April.

MR. FINLEN'S TOUR – Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> April N-u-T, Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> and Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunderland; Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> Monkwearmouth, 5<sup>th</sup> - 7<sup>th</sup> Coxhoe; Monday 9<sup>th</sup> Merton Colliery, Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> Edinburgh. - Gave a highly instructive and elegant lecture to a crowded audience in the Chartist Institute Newcastle on Sunday March 25<sup>th</sup> about Napoleon. On April 1<sup>st</sup> he will deliver a lecture on

“The People’s Charter; the several political movements; the absence of efficient organisation, and necessity for it.”

Edinburgh – Buchanan’s Coffee House, moved that James Finlen gives a talk on the 11<sup>th</sup> April in Whitfield Chapel.

Coxhoe talks: The present War and Napoleon’s Conduct on the same - 5<sup>th</sup> – On the People’s rights, Social and Political – 6<sup>th</sup>.

**April 6<sup>th</sup>** 1855 *Newcastle Chronicle* – Durham - Lecture on the War – During the early part of last week, the walls of this city were plentifully placarded with huge bills, announcing that a Mr, Finlen would lecture in the Theatre Royal on Thursday and Friday evenings on the war with Russia; but it having got wind that the lecturer was no other than an itinerant Chartist spouter of the school of Mr. Ernest Jones, the attendance in consequence was extremely meagre, not more than thirty persons having assembled on the Thursday evening. The principal portion of the lecture consisted of attacks on the “rascally aristocrats,” a denunciation of the present government, and of Lord Palmerston in particular; and it concluded with a torrent of abuse against the present Emperor of the French, and our alliance with him – sentiments which even drew hisses and expressions of disapprobation from his small and peculiar audience. On account of the failure of the preceding evening, the lecture announced for Friday evening was not delivered.

**April 7<sup>th</sup>** 1855 *People’s Paper* Newcastle-upon-Tyne – On Easter Monday a tea party and soiree will be held in the Chartist Institute. Tea on the table at 5 o’clock. Tickets 1s each. Mr. Finlen and other advocates of progress will be at the tea-party. Easington-Lane – A public meeting will be held at Easington Lane, on Saturday, the 7<sup>th</sup> of April, 1855. The meeting will be held in the large lecture-room, Murton-lane, when Mr. James Finlen, from London, will address the meeting, on the “Present Dangerous state of the Country.” All proceeds of the meeting, above expenses, will go for the purchase of the *People’s Paper*.

Newcastle-upon-Tyne – Chartist Institute, 11, Nun-street, On Sunday last Mr. Finlen delivered an excellent lecture upon the People’s Charter and the several Political Movements. The meeting was a spirited one. There was opposition to Mr. Finlen’s remarks. To such opposition Mr. Finlen replied to the entire satisfaction of the meeting. At the conclusion several new members were enrolled. John Brown, Secretary.

The United Brother’s Sick Benefit Life and Fire Assurance Company – Friends – the amount of business we have done during the past two weeks, which proves to us that there is a sufficient number of good and true men yet to be found to establish for labour an institution whereby it can be assisted – the immense number of shares which we have sold during the past fortnight to our friends in several parts of the country, owing we believe principally to the exertions of our indefatigable and patriotic friend, Mr. James Finlen, one of the directors – proves to us inevitably that the working classes of this country will yet accumulate a sufficient amount of capital for themselves, whereby labour and capital can, and will, work as co-partners, each promoting and securing the interest of the other, instead of, as now, labour being a slave to capital.

Anfield Plain - Wm Affleck in the chair. Mr. Finlen’s lectures were a complete triumph in this place. On each evening the school room was crowded to excess, and the frequent outbursts of applause were a true token the lectures were appreciated.

JAMES FINLEN’S TOUR - Monday, the 9<sup>th</sup> April, Newcastle-upon-Tyne; Tuesday the 10<sup>th</sup> and Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup>, Edinburgh; Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> and Friday 13<sup>th</sup>, Alva; Saturday the 14<sup>th</sup> Kirkaldy.

EDINBURGH - James Finlen will deliver a lecture on the ‘War with Russia,’ on the 11<sup>th</sup> April, in White-field, Ball Crubber’s Close, High-street.

**April 14<sup>th</sup>** 1855 *People’s Paper* Edinburgh – The soiree in commemoration of the 10<sup>th</sup> April came off in splendid style. Mr. Finlen spoke on the People’s Charter. Newcastle-upon-Tyne –

On Sunday last Mr. Gammage opened the discussion "What has been the cause of the failures in the Chartist Movement?" Mr. Finlen (and others) took part in opposition to the views of Mr. Gammage.

On Easter Monday the Chartist Institute held their tea-party and soiree, sentiments spoken by Messrs. Gammage, Finlen and others.

Easington-lane – On Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> Mr. James Finlen delivered a truly excellent lecture on the present dangerous state of the country, which subject he handled in a masterly manner.

THE SOLDIER'S CHARTER – Public meeting was held in the Working Man's Institute, Ripponden, for the purpose of petitioning Parliament to do justice to the British soldier. At half-past seven about 300 persons were assembled.... Mr. Finlen, in an able address, gave a brief sketch of the present war, and the hardships to which the British soldiers have been exposed by the incapacity of those at the helm of affairs. In speaking of the heroism of the soldiers he stated the successful attack on Alma had scarce a parallel in history, and the noble charge at Balaclava was equalled only by the heroic Spartans at the Stairs of Thermopylæ.

On Tuesday Mr. Finlen addressed another meeting in the same place, the subject being, "The War, and its influence on Free Trade."

MR. JAMES FINLEN'S TOUR - Monday 16<sup>th</sup> of April Kirkaldy; Tuesday the 17<sup>th</sup> and Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup>, Arbroath; Thursday the 19<sup>th</sup> and Friday 20<sup>th</sup>, Glasgow.

**April 19<sup>th</sup> 1855** *Fife Herald* – Chartist lectures – On the evenings of Saturday last and Monday, two lectures were delivered in Rose Street Chapel, by Mr. James Finlen, from London, on the "War with Russia" and the "People's Charter." The lectures consisted of the usual material provided on such occasions, though on Monday night only there was anything like an audience to listen. Discussion being invited, a vigorous opposition was given on Monday night, chiefly by a Path-head weaver of the name Killock, an opponent who proved rather heavy material for the lecturer who accordingly lost his temper, and told him plainly that all he had advanced was nonsense. Of course the affair ended as all such affairs do – in nothing. [*The Scottish press was the most violently opposed to Chartism and often stooped to the most offensive and inaccurate reporting on James Finlen*]

**April 21<sup>st</sup> 1855** *People's Paper* COXHOE – Mr. James Finlen addressed two meetings, one on the 5<sup>th</sup> and another on the 6<sup>th</sup> inst. on "The Present War; the Nation's duty to the Soldiers and the Soldier's duty to the Nation," which were listened to with breathless attention, except when interrupted by applause. The meetings in a great measure were composed of tradesmen in the place. John Robinson, Secretary. Sunderland – Friends, be at your posts on Sunday evening ... at the public meeting that our friend Mr. Finlen has to address.

*The Spirit of Freedom* No. 8 for April Holyoake & Co. Fleet-street. This spirited little journal still continues its useful career. This number contains an elaborate article upon the gradual and continual enlargement of the boundary of Russia, by Mr. Finlen.

JAMES FINLEN'S TOUR – Monday the 23<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> and Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> Sunderland; Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> Anfield Plain; Friday 27<sup>th</sup> Whitworth; Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> Castle Eden Colliery.

**April 28<sup>th</sup> 1855** *People's Paper* Mr. Finlen at Glasgow – On the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> of April Mr. Finlen lectured in Nelson-street Chapel, Glasgow. The members of the Democratic Association held a Social Meeting on Saturday in their own hall in honour of Mr. Finlen's visit to Glasgow. After tea was served, songs were sung, speeches were made, and "all went as merry as a marriage ball." Mr. Finlen has left a good impression behind him in this city which will guarantee him a most cordial reception should he ever visit this place again.

Sunderland – On Monday evening the 23<sup>rd</sup> a public meeting was held in the Lecture Hall of the Lyceum – the object of which was to promote Army Reform.... Mr. James Finlen supported (the resolution) in a powerful and eloquent speech. [He then] delivered a most masterly and eloquent

lecture on the People's Charter to a most attentive audience, who seemed riveted by the surprising force and eloquence of the speaker. Thomas Thompson, Secretary.

**May 5<sup>th</sup>** 1855 *People's Paper* Sunderland - On Wednesday evening, April 25<sup>th</sup> Mr. James Finlen delivered his concluding lecture on the "War with Russia." Mr. Finlen gave a brilliant address. James Finlen elected as member of the London Chartist Organisation Committee to represent them on the Administrative Reform Association.

**May 12<sup>th</sup>** 1855 *People's Paper* "...to raise the funds to have a course of lectures delivered in Coventry on popular subjects by the following talented gentlemen, namely—Messrs. Ernest Jones, Robt. Cooper, R. G. Gammage, and our young and esteemed friend, J. *Finlen*. This don't look as if they were men who had narrow and contracted views of humanity,..” extract of a letter from Mr. R. Hartopp in reply to a letter from Mr. Oxford of Birmingham.

**May 19<sup>th</sup>** 1855 *People's Paper* Chartist Political and Literary Institution – resolved that a conference of the Chartists of London be held on the 17<sup>th</sup> June; That a programme be drawn up for the conference: Mr. Finlen volunteers his assistance in drawing up of the programme.

**June 1<sup>st</sup>** 1855 *Morning Chronicle* – Administrative Reform – “A meeting was held in the St. Pancras Vestry-hall on Wednesday convened by the Marylebone District Administrative Reform Association...” Over 600 people attended and one of the speakers was Ernest Jones. When James Finlen tried to get a hearing too, “a scene of indescribable tumult and confusion followed.” There was dispute about who had won the motion. “Mr. Jones then called out, “I dissolve the meeting,” but nobody went away, and the brawl became fiercer than ever, all sorts of rough language being hurled at the chairman [Mr. Farrer], who remained in his place, determined to proceed with business. The meeting ended at ten when the chairman gave up the struggle.

**June 2<sup>nd</sup>** 1855 *People's Paper* Green Fields, Pimlico – The Annual Chartist Meetings will commence on Sunday June 10<sup>th</sup> at 11 o'clock am. The following speakers will attend: Messrs. James Finlen, W. Jones (of Liverpool), Ernest Jones, W. Slocombe, J. B. Leno, James Bligh, and others. R. Workman, J. Nash.

*The Spirit of Freedom* Numbers 1 - 10; contents of the current volume:- Notes on Lincoln, Leeds, Ripponden, Stalybridge, and Manchester - The offensive Maine Law - Continuation of the Autobiography of a Shilling - The Dream of the Millennium - the Maine Law agitation etc. etc.

**June 9<sup>th</sup>** 1855 *People's Paper* THE ADMINISTRATIVE REFORM ASSOCIATION.

The following advertisement has appeared in all the daily papers :—

Administrative Reform Association.—A Meeting will be held on Wednesday, June 13, in the Theatre Royal Drury-lane. Admission by tickets only.—Tickets may be had on personal application, by Members of the Association, at the offices, 96, King William-street, City.—Subscribers of 1*l.* 1*s.* per annum, or of 10*l.* 10*s.*, are Members of the Association. Samuel Brown, Secretary of the Business Committee.

The proceedings will commence at Seven o'clock, p.m., and close at Ten o'clock. Seats reserved for ladies.

These cunning tricksters, trembling before the people, have therefore confined their meeting to ticket-holders, and the ticket-holders to rich “gentlemen” who have paid one guinea and ten guineas, and such “ladies” as they may choose to admit. It is certain enough that they and the “ladies” and their flunkies can fill Drury-lane; and it is equally certain that their arrangement prevents the entrance of a single working man. Under these circumstances the money-lords hope to have it all their own way within the walls of Drury Lane. Perhaps they may. But, if they do—what then? All the world will know that there are profit-mongers enough in London to fill the walls of a theatre; and that, if they exclude the public, they can pass what resolutions they like. But resolutions passed such a way lose all moral weight and influence whatever. This meeting must be a nullity; it proves that they have not got the People with them; that they fear and hate the people, and it consequently follows their movement must remain a mere powerless nonentity.

At Fulham, on Wednesday, the Administrative Reformers held a meeting. They thought to get up very slyly and secretly, and no one in the neighbourhood knew a meeting was to be held till within an hour of its commencement. The Administrative Reform Committee had actually announced another meeting for Walworth

for the same night, to distract public attention, and then, at six o'clock, it was announced the Walworth meeting was adjourned for a week. A special trick.

Messrs. Leno and Finlen moved an amendment for the Charter at the Fulham meeting. When a division ensued, the Chairman announced that the Chartist amendment had 39 votes—the Administrative Reform Resolution 55 votes. There was a glorious meeting! Out of the 55 votes there was the committee of the Administrative Reform Association, which had come from the different parts of London, to the number of 42 persons, so that, locally considered, they had only thirteen votes to our thirty-nine! A precious victory!

#### Letter from Finlen [from the week previously, delayed]

THE SUNDAY TREACHERY.—A FEW MATTERS OF MOMENT.

Some, short time ago the Sabbatarian party, assisted by some few indiscreet Teetotallers, succeeded in getting passed through the Houses of Parliament a bill to demolish Sunday Trading. 'Through succeeding so far they picked up new hope and strength, and commenced a Jesuitical agitation in favour of a bill for the total suppression of Sunday Trading. This bill, after its merits having been canvassed and duly discussed in Infant, Ragged, and Sunday Schools—in churches, and in chapels, and also petitioned for from such places, is now before the House of Commons, under the immediate and lordly protection of two "plucky" lords—for as such they described themselves at a recent London meeting.

This bill has been framed specially in the interest of the poor, we are told, and especially in the interest of the poor shopkeeper, who is now obliged to be confined to his shop through the principal part of the Sunday. Now, might it not have occurred to the worthy, scented, and sanctified framers and promoters of this bill, that those poor shopkeepers are at perfect liberty to shut up their shops if they please, and that, as they do not shut them up, there is a pretty clear proof that they do not want to do so, and therefore any legislation in their behalf in the direction intended could only be estimated as a piece of pettifogging, sneaking, chandler's-shop legislation, not in any way in unison with the interests of those "poor people," nor compatible with the wholesome feelings of the liberally-inclined and enlightened portions of the public. But we may find that a different motive altogether possesses these individuals. The interests of large shopkeepers and parsons are well represented in Parliament, and to serve those interests the men there wish by law-made power to swamp the small shopkeepers, by depriving them of the best opportunity they have of getting a livelihood, so that their friends—the men of large capital in trade—may have less men to compete with. Again, by putting a ban upon Sunday Trading in one way, they will have a precedent and reason for doing so in another. It will then be argued that if it is right to close chandlers' shops, newsagents' shops, and green-grocers' shops upon the Sunday, it will be equally right also to close railway stations, steam-boat wharves, literary and scientific institutions, and to prevent cabs and omnibuses plying for hire on that day. The questions will be argued in this way, by the same rule that it is argued that the public-houses should be closed during the whole of the Sunday; for it is taken for granted that the public have profited by the "Beer Bill;"—"so," say the anti-beer-bibbers, "if an arrangement which deprives them of only three hours or so works so advantageously, what a grand effect it would have upon the morals of men if the public-houses were closed altogether upon the Sunday." By the closing of public-houses totally in Scotland on the Sunday "by partially doing so here, now—and be it remembered that this is but another phase of the infamous plan—by attempting to interfere with other trades and callings, we may easily recognise the busy parson-power at work. It is well known that the parsons have in all directions been complaining about their unfrequented churches, and that they have attributed the slackness of their trade to the lax, or free and reasonable, conduct of the people. Of course, as Science day by day develops itself, those gentlemen must know that their black reign is nearing its end. Men must naturally progress, and with their progress will their appreciation of the right and beautiful improve—then will they grow tired of the cant and the dread-inspiring atmosphere of the conventicle, will fee it by instinct, regard it as the home of opprobrious hypocrisy, and as one of tyranny's masked batteries, and seek far away from the scene blurred by moil and mammon, through the aid of the rail and river, a respite from the monotony of every day life. Parsons may step forward, like the stupid, petulant Xerxes, to lash the human tide that breaks the banks of the narrow channel that would confine it, and onward, onward goes, impetuous and unheeding; they may get their lacquey lords to manacle it with their laws, and prate the while of the plentitude of their pluck: but the pluck of the plebeian will then assuredly be roused and made manifest to both parson and patrician. Yes, there ought to be no hesitation in this matter. The band ought to be destroyed at once, for we have no time to spare to guard what small amount of rights we do possess, as it ought all to be employed in getting more; but if while we are working for more we allow those to be taken from us that we do hold, we shall never have finished our contest.

It is, I know, a lamentable thing that men should be obliged to stand on the defensive just now, when they ought really to be on the offensive. Lords have no thought of working-men's time; they will put them to the trouble and expense of holding public meetings to protest against their nefarious measures without the least concern. Why, the very idea of those fellows attempting to regulate how, when, and where working-men shall spend their money, is offensive! What do they know about the poor? How do they know but what it is impossible

for thousands of families in London to make the necessary purchases on the Saturday? If we were all lords we might dispense with shopping on the Sunday, because our pantries and cellars would be well stored.

What immaculate puritans, to be sure, are these representatives of the people! They ought certainly to legislate for the better observance of the Sabbath, to ensure sobriety and the like—those who work their cooks, grooms, coachmen, footmen, and others on the Sunday!—those very same pure men who by bribery and drink get their seats in the House! Yes, those debauchees, with vice playing upon their lips, are fit moralists and exemplars for the nation!

This Sunday Trading Bill is open to many more objections than here urged, but one of the principal ones is, that it denies the right and prevents the possibility of independent action. A man must not, according to its provisions, spend his money as he likes, after he has earned it. If it takes him till twelve o'clock on the Saturday night to earn enough to get provisions with for the Sunday for himself and family, he will be obliged to fast during the whole of the Sunday, because provision dealers will be subject to certain pains and penalties if they attempt to supply his wants.

So, on account of its principal characteristic being sheer tyranny, we may very properly solicit the public to petition, and that forthwith, against its enactment. JAMES FINLEN.

In the same issue is a piece by Ernest Jones – How to Tame the dishonest Press – It begins “The aristocracy have been accused of imbecility. That is a mistake. Depend upon it, there is not a more cunning set of rogues in the world than the aristocracy of Great Britain....”

Green Fields, Pimlico - The meetings be continued every Sunday - J. Finlen (et al) will assist.

**June 23<sup>rd</sup>** 1855 *People's Paper* Long Letter from James Finlen on the subject of R. G. Gammage's 1854 Scrap Book – “The History of the Chartist Movement.” Gammage slanders Ernest Jones and Feargus O'Connor, decries the movement, and sycophantically elevates James B. O'Brien as his leader, in abandoning the cause.

R. G. GAMMAGE'S SCRAP-BOOK.

I have been foolish and persevering enough to read from the beginning to the end what its compiler has designated “The History of the Chartist Movement.” Every man of sense and pride has been able to regard with sorrow or with scorn the attempts made by many to disparage or to destroy the great movement of the poor in favour of political freedom. The efforts of the phlegmatic editors of the *Reasoner*, the whining whelps of the *Leader*, the purveyor of filths through the medium of *Mysteries*, have been, in their way, intended to obstruct this movement, yet to a considerable extent they have been made with impunity. Many were able to regard, as they would a toothless bulldog, the now-decayed “*L'Ami Du Peuple*.” During his futile attempts to swamp in men that love of principle which he in days, when honesty was his pride, assisted to establish. All were prepared to meet positive hostility from positive and natural foes, such as those connected with the bulk of the British press, and other existing profitable monopolies; but few, I may safely conclude, anticipated a few short months ago to find in Mr. R. G. Gammage one of the most vicious enemies to their cause that it has ever had to encounter.

His “History” appears to have been written in obedience to a revengeful feeling. Evidently ignorant or forgetful of the province of the historian, he lets the prejudices of the man pervade his pages, and furnishes the work with a hero. The hero, of course, is no other than that gentleman who is now the chief of a knot of Mormons, meeting at the Eclectic Institute, known as James B. O'Brien. Of this gentleman the writer relates, in a chapter set apart for the purpose, “how he wielded more of the democratic mind than any other man in the movement.” The reader is also informed how, after the death of the hero's father, he was left, “like Byron, to the care of his surviving parent;” and thus, after being told of his prodigious scholarship, how he was flattered and caressed by old ladies, and complimented by Sir Walter Scott, we are impudently led through pages of unseemly sickening adulations, and assured that “Although other men had taken upon themselves the initiation of the movement for the Charter, it was the writings of O'Brien that laid the foundation for that movement.” The hero is then described by the flattering artist as being “In stature considerably above the middle size, of a fine figure, though rather inclined to the sloping posture of the profound student. His general features were often adjudged to be handsome, though we have sometimes heard expressed an opinion to the contrary. His lofty, broad, and massive brow, showed him to be a man of extraordinary mental ability, while that portion of his head, where phrenologists have fixed benevolence, was of unusual development. It is not too much to say, that of all the democratic leaders who figured at the commencement of the Chartist movement, he was undoubtedly the man with the greatest breath of mind.” The foregoing is but a sample of the O'Brienism by which Mr. G. is afflicted, and which characterises his chaotic productions. In what a different manner the deluded writer presents the now-defenceless Feargus O'Connor to the reader. He avers that he had no wish for that body (the Chartists) to be anything more than a mere mob, to conclude every meeting with three cheers for Feargus O'Connor, and the *Northern Star*. And he comes to the conclusion that if O'Connor had consented to the plan which William Lovett had submitted to the country, instead of abusing that gentleman—who is now, it should be remembered, and has been for years, one of the greatest enemies of Chartism in the country—the movement would “have been something better than a record of absurdities, disasters, and defeats.”



Now, R. G. G. apprehends, as he proceeds with his denunciations of O'Connor, "That he may be ensured" for what he records. But he is intrepid, he asserts his right to speak his mind, "To wade through the mass of treachery, falsehood, and folly, that grafted itself on one of the noblest movements that ever engaged the energies of a people;" and he does this notwithstanding that "paltry, meddling, rotten demagogues" might council the prudence of doing otherwise. Brave fellow! The Whigs and the Tories will put you on their back and cry, "Brave Mr. Gammage, we always thought that O'Connor was a blackguard, and that the Chartist movement was nothing better than a record of absurdities, disasters, and defeats," and now, upon your testimony, we have our thoughts confirmed. Bravo, bravo, you're a noble fellow, and you shall be well reviewed by the British press."

In the eyes of this reckless writer, Mr. O'Connor was guilty of an unpardonable sin, because he granted to the family of Mr. O'Brien, while that gentleman was in prison, one pound per week in aid of their support. This act of benevolence is by some agency or other construed by the writer into an effort upon the part of the donor, "to prevent subscriptions flowing in for O'Brien." It will, to the clear-headed, impartial, and, as a necessity, industrious inquirer into this delectable production, distinctly appear that, let Mr. O'Connor's acts have been what they might, as also the acts of those who co-operated with him, they would have been regarded by this brazen censor, the unskilled pupil of the "Irish schoolmaster," with the most unwarrantable suspicion.

If this production will be of any use whatever, it will only be so to the enemies of Chartism. By them it may be profitably used as a text book. They are using it already. Private matters are paraded in it for personal purposes. Mere desultory conversation is dragged in to bear up clumsy concoctions. The most dangerous assumptions appear to be the offspring of malignity, and lack proofs essential to their credit. A biased mind has guided a nervous hand, and the source of the "History" is crooked and unpleasing. An effort has been made for the concluding part of it to create discord amongst those who are now acting honourably in behalf of Chartism. Mr. G. evidently thinks that there are others like himself, stupid enough to abandon a cause because individuals connected with it do not entertain flattering opinions of them. Men's opinions of men ought never to influence in any way the actions of men who work for their cause, and not for themselves. What does it matter to the student of history, what Mr. So-and-So privately said of Mr. So-and-So?. No historians with sense or dignity would even dream of recording such irrelevant rubbish. "Here, in this work, where party and personal interests have to be favoured, the unfortunate writer avails himself of the most foreign and paltry means to insure his pitiful aim. There are many inaccuracies in the work, the existence of which must necessarily justify doubts being entertained of its accuracy in general. The defence of the Stanhope crotchets by O'Brien is unrecorded, because it may be presumed, that as it was the defence of a Tory dodge, it was disreputable certainly to the immaculate hero of his story, whilst the momentary leanings of O'Connor to the Hume party are bitterly commented upon and aggravated.

We have had too much cause to complain of the dishonesty and the offensive partiality of most of our historians, but give me the productions of any of them, the most base even, in preference to the production under consideration. We must still, I am sorry to say, remain satisfied with what W. Wilks and the Tory, B. Disraeli, have recorded of our movement. We have no right to seek favour of any man—no one required it of Mr. Gammage, but all those who thought of him at all, had a right to expect fairness at his hands in the consideration of the dignified and national cause, the features and proportions of which he has endeavoured to bedaub and deform. If the infamous "Whistler at the Plough" had been the producer of the work, we would not have been astonished; then we would merely have put it aside with the remark, the plain and worldly remark, "that we could expect nothing better than a grunt from a pig, or a kick from a jackass;" but it is because something better was thought of Mr. G. that I have taken so much notice of it. And, in conclusion, I may add, that if its author has now any regard for the character of a man, the most useful thing he can do to conserve such character, is to immediately arrange with the common hangman to perform an act, which would be the most useful one of his life, viz. —the demolition of every copy of the History of the Chartist movement. James Finlen.

[We had intended not to notice the despicable tissue of lies and scurrility contained in Mr. Gammage's dirty work; but as Mr. Finlen has sent us the above article, and as we feel he, as one of those insulted by the low trickster, has a right to a word, we seize the opportunity for affording an illustration of the baseness that Mr. G. has resorted to. There are two charges against us contained in his libel-book.

1st. That we tried to rouse O'Brien against Feargus O'Connor.

2ndly. That we made money by a Chartist tour, and got an unequal share of profit.

Our answer is;

1), on our oath, the conversation alluded to with O'Brien never took place; we never were in Lowndes's Court, where Mr. O'Brien is said to have resided, and do not even know whereabouts in London Lowndes's Court is. Moreover, no one need have tried to rouse O'Brien against Mr. O'Connor, since the previous enmity of the former, and his base ingratitude to O'Connor, are but too well known. It is rather strange that, when expressly challenged to come forward, O'Brien should never have dared to bring such a charge against us, face to face. With reference to Mr. O'Connor, no two men had a warmer friendship together, than he and Mr. Jones; they differed politically in reference to Mr. Hume's party, and to the calling of the National Assembly in 1848, but

that difference was public and open before all the world, for it consisted in pursuing a different line of political policy, which was argued in the debates of the Convention, and the columns of the “*Star*.” So much for the secret plotting. Mr. Gammage himself admits that Ernest Jones threw up the editorship of the “*Star*,” sooner than not obey the voice of his constituency, which called on him to sit on the National Assembly—Mr. O’Connor saying that if he sat in the Assembly, he would not continue editor of the “*Star*,” and giving him his choice between the two. Mr. Jones, without a moment’s hesitation, threw up a permanent editorship of two hundred per annum, for an unpaid seat as a delegate of the people—and that, be it remembered, *after* the failure at Kennington Common, when so many leaders were skulking from the movement, like rats flying from a falling house. The still continued private friendship of Ernest Jones for Mr. O’Connor, and the fact that Mr. Jones was the only party who stepped in at the moment of danger, *and saved Mr. O’Connor’s property for him*, when it was about to be seized by rapacious tricksters, speaks enough for his feelings and his conduct towards the unfortunate champion of the People. Had it not been for the efforts of Ernest Jones, Feargus O’Connor would have been robbed of his last shilling, and instead of being nobly cared for at Dr. Tuke’s magnificent asylum, would have been an inmate of a county lunatic asylum.

2.) We are charged with receiving more money in a political tour with Mr. Gammage, and representing ourselves as losers when we were gainers. What a base and wilful lie this is! No one knows better than Mr. Gammage, that our necessary expenses when travelling were more than mere railway fare and lodging; that the conduct of this paper during our absence put us to at least two pounds extra expense (weekly); and Mr. Gammage has (in common with friends in the localities) seen us day by day, pay as much as 3s. and 4s. daily for the sending or reception of letters and parcels from town, which expense, had we been in town, would not have been incurred. Mr. Gammage in the localities knew that part of the money paid by localities was paid for the paper; and no one knows better than Mr. Gammage, (when he talks of money being sent to London), that Mr. Jones at those very times had paid his railway fare out of his own pocket, and when he received back the amount for that same fare from the localities, he remitted it to the printer to support the paper. What an exceedingly base liar that man must be, knowing these facts as he does, to have thrown out the insinuation he has! And that he calls the “History of Chartism.” As to keeping a larger share of money, paid equally for both, than Mr. Gammage, surely Wm. Hill and the other Chartists of Stalybridge, and at other places, will recollect saying to Mr. Gammage his full *share in their presence*, with the words expressly uttered by Mr. Gammage, that he had all along received his “*full payment* out of these few sums which Mr. Jones happened to receive. Perhaps the Chartists of Cheltenham will recollect the payment of expenses made by Mr. Jones there, and his (Mr. Jones’s) refusal to receive the money back—and that Mr. Gammage, without Mr. Jones’s sanction or knowledge, wrote to Cheltenham for the money! What will you say to Mr. Gammage now? This is a brave scoundrel, to bring his dirty charges against a man, whose life for ten years has been one course of suffering and sacrifice for the Chartist cause!

We would say more—if we did not scorn to narrate private conversation, even though true. But we would remind Mr. Gammage of the base and infamous advice he continually gave us, to make the Chartist movement pay highly for his services, and how he blamed us for working so hard—how he boasted that “he took it easy”—and that, after having left the ranks of labour for the “easy” life of lecturing on politics, he was determined to make the movement support him, and never return to work again. Let him deny that if he dare! Thank Heaven, our labour in the cause has not been easy, but almost cruel for its severity—and thank Heaven that, while Mr. Gammage has “raised” himself from toil to comparative idleness, and from a working man to a gentleman, we, on the other hand, have played ourselves from affluence into poverty, sacrificed our career and prospects in the people’s cause—and earned the hatred of every knave and trafficker who seeks to make a living out of the people, and therefore persecutes all honest men.—Ed. P. P.]

*It is unfortunate that Finlen at this time fell for the articulate and self-serving lawyer Jones’ machinations - Gammage eventually proved the more accurate observer. Jones was the editor of the PP and wrote about himself in the third person in order to seem more objective. It was Jones who both praised O’Connor yet undermined him at the same time.*

**June 25<sup>th</sup>** 1855 Sunday - Sunday Trading Bill demonstration in Hyde Park. Karl Marx was present and he wrote that he thought it was the beginning of the English Revolution. The crowd attending grew from an initial 50,000 to around 200,000 with the police trying to prevent the organisers finding a spot to speak from. Bligh, the Chartist stood on a raised part of the ground and began to address the multitude. Finlen rushed to a nearby tree and was quickly surrounded by a crowd forming a circle round him and protecting him against the police. He said "Six days a week we are treated like slaves and now Parliament wants to rob us of the bit of freedom we still have on the seventh." [*Finlen’s part in this demo not confirmed from newspapers I have seen*]

**June 30<sup>th</sup>** 1855 *People's Paper* An Obscure death. The *Finsbury Chronicle* which has contained a series of infamous attacks on Ernest Jones and James Finlen has died with its fifth number. Mr. George Wells had given a crushing answer in vindication of the two Democrats attacked.

Meeting to prepare for a metropolitan conference. The meeting took place in the Chartist's Hall, Doctor's Commons, on Tuesday evening and comprised a large attendance of the leading democrats from all parts of the metropolis. Finlen was amongst the proposed delegates to represent the different localities.

*Plus Jones' attack on the Rochdale Sentinel which had attacked his motives. The paper also contains an article on how Queen Victoria spends her day, after receiving her £368,000 per year.*

**July 7<sup>th</sup>** 1855 *People's Paper* Literary and Scientific Institution – Friar Street, Doctor's Commons. On Sunday (Tomorrow) July the 11<sup>th</sup> Mr. James Finlen will deliver a lecture. Subject: The Three Associations – The Administrative Reform – The national and Constitutional, and the National Charter Association. *Report on the second Hyde Park demonstration of July 1st against the possible re-introduction of the Sunday Bill - the demonstration was even larger than the previous week. Police brutality put down the crowd ending in 150 arrests. The cases were dismissed when huge crowds demonstrated outside the court.*

**July 14<sup>th</sup>** 1855 *North Wales Chronicle* – The Hyde-Park Demonstration – Riots in Belgravia. Public Meeting on the demonstrations. Mr. Jones moved the first resolution condemning in strong terms the violence used by the police, and pledging the meeting to support Mr. Duncombe and the other liberal members of the House of Commons in their endeavour to obtain a strict and searching enquiry into the conduct of the police. Mr. Finlen and other speakers having addressed the meeting, a committee was formed to carry the resolutions into effect, and the proceedings terminated.

**July 21<sup>st</sup>** 1855 *People's Paper* Election of a Chartist Executive – nominations and returns of votes to be sent to Mr. James Finlen of 15, North Street, Fitzroy-square. The State Reform Association – On Wednesday week last an Association under the above name was formed at a large Public Meeting held in the Freemason's Hall, London. An executive committee was formed: Messrs. Jonathan Duncan, Herbert Ingram (Proprietor of the *Illustrated London News*) Matson, Hamilton, Elt, James Finlen, James Bligh, Lockhart, Hodgskin, Wall, William Jones and Ernest Jones. *The Spirit of Freedom* No. 11, July 1855 - contains an 'Address of the International Committee.'

**July 28<sup>th</sup>** 1855 *People's Paper* Newcastle-upon-Tyne nominates Finlen for the NCA executive.

**August 4<sup>th</sup>** 1855 *People's Paper* Ditto other localities - nominations to the committee inc. Finlen

**August 11<sup>th</sup>** 1855 *People's Paper* – Ditto. Devonport to invite lectures from Finlen.

**August 18<sup>th</sup>** 1855 *People's Paper* Chartist Organisation Committee. A meeting of members of the above committee took place on Sunday night last, Mr. Harman in the chair, to consider the propriety of dissolving. Previous to entertaining the question of dissolution, the following propositions were made and carried; 1st that a committee of four persons be appointed to assist, in conjunction with the English portion of the International Committee, in defraying debts owed to Messrs. Side and Leno. Messrs. Slocombe, Finlen, Bligh and F. Leno were appointed....*voted* "That we do now dissolve."

*The Spirit of Freedom* Vol I price 1 shilling The first year's volume of this magazine is now before us. It is a noble effort of labour's own sons to take a proud place in the ranks of literature. They have succeeded! for they have proved that, as a poet and a novelist, and as a politician, the working man may hold up his head with the loftiest of the republic of letters. Mr. Finlen's romance and Mr. Leno's poems are proofs of the fact.

Issue 1 of Vol. II price Three-halfpence will be published on September 18th. In it will be commenced a new History of Poland by Frank Grant. Also Political essays by J. Finlen. Original Poems by J. B. Leno. Translations by a French Refugee. The Autobiography of a shilling &c. [based on Dickens' "Biography of a Bad Shilling" of 1851?]

**August 25<sup>th</sup> 1855** *People's Paper* Doncaster The propriety of Ernest Jones and James Finlen being members of both the Chartist Executive and the State Reform Association Committee was next discussed, and was agreed that they might with propriety, and without any disadvantage to the Chartist movement, be members of both.// Letter from James Finlen about the dismissal of the secretary of the United Brothers Sick Benefit Life and Fire Assurance Company, Mr. George Harrison, for gross misconduct and neglect of duty. Also a letter from Harrison included.

Ripponden - Voted equally for the executive Jones, Finlen and Robinson. Doncaster - ditto

TO THE CHARTISTS REPRESENTED ON THE SOUTH LANCASHIRE DELEGATE COUNCIL,

Friends,—I answer the inquiry made by your secretary more for the sake of courtesy than ought else. When I was nominated by the body to serve upon the new Executive, I was nominated, I presume, because the members of it had confidence in me on account of what I had done, and because they were prepared to accept that as an earnest of what I would do were I again to become an officer of the Association. Had I sought the office for which I have been nominated as a stranger, or as one who had been shifting from one party to another, had I refused at any time to give when requested what assistance I could to the Association, or, in short, had I sought the office at all, I might then have considered your inquiry about my intentions towards the "State Reform Association" as being perfectly necessary; but as things were not so, I consider otherwise. As I have an aversion to promise-making, and more especially while a poll is pending, as all questions ought to have been asked before the polling began, I will make you no promise of a new kind, but ask you to believe me when I assure you it will not be my fault if my future bearing towards the Association will not be of as much or more service to Chartism than it has hitherto been. My mind upon new political associations is perfectly made up. In what way it is made up some of our friends knew from me long before any mention of new associations was made by you through the People's Paper; and when the proper time arrives I will, purely through the influence of my own feelings and convictions, state to you in full the nature and the wherefore of my resolve.

Allow me to say that I am well pleased at your exercising so much care in the choice of an Executive. Men cannot be too careful on such business, for upon the character of the Executive Committee mainly depends the issue of our movement. Those who are to be members of the Committee should be men above the scope of suspicion, or they will lack the confidence of those for whom they are supposed to act. If my connection with any other association has in any way diminished your confidence in me, do by all means record your votes for that candidate who may happen to be favoured with more of your confidence than I am. My course then will be the same as heretofore. Whether I am a member of the Committee or not, I will be a servant of the Association. Thus as now, and as usual, I will be prepared to do anything for the cause, and to do it anywhere. I wish the Chartists in general to know that I am now prepared to visit any part of the country to which they may think proper to invite me. Before long I am to begin a tour in the west of England. After it is completed the friends in Wales, the Midlands, the Northern Counties, also those in Scotland and Ireland may, if they please, command my services. I place myself at the service of the National Charter Association,

And remain, yours, fraternally, James Finlen. 15, North-street, Fitzroy-square, London.\*

[\*A James or J. Finlen appears in the Westminster rate books at 11, Exeter Change, St. Mary Le Strand from 1855 – 1858. This address was the headquarters of the 'United Brothers' Sick Benefit Life and Fire Assurance Company']

Feargus O'Connor died on August 30th 1855.

**September 1<sup>st</sup> 1855** *People's Paper* Votes for Finlen - listed on P. 2., in top 3 for most seats.

JAMES FINLENS TOUR – Mr. Finlen will visit the following places at the time specified: - On the 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> September, Exeter; 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> Devonport; 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> Torquay; 17<sup>th</sup> Tiverton; 18<sup>th</sup> Collampton; 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> **Somerton**; 21<sup>st</sup> **Street**; 22<sup>nd</sup> **Glastonbury**.

Open air meeting in London. - at the Caledonian-road, near the New Cattle Market – on Sunday morning next, September 2<sup>nd</sup> at half past 10 o'clock when Mr. James Finlen, James Bligh and J. B. Leno will address the meeting on the Justice of the People's Charter.

Letter from Wm. Emmerson saying that the State Reform Association was a middle-class body trying to undermine the Chartists and that Jones and Finlen should not belong to both groups.

Tower Hamlets – A few of the friends of the Charter met the London Chartists Committee of Management on the 26<sup>th</sup> at the Suffolk Arms, Church Street, Bethnal Green Road. Messrs Finlen,

Leno and others addressed the meeting after which they proceeded to form a locality at the above house.

Another letter from Mr. Harrison explaining his position and the failing of the Assurance Company, the bombast and arrogance of Mr. Finlen. Protesting his innocence he ends "I take my farewell for ever of public life, and brand you as dishonest villains, designing knaves, and cowardly traitors, whose only object is to deceive the innocent and betray the confiding."

**September 8<sup>th</sup>** 1855 *People's Paper* Mr. Finlen will visit the following places at the time specified: On the 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> September, Exeter; 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> Devonport; 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> Torquay; 17<sup>th</sup> Tiverton; 18<sup>th</sup> Cullompton; 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> **Somerton**; 21<sup>st</sup> **Street**; 22<sup>nd</sup> **Glastonbury**.

No. 1 of Vol. II "The Spirit of Freedom" includes the death of Feargus O'Connor – Editors James Finlen and J. B. Leno letters to J. B. Leno 6, Upper Fitzroy-place, New Road, London.

Funeral Arrangement at Bethnal Green for O'Connor. Open Air Meeting at Caledonian-road Sunday last – Mr. Finlen spoke with great pathos and manly feeling on the great service the deceased had rendered the working classes by his earnest advocacy of their political emancipation..... Meeting adjourned to Sunday Morning the 16<sup>th</sup> when James Finlen and other will address the meeting on the People's Charter. *More bickering about the Brothers' Assurance Company.*

Election for the Executive - The election of three persons to serve the Executive Committee of the National Charter Association has just been concluded, and Messrs. Ernest Jones, Abraham Robinson and James Finlen have been returned by large majorities over the other candidates. Scrutineers: G. Taylor, E. Harman, W. Slocombe.

**September 8<sup>th</sup>** 1855 *Western Times* – Exeter - The War – Mr. Finlen of London will deliver a lecture on the present War with Russia, at the Athenæum on Monday. As the subject is a popular one, a large audience is anticipated.

**September 15<sup>th</sup>** 1855 *People's Paper* JAMES FINLEN'S TOUR – Mr. Finlen will visit the following places at the time specified: On Monday, the 17<sup>th</sup> of September, Exeter, (second meeting); Wednesday and Thursday, the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup>, **Somerton**; Friday and Saturday, the 21<sup>st</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup> at **Street**, Somerset; Monday the 24<sup>th</sup>, at **Glastonbury**. All letters for James Finlen to be sent to the care of Mr. G. Pettey, bootmaker, **Somerton**, Somersetshire.

Exeter - A very able and powerful lecture was delivered to a numerous and attentive audience at the Athenæum, Bedford Circus, on Monday evening last, September 10<sup>th</sup> by Mr. James Finlen of London. Admission 3d and 6d. The place, no doubt, would have been crammed to suffocation but for the news having arrived of the taking of Sebastopol about an hour before the lecture commenced. Bells were put ringing, band playing, and the streets regularly besieged by persons anxious to get the news. The lecturer exposed in a masterly manner the wrong doings of the Duke of Cambridge, my Lords Aberdeen and Palmerston, the Peace (at any price) Party, and although last but not least Napoleon the little, he was well received during the course of his lecture, and sat down amid much applause. Mr. Finlen will lecture here again on Monday evening next. Subject: "State Reform."

Meeting of the Members and friends of the "United Brothers." - at Mr. Rex's Temperance Hotel, to hear from Mr. James Finlen about the affair with Mr. Harrison. Having heard his explanation they expressed their unbounded confidence in the company.

Letter from James Mathers, Late Manager of the U.B.I. company denouncing Finlen as a liar, with details – also mentions that Finlen is anti-teetotalist.

**September 15<sup>th</sup>** 1855 *Western Times* – Lecture on the War –

On Monday evening a lecture was delivered at the Athenæum, [Exeter] on the above subject, by Mr. Finlen, of London. There was a tolerably good attendance – more numerous than might have been expected, considering the excitement in the city consequent on the news of the "Fall of Sebastopol." The chair was taken (in the

absence of Mr. Johns) by Mr. S. Rumson. The lecturer, in the course of his remarks, alluded to the news which had just then been received of the evacuation of Sebastopol by the Russians, but advised his hearers not to be too sanguine, and reminded them how sadly they had been taken in in reference to Sebastopol once before, and that afterwards they found it to be as strong and formidable as ever. The same was the case in respect to Sweaborg. a short time since they heard of its being totally destroyed, but since then they found that the batteries remained intact, which must be destroyed before Helsingfors could be taken. He believed every Englishman would have cause to rejoice at the downfall of Sebastopol. But whilst they were on tip-toe of excitement, he would ask the reason why it had taken not been taken long ago? Why, it was this. If they had had men in Downing-street with as much pluck as those brave soldiers in the Crimea, he believed that old England's flag, which had braved a thousand years, would have floated triumphantly over Sebastopol long ago. He believed that the brave soldiers in the Crimea had had a more formidable enemy in the Aberdeen Government than they had in the Russian Forces. He then alluded to Alma, Inkerman, and the impetuous Balaklava charge, and maintained that more daring courage had never been evinced; but by the Aberdeen administration these noble fellows had been treated like brute beasts. There was also another party – “the peace at any price” men, who had seriously damaged the war. These men, when the riots broke out in Wigan, were the first to send to Lord Palmerston for a regiment of soldiers; but when the Czar trespassed on the territory of the “sick man,” these very men – who were so very anxious about their own property and lives – were the first to raise a cry for peace – “Peace at any price,” with Richard Cobden at their head. That was a specimen of the peace men. Aberdeen did not believe his “friend” Nicholas could be guilty of aggression, but if we had had a Cromwell living he would have detected it at once, and Russia would have been annihilated long ago. There was a friend in our Court, and that “friend” had been the cause of all the delay. The lecturer argued further, that the peace party had spoken out of season. When we were in war, we must push forward to get out of it: Russia had already too much power, and must be curtailed. The lecturer then went on to say that Russia had a destiny to perform, and he read extracts from the will of Peter the Great, wherein it was suggested that rivalry should be promoted, so as to crush Poland. He then alluded to the Duke of Cambridge, who had lately managed to leave the Crimea, and said that if he was at liberty to leave the war, others had the same right; and he ridiculed the idea that because some were of royal blood they should be allowed what was denied to others. It was the same with Prince Napoleon. He was obliged to leave the war, and the next thing we heard of him was that he was leading off a ball with Eugenie. But what was the case in reference to our private soldiers – why, if they lost a leg, they were provided with a wooden one, and perhaps pensioned off with one shilling a day. That was too bad. It reminded him of an officer who went up to an Irishman, and said – “What was the reason you was not at the fight?” The Irishman replied – “That he was just praying that the bullets would be as equally distributed as the favour of prize money.” The lecturer then alluded to the formation of the Polish legion, which he strongly objected to, if it was not to fight for its own independence. He compared the present House of Commons to “dummies” in a grocer's shop, and impressed on his audience the necessity of being properly represented. Sir Jas. Graham he denounced as a political coquette, who had deprived a brave and noble admiral of the command of the Baltic fleet. The lecturer concluded by expressing a desire to see Poland free, - that by crushing Russia we should be destroying despotism, - and counselled his hearers not to think of the expense now, but of the benefit which they would derive hereafter. The lecturer drew forth much applause, and after a vote of thanks to Mr. Finlen and the chairman, the meeting separated.

**September 15<sup>th</sup>** 1855 *People's Paper* More correspondence on the UBAC, some lauding Finlen but Harrison saying he, Finlen, “who is ever careful of the poor man's pence, when those pence are gathered together to the extent of five pounds, will expend in returning the extraordinary amount of business to the office the sum of about one pound thirteen shillings and sixpence; who on his return, had the effrontery to say he did not try to get members to the company while expending their money on his tour, only shareholders.”

*[cost of touring would have been great, shareholders were needed and it was up to agents like Finlen to find members?]*

**September 22<sup>nd</sup>** 1855 *People's Paper* DEVONPORT Mr. Finlen delivered two lectures on the War and Parliamentary Reform, in the Temperance Hall (to between 500 and 600 people) on Wednesday and Thursday the 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> inst. The lectures were admirable. Mr. Horsnill in the chair. TORQUAY Two very able and powerful lectures were delivered in the Temperance Hall, on the evenings of Tuesday and Friday last, by Mr. James Finlen, of London. The first lecture was on the War. He very clearly showed the fallacy of sending dukes, lords, and a set of imbeciles to do the work of a nation; he also showed up in their true colours Aberdeen, Palmerston, Cobden, and the peace party. The second lecture was on “Parliamentary Reform.” In his usual masterly manner, he

exposed the trickery of the shopkeeping classes by comparing them with the rulers of the country. The audiences frequently evinced their pleasure by outbursts of applause. Thomas Hocken, Sec. To the Chartists – letter from James Finlen – He gives thanks for being re-elected to the Executive Committee of their Association. He goes on “The West of England, where I am now engaged, is likely to be more active than usual, even. Large and very useful meetings have been held in Exeter, Torquay, Devonport, and **Somerton**. If you intend to have your new Executive really useful, and they can only be useful by being active, you must do what the friends in the West are doing – convene meetings and set them to work. [*issuing membership cards and distributing tracts*]

**September 29<sup>th</sup>** 1855 *People's Paper* **SOMERTON** – Mr. James Finlen addressed a large audience in this place, on Wednesday evening. The meeting was marked by the utmost enthusiasm. After the meeting several promised to engage in organising the district in behalf of the National Charter Association. **STREET** – Mr. James Finlen delivered two lectures to two of the largest audiences we have seen in Street since his last visit, on the evening of Thursday and Monday. Mr. C. Clinker, schoolmaster, presided over both meetings. Some opposition was offered by the manufacturers of the place; it was met and answered much to the satisfaction of the whole assemblies. Arrangements have been made for other meetings to be held here, and also in the neighbouring towns to which Mr. Finlen is to be invited.

**BRICKFIELD** The members of this locality are earnestly requested to attend at the “Duke of Norfolk,” on Sunday evening next, September 30<sup>th</sup> to make arrangements for a lecture by James Finlen, on October 8<sup>th</sup>.

**JAMES FINLEN'S ROUTE** - Tuesday, October. the 2<sup>nd</sup>, Ripponden: Wednesday, October. the 3<sup>rd</sup>, Rishworth ; Thursday, October. the 4<sup>th</sup>, Sozland; Sunday, October. the 7<sup>th</sup> (afternoon and evening), Rochdale; Monday, October. the 8<sup>th</sup>, Coventry; Wednesday, October. the 10<sup>th</sup>, and Thursday October 11<sup>th</sup> Llanidloes; Friday October the 12<sup>th</sup>, Newtown; Sunday, October 14<sup>th</sup> (second visit) Rochdale; Monday October the 15<sup>th</sup>, Brickfield; Tuesday October the 16<sup>th</sup> Heywood. Mr. Finlen can manage, if required, to be at Halifax and Bradford on the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup>. On the 13<sup>th</sup> he could arrange to be at Shelton. Any time after the 16<sup>th</sup> he will be prepared to visit the other towns in the north. Letters to him care of Mr. A. Paterson, Ripponden, near Halifax, York, and, after the 4<sup>th</sup>, to the care of Mr. John Crabtree, Raspberry-place, Bury-road, Rochdale.

**October 6<sup>th</sup>** 1855 *People's Paper* 'Spirit of Freedom' No. 2, Vol. II -Contents; Original Life of O'Connor by T. M. Wheeler, A Monody over his grave; A history of Poland by Frank Grant, England's Future; A Phase of life; The Gatherer - Robert Owen.

**October 13<sup>th</sup>** 1855 *People's Paper* **RIPPONDEN** Mr. J. Finlen delivered a lecture in this place, on the evening of Thursday, October 4<sup>th</sup> on the “Life and Character of Louis Napoleon.” The meeting, which was well attended although the weather had been very unfavourable, personally testified its approval of the manner in which the lecturer handled the subject; during an address that occupied nearly two hours. Mr. Finlen should have also addressed a meeting at Rushworth the evening before, but although the members of the mutual improvement class there were unanimously in favour of Mr. Finlen giving them a lecture, the Reverend Gentleman who is the president of the class, used his influence with the Trustees of the Chapel and School, who passed a resolution that Mr. Finlen should not have either their chapel or school room to lecture in, verifying what has been so often taught in the People's Paper: that if the people wish to progress, they must have *no Priest for their leader*. A Paterson, Sec.

**LEEDS** On Sunday next, October 14<sup>th</sup> Mr. J. Finlen will deliver an Oration on the Funeral of the late Mr. F. O'Connor, in the Bazaar-room, top of the Shambles, Briggate, at half past six. Mr. Finlen will deliver a second lecture in the same room on Tuesday, October 16<sup>th</sup> at 8 o'clock in the evening.

A Comprehensive Memoir of Mr. F. O'Connor will be published on the 18<sup>th</sup> January 1856 providing a sale of fifteen hundred copies is guaranteed before Friday the 30<sup>th</sup> November 1855. The volume will consist of 200 pages, it will be in first-rate type, and of the best paper. It will be handsomely bound in cloth – lettered in Gold. Price 2s 6d – Author Mr. James Finlen. There will be presented, gratuitously, with each volume, a full length portrait of the author. Besides being an entire and impartial review of the great patriot's career, the work will contain selections from his writings....[*it was never published*]

Mr. James Finlen at Rochdale – Funeral Oration in honour of the late Mr. F. O'Connor. - On the 7<sup>th</sup> October a public meeting was convened to do honour to the memory of the late noble champion of democracy. Mr. Finlen who was present had been invited to deliver a funeral oration. [*Speech, rather rambling, given in full, not transcribed here though - RCS*]. In the evening Mr. Finlen addressed another large meeting, over which Mr. Thomas Chadwick presided. The feeling was excellent. From these two meetings a committee was organised to get up a public meeting to memorialise for the return of John Frost. It promises to be a very influential one.

JAMES FINLEN'S ROUTE. All letters are to be sent, as his route has been changed, to the care of Mr. George Shaw, Newsagent, Park Lane, Leeds. On the 14<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> he addresses meetings in Leeds; then he proceeds to Bradford, where he has to address two meetings also. As it will be inconvenient for him to confine himself to the counties of York and Lancaster much later than the 21<sup>st</sup> of the present month, all persons wishing to arrange with him must lose no time in making their wish known. The friends at Coventry are respectfully informed that Mr. Finlen is not yet prepared to say when he can visit their town.

UBAC advert still gives Finlen's address as 15, North-street, Fitzroy-square.

**October 27<sup>th</sup> 1855** *People's Paper* more shenanigans about the UBAC finances and officers. Letters from George Harrison, Richard Workman and John Washington.

NEWCASTLE-UPON-TYNE - THE REFUGEES.

Two meetings in Newcastle-upon-Tyne to repudiate the Jersey Jackals. "At an immense meeting held on Sunday morning last, in this town, the following resolution was, upon the motion of Messrs. James Finlen and James Watson, carried amidst the utmost enthusiasm: – "That this meeting, while it acknowledges no secondary regard for England, cannot but view with unmixed disgust the conduct of those audacious and servile officials in the Isle of Jersey, who have been labouring to hound on the people of that island against the Democratic Refugees—estranged from their native homes and friends for fighting, like brave men, against the despotism of legitimate rule and in the interests of human freedom.

"It, furthermore, calls upon the people of England, Ireland, and Scotland to protest, through public meetings and that immediately, against the impudent conduct of these would-be tools of Napoleon the Cruel, Francis Joseph, King Bomba, and the other miscreant potentates of Europe; and it, at the same time, firmly pledges itself to do its utmost to maintain in England that sanctuary for the soldier of freedom for which she has so long been famous, and which the foes of freedom fear."

In the evening, at the Chartist Hall, Nun-street, the same resolution was adopted by a meeting unusually large. The treatment to which the Refugees have been subjected appears to have produced much indignation here amongst the people. A Mass Meeting on the Town Moor is contemplated.

"*Spirit of Freedom*" No. 3 of Vol. II contains a life of Cromwell. Finlen still trying to stump up support for his intended 'Comprehensive Memoir of Mr. F. O'Connor' - address 15, North Street.

**November 3<sup>rd</sup> 1855** *People's Paper* New agent appointed in **Glastonbury** for the United Brothers Assurance Company [probably as a result of Finlen's visit].

JAMES FINLEN'S ROUTE – Monday and Tuesday November 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> Coventry; Wednesday and Thursday November 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> Bilston; Sunday November 11<sup>th</sup> afternoon and evening Bradford; Monday and Tuesday November 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> Glasgow; Wednesday November 14<sup>th</sup> Paisley; Thursday November 15<sup>th</sup> Dumbarton; Friday November 16<sup>th</sup> Alexandria; Saturday November 17<sup>th</sup> Airdrie; Monday November 19<sup>th</sup> Lanark; Tuesday November 20<sup>th</sup> Peebles; Wednesday November 21<sup>st</sup> Edinburgh; Thursday November 22<sup>nd</sup> Georgie Mills; Friday November 22<sup>nd</sup> afternoon Leith – evening Kirkaldy; Saturday November 24<sup>th</sup> afternoon Tillicoultry – evening



Alva; Monday November 26<sup>th</sup> Stirling Tuesday November 27<sup>th</sup> Perth; Wednesday November 28<sup>th</sup> Dundee; Thursday November 29<sup>th</sup>; Arbroath; Friday November 30<sup>th</sup> Montrose; Saturday December 1<sup>st</sup> Forfar; Monday December 3<sup>rd</sup> and Tuesday December 4<sup>th</sup> Aberdeen. [*Hectic schedule!*]

**November 10<sup>th</sup>** 1855 *People's Paper* Newcastle-upon Tyne – Chartist Institute, 11, Nun-street. A District Delegate meeting was held in the Hall on Sunday Oct 28<sup>th</sup> - present; James Finlen of London. (resolved on Nov 4<sup>th</sup>: to try and set up meetings for him on his return from Scotland).

**November 17<sup>th</sup>** 1855 *People's Paper* Mr. Finlen's Route - All letters for Mr. Finlan must be sent to the Democratic Hall, 48, Nelson-street, Glasgow.

**November 24<sup>th</sup>** 1855 *People's Paper* Mr. James Finlen's Tour – BILSTON A meeting was held in the large room of the Shakespear Inn, Bilston on Wednesday evening on the subject of dear bread [*calls for public granaries and ban on export of the people's food*] Mr. James Finlen of London was then introduced, and commenced an excellent and powerful address. He gave a most excellent definition of the system of land tenure and was loudly applauded throughout. After his able address, Mr. George White addressed the meeting and urged on them the necessity of joining the National Charter Association.

WALSALL The Assembly Rooms, were, on Tuesday night, the scene of a vast assemblage, composed chiefly of working men, in consequence of an announcement that Mr. James Finlen, editor of the *Spirit of Freedom* was to be present. All passed off quietly. (!?)

GLASGOW A meeting of some of the friends of the late Mr. O'Connor, took place in the Democratic Hall, Nelson Street, on Sunday November. 11<sup>th</sup> Mr. James Finlen was announced to lecture upon the life and character of O'Connor, but as he was labouring under what was then thought to be a dangerous illness, he could do nothing more than deliver a short address upon the question.

PARK HEAD A full meeting of the weavers of this district assembled on Monday evening, November 12<sup>th</sup> to hear Mr. Finlen's lecture on "War, work and wages." The fullest satisfaction was the consequence. [*had made a full recovery?*]

CAMALCHIE – Mr. James Finlen addressed a meeting of working men in the Chartist school-room, here on Tuesday evening November 13<sup>th</sup> upon the question "In what manner do wars interfere with the food of the people." The lecture met with much applause. The meeting closed, after arrangements having been made to assist the Glasgow Committee in erecting a monument to Mr. O'Connor, by giving a vote of thanks to the lecturer and chairman for their services.

BRIDGETON – Mr. Finlen on the War – On Thursday evening 15<sup>th</sup> inst a public meeting was held in Murdoch's Hall, Bridgeton to hear an address by Mr. Finlen of London, on the conduct, causes, and consequences of the war, also taking into consideration the refugee question. The hall was well filled with an audience which Mr. Finlen soon raised to a state of enthusiasm as he depicted, in his own graphic style, the state of affairs in the Crimea, and when glancing at the case of the refugees, and the character of Louis Napoleon. The sensation created by his clear, succinct, and elegant episode on that part of his address was quite a treat, and was received with reiterated applause. [*then spoke about O'Connor and his monument*] assuring them that ere he left for England he would address them again.

GLASGOW – On Sunday evening November. 18<sup>th</sup> Mr. Finlen delivered a lecture to a full audience in the Democratic Hall on "The causes of, and national remedies for, Intemperance." The manner in which he treated it, although it provoked much discussion, gave general and great satisfaction.

The Refugees – On Tuesday, November 27<sup>th</sup> a public meeting of the people of Glasgow will take place in the City Hall to reprobate the conduct of the government towards refugees. Mr. James Finlen will address the meeting (*amongst others*).

Chartists of Lancashire - Mr. James Finlen will return to the north in five or six weeks time and will be prepared to address any meeting that may be convened in Lancashire. Parties wishing for

the services of Mr. Finlen must correspond with John Crabtree, Raspberry Place, Bury-road, Rochdale.

**November 29<sup>th</sup>** 1855 *Glasgow Courier* - **December 1<sup>st</sup>** 1855 *Arbroath Guide* –

A GLASGOW DEMONSTRATION – held in City Hall on Tuesday evening. Speakers were mostly representatives of Scottish Newspapers – the topic: the way the refugees had been expelled from Jersey....“At this stage an orator from London was introduced, of the name of **Finlan** or Tinling (we could not make out which, when a rather tall young man came forward with **bare cheeks, but a strong sandy-coloured brush sticking from his chin, and the hair of his head thrown back in a defiant kind of way.** On the whole he had a decidedly vulgar and singularly self-sufficient aspect. This personage delivered a tremendously powerful address, or at least what he intended to be so. It was almost as good as anything one reads in the proceedings of the French Revolutionary Convention of the olden time. He defended the rights of conspiracy in general – denounced monarchs of all sorts, including kings and queens – spat at aristocrats of all degrees – stated he did not profess to be loyal – and then flayed Louis Napoleon alive, calling the poor Emperor such names as one only hears from a drunken burglar when he is nabbed by the police. The seven dial orator was about to polish off Prince Albert in a similar style, but the meeting would not stand that; and a good deal of discord arose. Upon this Mr. Finlan condescended to let the Prince alone; and then rattled off with tremendous fury to show the beauties (as we understood) of British Republicanism; but here again he did not take, and there were hisses, groans, and tremendous cheering. In the midst of the row the chairman tapped the orator on the back, and he accordingly lowered his tone, and sat down, after giving a few flourishes in a general sort of way. The junior part of the patriots present, and they were the majority, seemed to be quite taken with this man, and cheered him stoutly; but we could notice that the elder class of people looked on with something like astonishment and disgust...Mr. Buchanan [of *The Sentinel*] intervened.. Mr. Finlen then presented himself for a rejoinder, and was received with a tornado of cheering and hissing – the former decidedly predominating, amid cries of ‘let him answer’, ‘fair play,’ “He’s a stranger.” &c. The chairman again tapped the London man on the shoulder and, amid the hubbub, whispered something in his ear when, he retired from the front without insisting on a hearing.

**December 1<sup>st</sup>** 1855 *Paisley Herald and Renfrewshire Advertiser* The Jersey Refugees – On Monday night a public meeting of the inhabitants of Paisley was held in the Old Low Church for the purpose of protesting against the expulsion of the refugees from Jersey, the meeting was numerously attended.

Mr. Robertson proposed the following resolution:- “That this meeting has learned with surprise and regret the violent expulsions of Victor Hugo and his fellow exiles from the island of Jersey, without charge or without proof, or without a trial; a proceeding which we regard as highly illegal, and altogether contrary to the spirit of the constitution of this realm. And when we learn that such anti-English and unconstitutional measures have been taken at the instigation of the despotic ruler of a neighbouring nation, our regret is heightened to indignation, and we hereby enter our firm and solemn protest against such a despotic infringement of the time honoured laws and liberties of this realm. We hereby pledge ourselves to adopt all constitutional means to resist such a ruthless and despotic violation of the sacred rights and privileges of Britain, and all interference with the laws of this nation by any foreign potentate whatever.” The resolution was supported at great length by Mr. James Finlen, of London, and unanimously agreed to. *A second resolution made and passed and copies sent to the refugees; Victor Hugo, Joseph Mazzini, Ledru Rollin, Kossuth and copy of the resolutions sent to the committee of the Polish exiles.*

**December 1<sup>st</sup>** 1855 *People's Paper* At Paisley a meeting was held in the Evangelical-chapel, Baillie Campbell in the chair, and Mr. James Finlen delivered an address so able that it elicited the encomiums of the local press.

**December 8<sup>th</sup> 1855** *People's Paper* The Jersey Outrage – Great Meeting at Glasgow – A gathering took place at City Hall, Glasgow Last week. Mr. Councillor Moir occupied the chair, and said, that now, when we were likely to become a tail piece of the Emperor of the French, it was high time to be up and doing. ....

*Professor Manson, editor of the Scottish Daily News and Mr. Buchanan of the Sentinel moved resolutions which were seconded* “At this stage of the proceedings, an orator from London was introduced if the name of James Finlen. This personage delivered a tremendously powerful address. It was almost as good as anything one reads on the proceedings of our French Revolutionary Convention of the olden times. He defended the system of conspiracy in general – denounced monarchs of all sorts, including kings and queens. The junior part of the patriots present – and they were the majority – seemed to be quite taken with this man, and cheered him stoutly. But what right this person had to play first fiddle in the oratorical line at a meeting of Glasgow people, it is not easy to discover. [*Finlen wanted a rejoinder but was refused by the chairman but the crowd broke out in a storm of indignation – Finlen made a short speech*].

DUMBARTON The friends of democracy had much pleasure in hearing Mr. Finlen give one of his never-to-be-forgotten orations on the evening of Friday the 30<sup>th</sup> of November, taking for his subject “The Wars of Kings and Rights of Peoples,” and I must say he handled his subject in a masterly manner, and met with great approbation from his audience... Chas. Manson Sec.

**December 15<sup>th</sup> 1855** *People's Paper* NEWCASTLE-UPON-TYNE – Chartist Institution 11, Nunstreet - On Sunday evening last [December 9<sup>th</sup>] Mr. James Finlen delivered an excellent lecture in the above institute. He will lecture again on Sunday evening next.

**December 22<sup>nd</sup> 1855** *People's Paper* Newcastle-upon-Tyne - Mr. Finlen lectured in the Chartist Institution on Sunday evening last. There was a numerous audience, which heartily applauded the lecturer for the masterly manner in which he handled his subject.

**December 29<sup>th</sup> 1855** *People's Paper* To the friends and supporters of the “*Spirit of Freedom*” It has been decided to abandon the above journal after a struggle of sixteen months.

*During the end of the year 1855, the International Committee organised meetings of protest against the persecution of foreign political refugees by the British authorities. (One of these took place in the month of November at St. Martin's Hall.) As a part of this movement, an international soirée was held just before the New Year in honour of the exiles, and among the speakers on this occasion was the German refugee Ruge, a friend of Marx's youth. A manifesto upon the question of nationalities was adopted. Substantially, though not precisely in the terms a similar manifesto would employ to-day, this document emphasised the right of all peoples to self-determination, and also affirmed the principle of the nationalisation of land, money, and the means of exchange. It closed with the adjuration, in French, “Vive la Republique Democratique et Sociale.” (“The People's Paper,” January 5, 1856). As a result of this agitation, the persecution of the foreign refugees was discontinued.*

## 1856

**January 19<sup>th</sup> 1856** *People's Paper* To the Shareholders of the Friar-Street Hall [*the meeting hall of the NCA*] – You are particularly requested to attend the above Hall on the afternoon of Sunday January 7<sup>th</sup> at 3 o'clock as important business involving the success or non-success of the place, will have to be taken into consideration [*lists 12 propositions*]. It is no use having a hall unless you are prepared to turn it to proper account. signed William Slocombe, James Finlen.

TO ALL DEMOCRATS We commend special attention to the circular issued by Mr. Finlen on his own account (we do not now allude to that one signed by the names of the Executive, on Chartist business, which no sincere Chartist will fail to act up to) but to that other matter concerning personally our excellent friend Finlen, and publicly the honour of every true advocate popular progress. *Let everyone act in the matter without delay as he values the good name of our cause.*

**January 26<sup>th</sup> 1856** *People's Paper* The Life of Mr. O'Connor – The work will not appear at the time originally advertised on account of not having received the required number of orders.

To all Democrats - we commend special attention to the circular issued by Mr. Finlen on his own account.

James Finlen will deliver an address to the Public of the East End of London in the Lecture Hall of the "Britannia," St. George's Hall, Cannon Street, Commercial Road, at eight o'clock on Sunday evening, February 3<sup>rd</sup>.

The Chartist Circular of Jones and Finlen widely circulated.- THE MOVEMENT - We have received a torrent of replies to the circular issued. In all parts organisation is recommencing. There is a glorious promise. Some of the fruits of our readers will see in this week's issue of cards. Letters of the most encouraging kind have been received from Newcastle, Bolton, Buckley, Coventry, Sutton-in-Ashfield, Sheffield, Rochdale, Stockport, Paisley, Plymouth, Lincoln. Rotherhithe, and Bermondsey, Tower Hamlets and many other places. By this time another circular will be in the hands of the Chartist body. James Finlen and Ernest Jones.

### **January 26<sup>th</sup> 1856 *Daily News* OPENING OF THE BRITISH MUSEUM ON SUNDAYS.**

TO THE EDITOR OF THE DAILY NEWS.

SIR,—A public meeting was held on Thursday evening last, January 24<sup>th</sup>, at the School Rooms, Amwell- street, Clerkenwell, R. Charles, Esq., in the chair, to adopt a petition against the opening of "places of amusement" on

a Sunday. A protest, on the part of the National Sunday League, against the words "places of amusement" as popularly understood being applied to the British Museum, National Gallery, and similar institutions, had been previously forwarded to the chairmen, but was only acknowledged with reluctance, and finally read upon a show of hands declaring for its perusal.

The main resolution was then moved, and an amendment proposed, to the effect, that the opening of national institutions on Sunday afternoon would be beneficial to the working classes, and the community in general. After a lengthened discussion, the amendment was put and carried by an evident and decided majority; notwithstanding which the chairmen, amidst much uproar, declared the amendment to be lost, and precipitately vacated the chair, leaving the *matériel* of his office behind him, and without even putting the resolution to the sense of the meeting. A new chairman was immediately elected, in the person of Mr. Finlen, and the amendment, in favour of opening the British Museum, was carried as an original proposition with acclamations, —I am, &c., WILLIAM DUTHIE, Chairman of the Committee. Central Committee-room of the National Sunday League, Lancaster House, Adelphi, Jan. 25.

**January 30<sup>th</sup> 1856 *The Globe* – The Question of Peace or War – Meeting in Westminster this day. - This afternoon a public meeting was called at St. Martin's Hall, Long-acre, in compliance with an invitation to the following effect extensively circulated – "Do the men of Westminster desire peace at any price?"... Mr. J. Finlen, a gentleman with a **turned down collar and ample auburn locks**, came forward, and said that it had been his wish to add a few words to the resolution, with the spirit of which he agreed. The promoters of the resolution demurred, and he therefore moved them as an amendment. They were as follows:**

"That this meeting has no hope that an indemnity for the expenses of the war will be exacted from Russia, or that terms of peace which England ought to accept will be agreed upon unless the ministers who have entered upon the present negotiations are deprived of office and impeached." The present was a great war meeting in anticipation of the great peace meeting which would take place at St. Stephen's to-morrow, "and which would be presided over by Lord Palmerston." He believed that another twelve months' war would be sufficient to enable the Western Powers to dictate terms of peace to the audacious despotism of Russia. The most perfect chastisement should be dealt out to Russia for the honour and dignity of England (Cheers).

**January 30<sup>th</sup> 1856 *Sun* [*Ditto of the last but different wording*] His amendment includes;**

"The English people had made sacrifices to have Turkey conserved, and the Russian power humbled, but now, at the end of two years' hard fighting, they found strange terms proposed, and they were urged to conclude peace in keeping with the honour of the Russian Czar, and the interests of the Russian people. (Cries of "Shame.") They went to war to preserve Turkey, which had been jeopardised by the policy of Russia, and he did not think that in considering the terms of peace they should consider whether they were advantageous to England, but whether they had procured for Turkey the object for which they went to war. (Cheers) Alexander II was a criminal at the bar of public opinion....Already 100,000 men had fallen in the Crimea by the doing of the English, Russians, Lord Aberdeen, Lord Palmerston, and others, and it was time to prevent its repetition."

[*Much repeated in newspapers throughout the country*]. *The Picture Times* of **February 2** gives a more dramatic version.

**February 2<sup>nd</sup>** 1856 *People's Paper* Public Address by James Finlen – The public of the East-end of London will be addressed by Mr. Finlen, at eight o'clock on Saturday evening, February 9<sup>th</sup> in the Literary and Scientific Institution, Philpot-street, Commercial-road; and on Sunday February 10<sup>th</sup> at eight in the evening in the lecture Hall of the "Britannia," Back-road, Cannon-street, Commercial-road. The public of Greenwich will be addressed by him in the Temperance Hall of that place, on Friday, Feb. 8<sup>th</sup>, at eight in the evening.// Defeat of the "Saints" in Clerkenwell. On Thursday evening a public meeting was held in the Amwell-street School-room, Clerkenwell, convened by a party opposed to the opening of the Crystal Palace, British Museum, and similar institutions on the Sunday. The chair was taken by Mr. Charles A. Pitton and the motions moved and seconded by Rev. Mr. Bailey and Mr. F. Ward. Mr. James Finlen came forward to move an amendment which was to the effect, that the opening the respective institutions on the Sunday would be conducive to the morals and general interests of the working people of London, and that it would be a lasting disgrace to the Legislature were it to refuse to open them. During the moving of the amendment and the speaking in support of it, the meeks were ferocious, they used their utmost efforts to prevent the speaker being heard. The majority of the meeting being in favour of free discussion, they were in time overcome, and Mr. Finlen insisted in plain terms upon the propriety of opposing now and ever all the efforts of the parsons and their creatures. Mr. Hannette seconded the amendment, and was, as well as the previous speaker, vociferously applauded, and Mr. Stuart Murray spoke in support of the amendment. The Chairman then proceeded to put the propositions, and an immense majority of hands were held up for the amendment. The original propositions were never put to the meeting, yet the Chairman declared the amendment lost. This announcement was the signal for a tremendous uproar, the Chairman precipitately left the platform. Mr. Finlen was voted to the chair in his stead. The amendment took the place of the original resolution and was, with a petition in keeping with it, adopted by acclamation by the great assemblage. Votes of thanks were given to James Finlen, Peter Hannette, and Stuart Murray for their services, and the meeting separated.

Commentary on the Great Westminster meeting, impeachment of Palmerston and critique of the other newspaper's reports (on *PP* p. 4).

Letter 'To the Working Classes.' by Ernest Jones and James Finlen;

"Fellow Countrymen! Two circulars have been issued to you by the executive of the Chartist Organisation – the second of which is intended to base your movement on an entirely new foundation – to make it a *working* movement instead of a *talking* one – to substitute *action* for *discussion*, and a *fixed plan* for *vague deliberation*. Depend upon it, this is as it should be; and the response that the appeal made is beginning to elicit, proves that you feel it too. The new basis that we propose for the movement is one that can alone ensure success. Hitherto we have spent years of work in making our movement strong, just that one day of talk might make it weak; we have complained of treason and government spies, forgetting all the while that government had no occasion whatever for such a thing as spies, since a "National Convention" did unconsciously all the work that spies could have performed, and did it much more completely too – blabbed out every secret, told every weakness, revealed every dissension, showed every feeble point, and warned the government against every strong one. Was ever folly comparable to this? Can you be surprised the Chartist movement never succeeded? Could *any* movement succeed when such a course was pursued? Conventions are useful, are indispensable at certain periods – at other fatal. Where we draw the line is this: when you have to found an organisation, and to establish a principle among people – then have a deliberation – then assemble by all means; but, when the movement is founded, when its principles are established, when the basis of its organisation is laid – then no more talking and canvassing, discussing and wrangling, no more telling the enemy and misleading ourselves at the same time. All that ought to be done then is to spread the movement farther and farther, wider and wider, by tract, lecture, and public meeting; to gather up the newly converted portion of the organisation, *quietly* and *imperceptible*; to let secrecy, NOT CONSPIRACY, shroud your movement – and act when you are strong enough – unexpectedly, suddenly, and unshrinkingly. The only public sign of the movement should be the lecture, the tract and the public meeting – all else should be unknown as much as possible. Never put forth your strength, unless you are tolerably certain of victory; never set it in motion on any but a sufficiently important occasion; and never let the world know your real strength – for even if it is great, it is better not to state it; public rumour, government fear,

will make it appear greater than it is – *without any misstatement* on your part, which ought ever to be avoided; for truth is the palladium of a public cause, even as honesty is of a business transaction – while at the same time a public organisation is no more bound to state to all the world, “we have so many members” than a mercantile firm are to reveal how many pounds they possess. But can this be effected, if Conventions assemble, to deliberate on what shall be done, and on what means the movement possesses to do it? Can this be effected if periodical elections for an Executive take place, with the full lists published, telling the government exactly how many members there are in a movement, or at least how many of them take a sufficient interest in the cause to put themselves to the trouble of recording a passing vote? Your own common sense must answer: *Never!*

The new basis that we, therefore, propose for the Chartist movement is one that avoids these evils. In plain English it amounts to this; we, Ernest Jones and James Finlen, ask you, the Chartist body, to entrust your entire movement into our hands – to make us your Executive, and to retain us as such *during your good pleasure* – no periodical election being required – but you having the power to turn us out and appoint others in our stead whenever you think us bad servants, by means of a Convention which should be called for that purpose, and for that alone. We ask you to act up to the details and instructions given in the circulars already issued, and to be issued – *the contents of which will NOT appear in the public papers* – we ask you to entrust the utmost possible amount of funds to our hands, to leave to us the appointment of lecturers and missionaries, and to be implicitly guided by us in every public act of our movement and every political step to be adopted; we ask you, in fine, to constitute yourselves AN ARMY, and make us its GENERALS. If you do so, we pledge ourselves to lead you to victory. On our side, we undertake to adhere unswervingly to the People’s Charter, and to wield the popular strength for its attainment – and for that alone; we undertake not to involve you in any turbulent or ill-advised courses, and to call a convention for the election of a new Executive whenever a majority of your body shall demand the same. More than this we say not; all else must be based on confidence. Without such confidence nothing can be achieved. We see our way clearly in the plan proposed – we know how the Charter is to be gained, and we are determined to gain it for you, if you act upon our propositions. But, to go on in the old track, is useless. We have now struggled many years in the cause – and are resolved not to waste the best years of our lives any longer in working on an impracticable basis, whereas we are prepared to devote the whole of our lives to the people’s cause, if we are allowed to work in a way that promises success. It is useless to struggle for the sake of struggling and end in certain failure; we are not the men to do so; we can better employ our time; but *trust us, follow us, obey us*, even as a democratic soldier may consistently *obey* a democratic general – and no power under heaven shall long keep the Charter from the people. Events are about to transpire – circumstances are opening out – combinations are on the horizon – that make us speak with confidence. DO YOUR PART – follow our guidance – *without discussion, doubting or wavering* – and RESULTS WILL FOLLOW ALSO! Our second circular is now before you, we again draw particular attention to the *fifth* paragraph. When you have had that circular before you a sufficient time, and acted up to it to a sufficient extent, a third will be issued containing a VERY important matter. Meanwhile, we impress on every reader the following;

1. *Let no one neglect attending to the circular just issued. It is issued in behalf of the holiest of all causes – at the most critical of all periods in the history of the world. It is labour’s money spent in labour’s cause – and he who wastes or neglects it, commits a cruelty and a sin to his brethren who have struggled for the sake of the poor, and to the poor for whom they have struggled.*

2. *Let everyone who reads this send us the names and addresses of all the democrats they know, in whatever part of the United Kingdom they may reside. We need addresses above all. Many have been sent us – we need far more. Do not neglect this. Send us the names and addresses of your friends. We publish elsewhere a list of towns where we need the addresses of friends – but those are only a few out of many – wherever you know of a democrat, near and far, send us the direction by which a letter might reach him. Ernest Jones - James Finlen. All communications to be addressed to Ernest Jones, 143, Strand, London who acts as secretary to the movement. All money orders to be made payable at the money order office, Tottenham-court Road, London to James Finlen, who acts as treasurer.*

**February 9<sup>th</sup> 1856** *People’s Paper* Endorsements printed for the Jones/Finlen proposal from all round the country.

Public discussion on Monday the 18<sup>th</sup> and Tuesday the 19<sup>th</sup> of February in the Lecture Hall, Newcastle-on-Tyne between Mr. James Finlen and Mr. Richard Hart. Subject: “Is there any political programme so well calculated to insure for the people their full political rights as the People’s Charter”? The affirmative will be taken by Mr. Hart – the negative by Mr. Finlen.

Mr. Finlen will lecture in the Chartist Hall, Newcastle on Sunday the 17<sup>th</sup> instant at 7 o’clock in the evening. Subject: “The Crimes of the Peace Makers.”

The O’Connor Fund – Received by Ernest Jones – brought forward £22 3s 9d, Paid Messrs. Slocombe and Finlen to pay balance of Lovett, Undertaker’s Bill £4 14s 0d, Previously paid £11 11s 11d.// The Orphan |Children of the late Henry Jeffrys. An adjourned meeting of the committee

to receive subscriptions in behalf of the orphan children of the late Henry Jeffrys, was held on Sunday evening last, at the Rising Sun, Calendar-yard, Long Alley, Mr. Smith in the chair. Messrs Finlen and Slocombe were added to the committee. [The City of London Ladies' shoemakers Society was running the committee for the orphans of Henry Jeffrys.]

IMPORTANT - It is now as it was at the first moment, that the circular issued by Mr. Finlen, and the business it relates to should be attended to by every Democrat. Not more than one third the required sum has been received. Unless the whole amount mentioned in the circular be forthcoming IMMEDIATELY the result will not only be harassing but DISGRACEFUL. All those who have had the circular, and still hold it OUGHT TO GET IT FILLED UP AT ONCE AND FORWARD IT WITHOUT DELAY WHATEVER- FURTHER DELAY WILL BE DANGEROUS. Ernest Jones.

**February 16<sup>th</sup>** 1856 *People's Paper* Page 1, column 1 has "Important Notice" referring to the response and lists observations. Signed **Ernest Jones and James Finlen**, it has a PS "We are asked by a friend in Mold whether the money subscribed will go towards a lecture fund; we reply that it will be spent in all ways most conducive to the furtherance of the cause, and most required by the movement. *A weekly account of expenditure and receipts will be published.*" It is followed by the plea, repeated from the previous week, by Jones and Finlen. Despite almost all the regions supporting the plan, a few such as LEEDS state "we will not place all power in your hands, for we do not like the centralization," but will otherwise assist.

Shareholder of the Friar-street Hall - 9 of the 12 propositions have been adopted, the remaining three to be discussed next Sunday. Then a Committee of Management needs electing. Finlen and Slocombe.

Anniversary Commemoration - on 25<sup>th</sup> Feb to celebrate the European Revolution of 1848 and the Annual commemoration of the Alliance of the Peoples - by the International Committee and the "Commune Revolutionaire," at the Literary and Scientific Institution, John-street.

Public meeting at the British Schoolroom, Cowper-street, City-road on Wednesday evening next, Feb. 20<sup>th</sup> in connection with the National Sunday League, in favour of opening the British Museum, National Gallery and similar institutions on Sunday Afternoons.

**February 23<sup>rd</sup>** 1856 *Newcastle Guardian and Tyne Mercury* Full report on 'Discussion in Newcastle on the People's Charter - between Mr. Finlen and Mr. Richard Hart.

*[Basically Mr. Hart supported the good old days of the distant past when Englishmen were, in his opinion, better off, while Finlen looked to the future when men could elect their representatives to improve their lot. Mr. Hart pointed out that the republic of the USA with its elections still had slavery, and universal suffrage in France had brought about despotism.]*

**February 23<sup>rd</sup>** 1856 *People's Paper* Much more support from the provinces for the 'rule by Jones and Finlen' "two great and qualified leaders of the Chartist movement."

**March 1<sup>st</sup>** 1856 *People's Paper* CURRENT NOTES - Letter from Benjamin Armfield, Doncaster dated February 16 1856,

Sir, I am ready and willing to render all the assistance in my power to the better organisation of the Charter movement, for the spread of our principles in instructing the people in a knowledge of their social rights by tract, lecture and public meetings, and in using all the moral means in our power for the achievement of our object, but I cannot acquiesce or take any part in a secret movement; it looks too much like, and could be easily construed by the Attorney-General into, conspiracy. You assure us that there is nothing illegal or dangerous in the plan, but this assurance is not consistent with the following recommendation: "Act when you are strong enough unexpectedly, suddenly, and unshrinkingly." In my opinion that advice implies the use of physical force. I am of the same opinion as our late lamented champion Mr. O'Connor on physical force, "that they who marshal it destroy it," not only it but themselves too. I have no desire to see you and Mr. Finlen become victims to your patriotism and love of freedom. Apart from a physical force movement I sincerely believe you are calculated to do good service to the cause of political and social equality. I have no faith or confidence whatever in a physical force revolution even if successful. The history of the two French revolutions of 1739 and 1848 furnishing sufficient evidence to convince any rational being that Democratic institutions can't be maintained

when the great mass of the people are ignorant of their rights and duties. When the people of the country shall have acquired a knowledge of their political and social rights, they will get and keep them, without the aid of physical force. If the new organisation is not a physical force organisation, I can't imagine what there is to keep secret from the members of the association. I am willing to act on the advice and suggestions of the executive when I know what I am wanted to do, but I don't like this rendering blind obedience, this groping in the dark: there is nothing reasonable in it. As for keeping our strength or weakness a secret from the public or Government, it is impossible. They know that the Chartists are not the men to let important events (to which they are opposed) pass quietly by, if they could offer an effective opposition. They would take the absence of our opposition as evidence of our weakness. Our numbers might be known by the use of spies or without, if they only referred to the weekly subscription list in the *People's Paper*. Sir, in conclusion, I hope Palmerston won't make this secret movement an excuse for making a coup d'état on the Democracy of Great Britain. Yours fraternally. Benjamin Armfield - followed by Jones' response to this:

*I feel it a duty to give a special and personal answer to the above manly and temperate letter of a veteran and respected member of the Democratic body. He writes under a mistaken impression. Who has ever talked of a secret conspiracy? Who has ever hinted at physical force? The paragraph our friend quotes does not apply to conspiracy in secret, but to blabbing out too much. We are not bound to tell our enemy our weakness or our strength—or inform him beforehand of our intentions. The Whigs lay the plan of their campaign—but don't tell the Tories—the Tories do the same and don't tell the Whigs. Then why should we, the Chartists, tell either? The Whigs, or the Tories, meet at the houses of their respective leaders—they hold conclaves of their chiefs at the Carlton Club, or at Derby's or Palmerston's, they arrange their electioneering tactics or their Parliamentary campaign, but who know beforehand what it will be? None, but the initiated chiefs, the confidential few. Then, when the time is ripe, when their Organisation is prepared, and their opponents are most unprepared, they come down upon them like a sudden storm and frequently from that very fact, obtain the upperhand. Far be it from me to recommend imitations of Whigs or Tories, aristocrats or monarchs, in any point but one: centralisation of force, and keeping the secret of ones own councils. Tell everybody what you mean to do; and ten to one you never will be able to do what you mean. With conventions and deliberative assemblies you cannot keep your counsels secret—and it is merely to counsels and to policy that I intend the term secrecy to apply, The words not conspiracy were specially added in the address issued. Secrecy of counsel is a very different thing from conspiracy in action, The former is indispensable—the second unpracticable in a country like ours.*

*With regard to physical force, what have I said about it? I neither adopt it, nor repudiate it. The use or the avoidance of physical force is entirely a matter of circumstances. I believe the people of this country can obtain their rights without an actual resort to physical force. I conscientiously believe this—and I hope this belief is well founded. If it is not, I am neither such a fool nor such a coward, as to shrink from physical force if needed. I do not feel myself inferior to a Frenchman, a Pole, an Hungarian, a German, an Italian, or a Yankee. I believe I could fight as well as they, and I believe the English people, under similar circumstances, would do so likewise. Therefore do not let us have any more of this miserable twaddle about physical force. If it is wanted, we'll have it—if it's not, we'll do without it—and there's an end of the question. As far as that matter goes—I only wish I'd 100,000 of the Lancashire and Yorkshire men at my back, and all the peers, aristocrats, bishops, cotton-lords and usurers before me—and I'd give the lookers on a good account about two hours afterwards. But this is altogether beside the question—nobody is talking of physical force. I only mention it as a protest against pusillanimous and sweeping repudiation of its use—than which nothing can be more ill judged or more absurd.*

*Mr. Armfield justly observes that physical revolutions fail, if popular knowledge does not accompany them, and instance France. I fully agree, though you sometimes have to make physical revolutions to GET AT popular knowledge. Don't forget that, my friend!*

*Mr. Armfield cannot conceive "what there is to keep secret from the members of the Association" if it is not a physical force movement. But that is precisely the very thing that could not be kept secret from the members! The only "secrecy," I repeat, is, with regard to our plans and intention?" —and if those are published to all the world and talked over in public convention —with details of our numbers, our dispositions, and our power, good bye to our movement. We have had rather too much of this, He says it is impossible to keep our strength or weakness concealed from Government, because we should not let great events pass quietly by - by which I presume he means we should by public meetings etc., protest against, or pronounce in favour of, some public acts. Precisely so. But would that tell the Government how many members we had on our books, or how much money we had in our exchequer? I should rather think not.*

*As to spies finding out the number of our Association a throughout the Chartist movement, it would require a machinery more costly than that of the church—and even that would fail to obtain information of what was known to the Executive alone. Mr. Armfield says he will act on the advice of the Executive when he knows what he's to do.*

*He shall be informed—but it is precisely that friends like him may—and foes may not, be informed, that the new basis of organisation has been proposed, and is now endorsed by responses from nearly two hundred towns and villages of Great Britain, 160 of which have been already published in this paper!*

*Thus much for the special points urged by our friend. Now for the general bearings.*



*Our friend seems apprehensive of governmental molestation. He fears it will come. Of course it will. Does he—do you—does any one—suppose the rose of liberty is plucked without the thorn of persecution? Do you think the Charter is such an easy thing to win that you may have it by asking for it? Do you suppose government won't act in its own defence? As long as your movement is insignificant, you may continue it with impunity, like a pretty plaything to amuse you—when it becomes dangerous you have to fight for it—fight either in the Courts of law, the prison cells, or elsewhere, as the case may be. Mr. Armfield fears the present organisation might be construed as illegal, Why! if they chose, government could construe the Lord's Prayer into high treason. If there are no laws for it—they will make laws for it. Every child knows that—you know it, I know it—and yet I act—and expect you to act as well. It is a question of generalship. We may prove better tacticians than our foes, and if so, we shall escape the casualties and win the day. I for one, undertake to guide the movement scathlessly and victoriously through the pitfalls government will prepare, if the people confide and rally round our friend FINLEN and myself. The conduct of a great movement is a matter of such fine tact, that the slightest mistake, one word too much or too little, one act underacted, or carried too far, may ruin all.*

*A revolutionary movement is a thing for the statesman's cabinet, not for the debater's platform—it should be the secret of the general's tent, not the talk of trench and bivouac—and therefore I say: entrust it to chosen leaders—rally round them—and act as they direct—so long as you see them remain true to the principle, the details of Chartism, and the cause of Democracy. Beyond that—not one hour! and your sound sense could easily detect the slightest deviation! That may be safely left to you!*

*There are some people who will neither do anything themselves nor allow anybody else to do it for them, There are some people so excessively 'Democratic' that from very excess of Democracy they oppose all vigorous action that may aid their cause. Accordingly, Mr. Lowry, a Chartist of '39, asks: what right have I to make such a proposition?:—I'll tell him, the "right" given, by having beheld a succession of miserable twaddlers wreck the movement, of petty enviers divide the movement, of mercenary knaves betray the movement, and of despicable cowards desert the movement, when the cause might have been made victorious four times, but for their knavery, their cowardice and malice. The "right" given by having seen the efforts of great and good men paralysed by the conspiracies of little and bad men—all rendered possible because our organisation was planted upon a false basis, of which division seemed to be the corner-stone—so industriously was it provided for by the very constitution of our body.*

*The "right" given by witnessing millions suffering in misery, and units sweltering in magnificence, and by knowing that all this might be changed—oh God! how easily! if the great democratic machine had but the hand of a man laid on its leverage, instead of the palsied touch of the dotard, or the slippery palm of the mercenary hireling.—Mr. Lowry asks what right have I, individually, to speak all this? I'll answer him: the right that Galileo had to say, "The world moves!"—although the world denounced it heresy to say so. The right that Luther had to proclaim an Antichrist, though lukewarm friends sneered and fiery enemies surrounded him. The right that every man has to speak the truth according to his conscience.—But, worst offence of all! what right have I to say, "follow me"—"entrust the movement to my hands?" The right that Rienzi had, when he rose alone among a fallen people, and cried, "Follow me," and led them to liberty and glory equal to the earliest days of yet unfallen Rome. The right that Columbus had when he said, "Follow me," and led the fortunes of Spain to a new world, destined, how greatly! to eclipse the old. The right given by the WARRANTY WITHIN, by no patent from without, whether from royal parchment or from platform votes—but by the knowledge of being capable of performing great acts, and producing results that can change the destinies of a nation, if a response is made to the summons I have given, and power for action is entrusted to my hands. Where has been the fruit of your previous course?—what sign of progress does it give?—have you not tried it long enough to be convinced of its utter folly? I have tried it with you for eleven years of arduous service in your cause—it is not lightly, therefore, that I have proposed this change—but, seeing its necessity, I am not such a moral coward as to shrink from proclaiming it, or from personally taking the responsibility of the course I recommend.*

*Happily, too, I do not stand alone—but one in every way qualified and entitled to equally participate in the leadership of our cause, has joined me in appealing to its advocates—and those, in vast and constantly increasing numbers are enrolling themselves under the banner we feel strong enough to lift, and confident, with popular support, of maintaining victoriously to the struggle's end. Ernest Jones*

TWO PORTRAITS – [The following choice painting is from the columns of the *North of England Advertiser*.] Mr. James Finlen and Mr. Ernest Jones are the chosen representatives of the Chartists. Mr. Finlen was brought down, by the Chartist Party in Newcastle, in consequence of some questions which were put to Mr. Hart, in his lecture in this town a few weeks ago. He is a man under 30 years of age, rather youthful and prepossessing in appearance; and, if he may be taken as a fair specimen of the Chartist body, we should be inclined to think its intentions are good at any rate, whatever its achievements may be. He has an **intellectual-looking countenance**, and *thinks so*; but in capacity of mind his is not that of a great leader. Mr. Finlen's **hair is thrown back so as to expose his face and brow to best advantage**, and as if he thought he had a face and brow worth

looking at, and it is indeed a face and brow not to be ashamed of. **We like Mr. Finlen**, and the majority of people would like him. Yet it is difficult to say why he is liked; for his faults are neither few nor difficult to discover. We know nothing of Mr. Finlen's past history; but should guess that he was rather precocious as a child and certainly a spoilt one. We can imagine that the six points of the Charter were early laid before him, and have filled his brain ever since, to the exclusion of almost all other points of wisdom. Like all men possessed of only a single idea, he is exceedingly full of vanity and conceit in connection with it. We repeat – we like Mr. Finlen, and if the world is no better it will certainly be no worse for Mr. Finlen having lived in it. [*the author then goes on to give a negative portrait of the dark Mr. Hart*].

LEEDS Mr. James Finlen delivered two lectures in this town on Sunday the 24<sup>th</sup> Feb. He appropriately introduced unto them the dangerous designs and doings of David Urquhart, and cautioned his audiences against him. Although there were some of Urquhart's followers present, amongst whom was one who is in the habit of publicly promoting his views, and defending his character, not one word was offered in his defence or in opposition to what Mr. Finlen said of him. It is considered by all persons who really know what Urquhart's intentions are, and what his past conduct has been, that he ought to be opposed in all directions. Mr. Finlen's exposure of him here is mentioned with much satisfaction.

“The complete enrolment of the United Brothers Assurance Company. On Monday last a grand banquet took place at the Bell Hotel, Exeter Street, Strand for the purpose of celebrating the complete enrolment of this Company” “The income of the company now amounted to 500*l.* Per annum and policies were effected to the amount of 8,000*l.*” “Mr. Finlen in a speech adapted to the toast, most ably responded.”

More directions for the Chartist Movement from Jones and Finlen.

**March 8<sup>th</sup>** 1856 *People's Paper* Continued reports on the Charter movement by Jones and Finlen. Urquhartism Stripped – Letter 1 – John Finlen's account of Richard Urquhart's Tory vision of the future, based on the past. Finlen gives a somewhat simple hashed version of history from Alfred the Great to 955 pointing out the injustice and unfairness of the Anglo-Saxons.

*This and following issues give many more districts approving the Jones/Finlen movement.*

**March 29<sup>th</sup>** 1856 *Wells Journal* ADMINISTRATIVE REFORM - On Tuesday night a public meeting was held at St. Martin's Hall, Long-acre, in order, in the words of the advertisement, to "consider the necessity of a vigorous effort to counteract existing abuses in the administration of the affairs of the country, to expose corrupt influences and favouritism in Government appointments - the consequent inefficiency of the public service and enormous increase in taxation." Mr. Smedley, the High Bailiff of Westminster, presided, but the attendance was very scant. Mr. Bell, who attended as one of a deputation from the Administrative Reform Association, and as an inhabitant of Westminster, proceeded to answer the question which he said had often been asked, as to what Administrative Reform was; and to meet the arguments, that it was indefinite in its purpose, too extensive in its object, and brought forward, and advocated at the wrong time. [*some inconsequential discussions followed, then -*] Sir. J. V. Shelley, M.P. moved the following amendment "But that, inasmuch as the Commons House of Parliament does not, except in name, represent the people, no appeal for redress to that House, as at present constituted, is likely to be attended with a satisfactory result; and that a complete and permanent removal of existing abuses can only be expected as the result of a reform of the House of Commons, including the vote by ballot." Mr. Whithurst seconded the amendment. Mr. Bell expressed his readiness to accept the amendment - Mr. Finlen (said to be a Chartist) presented himself to address the meeting; but the High Sheriff said that the meeting was confined to "electors of Westminster," (Uproarious shouts followed this announcement, and the general feeling appeared to be that the meeting was a public one.) The Chairman then said that he should be happy to hear Mr. Finlen; but it must be distinctly understood that he would not put an amendment upon an amendment - Mr. Finlen said

that he would propose what he had to move, as a rider. - Several persons ejaculated that there was no amendment before the meeting, inasmuch as Sir John Shelley's amendment had been incorporated in the original resolution. - The Chairman declared, however, that he would not put an amendment upon an amendment; and eventually Mr. Finlen retired. Mr. Breckton supported the resolution in general terms, but being somewhat discursive in his remarks he was not permitted to proceed with them. - Mr. Finlen then came forward;

He said that there had been nothing definite yet proposed, and what the country wanted was something palpable, something which could be seen, felt, and valued. (Cheers) He proposed the following amendment: "That while this meeting acknowledges and deplores the corrupt and corrupting practices of the Administration, it cannot rightly conclude that the Administration can be reformed to the extent needed until a radical reform takes place in the House of Commons. It is also of opinion that the House of Commons cannot be reformed until such reform takes place in the electoral system as would be guaranteed by an act giving universal manhood suffrage, the opportunity of voting by ballot, the payment of members of Parliament, equal electoral districts, annual Parliaments, and no property qualification; and that no association is worthy of support unless it has such reform for its object."

The amendment was seconded by Mr. Wells. After some noisy discussion, the Chairman having put the amendment of Mr. Finlen, declared it to be negatived, and he then took the sense of the meeting upon the original motion (with Sir J. Shelley's addition) which he also declared to be negatived, observing, "Neither the original motion nor the amendment is carried." This was received with some laughter, and a vote of thanks having been passed to the High Bailiff, the meeting quietly dispersed. [also reported in the *Daily News* of March 26th and several other London papers]

**March 29<sup>th</sup>** 1856 *People's Paper* Saturday evening discussions – the Society of West-end debaters meet every Saturday evening in the large subscription room, at the Old Bell Tavern, Wellington Street. On Saturday April 5<sup>th</sup> Mr. J. Finlen will open the following question: "Is Urquhartism disgraceful?" Report on Administrative Reform – Meeting in St. Martin's Hall on Tuesday evening in which Finlen took part – pages 1 and 5.

Urquhartism Letter II – James Finlen.

**April 5<sup>th</sup>** 1856 *People's Paper* Fourth Anniversary of the *People's Paper* and Welcome to James Watson – The Banquet in celebration of the above will be held on Monday, April 14 at the Bell Hotel, Wellington Street, Strand, at half-past six o'clock precisely. Ernest Jones, Chairman. W. B. Fawley, Vice Chairman. **James Watson, Doctor Marx**, (the celebrated German Exile), **James Finlen** and other well-known continental and English friends of Democracy will be present, and address the company.

*Under the title CHARTIST MOVEMENT Jones and Finlen issued the following extraordinary statement - presumably concocted by Jones;*

EXECUTIVE ADDRESS Friends,—You will perceive that our labours are bearing fruit—that the Chartist movement is becoming, gradually, a powerful reality—that every week towns and villages are placing themselves in communication with us, which are either entirely new to Democracy, or in which Democracy has long been dormant. The obtainment of the Charter is merely a question of numbers; the obtainment of the needful numbers is merely a question of time, and the length or shortness of that time entirely depends on the amount of funds wherewith you supply us, as on that depends the amount of tract distribution and organised machinery we are able to put in motion.

In making these remarks, and in pointing to our cheering progress and its *infallible result*, if duly followed up, we repeat, the Charter is certain, the Charter will be ours, *if the course we have taken is not thwarted*—but we are not prepared to sacrifice our political reputation, perhaps our liberty and lives, for even in the most moral and constitutional movements leaders ever jeopardise both when opposing an infamous oligarchy—we are not, we repeat, prepared to sacrifice liberty and life to divided councils, bickering, rant, and treachery. What is more, we are not prepared to re-create a movement merely that it may be knocked down at the eleventh hour, at the very point of success, by knavery, folly, or imprudence. If our plans are in our own keeping, we know they are safe—no spies can get at them—no oligarchy can counteract them—no letter-opening can find them out, *for no letters will contain them*—but a vast power is raised up, *without conspiracy*—the world sees it growing; but, like the gathering storm of heaven, it knows not which way it will direct its wrath; it knows not its extent; it merely sees the outer form—greatening and spreading all around—but where the storm will burst, and how, remains unfathomed. So revolutions (however legal, peaceable, and moral)

should be guided—so only can they conquer. The enemy can not counteract that of which he knows not the nature—he can not betray that of which he has no knowledge. Therefore, we abide unswervingly by our plan. But once throw open the movement to discussions, candidatures, and elections, to independent isolated councils, and desultory action, our enemies need but send their emissaries, division is created, and all is lost. We refuse to place the movement, we refuse to place ourselves, in that jeopardy. When we alone are responsible, we know we are safe; we know the cause is safe as well, and if the masses organise on that basis, when the hour for action comes we shall know what power we can count on, we shall know that we can count on it in time, and that the precious moment will not be lost in getting opinions, in squabbling about straws, in meeting objections, or in conciliating dissent—and that our power will not be neutralised by letting everything out in these discussions that ought to be kept from the foeman's eye; or perhaps by the publicity and squabbles of an election coming on, just when promptitude, secrecy of council, and centralised action were most needed; or by giving up this or that point, to secure the co-operation of some misled portion of our body, which, had the floodgates of dissension not been opened, would have marched on unswervingly amid the stern discipline of our ranks.

No! we repeat, we have had too much of this; our cause shall not be so wrecked, so murdered again. As to the objection of the Manchester Council, that to obtain a Convention for deposing the Executive, would lay the movement open to intrigue and division as much as the old mode, we answer: *that is a strong argument in favour of our plan*, since it is an admission that Conventions and Elections are the very source of bickering, disunion, and ruin, and our plan avoids them at least as much as possible. But, we repeat, something must depend on personal confidence something must depend on individual character; act as you will, you cannot avoid this—then, we say, select your men, reflect well, choose well, and, having chosen—*trust*. Though there may be danger here, it is less than in any other plan. Want of confidence has destroyed as many movements as want of honesty in leaders. If we cannot trust each other, all is at an end. Look at the past of those you choose: it answers for the future. Those who were true in times of power and of danger, when governments did all they could to *buy* and *bribe*—those who were true in times of weakness and dismay, are not likely to desert, when the movement is rising around them, *with* them, *is* them, *by* them,—when all that honourable ambition can desire is wound up for them in the success of that movement—and when oligarchs and monarchs can have no fame so great to bestow, no honour so high to grant, no power so mighty to delegate, as that which would result from the successful leadership of the noblest and truest cause. Such men, men in such a position, can not be bought or bribed, for dishonesty can bring no reward so high as that which honesty is sure to give! It is only when there are many hands, any two, or three of whom, being bought, are enough to divide, paralyse, and destroy the movement, that bribery treachery is to be feared—for among so many, some are almost certain to be venal, and their price is not too high for governments to pay. But the recognised heads of Great Britain's Democracy, with the certainty of victory before them, are no more to be purchased than the mightiest monarch in the world, for even were they sordid, mean and venal, no power on earth can pay so high a price—no one has the reward to give.

Therefore, we say—trust in the Executive of two, whose appointment you have so unanimously endorsed; swerve not from that centralised action which must prove invincible, when sufficiently matured—roll on the concentrated power of the nation, with the oneness, the decisiveness such a guidance gives—the concentrated action of one brain—the power of organised millions. Bring those two together, and you have victory; let many act, think, discuss, and you have division, helplessness, and a laughing stock. Throughout history, where the two have been conjoined, victory has followed. Rienzi led, the Romans conquered. Had there been a dozen Rienzis all would have been lost. That concentration has been tyranny's strength. Napoleon made the *coup d'etat* through it. Had there been a dozen Napoleons plotting it, it would have been a miserable ridiculous failure. Let Democracy thence take a lesson of power, of unity, of centralised action, and secrecy of council. The same power used for infamous ends by a tyrant, may be used for noble ends by a patriot. By precisely the same plan of action Rienzi liberated Rome, and Napoleon enslaved France. In the time of struggle, have one head—one dictatorship, if you choose so to call it—(though that can NOT be a dictatorship, which the people can remove any one day by one vote of the majority) after the victory—perish the dictatorship—then let the masses come together, then Parliament meet, and Democracy assume her rightful garb and power. Meanwhile, remember, that which *is best for Democracy is most Democratic*.

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The following has evidently been implied by the Manchester Council: what guarantee is there that if the majority desired to depose the Executive by a Convention, that majority would have its voice fairly heard? The guarantee is the following: the Executive hold power only by the consent of the body. If a number of localities voted for a Convention, their resolutions must be published—if any were withheld, the aggrieved locality would, of course, inform other localities. This no Executive *could* prevent, as the addresses of leading members are pretty generally known—and, therefore, as the power of the Executive rests altogether on the good opinion of the body, any Executive tampering with the votes and will of the latter would soon fall helplessly without support. Therefore, it is that the very essence of Democracy (while yet struggling for its rights) is embodied in our motto:—PERSONAL CONFIDENCE UNDER POPULAR CONTROL. Ernest Jones. James Finlen.

**April 12<sup>th</sup>** 1856 *People's Paper* Anniversary of the 10<sup>th</sup> April. On Thursday evening an enthusiastic meeting was held, in commemoration of the 10<sup>th</sup> of April, 1848, in the Friar-street Hall, Mr. Bligh in the chair. Messrs Finlen, Ernest Jones, Leno, Nash, Slocombe, and the Rev. Mr. Stannard, spoke on the occasion.

**April 12<sup>th</sup>** 1856 *Edinburgh News and Literary Chronicle* London Thursday Evening

Tenth of April, and, says the almanac, the anniversary of the threatened subversion of the genuine old British constitution by the Chartists of 1848. Eight years, of course, always will produce many changes, but not always so many or so momentous as have been brought round since the day just alluded to; and were I but to dilate upon the metamorphosis of our 'special' of St. James's—now his Imperial Majesty and our right trusty ally—I might by that illustration alone establish the fact that the last eight years have been the most wonderful of all the like measures of time that preceded them. Where now be the so-called threatened subverters as aforesaid? Feargus—whom your correspondent on that memorable day very good-naturally lent a helping hand to assist over the palings of Kennington Common when he left the meeting—has all but faded from the memory of the general public, though there are yet some who, spite of the follies and failings of the man, turn with eyes of affection to the stone that covers the grave of the poor lunatic at Kensal Green. Of Cuffy, in whose black body centred all the 'pluck' that the party showed on that intended great occasion, we must seek for information in antipodean annals, for fame makes no report of him here, where once he was once so well known. Bronterre O'Brien I occasionally come across, more *bizarre* and cast-iron in feature than ever; and at any time the Irish champion of the points might have passed for twin brother of Bishop Philpots, and that is saying a great deal in proof of strong marked physiognomy.

Thomas Cooper, laureate of suicides and lecturer on Liberalism, political and religious, has recently recanted at least some points he formerly advocated by public renouncement of his belief in materialism. William Lovett, best and gentlest of the five points-men—(dear me, am I not mixing the peace conditions and the charter all in one?)—is now peacefully and pleasantly discharging his duties as teacher in the schools attached to the National Hall, Holborn, abjuring politics, and not further recognising his party than to furnish a design for the monument that covers the remains of Father Feargus. If Chartism yet have a leader, I suppose we are to recognise him in the person of the lean and hungry-looking Finlen, who seems to care for no points save the point of precedency, for he is the veritable stormy petrel of all open meetings held in London. Dreaded by chairmen, abhorred of secretaries, and scouted by platform holders, he either mars proceedings or makes the meeting his own.

**April 19<sup>th</sup>** 1856 *People's Paper* doctors Commons – The usual Sunday meeting took place in the above hall. Messrs. W. Slocombe, J. Finlen, J. Leno, J. Watson of Newcastle, and Major Beniowski, addressed the meeting in truthful and glowing language in favour of the People's Charter. NORTHAMPTON Mr. James Finlen will address two meetings at Northampton. The first on Monday morning, the 27<sup>th</sup> inst., the second on Monday evening.

FOURTH ANNIVERSARY BANQUET of THE PEOPLES PAPER And WELCOME TO JAMES WATSON. On Monday last at the Bell Hotel, Strand, Ernest Jones entertained the compositors of the *People's Paper* and the other gentlemen connected with its office, at a supper, which was joined by a large number of the leading Democrats of England, France and Germany now in London. The entertainment was of the choicest description, and reflected the greatest credit on the enterprising proprietor of the Hotel, Mr. Hunter; the choicest viands and condiments of the season being supplied in profusion. The tables were well filled with a numerous Company of both sexes, Ernest Jones occupying the chair, and Mr. Fawley, manager of the *People's Paper* office, the vice-chair. The banquet commenced at seven, and at nine o'clock the cloth was cleared, when a series of sentiments was given from the chair. The Chairman then proposed the toast: "The proletarians of Europe," which was responded to by **Dr. Marx** as follows: -

The so-called revolutions of 1848 were but poor incidents—small fractures and fissures in the dry crust of European society. However, they denounced the abyss. Beneath the apparently solid surface, they betrayed oceans of liquid matter, only needing expansion to rend into fragments continents of hard rock. Noisily and confusedly they proclaimed the emancipation of the Proletarian, *ie.* the secret of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, and of the revolution of that century. That social revolution, it is true, was no novelty invented in 1848. Steam, electricity, and the self-acting mule were revolutionists of a rather more dangerous character than even citizens Barbes, Raspail and Blanqui. But, although the atmosphere in which we live, weighs upon every one with a 20,000lb.

force, do you feel it? No more than European society before 1848 felt the revolutionary atmosphere enveloping and pressing it from all sides. There is one great fact, characteristic of this our 19<sup>th</sup> century, a fact which no party dares deny. On the one hand, there have started into life, industrial and scientific forces, which no epoch of the former human history had ever suspected. On the other hand, there exist symptoms of decay, far surpassing the horrors recorded of the latter times of the Roman Empire. In our days, everything seems pregnant with its contrary. Machinery, gifted with the wonderful power of shortening and fructifying human labour, we behold starving and overworking it. The new-fangled sources of wealth, by some strange weird spell, are turned into sources of want. The victories of art seem bought by the loss of character. At the same pace that mankind masters nature, man seems to become enslaved to other men or to his own infamy. Even the pure light of science seems unable to shine but on the dark background of ignorance. All our invention and progress seem to result in endowing material forces with intellectual life, and in stultifying human life into a material force. This antagonism between modern industry and science on the one-hand, modern misery and dissolution on the other hand; this antagonism between the productive powers, and the social relation of our epoch is a fact, palpable, overwhelming, and not to be controverted. Some parties may wail over it; others may wish to get rid of modern arts, in order to get rid of modern conflicts. Or they may imagine that so signal a progress in industry wants to be completed by as signal a regress in politic. On our part, we do not mistake the shape of the shrewd spirit that continues to mark all these contradictions. We know that to work well the new-fangled forces of society, they only want to be mastered by new-fangled men—and such are the working men. They are as much the invention of modern time as machinery itself. In the signs that bewilder, the middle class, the aristocracy and the poor prophets of regression, we do recognise our brave friend, Robin Goodfellow, the old mole that can work in the earth so fast, that worthy pioneer—the Revolution. The English working men are the first-born sons of modern industry. They will then, certainly, not be the last in aiding the social revolution produced by that industry, a revolution, which means the emancipation of their own class all over the world, which is as universal as capital: rule and wages: slavery.

I know the heroic struggles the English working class have gone through since the middle of the last century - struggles less glorious, because they are shrouded in obscurity, and burked by the middle-class historian. To revenge the misdeeds of the ruling class, there existed in the middle-ages, in Germany, a secret tribunal, called the 'Vehmgericht.' If a red cross was seen marked on a house, people knew that its owner was doomed by the 'Vehm.' All the houses of Europe are now marked with the mysterious red-cross. History is the judge—its executioner, the proletarian.

The Chairman next gave "The Rights of Labour", which was responded to by W. Pieper, who said:- In the German fairy-tales we read of magic rods, the gift of enchanters, whose single touch converts a heap of dirt into pure gold. Life exhibits the reverse of these tales—in life it is the touch of gold that converts everything into dirt. Science, art, genius, beauty—are they not all soiled and degraded by the touch of that cursed rod? Has anyone, even of us, who are struggling to break this demon of a spell, has anyone had the privilege to escape from its sullyng sway? Yet, what is this gold. and wherein lies its fatally despotic power? Ah, the power is not in the rod, it is in the enchanter that uses it—even so, the power of gold is but the power of the capitalist. The capitalist - who is he? He is "our brother." Brother indeed! Yes, Labour's own brother—his younger brother, who has kicked him out of his inheritance; his upstart brother who has laid him in bondage; his own flesh and bone out of which he sweats him into starvation. There he stands—tall, at the cost of your dwarfishness; fat, at the cost of your leanness; rosy, at the cost of your paleness; striving, at the cost of your wretchedness ; insultingly prosperous, at the cost of your ruin, There he stands with your rights in his breeches pockets—the policeman to his right to tell him that his robbery is safe; the lawyer to his left to tell him that it is right, and the parson at his back to tell him that it is holy. Poor Cain of labour, how in the name of fraternity, wilt thou ever get rid of this brotherhood? Lift up a single hand and it is Abel that will slay thee. But look behind. See'st thou

not Birnam's wood advancing? It is the wrong hands lifted up by millions of brothers like myself. Behold! without a blow. the rights of labour are theirs.

The next sentiment was "The Old Guards of the Old Movement," the Chairman called on Thomas Martin Wheeler, who responded in a feeling and most cheering speech. The Chairman next gave "The Alliance of the Peoples." M. Tallandier in responding to the sentiment said: Ladies and gentlemen—After an inglorious war, an inglorious peace, such are the results of the alliance of despots. That grand alliance is now is now gone, and the little alliance of the peoples survives it. The fruits of the great alliance were the waste of a million of men and some hundred millions of money, after which, Europe is left exactly where it was before. But no, not quite so. England has learnt that its used-up decrepid aristocracy is unfit for military administration, and France that a Napoleon is not necessary to its military glory while he is a good deal too much for its civil liberty. As to the bravery of the soldiers we know that ruined soldiers are always brave; they are as unswerving and heroic when serving the republic as they are under the beams of despotism. The leaders, however, coming from the governing classes, by showing their incompetency, have made the soldiers, I have no doubt, more willing to serve any government henceforth than that which has so shamefully betrayed them. 'Let then the Alliance of the Peoples display its banner.

The Chairman then gave "The Chartist Movement" which was responded to by **Mr. James Finlen** in a speech which for wit, point, and argument, we have never heard surpassed. Accident causes omission. The Chairman then proposed "Our Country Friends," which he coupled with the name of Mr. James Watson. The toast was received with loud cheers.

Mr. Watson expressed his gratification at the reception given him, and said, like most men who devoted themselves to the Democratic cause, he was assailed by calumny and hostility, but he should never swerve. He was a Chartist and a Republican, and he believed that nothing but the Peoples Charter would be a remedy for the peoples wrongs. All other movements were fallacious. Some people said, go for this measure or for that, short of the Charter. His answer was, there is a diamond at the bottom of a mine—and you propose giving me a rope that shall lower me half way. Can I get that diamond? No! you might as let me remain where I was. I am as poor as ever. So it was with the Charter. The diamond, liberty, could be got only by the rope being long enough – by the Charter and nothing else. To the Chartist movement he had devoted his life - and to that movement he would remain true for ever. (Loud cheers.)

**Mr. James Finlen** then gave "The *People's Paper*," and accompanied the toast with a glowing and manly eulogium on the paper and its editor. Mr. James Watson said, he had rendered material assistance to the paper in the hour of its difficulty, and, if pecuniary assistance were needed again he would afford it if applied to. (Loud cheers)

The Chairman then gave "The Manager and Compositors of the *People's Paper*" He said:—"Honour to Labour" is our principle—let us carry it out to-night, and honour those whose labour contributes to the production of our organ. There is no trade more infamously treated than that of compositors. It is a system of regular robbery and murder, The young are sought out to have cheap labour and displace the old, and thus wages are brought down, and journeymen found to work at "turnovers" price. But worse than this—boys of eleven, twelve and thirteen are put to case—forced to work from 7, 6, 5, sometimes 4 in the morning till 10, 11, 12 at night—frequently two entire nights in the week—and paid five or six shillings weekly for their labour. the result is that they become sickly and they are old when they are children—a dreadful decay seizes them—and they die prematurely aged, after a childhood of misery—a life of martyrdom— while the social murderer who employs them makes a fortune out of their young lives. Thank God! I have an office, which enables me to rescue some, at least from this—that crime lies not at my door—and I have laid it down as a regulation in my office that no young person shall work later than eight o'clock, whether the paper comes out or not—and you should see the difference this operates already. But, I wish to say something personally to the gentlemen of the office here present. Are you aware what your rights are—you consider if you get journeymen's wages you are well paid. I tell you, he who gets the highest wages in England is robbed of ten times more than he receives. I tell you

gentlemen, —you are entitled to all your labour produces. I tell you, you have a right to work for yourselves instead of working for me—and I tell you, that instead of receiving your wages from me, you have a right to receive them for yourselves, and all the surplus over the cost of production too. There is no other employer of labour would speak thus to those he employs—but I tell you this, because I am desirous of seeing you and all your class in such a position of competence and freedom. Labour has a right to everything that labour produces—and when it cannot produce without the association of capital, capital ought at least to share equally with labour the net profits of that which their partnership produces. As you are, what hopes have you? If you were to work for me under the present system, and if I acted like most other employers, I might grow richer every day, while you grew poorer—for as your labour is your only capital, you grow poor as your strength grows smaller, and your years advance. Can you lay by for your old age? No! But I could! I might hire turnover after turnover, boy after boy—man after man—use them up, wear them down—grow rich out of their labour, and send them to the workhouse when past work—which a very few short years would make you. Meanwhile I might keep my carriage—buy my villa—and swelter through life in luxury and wealth. But gentlemen—I devote my life to alter that system—I will be poor—poor as my predecessors in the holy work, sooner than grow rich by such means.—No gold so gained shall touch *my* hand, at least, I will teach labour its rights —and organise it to gain them if I can—and as to gentlemen, depend on it, I will act up to my professions. Let the paper *which is self-supporting now* realise profits, and you shall have wages that will enable you if temperate and sober, to lay by a competence. The proof of democracy is in *action* – not in words alone – and by that test I claim that the world shall judge me. I cannot leave this subject without testifying to the merits of those gentlemen, whose health I have now the honour to propose. One word, before I conclude: this paper stands pledged to share its profits with the Charter Fund. That pledge I will carry out to the utmost. I take this opportunity solemnly to renew it. After four *years* we have made it self-supporting. I hope *months* will make it remunerative and then the Charter Fund shall see its name weekly appearing in its budget of finance. I give the Manager and Compositors of the *People's Paper*.

The sentiment was received with enthusiasm. When the applause had subsided Mr. W. B. Fawley said —In responding to the sentiment just read from the chair, I may say that it is extremely gratifying to me to find myself here to night for the purpose of celebrating what I have many times despaired of ever seeing – the 4<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the *People's Paper*, When I look back upon the many desperate struggles through which it has passed, I am sure it is not speaking too strongly to say that its existence is a perfect miracle. But let me remind you that it not only exists now, but it *lives*. It is the only organ of the Democracy of this country - and the only organ which fully sympathises with the Democracy of Continental Europe, some of whose representatives have spoken here to night. It has been the saviour of the Chartist movement, and it is now becoming its resuscitator. It has filled up, and nobly too, that awful gap which but for it would have still remained between People and the proper understanding of their political rights. It is the first of labour's organs. Every political movement, sir, must have its press. If a movement of the middle-classes is started, either the existing journals take up its principles, or by having capital at their disposal, they commence an organ of their own. But a movement of the Working-classes, though requiring its special organ, must be supported under difficulties of an extraordinary nature. However, those difficulties have now been struggled against for four years—till at last, the gloom which hung over the destiny of the *People's Paper* has been changed for a brighter cloud—a cloud which, if not quite so bright as it should be, it is much more encouraging than that which has threatened it for so long a period. It can show itself in the same place with the venal organs of Capel-court bullion-mongers, and Manchester Cotton-lords. It has now, in fact, taken its stand as a *newspaper*. Let us all hope that stand may be maintained. And if it should be so, Democracy would still have its staunchest and truest organ, and that Democracy would have to thank the energy, perseverance, and devotion of its noble and self-sacrificing editor for its preservation. With these



few remarks, I beg most cordially to thank the meeting for the kind manner in which they have drunk the health of myself and the composers of the *People's Paper*.

The political Martyrs were responded to by Mr. Wm. Slocombe. The Exiles by Mr. Leno. The Ladies by Mr. Wheeler. A Song or a recitation was given between each toast by a gentleman or lady, among whom we must particularise Mr. Phillips, (of the *People's Paper* office.) Mr. Renham, Mrs. Renham, Mr. G. T. Taylor, Messrs. Fawley, Washington and Leno.

Citizen Tallandier sang the Marsellaise with thrilling effect, the company rising at the anthem. The entertainment was not concluded till near three o'clock.

**April 26<sup>th</sup>** 1856 *People's Paper* Notice to the working classes and the inhabitants of the town and county of Northampton generally, two lectures will be delivered by Mr. James Finlen of London – The first on Sunday morning, April 27<sup>th</sup> on the Race Course, on the late war with Russia and Imbecility of the Government in relation thereto. The second on Monday Evening, April 28<sup>th</sup>, at the Milton Hall, Newland, on the Principles and Prospects of Democracy at Home and Abroad... A Lecture will be delivered by Mr. James Finlen at the large Assembly Rooms, Cheshire Cheese Tavern, Grosvenor Row, Chelsea. Subject: "The Disastrous War and the Disgraceful Peace." ..... Working Men, Attend!

**May 3<sup>rd</sup>** 1856 *People's Paper* Northampton – Pursuant to announcement Mr. Finlen delivered his first lecture on Sunday last on the race-course. Mr. Cherry in the chair, and although there was a keen cold wind accompanied at times with large drops of rain, the audience which was large stood from the first to the last and listened attentively to the arguments put forth by our talented advocate. The second lecture on Monday evening, Mr. G. Corby in the chair, also attracted a large and well conducted audience. During the evening Mr. Finlen took occasion to explain the "Six points of the People's Charter," in the most concise and expressive manner I have ever heard – with which the meeting appeared to be well pleased. A third lecture was delivered in the same place on Tuesday evening in continuation of the first two, Mr. Hutchinson in the chair, when a vote of thanks to the lecturer was carried without one dissenting voice. Altogether this visit has raised Mr. Finlen high in the estimation of the Chartists of this town...a large accession of new members [resulted].

**May 10<sup>th</sup>** 1856 *People's Paper* The Chartist Movement - Executive Notice - In the course of this and the ensuing week a circular will be forwarded by post to all friends, and particular attention is requested to its contents. The details of organisation will be issued in due time - but we do not consider the movement far enough advanced yet for this promulgation. Our friends, may, however, rest assured that we are neither idle nor negligent. We are pursuing a fixed course - and we need means to extend our operations in the country...Ernest Jones, James Finlen.

**May 17<sup>th</sup>** 1856 *People's Paper* Doctor's Commons – There is a great demand for tracts in all directions... Mr. J. Leno on occupying the chair at our usual Sunday evening discussion introduced the topics of the past week in which Mr. Finlen and Slocombe took part.

**May 24<sup>th</sup>** 1856 *People's Paper* Mr. James Finlen will address a public meeting next Sunday night at the "Woodman Tavern," Daly-street, Sloane-street, Chelsea. On the 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> days of June he will address public meetings in Nottingham. Arrangements are being made for Mr. Finlen to address meetings in Buckley, Flintshire, Wales. **May 31<sup>st</sup>** Finlen added notice of a public meeting to be given on Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> June at Sutton-in-Ashfield.

**Jun 7<sup>th</sup>** 1856 *People's Paper* Notice to correspondents - Scotch Jock - In answer to your anonymous communication we have to say: That a letter from our friend Finlen was never once rejected or excluded from our columns - and that we do not believe he ever said it was. We suspect

this to be merely an attempt to breed ill-will between Mr. Finlen and ourselves; of which our enemies may rest comfortably assured there is not the slightest prospect.

**June 14<sup>th</sup>** 1856 *People's Paper* NOTTINGHAM Mr. Finlen addressed two meetings in Nottingham, one on Sunday in the New Market and Monday evening in the Old Market. Both meetings were well attended particularly Monday's being very numerous, orderly and attentive. Mr. Finlen spoke for nearly two hours.

SUTTON-IN-ASHFIELD Mr. Finlen delivered a lecture in the large room of the Trooper Inn, "On the Late War and its Consequences." He was listened to very attentively amidst great applause. He lashed the aristocracy in first-rate style, told the people not to be led away with any middle-class clap-trap, but to battle on till the Charter became the law of the land. B. Brandreth.

**June 21<sup>st</sup>** 1856 *People's Paper* THE CHARTIST MOVEMENT.  
THE EXECUTIVE TO THE CHARTIST BODY.

Friends!--Since the movement was reorganised on its new basis, a sterling active nucleus of Chartism has been established so extensively through the country, as to ensure the efficient and wise direction of the masses, when the latter are prepared to act. For such action, we must wait, till circumstances occur to arouse them—such as continental revolutions, an anti-republican war, or—bad trade. The first and last of these contingencies are certain—the second is not impossible sooner or later, within no very distant time.

There is, however, evidently at present, a pause, in public movements. Be not deceived, as to its nature: it is the calm that precedes the storm. During that pause, it is our duty to watch and wait, to seize every favouring circumstance, and to keep the ranks of our organisation steadily together. For this purpose, however, no present funds are needed, beyond the balance we have still in hand—(of which an account shall shortly be rendered to you).

Under the circumstances, we request you **Not** to subscribe farther for the GENERAL Chartist Fund, until you hear from us again, (This will, of course, not interfere with your local contributions for local purposes). Our object in thus requesting you to desist for a while from subscribing, is, simply because we know times are not prosperous with working men at present, and we cannot bear the idea of depriving you for one moment of a single penny, where it is not absolutely needed for immediate work in our cause. Having enough in hand for immediate purposes, we prefer the money that you would continue to subscribe remaining in your own pockets till needed.

When the hour for agitation returns, we will fearlessly and unhesitatingly call on you again.

LET NOT THIS ADDRESS DISCOURAGE YOU. It is no sign of weakness, or of drawing back—it is only with the view of more efficiently gathering up our energies for the great time near at hand The only reason why we wish you to discontinue your subscriptions is, because we are not the men to draw one farthing from the people in the name of democracy, when democracy does not require it for instant service.

Keep your ranks together—increase your members—agitate the districts around you-- DO NOT RELAX IN YOUR ENDEAVOURS—a working staff has been recruited by this new attempt—*do not*—DO NOT—LET IT BE DISBANDED, Work as ever—we hope soon to summon you for the next stage of action in our progress to the sovereignty of Labour. Ernest Jones, James Finlen.

A lecture will be delivered on Sunday evening next, June 22<sup>nd</sup> by Mr. James Finlen at the Red Lion and Wheatsheaf, High-street, Deptford – Subject: "Both sides of the House."

Report on Finlen's Buckley meetings and his success in making a great impression on his audience.

**June 28<sup>th</sup>** 1856 *People's Paper* Deptford – Mr. James Finlen lectured to a very crowded meeting at the Red Lion and Wheatsheaf, High-street, Deptford, on Sunday evening last. The subject was "Both sides of the House." (He) displayed his usual eloquence in explaining the base and treacherous acts of both Whigs and Tories towards the people, an appealed to them to take their affairs into their own hands. He proved that if the working people did not look to their own interest the aristocracy would bring on them certain ruin. He also explained to the satisfaction of the meeting the cause that led to the present threatened war with America, and told us of the serious consequences should the apathy of the people allow the aristocracy to plunge us into such a murderous war. The meeting appeared to be delighted with the lecture - which lasted two hours - after which Mr. Slocombe addressed the meeting with the same effect.

Caledonian Fields - Mr. Finlen will address an out-door meeting in the New Cattle Market on Sunday next June 29<sup>th</sup> at 11: also at the Cock Tavern, Upper North Street, Sloane Street, Knightsbridge next Sunday at 8. Subject: "The Main Features of the American Question."

**July 5<sup>th</sup> 1856** *People's Paper* Mr. James Finlen will address a public meeting at Jacob's Well, Mile End, New Town, next Sunday evening July 6<sup>th</sup> at 8 pm.

Barbes is in London. Whether his stay will admit of a public banquet in his honour, is as yet uncertain-but we exhort all friends to prepare for the eventuality. Ernest Jones, James Finlen.

**July 12<sup>th</sup> 1856** *People's Paper* Tower Hamlets The Council of the Jacob's Well met on Sunday evening last at 6 o'clock to frame laws of local organization... Mr. Finlen arriving, Mr. Bligh was appointed to the chair, who opened the meeting in a neat speech introducing Mr. Finlen, who gave a most eloquent address and made a good impression.

Mr. James Finlen will address a Camp Meeting at Stoodley Pike, Yorkshire on Sun. 20<sup>th</sup> July; on 21<sup>st</sup> July he will deliver a lecture to the Public of Todmorden in the Odd Fellows Hall.

**July 19<sup>th</sup> 1856** *People's Paper* as last, - Todmorden - at half-past 7 o'clock Mr. Finlen will lecture in the Odd Fellows' Hall on "Both sides of the House." - plus - Mr. Finlen will be delivering a lecture on the 22<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday in the Working Men's Literary Institute, Ripponden: On the 24<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> he will deliver lectures in Bradford and further invited on the 27<sup>th</sup> to lecture on Bradford Moor at 2 o'clock and in the Democratic Meeting-room, Croft-street at half-past six.

**July 26<sup>th</sup> 1856** *People's Paper* EXILE DEMONSTRATION COMMITTEE. At a meeting of the above Committee held last Sunday evening at the Woodman Tavern, Chelsea. The following resolutions were passed; 1) That a demonstration and a banquet be got up to welcome John Frost [1784 – 1877 Chartist, leader of the Newport Rising, transported in 1841] back to his native land.

**GREAT CHARTIST CAMP-MEETING AT STOODLEY PIKE, YORKSHIRE.**

Pursuant to an advertisement issued the previous week, the Chartist Camp Meeting it announced took place last Sunday at Stoodley Pike.

It was very numerously attended. We will not speculate upon what number there was present, as there is generally such a diversity of opinion upon the question of numbers, but if we designate it as a great meeting we shall then be perfectly right. As early as two o'clock people from the surrounding country were to be seen wending their way to the mountain top, where the meeting was to take place. People came from all directions, some on foot a distance of fourteen and twenty miles; others by rail more or less distant. Every place in the neighbourhood it appeared had furnished its quota. We were glad to observe amongst the throng a good proportion of females, who appeared to take a lively interest in what was about to take place. Much disappointment was experienced by those who had assembled at the early hour above mentioned, on account of no one appearing to enter upon the business for which they had been called together until four o'clock. This delay was occasioned, we were afterwards informed, from the fact that a meeting of delegates from the Principal towns of Yorkshire and Lancashire was being held at Todmorden, and the business it had to transact, being of so much importance, relating to the celebrated John Frost, that it was impossible for either Mr. Finlen who had been invited from London to address the meeting, or for any of the delegates to leave earlier. At four o'clock the chair was taken by Mr. James Mooney. He opened the business of the meeting in a speech of good merit and full of happy remarks. After some other preliminary business, Mr. James Finlen was introduced to the meeting. He commenced his speech by saying we shall be stoutly opposed, now that we have once more taken to the mountains of Yorkshire in our thousands; the alarm of old, common to the souls of our foemen, will burst forth croaking, harsh, and harrowing by it; the timid will be made pale and nervous, the courageous flushed and hopeful, for when the pulse of heavy lethargic dispositions is quickened and made to throb by the magnetic thrill imparted by the movement of vigilant vigorous democracy, there is the signal for a conflict and the grounds for hope,— there is at once the source of alarm and satisfaction. We will be told presently there is no need for us to meet in this manner, as every element in the State is harmonising. We are to be told, I doubt not, that Britain knows no poverty now; that her sons and daughters are well fed, well clad, well housed, well schooled, well cared for in every particular; that, in fact, here in England, at all events, is enjoyed the much-talked of Millennium. Is it so? I accept this meeting as a protest against such an assertion. In and through the presence of this important meeting I find the answer to my question, and the justification of the efforts made by me to organise the un-organised, the oppressed, the robbed, the discontented, the malcontents of my country into a

band, a phalanx of stout soldiers of warrior-brothers determined to grapple with perpetrators of wrong, to trample the life from the hag, tyranny; to manumit themselves—the many; to institute, in fact, the sovereignty of the masses, and rid the country of her hitherto privileged malefactors (cheers). What, no need for meeting and protesting? Was there any need seventeen years ago, when the warm blood of revolt—of what then appeared imminent revolution, coursed—through the broad and ample veins of our good old land from limit to limit; when the patriot and standard of consistency, Mr. John Frost, stood out from amongst his fellows, threw down the gauntlet, and braved heroically the consequences of his acts? The general disposition of our people then, as did their condition, justified the struggle. At two subsequent periods similar efforts have been made and sanctioned by the requirements of the people (hear, hear), Well, then, have their requirements altered—are the people in the enjoyment now of more of those things essential to their social weal than they were then? Every fact connected with them gives an answer in the negative. Then there is as much cause for agitation now as in any period alluded to (hear, hear). We must not listen then to those who would deny it There is much truth in the saying that it is only by making the ruling few unhappy that the people can come by their rights. Nothing can disturb them so much as agitation—therefore agitate. I am here to-day to say, that so long as we have society so ordered as it is today, so long is it the duty of the well-disposed to war against it. I am here today to say that so long as it is found that those who are the laziest are the wealthiest, the most powerful, the monopolists of rule and right, and that those who are the most industrious are the poorest, the first to feel want—to suffer from scarcity—are deprived of power, and debarred from both rights and privileges, there is only ‘too much cause or what has been dubbed a war of classes.’ What we seek is justice, with it we can enjoy peace and happiness, without it peace and happiness shall be but known to those who keep it from us. We have two classes with which we contend—the aristocratic and the capitalist. What are the transcendent merits of the first that they should monopolize as they do the exclusions of the toiler? Now a glance at their doings in relation to the war with Russia will suffice to make you acquainted with their particular attributes. In that war they were murderers, jobbers, bunglers: they were not soldiers in the ensanguined peninsula, where they commanded; they were not British statesmen in the Houses of Parliament, where they conspired. Actuated by all motives but those which made the British poor endure the hardships it entailed, they brought the war to a damning, to a disreputable conclusion. All the avowed objects for which the war was undertaken were neglected by them, and after squandering forty millions of money, sacrificing as many millions of lives, desolating homes in every city, borough, village, and hamlet in England, Ireland, Wales and Scotland, dimming the lustre of that fame which everywhere, by sea and land, it has been the pride or shame of our by-gone warriors to win for us, leaving Turkey as exposed as ever to the designs of its implacable and natural adversary; Italy stilted here, prostrate there, spasmodic everywhere; Poland to be favoured by a Russian imperial amnesty; and Hungary still the calvary where liberty is still to be crucified. They wrangle, they bully, they browbeat one another, they institute commissions, they hold inquests upon dead horses, they are indifferent to murdered men; they gorge at the Mansion House, make speeches in the provinces, parade at reviews, shirk questions in Parliament, cadge, cap in hand, for a Parliamentary existence, scoff at the nation’s sores, insult her in her sorrow, care nothing for her bereavement, but are quite “aristocratic;” go on in their antique and patrician fashion; and, worse than all, the good-natured, soft-hearted, questionable-headed, poor foodless, houseless creatures of all they get; squander, consume, and abuse. The poor of my country let them do these things with impunity. Our system gives them the power; it must be altered, and we must alter it. There is the other, the capitalist class, which is also too powerful. We were overrun with promises by it a few years ago, when some of its most conspicuous members were agitating for free trade. They told the people God knows what about cheap food, plenty of work, and high wages. Have the people been benefited by their measure (No)? Certainly they have plenty of work; in this particular their prophecy has been right. But it occurs to me that if they did not have half so much work that it would be far more just and preferable (hear, hear). I don’t want the people of England to have more to do than at present; upon the contrary, I want then to have considerably less; I want the work to be distributed right throughout the community, and every hearty member of it made to do his share. Those who work today work too much, and are paid too little. Make those who have been hitherto idle don the apron, turn up their sleeves, and go at it for the sake of the community, in general. If you did this, your wives and children would not be taken from their proper places and put in competition with yourselves in your factories and workshops. Your hours of labour would be less, for then you would not have to work to weave clothes for those too Idle to do so for themselves. Ay, they were right when that said that you should have more work, But I have and will show that the having of it is no boon to you, but an immense one to them. Mr. Finlen then went thoroughly into the question of political economy, and occupied for a considerable time the attention of his audience in pointing out the fallacies it teemed with, and in suggesting remedies. He then enumerated, in concise terms, his views upon portions of the People’s Charter, winning for it, while doing so, the entire approbation of the large assemblage. After speaking for an hour and-a-half, he resumed his seat amidst the plaudits of all present. .... [Messrs. N. Frith, John Corless, - Want of space prevents us giving a report of their speeches, as it does also in giving a fuller report of Mr. Finlen’s...]

Letter from James Finlen to John Frost asking whether he would take part in any demonstrations answered in a letter from John Frost dated July 18<sup>th</sup> 1856, Stapleton, near Bristol,

My Dear Sir,— Be assured that no man in England has influence over me to induce me to act contrary to my judgment. No one more ready to hear, no one more disposed to consider, where it can be done without any sacrifice of principle. The gentlemen whom you mentioned did not attempt to persuade me not to engage in public matters; the advice they gave me was good—simply to act with prudence. Few persons were ever placed in a situation where circumspection is more necessary.

“Scarcely a day during the last sixteen years of my life has passed without my mind being employed in considering the best means to remove the iron hand of oppression which weighs so heavily on my country. My love for liberty and my country has not diminished by what I saw and suffered in Van Dieman’s Land; our object is to convince the people of England what has, what must follow, where men in power are subject to no restraint; we want to limit the power of the law-giver, we want that he should in reality be responsible for the abuse of power, not in name only. The state of society which exists in the penal colony is unequalled in depravity in any part of the world; and I believe that I shall be able to convince my countrymen that this state arises from the conduct of the Legislature. The state of England in the present way is to me a matter of deep sorrow, and I should consider myself a base man if I could desert my country in her utmost need. I will never do it while health and life remain. The only subject for consideration is, *how can this object be most effectually secured?* However gratifying a public demonstration may be to me as convincing me that my long services and sufferings are not forgotten, yet I would willingly forego this if I thought that such demonstration WOULD BE AN INJURY.

“The enemies of our cause would wisely take advantage of any false step we might make to alarm the fears of the Middle Classes, as they did in 1848. We must guard carefully against this, our cause at this moment is so good that we may with perfect propriety show that our appeals are to the understanding. The working men will, I think, believe, that it is not fear on my part which would make me the advocate of peace. I am thoroughly persuaded that when I describe the conduct of the authorities to our countrymen whom the laws placed in their hands that it will produce so strong a feeling for a thorough reform in the House of Commons that the powers that be will not be able to resist it.

At present I am unacquainted with the state of public feeling in England. Among the real friends to reform, I need not tell you, WHAT WOULD BE THE CONSEQUENCE OF A FAILURE! our friends must seriously consider this, and I am quite satisfied that if I hesitate they will not attribute my doubt to coldness in the great cause. I am not indifferent to the state of my countrymen, nor will I ever be. This object is to me of paramount importance, and were I to believe that I could do nothing to further it, life to me would be of little value. There then rests the matter for the present, let me have a little time to consider. I dare say I shall in a short time by communications from different parts of the country, be better able to come to a correct decision. Very truly your friend in the cause. John Frost. (to) Mr. James Finlen.

#### LANCASHIRE AND YORKSHIRE DELEGATE MEETING - Oddfellow's Hall, Todmorden, Sunday July 20<sup>th</sup>. 1856. *After a list of the delegates present;*

Mr. H. Holt was unanimously voted to the chair, when the secretary read letters from Tyldesley and from the exile committee, the former of which stated that the Chartists of Tyldesley were getting up a subscription for Mr. Frost, and would attend a demonstration to welcome that gentleman on his return to this country. The letters from the exile committee gave information to the effect that Mr. Frost had arrived in this country.

The first resolution, “That we have a Lancashire and Yorkshire demonstration to welcome John Frost,” was moved by the veteran J. Mooney, in a neat and appropriate speech, seconded by T. Wood, and carried unanimously, Mr. E. Hooson, in rising to move the next resolution, said that it must be gratifying to every one connected with the movement to hear that John Frost, after all the persecution he has endured, was still animated with the same spirit as of old, that tyranny was not able to crush the love of liberty in that noble heart; for, to use his own words to Ernest Jones, “he felt as young as ever.” He therefore thought it the duty of every Chartist to give him such a welcome as he deserved, and, as it would be impossible to find a building large enough to hold the numbers that would attend, he would suggest the propriety of taking vantage of the fine weather, and holding the demonstration as early as possible; for which reason he would move—“That in the opinion of the delegates present, the 24<sup>th</sup> of August would be the most suitable day for holding the demonstration, but that a discretionary power be left in the hands of the secretary to call it a week sooner or later, providing Mr. Frost cannot attend on the 24<sup>th</sup>. Mr. J. Mooney, in seconding the resolution, said that he perfectly concurred with what had fallen from Mr. Hooson, and although by calling the demonstration so early it would be dragging Mr. Frost from his family after so long an absence, yet, he hoped, as the time would be the most suitable, he would comply. The motion was then put and carried unanimously.

At this stage of the proceedings Mr. Finlen entered the room, and his presence was greeted with loud applause, which, having subsided, Mr. Mooney moved that Mr. Finlen, do sit and take a part in the proceedings, the same as any Delegate present; but Mr. Wood suggested that Mr. Finlen, in virtue of his office as one of the Executive, was entitled to sit and act at any Chartist Meeting. This was at once agreed to by all the delegates present. A very lengthy discussion then ensued as to whether Blackstone Edge or Heyhead Green, near

Todmorden, would be the most suitable to hold the demonstration at. Eventually a resolution in favour of Heyhead Green was carried, against an amendment for Blackstone Edge, by a majority of one. The next resolution was moved by R. Brook, seconded by T. Wood, 'That the secretary write to Messrs. Frost, Ernest Jones, and J. Finlen, inviting them to attend the demonstration'—carried.

**TODMORDEN** On Monday, July 21, Mr. James Finlen delivered one of the most eloquently, powerful, and instructive lectures it was ever our pleasure to hear; his subject was, "Both Sides of the House." Mr. Finlen was listened to with the deepest attention throughout, for one hour and forty minutes. It was one continued flow of glowing eloquence; his description of the Whigs and their policy was truly characteristic, and also that of the Tories; Mr. Disraeli's speech in reply to Lord John Russell's on the present state of Italy, was given by Mr. Finlen, most correctly, in a mimic style. It is indeed a most excellent mimic. truly masterly. The Central American question was very ably expounded, fully proving that should there be an hostile movement between the two countries, the fault will be that of the present cabinet of St. James's.....It is the opinion of the Chartists of this town that Mr. Finlen has done much good, and we most earnestly hope that those places that have not had the pleasure of hearing him will lose no time in doing so.

**RIPPONDEN** – On Tuesday evening July 22<sup>nd</sup> a public meeting was convened for the purpose of hearing a lecture from Mr. J. Finlen, on the "Benefits of Education." ...The chairman then introduced Mr. Finlen to the meeting, who delivered a most brilliant address, which occupied one hour and a half in delivery, and during which he was frequently applauded, and at the conclusion he received the unanimous thanks of the meeting.

**BRADFORD** – On Sunday next ..arrangements to be made for a public meeting to be held on Bradford Moor when James Finlen of London and Mr. William Mitchell of Stanningley will address the meeting – On the evening of the same day Mr. Finlen will deliver a lecture at the [Democratic School Room, Croft-street, Bradford] – subject; "Both Sides of the House."

**August 9<sup>th</sup> 1856 *People's Paper*** The Yorkshire and Lancashire Demonstration in honour of Mr. John Frost will be held at Heywood (Heyhead) Green near Todmorden on Sunday August 24. John Frost, James Finlen, Ernest Jones W. P. Roberts and other speakers will attend. [others localities inviting James Finlen to attend meetings in the future].

A letter from John Frost in the paper states he wished to become a lecturer and since his private fortune doesn't enable him to travel over England, he will adopt the plan of Kossuth and others and charge for admission to his lectures.

**August 16<sup>th</sup> 1856 *People's Paper*** Mr. James Finlen will address a public meeting next Sunday night in the Assembly Rooms of the Rising Sun, Deptford – at 8 o'clock.

**TOWER HAMLETS** At a weekly meeting of the Jacob's Well locality, Mr. Finlen and Mr. (Peter) Henrette attended and ably reviewed the doings of the Peoples so-called representatives during the last session of Parliament.

**DEPTFORD** Mr. Finlen will lecture at [The Rising Sun] on the 17<sup>th</sup> Subject: "The People's Politics." The Deptford Banner will be hung in the Room.

To the Chartists of Lancashire and Yorkshire – Demonstration will take place at Heyhead Green on the 24<sup>th</sup> inst.... But as there will be the expenses of travelling to pay for Messrs. Frost, Jones and Finlen, as well as other expenses, I trust you will send your delegates fully prepared.

**August 23<sup>rd</sup> 1856 *People's Paper*** **BOLTON** A public meeting will take place on Thursday night at the Temperance Hall, Little Bolton. Addresses to be delivered by Mr. John Frost and James Finlen. An address is to be presented to Mr. Frost.

**DEPTFORD** Mr. James Finlen lectured at the Rising Sun, Pope's Buildings, Church-street, Deptford to a very attentive audience on Sunday evening last, August 17<sup>th</sup>. Subject "The People's Politics." The lecture gave great satisfaction – lasted one and a half hours. The landlord then informed them that they couldn't hold any more meetings there.

**August 26<sup>th</sup>** 1856 *Leeds Mercury* A Chartist meeting was held on Sunday at Heyhead Green near Todmorden. The speakers were Mr. John Frost, Ernest Jones, Finlen [and named others]....an address said to be signed by 25,000 persons in Yorkshire and Lancashire was presented [to Mr. Frost, the returned exile]. The *Manchester Guardian* mentioned that the address was printed in gold on green paper. Reported in many Lancashire, Yorkshire and national newspapers.

**August 30<sup>th</sup>** 1856 *Langport & Somerton Herald* An advert for the United Brothers Assurance Company gives a quote from the “Spirit of Freedom” edited by James Finlen [*a director of the United Brothers, though the Spirit was now defunct*] of interest is that two agents were Mr. George Petty of Somerton and Mr. Alfred Adams of Street.

**August 30<sup>th</sup>** 1856 *People's Paper* “GLORIOUS WELCOME” TO JOHN FROST. (*see p. 282*)

One of the most extraordinary gatherings ever held in this country took place on Sunday last at Heyhead Green, a wild mountain side on the confines of Lancashire and Yorkshire, to give a northern welcome to John Frost on his return to England. In applying the epithet extraordinary to this great Meeting, we are sure our readers will agree with us, when they learn the circumstances under which it was held. From sunrise to nearly sunset, the most inclement storm kept sweeping over the mountains, enveloping the heights in mist, and drenching the country with almost ceaseless showers. Few anticipated for a moment that it would be possible to hold a meeting—fewer still that any gathering would assemble on such a bleak mountainside. It was a day on which all, who possibly could, would abstain even from ordinary business, if calling them out of doors—and in which those only, compelled by dire necessity, or some most pressing avocation, would venture over the lonely moors, The reader will therefore see the vast significance of so mighty a gathering, as the one that took place, assembling on such a spot on such a day.

By nine o'clock the delegates from the two counties began to wend their way through the drenching rain to the Odd Fellows Hall, in Todmorden—the central hall of which, with its ante-rooms, was thrown open for their accommodation. The attendance of delegates was most numerous, and all the old standard-bearers of Chartism—all the well-known local generals of the Chartist army, those whose names have been for many years identified with any movement of our body in the towns and villages of Lancashire and Yorkshire, were to be met on that occasion.

At half-past one Messrs John Frost, Ernest Jones, and James Finlen, proceeded in a carriage, through a double line of men and women that were winding up the road from Todmorden to Heyhead Green, up the mountainside. It was an admirable sight to see the masses of men and women climbing that rugged mountainside amid the pitiless storm, to do honour to a man who had suffered so greatly for their cause, to do honour to the cause for which that man had so greatly suffered. The chair was taken by the unanimous vote of all present, by Joseph Alderson, of Bradford, one of the oldest and most unflinching Chartists in the country.

On ascending the waggon provided as a platform, a noble sight met the eye. Far away in front, and on the right and left, stretched the rich valleys of Yorkshire, hollow after hollow, hill on hill—and along the heights where the road wound up and down, like narrow bands linking them together, might be seen through the driving sleet and rain streams of human beings wending steadily and in constantly increasing numbers towards the place of meeting—which was a short distance below the crest of the mountain, whose bleak heights rose behind, studded with spectators. At the opening of the meeting the reporters present estimated the numbers present at 15,000; it was not long before they had reached 25,000; and the stream of people kept flowing on up to the close of the proceedings in uninterrupted tides.

We believe such a vast gathering on such an inclement day is almost unprecedented—and shews, more than any recent circumstance the enormous hold Chartism has on the popular mind of the North. The proceedings were opened by the Chartist hymn

“Great God! is this the Patriot’s doom?”

which was sung in chorus by the entire multitude, after which the chairman addressed the meeting.

He commenced by calling up the names of the mighty dead, who had met us on many a festive day on those hills whose frowning crags were defying the blasts of the storm, as others had done the political tyranny of the age. The great—the immortal Feargus O'Connor had swayed the minds of hundreds of thousands on the very spot where he stood—he had defied opposition—and being the People’s great tribune for years—he was now dead, over his grave millions unborn would strew flowers. He then alluded to Benjamin Rushton, of Halifax, that sublime old man, whose name is as imperishable to Chartism as that of Leonidas is entwined in the Legends of Sparta;—to the white haired Thomas Drake, who suffered two years so cruelly in Beverley gaol, and proved himself a model which all young Chartists should follow. Many among the crowd whispered the name of Joseph Bowker, who died so lately and suffered two years in Kirkdale gaol, but this appeared to have escaped the Chairman’s memory. He concluded uttering a magnificent apostrophe to John Frost and Freedom.

Mr. Snowden, of Halifax, moved the adoption of an address to Mr. Frost, and said :—

Working men and women, what is treason?—defending a righteous cause. Patriotism. Success to honest rebellion. If Washington had been defeated; we would have been hung on Bunkers Hill as a rebel, but the tools of tyranny were defeated by him, and his name is one of the bright spots in the History of Freedom. And who were the men that wished to crush Washington and John Frost—the sons of Norman brigands, who sought to grasp all power—all honour—all freedom—to themselves, but whose infernal machinations had ignited a holy war against tyranny, which would end only by the destruction of the cold-blooded monsters of oligarchy. The people of England will never have freedom till they have justice, and that is when every man shall be treated with equality, and a crime performed upon the meanest person shall be redressed as surely as if he was the greatest dignitary in the land. Mr. Snowden quoted Lord John Russell, that most perfect specimen of hypocrisy and cant—who once said: "Anciently, the House of Commons sprang from the people, and until the year 1422 no property qualifications were required for a man to vote for who should represent him!" So that Chartists only wish to go back to the ancient British Constitution. He next discoursed on the constitution, asking the people if it was worth struggling for—was there no class interest which would prevent the people from obtaining their rights—did not the man who produced the wealth of England beg of his rich master for liberty to toil for a mere starving pittance, while he, rioting on his luxury, earned by playing with the sinews of the suffering poor? Was there no abatement of wages without just cause—and were not the people without redress—did not the people exist on sour cider and musty bread, to allow the cotton-lord to heap up wealth for him to go fox-hunting with the squirearchy, who despises his *parvenu* extraction, but tolerates him for his gold. Mr. Snowden concluded a long, argumentative, eloquent speech, by proposing the adoption of the congratulatory address of the meeting. (Tremendous applause)

Mr. William Mitchell, of Stanningly, seconded the address, and said: He honoured the man for his consistency and by honouring Mr. Frost, he honoured the cause—and respected himself. He denied that England was free—and quoted some beautiful verses of Shelley. He paid a grateful tribute of respect to Mr. Frost, and exhorted the People to struggle for political power—which, supported by Mr. Frost, would soon lead us to success. He proved that genius, however great and God-like, was impotent if not directed in the pathway of the people—for these are the sources of all power—principle and greatness. But the 'Charter' is not the whole—it is the *pathway* by which we can reach the palladium of our liberties—by it we shall gain power for the disposal of the wealth we create—and by the creation of our wealth, it will confer happiness by flowing in sources beneficial to the working man. He wanted social emancipation, not by union in the sale of flour and butter which would fritter away our noble cause in the most trifling way imaginable—*our* co-operation must be political—we must organize to obtain a representation of ourselves—and by so doing free ourselves from the shackles of an aristocracy—more beastly than those who formed the courtesan characters of a by-gone age. Mr. Mitchell concluded, in a magnificent burst of rhetoric in praise of Mr. Frost, prophesying that when the emancipation of the human race was complete, and the age of gold was over, the name of Mr. Frost would be revered as one of the greatest of his age. (Loud and continued cheers.)

The following is the address: which was printed in letters of gold on green parchment, presenting a truly chaste and splendid appearance;

TO JOHN FROST, ESQ.

Honoured and Respected Sir,

With the most unfeigned pleasure we hail your return to this country, after a painful absence of more than fifteen years; and the more so, when we reflect on the position in life you occupied at the time you espoused that great cause for which you have suffered so much and so long. Faithful hearts, devoted to the realization of a great principle, never whine and regret obstacles and defeats they encounter in their career; and such we are happy to say, you have proved yourself to be.

We, Sir, have not forgotten the malignant and vindictive spirit which actuated the Home Office in its treatment of you, when, listening to the call of your countrymen, you became a member of the Convention of 1839. Nor have we forgotten the dauntless and splendid letters you addressed to the Home Secretary in vindication of the course you had taken. There are so many corrupt influences and unholy interests interwoven with the English government and English institutions generally, that their reformation is almost an herculean task. Yet, knowing the state of public feeling in the ever memorable year of 1839, we are persuaded, had all who became the People's leaders and representatives at that time been as faithful, devoted, and self-sacrificing as yourself, success would most positively have crowned your efforts; and instead of being banished as a faithless subject of the English Crown, you would have remained in your country, respected and revered as one of the most honourable and upright citizens of the English commonwealth. Think not, Sir, that we have read unmoved the harrowing scenes and sufferings you have witnessed, and painfully experienced in your banishment from home, country, and friends.

It is a most cheering and encouraging circumstance for the Democracy, to have in its midst an individual, who, by dear-bought experience, has the power to unravel the iniquities of the vile English rule, both at home and abroad, more so than any man in England. We are not so vain and presumptuous, Sir, to hint at the course we would wish you to pursue; having full confidence in your political integrity, and stern devotion to principle, we have no fears but that the people's cause will receive a great impetus through your sage advice and wise counsels. You, Sir, are partially acquainted with the state of public feeling in 1848; but it was not the fears



nor hostility of the middle classes that destroyed our movement at that time. No, Sir; but then, as in 1839, the unseemly differences and angry squabbles of those, who should have been unanimous and devoted to the people they professed to lead, broke us up and retarded the triumph of our cause. The present seeming lull in the political world, will ere long be succeeded by an ardent and earnest desire for the accomplishment of those great political changes, the espousal of which on your part, procured for you the hatred of that vile faction—the Whig Oligarchy.

We shall conclude by humbly venturing to hope that your valuable life, which was once threatened, may be long preserved, so as to be useful to your country, and a blessing to your family. Your friends and admirers, the Democracy Of the Counties of York and Lancaster.

The reading of the address was hailed with enthusiastic cheers, and its adoption voted by acclamation—not one hand being raised against it.

Mr. **James Finlen** who was received with loud cheers, supported the address. The report of Mr. Finlen's speech did not reach till half-past two on Thursday, when it was impossible to insert it. It is really very reprehensible our not having received it before. Mr. Finlen's address was truly splendid, and shall appear next week.

A Chartist hymn was sung at this stage of proceedings. Mr. Snowden then, in the name of that vast gathering, presented in feeling terms, the address to Mr. Frost.

On Mr. Frost's rising to respond, he was received with deafening bursts of enthusiastic cheers, often repeated, that made the mountain ring again—hats and handkerchiefs were waved aloft, and every demonstration of affection and gratitude was bestowed on the veteran champion of our cause. When silence was restored, Mr. Frost spoke as follows:

I receive with much pleasure the address which has this day been presented to me by the good men of Lancashire and Yorkshire. I thank you for your congratulations on my return to my native country, and for the kind wishes which you have expressed that I may live to see the triumph of that cause in which I have suffered. I believe I shall; and this belief has sustained me under trying circumstances. Be assured that while health and strength remain, my life shall be devoted to the success of a measure, namely, a radical reform in the Commons' House of Parliament; and I have long been of the opinion, that the freedom and happiness of a great part of the world will depend on its success.

I am pleased with the address as a piece of writing; it is the work of a thoughtful and sagacious mind; it has, too, strengthened my own opinions on a subject, which has always appeared to me of paramount importance. Let me refer to that subject.

The address says, "You are partially acquainted with the state of public feeling in 1848: but it was not the fears, nor the hostility of the middle classes that destroyed our movement at that time; but rather as in 1839, the unseemly differences and angry squabbles of those, who, should have been unanimous and devoted to the people they professed to lead. This broke us up and retarded the triumph of the cause."

When I was applied to by my neighbours, and some more distant friends, to become a member of the convention of 1839, I pointed out to them the certain consequences which would follow in regard to the local power which I possessed, were I to comply with their wishes. My predictions were realised. It was supposed by those who knew me, that I should be of more service to the country by taking active part in the great movement, for it was a great movement, than in retaining my name on the commission. I took my seat at the convention, and I was a most attentive observer of the conduct of that body. Great was my disappointment. Instead of meeting with wise and good men, thoroughly acquainted with the state of the country and with the remedy which should be applied; instead of finding a firm, but conciliatory, disposition having one great object in view—to which little things would be sacrificed, I found a great many of the members much more ready to destroy the political influence of each other, than to destroy the wretched system of which our country was the victim. If this were a correct specimen of a Chartist parliament, need any one be surprised that influential men refused to aid in filling the House of Commons with such men? During my residence in America, I met with many sensible men, and men, too, devoted to the cause, who ascribed the failure of the movement in 1848 to the want of wisdom and honesty in those who took the lead at that period. Why have many of us toiled and suffered with a view of removing the evils which afflict our country, those evils arising from having ignorant and dishonest men to rule, but from a thorough conviction that if the great bulk of the people had the power of voting, that power would be exercised to place in the House of Commons men of principle, who would in a temperate, but firm manner, repeal those unjust and oppressive laws by which our country has been, and is, still oppressed and impoverished? I have long been convinced that the miserable state of our country is owing to a corrupt legislature; that the evil arises from the House of Commons, and there only can the remedy be applied; but we must have there wise and good men, or the most fatal consequences will follow. There were many of the members of the Convention of 1839 whom I esteemed, and whom I still respect, but the majority were evidently unfit for the situations which at that period they occupied. The address says and says truly, that "Faithful hearts devoted to the realization of great principles never repine or regret at the obstacles or defeats they encounter in their career." This is true; such qualities, however, are not common. Men are too fond of playing a winning game, and thus it is when a good cause appears hopeless, that men devoid of principle join the ranks of the

enemy, and sometimes become the assailants of that cause of which, at one time, they were ostensible supporters.

Let me now obvert to one of the most important topics in your address. "Think not, Sir, that we have read unmoved, the harrowing scenes you have witnessed, and painfully experienced in your banishment from your country and friends. Yet we feel it to be a most cheering and most encouraging circumstance for the democracy of this country, to have in its midst an individual, who, by dear bought experience has the power to unravel and lay bare, in all its hideous nakedness, the iniquities and abominations of the vile English rule, both at home and abroad."

What are "the abominations and iniquities the result of the English rule" in the penal colonies? Listen to what the English authorities say on this subject. The Duke of Richmond in speaking of the effects of transportation on the morals of those who were subject to it, said, 'that if there was no remedy for the fearful evils existing in the colony of Von Dieman's Land as to the state of the convicts, he would move for a committee of inquiry, for in no country calling itself Christian was there a worse state of depravity.

In 1837 a committee of the House of Commons was formed to enquire as to the effect of transportation on the morals of the colonists and prisoners of which committee the late Sir William Molesworth was the chairman. Every facility was afforded this committee for enquiry. In 1840 Sir William brought the matter before the House; what does he say as to the moral state of the prisoners? That Norfolk Island and Port Arthur, for depravity, had not their equal in the world. In a speech delivered in the House in 1849 Sir William says: "In Australia are communities, the offspring of convict emigration, more hideously vicious, than any recorded in sacred or profane history. Again in the same speech he says, "under the old system of distribution, the moral filth of Great Britain was accumulated in vast and fermenting masses in the Penal Colonies, whence moral typhus, plague, Pestilence, and all manner of hideous disease; and the British Pest houses of Australia stank in the nostrils of mankind!" Here's language, uttered to, by one who had been chairman of the committee of enquiry; yet, bad as this state was, the probation systems introduced by Lord John Russell made it worse.

Now let us hear what these men say as to the cause of this moral pestilence, which must sooner or later destroy the nation where it exists, Sir William says, "that a human being could not be made unutterably wretched without becoming in an equal degree depraved; the extremes of misery and immorality were generally found existing together. In both those respects Norfolk Island had not its parallel in the world except perhaps the kindred settlement of Port Arthur. In proof of this he would refer to the official report of the state of Norfolk Island drawn up by the officers resident there at the order of Lord Glenelg. The chaplain says "that blasphemy, rage, mutual hatred and the unrestrained indulgence of unnatural lust are things with which a short residence in the Prison wards of Norfolk Island must necessarily familiarize the convict, in short the convict code had not its equal in severity in any part of the civilized world."

Here then is the cause of the immorality of the prisoners according to the principles enunciated by Sir W. Molesworth; "a convict code not equalled in severity in any part of the civilised world" this code necessarily produced great misery, and misery, Sir William says, "destroys the reflective faculties and leaves no thought or wish but the immediate gratification of the appetites." Lord John Russell, then Secretary of State for the Colonies agreed with Sir William, for he says "that extreme severity of punishment was not the principle which he conceived ought to form the basis of criminal jurisprudence." Here then these two statesmen agreed, that to reduce men to extreme misery would destroy all moral feeling.

I will now, to confirm what "Sir William said, mention one circumstance which came within my own knowledge; I could mention many scores of them to show the practices and state of morals among the prisoners, and the indifference with which this great crime was viewed by the authorities.

About a month after I was put into the office at Port Arthur, a prisoner was brought before Captain Booth charged with this offence committed under horrible circumstances. The witness, whose name was \_\_\_\_\_, said that the superintendent had heard that abominable practices were continually carried on by a gang of men from Port Arthur, and a gang of boys from Point Puer, both working at the head of Opossum Bay; he directed me to conceal myself and to watch their proceedings. For this purpose I went yesterday morning and hid myself before the gangs came to work. The prisoner passed my hiding place and went in the direction of the boys; a boy met him, they continued conversing together, at last they separated, the prisoner returned to his gang, and the boy went to his. When the gangs returned from dinner, the prisoner passed the place where I was concealed and went towards the boys. I saw the boy with whom the prisoner had been conversing in the morning, and a little boy, about twelve years of age, coming to meet the prisoner. When they met, the prisoner and the big boy went aside, they continued talking together for some time, at last they returned to the spot where the little boy stood: when the big boy attempted to persuade the little [boy] to do something to which he appeared to be averse; at last the big boy pointed to the bush. I could hear the little boy say; be quiet, be quiet, let me alone, you shan't, you shan't. I went to the spot whence the voice proceeded, the prisoner and the little boy were lying on the ground in a certain state. I put the Prisoner into the cells. Here was a state for boys to be placed in, not only subject to the will of the big boys at Point Puer, but also to the men men at Port Arthur, and this was a trade regularly carried on, the big boys receiving tobacco for the prostitution. of the little ones, nor was there a little boy who would dare to refuse. The witness said the little boy was very averse to with the Ruffian; at last the big boy pointed to the bush; the little one submitted. The little boy resisted, for the witness

said, "I heard him cry out, be quiet. be quiet, you shan't, you shan't; all availed nothing, - the boy was forced to submit. Was not this a hell? One if not both those boys were natives of Manchester.

In addition to this horrible state, the boys were subject to disease resulting from this crime, and so common was this that eighty were sent from one station, at one time, affected with a loathsome disease. I was at a Probation Station at which was a very large hospital, nearly filled with men in this slate, many of them blind, and, in every point of view, tof the representations of some of the medical men, the governments of England were sending thousands yearly of young men and boys to places to which death in its worst form would have been preferable. Mark!—the authorities with all the evidence before them denied the existence of such a state of things. Lord John Russell denied that Sir W. Molesworth's description of Norfolk Island applied to the present state of that settlement, for a beneficial alteration had been effected. He agreed that religious instruction had been too much neglected, but great exertions had been made to remedy the defect. This man talked about religious instruction. I will show the people of England what sort of religious instruction the convicts received. In a debate on transportation in 1851 Sir George Grey said in reply to Sir William Molesworth, "the honourable Baronet has spoken despairingly of the moral condition of the convicts, but all the evidence of persons practically acquainted with its operation was against him." The Duke of Newcastle when in office said he had originally recommended that the establishment at Norfolk Island should be broken up and the men transferred to Port Arthur, upon grounds, which had exclusive reference to the relative situation of the two stations, for the enforcement of a good system of ' convict discipline, and, he now said that the results of the arrangements at Port Arthur, though in an incomplete state, had been most satisfactory. Such was the language of Lord John Russell, Sir George Grey, and the Duke of Newcastle, when those individuals must have known the wretched state of the prisoners. At the time when the Duke stated that the arrangements at Port Arthur were most satisfactory, I was conversing with persons of credit who had just left Port Arthur, and they told me that the mode of treatment was worse than ever it was; the sufferings greater, and according to the reasoning of the authorities, the depravity greater.

Is there a man in England possessing the feelings of man, who will say that I am acting improperly in exposing the conduct of the authorities? In endeavouring to prevent my countrymen from being exposed to a system worse than death? I do not believe that any one can excuse me of want of affection to my children, but if I had a dozen sons, if they were sentenced to die, and if it lay with me to save their lives, at the alternative of placing them as prisoners under the English Government, I would say at once, hang them all, and I am convinced, that most fathers would agree with me, did they know the penal colony as well as I know it. Besides I see from the papers that twelve hundred men and boys have been sent this year to Australia, subject to the same discipline and to the same effects, as thousands, yes scores of thousands, of our countrymen have experienced,

When I was about leaving America for England, some of my acquaintance said to me, now Mr. Frost you are an old man, you have seen enough of political life, and you must have suffered a great deal. There are many pleasant spots in America, on which you can live at a cheap rate, send for your family over, and spend your days in peace, The same language has been used in England. Those advisers have no conception of my feelings; they can not be made to understand them. Remain at home at peace, while my country and countrymen required my services? Peace indeed, with me it would be a state of war, and the worst of all wars, war with myself, I should deem it a base desertion of my duty to God and man. I could no more remain at peace, under the circumstances which I have described, than I could take the hands of my grandchildren, with whom I have lately become acquainted, and thrust them into the fire. I have been told that I shall have spies around me to entrap me, and that should the government get hold of me, it will shew me no mercy. Spies would be nothing new to me, I have had them for many years, but there is nothing to spy, I have no secrets; what I attempt to obtain is a Radical reform in the House of Commons. I do not fear the government. I did not fear when the hangman and the gallows were waiting for me, I am endeavouring to rescue my countrymen from hell; will a Christian government punish me for that? Will the people of England call this an offence? Besides, I believe there is a power much stronger than the English government, which has, and which will protect me, while I am doing my duty to my countrymen!!

There is one thing for which I look with great anxiety!! What will Christian ministers do? Will they take the lead in demanding an inquiry? And should my statements be found correct will they aid in changing a system which has produced and is producing such fatal consequences? What brought destruction on the cities of the plains? Is not the same God in existence, and has he not the same hatred of this monstrous crime, and the same power to punish it? Let not your minds be diverted from the object which we now have in view: a Radical reform in the House of Commons; and when the day will arrive which cannot be very distant, when you will exercise the elective franchise, then let wisdom guide you; then let your choice be such as will do honour to you. Whoever they may be, they will have a difficult task before them; one that will require great wisdom, firmness and honesty. Ages of misrule can not be rectified in a day. Consider those to whom you will entrust a power on the proper exercise of which will depend the freedom and happiness of our country, and of Europe. (Deafening cheers.)

Mr. Hooson moved a resolution, pledging unflinching adherence to the People's Charter, and a determination to labour for the enactment of the same. He spoke clearly, *forcibly*, and in a most calm and

argumentative manner; his method elicited universal admiration, and on the road home scores were heard discussing the relative merits of Mr. Snowden and Hooson; it seemed difficult to award the palm to either.

Mr. Ernest Jones, who was received with loud cheers, seconded the resolution. He said: They who stand steadfast through the shower, will reap the harvest in the sunshine. 'That is exemplified today—and by none more than by the man whom we have met to honour—for the sunshine of Chartist victory will gild the evening of his life. We are here to meet an illustrious martyr to our cause: but he is here to meet an army of the martyrs, for such are most of those assembled on this mountain. The victims of the dungeon and the chain gang are not the only martyrs—poverty is a fearful rack—hunger is a dreadful torture—wages-slavery is a terrible enchainment. Yes! the man who is not allowed to work for himself, but must devote his strength at the bidding of another, is a martyr. The man who is robbed of his earnings, and dares not murmur, is a martyr. The man who sees his wife fade with overwork and hunger, and cannot save her, is a martyr. The father who sees his child pine and wither in the factory, and die before his eyes, while those who rob him of life roll in wanton waste—he is a martyr. The man who grows poorer the longer he lives, while he enriches others, treading his hard pathway to the workhouse and the pauper grave—he is a martyr—the greatest of all martyrs—and thus this mighty meeting turn to you, and cry "brother, we welcome you from exile," (Loud cheers.) It is a proud moment, too, for those among us who have struggled on without an hour's intermission, that we are enabled to wave before you that old flag, and say—it has never once been sullied or lowered in our hands. We have not struck those colours for one moment! We restore the movement to you, as we restore you to the movement, still hearty, strong, unyielding. This is the only party, the only principle in the country, that can command such meetings. You see this gathering on this day: 25,000 men assembled in storm and tempest on a bleak hillside. I tell you, sir, no other party, neither Whig, Tory, "Radical," "Liberal," Manchester nor Financial, could have assembled half the number, beneath a cloudless sky. Our enemies tried to crush us by silence but we spoke too loud—the world has heard. They tried to misrepresent our views, but, we baffled them. The rod of Aaron struck the rock in the wilderness, and made the waters flow: so with the rod of truth have we struck the hard rock: of prejudice till the waters of enlightenment flow forth for all to drink. They tried to mislead us by false promises—but we exposed their hollowness. They tried to split us by countermovements—but we split them. They tried to make us yield by persecution, but we yielded not—and by Heaven! we never will, (Loud cheers.) I am not going to make rhetorical flourishes, at this late hour—but I tell you this, in plain terms, if you rally around us, if the working classes rally around us, they shall have high wages, cheap bread, plenty of employment, and, to a large extent, independent labour. Plenty of men have made you promises—but vague ones. I will prove to you what I say. If you send men like those by whom I am surrounded, into Parliament, laws will be made, which will secure to you the advantage I name. Send men like **James Finlen**. (Cheer.) Like John Frost—why should he not 'be sent to Parliament on his return, as well as Smith O'Brien—send John Frost to Parliament, (Enthusiastic cheers.) For my part, I expect to be in Parliament before many months. (Deafening cheers.) Rally round me then—and I'll either shake the house about the ears of the rats, or drive the rats out of the house. (Continued cheers.) I say, send your friends to Parliament, and laws will be enacted, which will procure high wages, constant work, cheap bread, and independent labour! What laws shall they be? I will tell you, that you may judge whether, if the masses rally round, my words will be fulfilled. To make your labour scarce, would make your labour dear. I know how to make it so. Not by emigration. You need not look across the sea—but across the land. Not by priest or peer. Don't look up—look down. Don't look to the clouds over your head, but to the soil under your feet (loud cheers)—not to the red brick factory, but to the golden corn field. The speaker then rapidly sketched a brief course of legislation, which would, without trenching on private property, secure wealth and happiness to the masses, drawing one conclusion from the other, and meeting the objections that the press had urged, and then concluded by saying: if you rally round us, these laws will be secured to you. I believe you will. This wonderful gathering is a pledge that you will. If so, do not be led astray by other parties. Do not be divided by half measures. Do not be broken up, by lending yourself to intemperate rashness. Do not be paralysed by weak and womanish counsels. Above all, do not be decoyed by generalities. Stick to practical measures, and rally sound tried men. Do not be led away by a cry that I myself once joined in, "measures not men." Say, "measures *and* men." What are the men, what are the measures? Who originate the measures? Men. Who propagate them? Men. Who carry them out? Men. And who have to administer them? Men. Good laws administered by bad men are worthless. Therefore, in our coming struggle—adopt your measures—select your men—and desert, neither. (Loud cheers.)

The resolution was then put and carried by acclamation. After a vote of thanks to the chairman, moved by **Mr. Finlen**, and seconded by Mr. Frith of Bolton, the vast assemblage dispersed, and even at that hour crowds were still coming to the place of meeting! It is worthy of being noted too, that, notwithstanding the drenching storm, not a soul deserted the meeting during all the hours it lasted. Such was the noble welcome given to John Frost by the men of Lancashire and Yorkshire.

### **September 6<sup>th</sup> 1856 *People's Paper* MR. JAMES FINLEN'S SPEECH AT HEYHEAD GREEN.**

The following is the speech of Mr. James Finlen, which was omitted last week, on account of its arriving too late:

Need I say that this occasion pleases me: very likely it will be taken for granted that it is the source not only of pleasure but of delight and hope. These who can respect and venerate have at this hour a genial opportunity. Here we have amongst us to-day a glorious and a good man—the patriarch of politicians, the bond of patriots, The world has heard of him, the good of it admire him for his rectitude, sympathise with him for his sufferings for them; the faint-hearted condemn and fear him. The world shall profit by him. A man who lives for others, lives a great, an exalted life, he is the hero of life's probation, a god in the midst of men. No sordid qualities dim and damage the lustre of his character; he suffers pain, poignant everywhere, and at every time, to diminish the sufferings of others. The intense study, the intermittent application of mind to the affairs of men—the ordeal consequent upon the promulgation of new and unfashionable truths; the scorn, the anathema, the cold, the icy side of society; the bar where the wanderer, the pickpocket, the swindler are arraigned:

The scowl of the judge, the sneer of legal lacquies, the dark repressing frown, indeed, of all that host strengthened by tyranny, favoured by ignorance, and fattened by the poor, are his, and are common to him. It is not enough for a man to receive at the hands of his foemen punishment and indignities, but he is expected to be grateful to them and humble to all people. Mr. Frost, who lived, and suffered and went through the ordeal for us, is now expected to be quiet, good, and grateful. He knows best the best policy to pursue; for myself I say, when struck, strike again, retaliation is harsh, but by all that's great in heaven and dear on earth it's necessary. We have not practised it sufficiently yet. We have been stamped down and tortured; we have been robbed of our daily bread; we have been stunted in growth, deformed in proportions, we have been pining in the midst of the plenty we have produced; we have been bludgeoned by special constables, gagged by acts of parliament, some have been immured in the dark dungeons of the foe, but no blow of down-right retaliation has as yet been given. There is too much of the Christ character common to the people. When struck upon one cheek they present the other. Such conduct is worse than self-murder, it is the conduct of curs. The precept and the practice would be good had we Christ-like people to deal with; but as we have to deal on earth with the incarnation of hell, striking when struck, should be the order and the practice. Such is my doctrine, from what I have learnt of the historical part of Mr. Frost's life. I judge that his is not very different. It will not I presume, be supposed that the path about to be trodden again by Mr. Frost, is a clear and even one. Few I think will imagine that the penal colonies, the hulks, the jails, are the only places where men suffer. Chartists suffer every-where. The earth to them is a prison while tyranny prevails and despots are dominant. Those who travel our way must expect to suffer. It is the rough and harrowed way, but then we are told that that leads to salvation: very well and good, so be it. It is our way and we have only to move to reach the goal, the good to which it leads. We must one and all be proud that we are to be accompanied by an experienced man, by one whom nothing can turn aside, nothing daunt. But it is dinned into our ears that our cause is dead. Why I have been taught by a poet, one who gave glory to his age 'a thing of beauty is a joy for ever.' I have been taught also that nothing is more beautiful than justice. We see it symbolised even,—when its symmetry appears as graceful as its influence is genial. It is the idol of those by whom it is often outraged. Throughout our country our cause has been designated just. We have been taught that it is so: we believe so now, and cannot think of its vitality ever being lost. Dead! It is as lasting and as constant as those lights of old, lit up, when the Sabine sage, Numa, flourished, when the Vestal virgins toned the faith of centuries. Yes, like those lights of old it lives bright and light-giving. Storms raised by opposing sectaries are futile, and harmless. It lives I say to give hope; light, and life, food, raiment, fuel and liberty. It lives here to-day, and we as pilgrims attend its shrine—the breast of this grand mountain, majestic in its rugged rudeness—to pay homage to it. Yes, through all the gloom and storm of this unpropitious day it lives and shines. Fixed here like a beacon light, it shall facilitate the escape from the sphere of despotism and darkness, to the land of promise, the millennium of a people, those, all those of my country, who work and look onward and sunward.

Despair not, for despair is the destroyer of hope, and hope is the buoy of life. As our liberties depend upon the triumphs of our cause, so does that triumph depend upon our activity; we must, therefore, work, that we may win. By working for the Charter, we shall be dubbed disturbers again. Let it be so. I proclaim myself a disturber. Disturbance is better than stagnation. Stagnation breeds and spreads disease. Society is poisoned by it - it must not be allowed. Yes, I like disturbers, they are public benefactors. That man is a disturber who in the dead hush and middle of the night, when observing his neighbours house on fire, breaks through doors and windows, shouts and roars to disturb, and wakes the sleeping inmates, to bring them to a sense of their peril—that man, I say, is a benefactor. He who stands upon your public platforms, he who conducts your Democratic news-papers, is equally a benefactor. He alarms his countrymen of perils imminent and awful. From his position he descries dangers hitherto: untold, advancing, and which ought to be averted. He tells you that the blood-reddened, the withering, the devastating hand of tyranny is upon you, that it grasps you in your sleep, and summons you to watchfulness and action, that you may be saved. Such a disturber is a saviour, such a disturber I wish to be. What would the world have been without such men. Would to God we had more of them. We are now infested with a nation of sneaks. Mealy-mouthed flunkeys, idolators of big names and little heads, long purses and short consciences, who would shrink and scrape the hoof before a fellow with a patrician name, although he might have about as much brains in his head as he had in his boots, and as much heart in his breast as in his pocket. Our country is overrun with such menials. When will men become wiser? When will they endorse and champion truth for its sake, and its alone. We want indeed sturdy men to-day, men who are

conscious of their manhood and their importance, men who will recognize and prove this simple fact, that the ploughman is a more serviceable member of society than the lord—that every man who works, has by his handicraft, won, and that legitimately, one of the foremost places in the world, and that he who works not at all is nothing short of a usurper, a cormorant, and an incubus, a pest to society, a heap of lumber to be removed. I want men, working men, to place a different estimate upon themselves,—to know that, without the labour of the men, the land of the landlord, and the capital of the capitalists would be literally useless. When men can be got to think this they will be less disposed to cringe to either one at every turn, and more determined to be Britons free, great and glorious. The example given by Mr. Frost to his Country is, and ought to be, invaluable. In him no cringing was found, but the real personification of all that should be associated with a holy, an ennobling, and historic cause. I say that I would to God that Britain to day could boast of an army of such men, they would be worthy of the Cromwellian era. Are they to be got? they must be sought. Let no man be distressed because he's poor. Remember that a ship's purser combatted his country's foes and freed his countrymen. Faith is much in every undertaking. Be determined that your next campaign for the Charter shall realise the main and foremost hope of your lives. Do not have your next mighty movement dissipated, squandered by the foe. Climb upward, the ascent is difficult, certainly, but then it is as possible to master; from the possibility take faith and conquer. The work is great, the help must be co-equal, the strength can be garnered. We shall be dastards if we fail.

Life of O'Connor price 2s 6d. Eight hundred copies of this work have been bespoke. The author will feel himself justified in producing it if orders for it to the number originally required, 1,500, are forwarded to him immediately. - ..All communications to be sent to James Finlen 29, Cranbourne Street, Leicester Square, London.

Jones and Finlen call for a Mass Meeting on Monday September 15<sup>th</sup> to welcome John Frost to London. *Various associates to begin their processions from: Finsbury Square, Russell Square, Lincoln's Inn Fields and march to Euston-Square Railway Terminus to receive him at one o'clock. From there he will proceed in a carriage to Primrose Hill at two o'clock.* All parties are requested to keep their line unbroken from the moment of starting to that of taking up position on Primrose-hill.

**September 13<sup>th</sup>** 1856 *People's Paper* DEPTFORD - ..resolved to have a public meeting on Blackheath on Sunday morning the 14<sup>th</sup> at 10.00 o'clock – subject “A Call for the Fifteenth” and invite Ernest Jones and James Finlen to speak.

CALEDONIAN FIELDS in aid of the John Frost testimonial committee. On Sunday morning last, a very numerous assembly received with energetic applause the following speakers; Messrs. Leno, Finlen, Nash, Henriette, the Lancashire Lad, and Bligh.

BOOKS! BOOKS! BOOKS! [We direct particular attention to the following announcement. One of labour's truest friends has opened an establishment eminently conducive to the interests of democracy. We hope that every democrat will support him in his undertaking – it is alike a public as a personal duty – Ed. P.P.] A large Stock of Books, New and Second-hand, now on sale at Mr. Finlen's, 29, Cranbourne Street, Leicester Square, London. The daily and weekly newspapers supplied. Works published. Working men's libraries furnished.

**September 16<sup>th</sup>** 1856 *South Eastern Gazette* – This (Monday) evening's *Globe* says that the grand entrance into London of Frost, the chartist, was an innocent fiction. There was no ceremonial reception of him at London Bridge, nor any demonstration there at all. He has for some time been lodging in Cecil-street, Strand, took his seat in the carriage at the end of Exeter-change and quietly drove to Finsbury Square, whence the procession, which was far less numerous than was expected, set out according to previous arrangements for Primrose-hill. Frost was accompanied by Mr. Ernest Jones, Mr. Finlen, Mr. Cooper and two foreign refugees. At Primrose-hill Ernest Jones presided at the mass-meeting.

**September 16<sup>th</sup>** 1856 *Saint James's Chronicle* ATTEMPTED REVIVAL OF CHARTISM. DEMONSTRATION TO MEET JOHN FROST, THE PARDONED CHARTIST LEADER.

Yesterday the ordinary outdoor life of the citizens of London was varied by a Chartist demonstration—an event happily now of some novelty. Mr. John Frost, who, by an act of clemency on the part of the Crown, was recently permitted to return to his native country, after spending some 15 years of his life in a penal settlement as a

convict, for his share in the Monmouthshire Chartist riots, arrived in the metropolis, and this circumstance, utterly destitute in itself of public significance, was made the occasion of an ovation by his compatriots here. Under the pretext of presenting an address of congratulation to this person on his liberation from slavery and exile (to which he was sentenced for the remainder of his life), an attempt was made for the moment to drag the Charter, with all its bitter reminiscences, from the oblivion to which it has long been consigned; and for several hours, in the height the day, the continuous current of traffic which pours through the principal thoroughfares of this great city was obstructed by a political procession. Perhaps in no capital in Europe, except that of England (which these men count unworthy of them) would such a demonstration have been tolerated, composed as it was, of men whose open and avowed object is to overturn the whole political constitution of the country in which they live, and to substitute one propounded by themselves.

The demonstration, such as it was, had been regularly organised after the accustomed fashion of bygone years. It was announced in large placards posted about the public streets to be made "in honour of the champion of Chartism," and working men were invited to attend in their thousands. It was to be headed by the members of the "Executive committee of the National Charter Association," followed immediately by "the members of the Exiled Demonstration Committee" after which were to come "the members of the different localities, and the foreign democratic associations, accompanied by their respective bands and banners." The "democrats" of the northern parts of the metropolis were to assemble in Russell-square, with their bands and banners, and start thence at ten o'clock for Lincoln's-inn-Fields, where those of the central localities were to meet. Similar gatherings were to take place at Chelsea, Bermondsey, and the east of London, and at a given hour the whole force was to march from all those different points to Finsbury-square, which was to be the grand rendezvous, and hence, after being consolidated into one body, to proceed at twelve o'clock along Moorgate-street, Cheapside, St. Paul's-churchyard, Ludgate-hill, Fleet-street, the Strand, Trafalgar-square, part of Pall Mall, the whole length of Regent-street, Portland-place, and so on to its final destination at Primrose-hill, where there was to be a "mass-meeting," held at two o'clock. The hero of the occasion, Mr. Frost, was to be picked up somewhere on London Bridge in an open carriage and four, and, accompanied by "the Executive Committee," to form the van of the cortège from Finsbury-square throughout the whole route. Mr. Ernest Jones was, of course, intimately identified with the movement, associated by **Mr. Finlen** and several other kindred spirits constituting the young blood of the Chartist association; but the familiar faces of "poor Feargus," Mr. Bronterre O'Brien, and Mr. Reynolds were wanting on the occasion.

At ten o'clock, the hour appointed for the assembly in Russell-square and Lincoln's-inn-fields, and for some time after the "democrats" made no sign in either of those localities, and the whole thing had then the appearance of utter failure, so far as they were concerned. Groups of men and boys, with a few nursery maids and children, loitered about the corners of the square, and the residents stood at their windows in anticipation of the coming event, but they waited in vain. A very motley crowd was also collected in Lincoln's-inn-fields with a similar view, and there at length a few Chartists, principally from the Chelsea district made their appearance, preceded by a band of music and banners. They were speedily joined by some 20 or 30 men wearing beards and moustachios, and most of them "wide awake" hats. They marched two-and two, coming from the direction of Leicester-square, and had the appearance of foreign political refugees and sympathisers—an impression the more confirmed when they unfurled a large crimson banner, surmounted with a pennon of crape, and inscribed, in white letters, with the words, "'Es Lebe Die Allgemeine Sociale Democratiche Republique." Forming themselves into a procession with the "democrats" from Chelsea, they left the square, and, preceded by a band, marched down Holborn, up Snow-hill, across Smithfield, and by Barbican to Finsbury-square, where they arrived a few minutes before twelve o'clock. There some thousands of people had already assembled, but evincing no feeling beyond that of sheer curiosity. They were collected all round the open space between the enclosure in the middle of the square and the adjacent houses. The air was filled with bad music, flags in great number and variety flaunted in the breeze, and the inhabitants from their open windows and verandahs surveyed the crowd below with looks of pity, blended with amusement. Shortly after 12 an open carriage, containing Mr. Frost, Mr. Ernest Jones, Mr. **James Finlen**, Mr. J. Cooper, of Bristol and two others, and drawn by four greys, with outriders, entered the square, and this was the signal for a round of cheering from the people waiting to fall into the procession, which, as Mr. Frost became recognised, was again and again renewed, while many of them ran by the side of the vehicle and grasped him cordially by the hand. To be upwards of 70 years of age, and to have spent 15 or 16 years of his life in exile and slavery, he looked well, and certainly much younger than he is. He is a man rather above the middle height, slightly corpulent, with grey hair and pale face, marked a little with the small-pox, and a person young-looking and straight, considering that it sustains the weight of 72 years. He was dressed in a black frock coat and trousers and a buff waistcoat; his deportment was modest, and his appearance on the whole, prepossessing rather than otherwise. A short interval was spent in marshalling the procession, and its arrangement was worthy of note, seeing it emanated from men who are continually crying down all social distinctions and with whom equality is first among the cardinal virtues. The *elite*, so to speak, were comfortably seated in an open carriage, and all the rest, after their kind and degree, had to trudge along behind on foot, including two young married women, who each bore a banner aloft in the air, throughout the whole distance, with a rabble continually pressing on their heels, and whose heroic devotion would have ennobled a better cause. The younger of these poor women, not more than 18 or 20, and one of whose eyes was

covered with a green shade, told the writer, in reply to a question from him, as she planted her standard on Primrose-hill, that she had carried it that morning first from Chelsea to Finsbury-square, and thence to the end of the long journey which she had just reached.

The *cortège* was composed, first of three equestrians wearing party-coloured silk scarfs, seated—we shall not say how - on three remarkably docile horses, doubtless selected by the riders for that particular virtue; then came the carriage and four, followed by a long line of pedestrians, including a considerable number of women, who walked generally four abreast, with a number of banners floating overhead, some surmounted with a cap of liberty, and bearing characteristic inscriptions, such as, “The alliance of the peoples;” “The Archangel is here; his name is Democracy;” “Frost, Williams, and Jones, the victims of tyranny, restored to their homes;” “The sovereignty of the People;” “Hail, brother victim!” “The Political Victims of 1848;” “God speed our cause!” and “Disobedience to a tyrant is honour to God.” At one part of the procession a copy of the *Daily Telegraph*, a penny Newspaper, was borne aloft on a black gibbet, and set fire to as the *cortège* passed the office of the Paper in the Strand. The rear was brought up by several pleasure vans, laden with women and children. The procession, thus made up started from Finsbury-square at half-past twelve, passing along Moorgate-street to the Mansion House, and so on through Cheapside by the route already indicated. Besides the persons of whom it was composed a motley rabble of “roughs” and boys accompanied it throughout the whole way. It was difficult to estimate the number of people who made up the *cortège*, but it took about five minutes to file past a given point in the journey. As it passed along the resident population collected at their doors, windows, and balconies to catch a glimpse of it, but rarely, if ever, did any one of them evince the slightest sympathy with the demonstration. Some bunting was displayed over the shop of Mr. Holyoake, a bookseller, in Fleet-street, but that was the only exhibition of the kind noticed during the journey. At short intervals the crowd raised a few faint cheers, and now and then a man in the street would step out of the ranks to shake hands with Mr. Frost, or an artisan would raise his paper cap and cheer him as he passed. It was a glorious opportunity for the light-fingered gentry, and they doubtless made the most of it. As the procession moved past Trafalgar-square there was a great rush among the crowd to a particular point, the meaning of which was shown by a well dressed man, having the appearance of a foreigner, holding up, in a state of great excitement, a strong gold guard chain to indicate to an approaching policeman that he had just been relieved of his watch.

With but few incidents to relieve its tedium the *cortège* reached Primrose-hill about three o’clock. By this time it had gathered immense volume, and there some hundreds more awaited its arrival. On reaching the crest of the hill a scene of disgusting violence ensued. Some 20,000 people, including a large number of the roughest and lowest part of the of the population of the metropolis attempted to procure standing room on a spot not calculated to accommodate more than a tenth of their number, and a fierce struggle was waged among them for more than half an hour. Mr. Frost and his compatriots tried in vain to make a ring, and most of them were buffeted about among the mischievous rabble for some time. At length accompanied by Mr. Ernest Jones, Mr. **Finlen**, and others, he raised himself upon a form brought for his use, and here, during another considerable interval, the party surveyed the desperate fight going on around them in mute despair.

Poor little ragged boys who had strayed into the midst of the merciless crowd were held up above head to prevent their being suffocated or trodden to death, and terror stricken women fainted away. One single police-constable alone was seen on Primrose-hill during this fierce onst, and he was a man off duty. It is said there were some on the ground in plain clothes, but they were looking after thieves, and were not seen to make any effort to quell this unseemly riot.

Eventually, for a brief interval, order was restored, and Mr. Ernest Jones having been called to the chair addressed the crowd. He said that men desiring to be free had come to pay homage to a tyrant’s victim, and never were they met on a nobler occasion (cheers). There (pointing to Mr. Frost) stood a man who united the energy of youth with the experience of age, after spending 15 years villainous oppression in a colony of England. He had worked in the chain gang during those long years, and was now ready to break the chains that bound the working man of his native country (cheers). His life had been marked by indomitable perseverance, incorruptible honesty, and fearless courage, and they honoured him as the representative of a principle which embodied the rights of labour. Where was the man among them, even he who had a vote, who could stand forward and thank God that he had given him his rights? They the working men created the resources of the world, and grew old as they created them, while the more they created the poorer they had become.

Why was that? Because of the monopoly that ruled everything and crushed down their labour – the monopoly of legislation, of trade, of credit, of land, and of everything else that ought to be open and attainable by every man who wished to earn an honest living by his own labour (cheers). The Chartists of England were the only men who had propounded measures, calculated to secure the rights of the working population, and to place them as a body in a position of prosperity and comfort. Every other remedy had failed of that result; the rights of labour had been for years and years shamefully confiscated (a voice, “Do you labour? And great uproar) He had laboured more than the man who interrogated him, with his brain and his pen, in the dungeon and in a state of liberty (cheers). He had ruined himself individually; he had sacrificed all the hopes of his life by his adherence to their cause, and he was ready, if need were, to offer up life itself for it (renewed cheers). There were at that moment 30,000,000 acres of waste land in this country out of 70,000,000 acres, and if these public lands were thrown open to the working classes, thousands upon thousands of them might be living independent on an



allotment of 15 acres to each man. That would not be attended by the confiscation of one acre of property, for these waste lands belonged to the right of the people, though the people were not even permitted to set foot on them. They were anxious to listen to Mr. Frost, and he would not detain them. He believed that not fewer than 1,000,000 human beings had joined in the procession that day, and let them not think that their time had been misspent by taking part in it. Half-a-dozen measures of reform would be brought forward ere long, as the result of it, in the House of Commons, as a sop to the fellows, as they would be designated, who had identified themselves with that tremendous Chartist demonstration.

The following ode was then sung on the hill: -

THE WORKMAN'S SONG TO THE RICH

Air – “God Save the Queen.”  
God save the workman's right  
From Mammon's sordid might,  
    And Birth's pretence;  
Confound the tricky rule,  
Of foreign courtly tool,  
Give us from Freedom's school-room  
    The men of sense

Forced as a boon to ask  
For Labour's daily task  
    From purse-proud knaves;  
Not ours the land we till.  
Noy ours the stores we fill:  
Living and dying still  
    Beggars and slaves.

We toil at loom and spade,  
And still, the more we've made,  
The less we gain;  
For you the profits keep,  
And you the surplus heap,  
Till all our age can reap  
    Is want and pain.

Our poverty's your wealth,  
Our sickness is your health,  
    Our death you life;  
Your shops in poison deal,  
Banks forge and statesmen steal,  
And rots the commonweal,  
Corruption rife.

With bloodstained despot's shameful  
You link our country's name,  
And aid their crime;  
God, hear they people pray,  
If there's no other way,  
Give us one glorious day,  
    Of Cromwell's time.

But, if the Lord of Life,  
Will turn your hearts from strife,  
    To clasp the hand  
And bid oppression cease:  
Then brotherhood and peace,  
In Freedom's safe increase,  
    Shall bless our land.

Mr. **James Finlen**, after a few observations, presented the following address to Mr. Frost, the lion of the day, which was received with great cheering.

“Respected Sir and Fellow Chartist, - We are glad that we may take this opportunity to thank you for your inestimable services, and congratulate you upon your return to your native land, after an exile as protracted

as it was dishonourable to those by whom it was necessitated. We congratulate you, too, that you were able to sustain the trials and indignities of that exile with such exalted and dignified composure – such composure, indeed which it is seldom the lot of humanity to witness. The heroic vindication of your deeds, the exposure of the misdeeds of the people's enemies, of those who became your enemies, because you championed the interests of those whom they oppressed, are acts which still hold a prominent place within the memory of your countrymen; and we, the Chartists of London and its suburbs, in connection with the representatives of continental democracy, avail ourselves of this gracious occasion, this happy and auspicious hour of your return, this significant and eventful day, to declare our gratitude to you for those acts, and to make known our joy at your proclaimed disposition to work again for the removal of those wrongs which 15 years since prompted you to the performance of such acts.

“It is refreshing, Sir, in this day of blasphemy and reproach, in this day of political apostasy and compromise, to know that while we have had men who publicly recognised our cause, and who have since succumbed before the fiery blast of persecution, or forfeited the future greatness of being true for the present advantage of being rich, that we have you among the number who have bravely endure the cross, despised the shame, and still foster fealty to that faith which our doctrines, the doctrines of the poor, have engendered, and which, sir, the sufferings of us all have sanctified.

“Permit us then, to bid you welcome. We do so as strangers to you in person, although we are by our common cause familiar to each other. By the influence of the justice of that cause are we now and still hope to be united. From this day we take new hope. We do so from the circumstance by which it shall be marked. Your name, associated as it is with the worthiest of worldly objects, is, while it calls us to a sense of both a duty and a right, so suggestive of the highest aims and purposes of men, that we accept your presence amongst us this day as an earnest of future weal, as a guarantee, sir, that there shall yet be attendant upon the necessary efforts of the people those fair and happy issues for which the philanthropic of the world have worked. And, guided as you are by your long experience, attached as you are to that cause the success of which will be equivalent to the manumission of your fellow men, accredited as the advocate of justice to all, gaining the vigour even from your sufferings, and love and sanction from the poor, for whom you have especially worked, thought, and suffered, we recognise in you those high and rare attributes, those peerless parts which make the patriot, and render you, sir, as one fit and destined to rank amongst the delivers of nations.

“May our whole hope and partial prophesy be realised. May the evening of your life be soothed and solaced by the operation of that beneficence which will be the result of you country's liberation from the detrimental dominion of those sectaries, both political and theological, that have flourished for so long a period, and that to the material injury of your country's people. - Regards us, dear Sir, to be your friends and admirers, “THE CHARTISTS OF LONDON AND ITS SUBURBS.”

Mr. Frost having received the address, which was printed in gold on green satin, then replied as follows: - Brother Chartists, I accept with much pleasure your kind congratulations on my return to my native country, and be assured that I set a proper value on them. I am convinced of their sincerity, and nothing shall be wanting on my part to continue to deserve the confidence of the working men. On principle and humanity I have ever taken the part of the weak against the strong, when I believed the weak to be right; and to be held in remembrance by the industrious classes gives me more real satisfaction than anything the wealthy and powerful could bestow. It is the leading principle of that religion which I confess – this was my practice when I held situations of power, to succour the oppressed, and I shall do so while life remains (cheers). Forty years ago I became convinced that the miserable state of our country, and of its industrious inhabitants, was occasioned by the lawgiver, by the corruption of the House of Commons, and I did all in my power to point out to my neighbours the cause of the evil and the remedy. The only remedy, as it then appeared to me, was to recur to the principles of our ancient constitution, which principles are embodied in what is now called the Charter (great applause). I saw the demoralising effects of the present mode of electing members of the House of Commons in my native town. In the year 1837, on the accession of Queen Victoria, I was the mayor of our borough and the returning officer. At that election I believe that 20,000*l.* were spent, principally in bribing the electors, in corrupting society in its very foundation, and I was obliged to receive the votes of men whom I with good reason suspected had received money from both candidates (applause). During the agitation for the Reform Bill I warned my countrymen that the thing was a humbug, that it would put the same sort of men into the house as those who occupied seats under the borough system; and I have lived to see the day when the ablest writers in England have declared that since the Reform Bill became the law of the land the members elected under it were greater imbeciles, and more dishonest, than any elected under the old system (hear, hear). Bitter as was the hatred which I formerly felt for the men who oppressed and impoverished my country, it was nothing in intensity as compared to what I feel at present (hear, hear); and base, indeed, must I be if, after witnessing the sufferings and depravity of my countrymen in Van Dieman's Land, there occasioned by the laws, I did not exert every power I possessed to change a system which, unless altered, and speedily too, will bring down on the nation the vengeance of that God who, for crimes of the same kind, produced, too, by the merciless severity of the lawgiver, destroyed the fairest spot in the world (cheers). I am greatly pleased to find that the Chartists of London and its suburbs place confidence in my integrity: that confidence shall not be disappointed (applause). Let our organisations be preserved where they exist, and let others be formed where there are none. When the

parliament meets we shall be able to place our cause before it in such a manner that the enemies of the people will not be able to resist our claims (cheers). They are founded on justice; the powers possessed by the House of Commons are usurpations, obtained at the expense of those principles which deputies ought never to have violated; and the poverty, misery, and crime which now afflict our unfortunate but beautiful country are to be attributed to these usurpations. We play for a great stake – for life or death – let the game be played skilfully (hear, hear). Let us be cool but determined – prudent, but fearless – giving up no principle – satisfied with nothing less than our due, and we may yet live to see our country once more bearing and deserving the name of “merry England” (continued applause and cheering).

Mr. Henrette then moved a resolution in favour of the adoption of the Charter. Mr. Ambrose Tomlinson seconded the resolution, which was put and unanimously agreed to.

Three cheers were given for John Frost, and a similar honour having been accorded to Mr. Ernest Jones, the meeting separated.

*Other reports in Northern Daily Times, September 16; British Banner 1848, September 16; St. James Chronicle, Morning Chronicle, Daily News and many others. [A few, perhaps the equivalent of today's Daily M--- wrote a complete fiction – viz. the North Devon Journal September 25 which stated 'The affair was a most ludicrous failure the procession which according to Mr. Jones comprised a million persons was more correctly estimated by the reporters as under 800 including a large proportion of women!']*

**September 20<sup>th</sup>** 1856 *People's Paper* GREAT NATIONAL DEMONSTRATION of nearly ONE MILLION PEOPLE - *more favourable version and begins by disputing the numbers dishonestly given by the usual press. Despite the huge numbers it was a peaceful demonstration, shops remained open and no police presence probably prevented disturbance!* “...a splendid open carriage and four greys with postillions in gala dress, the horses decorated with laurels, had drawn up before the ‘*People's Paper* Office,” in the Strand, to receive Messrs. John Frost, Ernest Jones, James Finlen, James Watson of Newcastle and H. Cook of Bristol.” “conspicuous among the procession were the foreign Democrats, about 500 strong, distinguished for the precision of their march, their military bearing, and their splendid banners. There might be seen the flower of foreign democracy, the men who had fought at the barricades of Paris, Berlin, Vienna, and Milan, or on the battlefields of Hungary, Italy and Poland.” *Since their own reporter couldn't get within hearing distance of the speakers, the PP take their report of the speeches from the “Morning Star”.*

Two lectures will be delivered by Mr. James Finlen at St. George's Hall, Southwark on Sundays October 12<sup>th</sup> [later altered to the 19<sup>th</sup>] and October 26<sup>th</sup>.

**September 27<sup>th</sup>** 1856 *Greenwich Free Press* – Mr. John Frost gave a lecture on “Transportation,” on Wednesday last in the hall of the Literary Institution [Greenwich]....Mr. Ernest Jones being unable to attend in consequence of family affairs, the position of chairman fell upon Mr. Finlen, who, in addressing the meeting, declared the true power of the country lay in the peasant and mechanic, and that their meeting at that place was dictated by purity and honesty. (He) then referred to the press, declaring that it was an estate in the country, and that such papers as the *Times* dictated even to the Houses of Parliament. The chairman, who spoke with much eloquence, was loudly cheered as he resumed his seat. *Mr. Frost had by then arrived and gave his speech.*

**September 27<sup>th</sup>** 1856 *People's Paper* Flowers and Fancies by John Blackman, London; [obtainable from] James Finlen 29, Cranbourne Street. Poems by a working man - extract given from The Worker's Sabbath Song.

**October 4<sup>th</sup>** 1856 *People's Paper* WEST RIDING – Halifax, Sunday, September 28 1856. The secretary, in reference to Mr. Frost's visit with Mr. Finlen to the various localities in the West Riding, the following arrangements were made; That they go to Dewsbury on Monday and Tuesday the 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> October; Huddersfield 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup>; Todmorden 10<sup>th</sup>; [Leeds 13<sup>th</sup>] Halifax again 14<sup>th</sup>; Pudsey 17<sup>th</sup> Keighley 19<sup>th</sup>, Leeds again 20<sup>th</sup>; Bradford on Monday and Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup>.

BERMONDSEY Mr. John Frost delivered a lecture at St. George's Hall, St. George's Road, on Tuesday last. Mr. James Finlen was elected to preside and after a neat and appropriate address that

gentleman introduced Mr. Frost to the meeting. After Mr. Frost's talk the chairman then addressed the meeting in his usual forcible and eloquent style.

Life of O'Connor - 800 copies of this work have been bespoken, 1,500 required - all communications to James Finlen, 29, Cranbourne-street, Leicester-square, London.

**October 11<sup>th</sup>** 1856 *Huddersfield Chronicle* Lectures by John Frost, the Chartist – delivered in the Theatre [Dewsbury] on Wednesday and Thursday [6<sup>th</sup> & 7<sup>th</sup>] evenings. Includes address by Mr. James Finlen denouncing depravity in high and middle life, advocating universal suffrage, the abolishment of State Religion. According to the *Leeds Times* of October 11<sup>th</sup> about 4,000 people attended the Thursday lectures. They were welcomed to the town by the Dawgreen Temperance Brass Band.

**October 11<sup>th</sup>** 1856 The *Huddersfield and Holmfirth Examiner* a fuller report of the Huddersfield lectures on Thursday – more detailed on Finlen's stance on electoral reform.

MR. FROST IN HUDDERSFIELD - THE HORRORS OF TRANSPORTATION,

On Wednesday night, a meeting was held in the Theatre, to hear from Mr. Finlen on the "Peoples' rights" and from Mr. John Frost, who has recently returned to England on the "horrors of transportation." About 400 or 500 persons were present and Mr. Archibald Patterson of Ripponden was placed in the chair. He introduced to the meeting,

Mr. Finlen, who advocated the principles of the People's Charter, or more particularly that part relating to universal suffrage. He commented upon the fact of education bills being thrown out of parliament, by the men who said the people were too ignorant to be entrusted with the franchise, mentioning the crimes committed by educated men, and members of parliament, instancing Palmer, Dove, and Sadlier, he contended that the men who were educated to do the work which tended to increase the wealth of the nation ought to have a voice in the elections. He concluded by urging the men to support the principles he advocated.

Mr. Frost was received with much applause. He was there after fifteen years imprisonment, to show what were the effects of irresponsible powers in the hands of vicious men. He never expected such a state of things as existed in the penal colonies. He was placed in the office as a police clerk, and in a few days was thoroughly ill from seeing the depravity he witnessed. He had come to lay these matters before them, and to ask for their assistance in changing the system. Years ago in the House of Commons, Sir William Molesworth said our penal code was the most severe in the world and a committee of the House of Commons had been informed of the state of things in 1838. He would now state what he had seen. He then detailed the crimes committed by the convicts in Van Dieman's land, as being those of the cities of the plain which had been destroyed by fire from heaven. He stated that the truth of the 19<sup>th</sup> chapter of Genesis was incontestably proved by the doings in the convict settlements, and yet the government officials did not punish these crimes as much as they did smoking. Wherever large bodies of convicts were together these crimes were done, and yet, although it was known to the government, the colonial secretary (who was then Lord John Russell) had ordered that the men should undergo a probation of some years before they were allowed as servants, and the result was that all the convicts had to be placed in these barracks, and of the hundreds sent yearly to Australia, two thirds of them were destroyed, if the commission of the worst crimes was considered destruction. As men, fathers, and Christians it was necessary for them to take this matter up. He in making those things known, at the age of seventy-two, was only doing his duty. As soon as he got to Port Arthur he thought he was sent there for a certain purpose, that of altering the present state of the penal colonies. He believed it now, and he was endeavouring to show to his fellow-countrymen the state of things in Van Dieman's Land, which resulted from the severity of the punishment. He should think the statements he had made would produce some effect upon those present, unless men were thoroughly indifferent to the happiness of their country and its future as a nation, and that no man but would do something to effect a change. It was his intention to be heard before the House of Commons, it was the intention of many people to petition that he might be so heard, and he hoped people of Huddersfield would petition for the change of the system which produced such abominations. It would be pleasant for him to remain at home with his family if he could do so consistently with his notion of the duty of a man, but he had a duty to perform, and his conscience told him he must bring this system before the people of England, and to try to save thousands of their fellow-countrymen from these depravities (applause).

The Chairman called upon those who would support Mr. Frost in his undertaking to hold up their hands, and all did so. The meeting then passed the usual votes of thanks and separated,  
THE PEOPLES' CHARTER.

On Thursday evening Mr. Patterson was again placed in the chair, and he wished all persons who were opposed to their views to come forward and argue the question.

Mr. Armitage moved that "The meeting pledge itself to support the Peoples Charter."

Mr. Bradley seconded the resolution. He remarked that he had heard persons in the town contrast the conduct of Mr. Frost, who they said was not humble enough, and Smith O'Brien. The speaker stated a ticket-of-leave was given to O'Brien as soon as he got there while Mr. Frost was six years before he obtained one.

Mr. Frost supported the resolution. He had always acknowledged a kind action, but the fact was Lord Palmerston wanted the notes of the Irish members, and he was informed that unless he pardoned Smith O'Brien he could not count upon their support. He had formerly stated that if he pardoned Smith O'Brien he must pardon the Chartists, so choosing between that and going out of office he pardoned O'Brien to get the support of the Irish members, and necessarily was obliged to pardon the Chartists. He (Mr. Frost) therefore owed no gratitude to the government, and he came forward to advocate the principles he did for the sake of his country. He stated that the English ministry had always been inimical to liberty and he was sure they were concocting schemes with Louis Napoleon which would have the same effect. He thought it would be better if England altered the wrongs in her own dominions before meddling with other countries. He then dwelt upon the abuses in the House of Commons as exemplified by members voting, without knowing the subject they voted upon, simply because they were told to do so. He referred to the vicious laws still upon the statute book, and the large taxation of the country as requiring consideration and alteration. He spoke of the national debt as being established by the aristocracy and considered while the property qualification for members of parliament, and a restricted franchise were the law of the country the House of Commons would new except for the higher classes. He urged the people to respect themselves and then others would respect them, (hear, hear) - and spoke of the greater intercourse which existed between each class in America in consequence of their considering themselves equal to each other. He wondered how it was that the middle class did not take up such matters as the church when they saw that those of the middle class who entered the establishment only got the £60 or £100 cures, while the relations of the aristocracy got the £10,000 or £20,000 a year places.

He referred to the educational scheme of Lord John Russell and stated that the charities, or foundation schools, in this country were amply sufficient to educate the people if the funds were properly applied, while Lord John's schoolmasters would only teach "honour the king and all in authority" and would stop there. He next spoke of the political aspect of the country considered that a measure of reform should be introduced next session and the working men should remember that if they would alter the present state of things they must be moral and show they could appreciate and rightly use increased privileges. He urged the men to think, to think closely and consecutively for then they would succeed, and in conclusion he requested them to organise and try to obtain the rights they ought to have by peaceful and proper methods.

Mr. Finlen then advocated universal suffrage; and incidentally a shortening of the hours of labour; stating that R. Cobden, John Bright, and Milner Gibson had, by voting against the Ten Hours' Bill, shown themselves to be opposed to the interests of the people; the ballot. This was said to be un-English, but it was more un-English to see the nation drunk at a general election, or to see a land-owner driving his farmers up to vote as he desired: bribery corruption and intimidation were un-English so if they had the ballot, even if it was un-English, there would be one un-English thing instead of three. He wanted annual parliaments. Many persons said the time was not long enough for the members to learn their work, he said they should know their work before they went to parliament, and the annual elections would allow them to get rid of bad or useless members. They must have paid members. If a man was working and was not paid, he paid himself. The property qualification must also be abolished, not because rich men might not be members of parliament, but because then poor men could be elected to represent labour, as the others represented capital. The last point was equal electoral districts, and it would not be that 30,000 people in Halifax should send two members to parliament while the 250,000 persons, or more, in Manchester, only sent two members. He concluded by urging them to support the views he advocated, which he considered would be the panacea for all social evils.

The chairman then put the motion which was carried with one dissentient. Votes of thanks to the speakers and chairman closed the proceedings. About 400 persons were present.

**October 11<sup>th</sup> 1856** *People's Paper* HALIFAX – Two lectures in the Oddfellows' Hall, HALIFAX by Mr. John Frost and Mr. James Finlen on Sat. October 11<sup>th</sup> and Tuesday October 14<sup>th</sup>. They will both give two lectures each on October 12<sup>th</sup> at the Hall of Freedom, Queen's Head on Sunday.

RIPPONDEN – Frost and Finlen's tour, *after Queenshead*; Leeds 13<sup>th</sup>, Halifax 14<sup>th</sup>, Pudsey 16<sup>th</sup>, Keighley 19<sup>th</sup>, Bradford 21<sup>st</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup> – ends Leeds, Sunday the 26<sup>th</sup>.

KEIGHLEY Frost & Finlen lectures on Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> October at the Workingman's Hall.

DEWSBURY On Monday and Tuesday, the 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> inst., two lectures were delivered by Mr. John Frost, in the Theatre. The first on the horrors of Transportation in the British Colonies, the second on Political Reform. Mr. Frost is accompanied by Mr. Finlen, of London, a young man of great eloquence and ability. Both the meetings were well attended - especially the one on Monday., when the spacious building was crowded in every available part. Mr. Frost and Mr. Finlen were

welcomed to the town by the Dawgreen Temperance Brass Band, which accompanied the carriage that conveyed them through the principal streets.

INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE - On the return of Mr. James Finlen to town, steps shall forthwith be taken to renew the English delegation. No time shall be lost.

**October 16<sup>th</sup>** 1856 *Bradford Observer* [*a taste of the anti-Chartist Press!*]

CHARTISM AT A DISCOUNT IN HALIFAX During the latter part of last week the town was placarded with an announcement that John Frost Esq., the returned convict and martyr to the rights of the people, would lecture in the Oddfellows Hall, on the evening of Saturday last. The time for opening the meeting was stated at 7 o'clock, and on our going to the Hall, we found the principal entrance kept by a strong "navvy," and the back entrance was under the care of an idiot pot hawker. At a little after seven o'clock, Mr. Frost made his appearance, accompanied by Mr. Finlen, of London, and another gentleman unknown to us. In the gallery were three persons; on the orchestra four; and the number in the body of the Hall never exceeded 150. After a short interval, during which a faint manifestation of approval was given by the scanty audience, a motion was made by the unknown person in the orchestra, which, after some delay, found a seconder in the body of the room, to the effect that John Snowdon (a woolcomber) should take the chair. Mr. Snowden came forward, and in his well known sarcastic tones, railed against the "persecutors" of Mr. Frost whom he introduced to the meeting. Mr. Frost then rose, when he was greeted (sic!) with three rounds of applause from a portion of the audience. He began by saying that he did not think he owed the English government anything, for during the whole of the time he had been in the penal settlements he had been treated worse than any of the rest of the convicts. He contrasted his case with that of Mr. Smith O'Brien, whilst that man had been treated with comparative respect, he (Mr. Frost) had been put to all kinds of hard work. Referring to the jury and witnesses before whom he was tried, he Declared that there was not one but would have found him guilty either of witchcraft or stealing. Some of them were told what to say before they entered the witness box; falsehoods of the grossest nature were given expression to, and several jurors, he affirmed, were the most ignorant of characters. Such, he contended, was the evidence on which he was convicted of treason. He related a conversation held between himself and some other prisoners whilst in the cells, as to how they should commit self-murder, and stated how they had been overheard by one or more of the turnkeys, of which he complained most bitterly. He gave an account how, whilst at Port Arthur, he had been compelled to remove stones until his hands were sore, and when he complained to the governor, who he thought acted cruelly towards him, he ordered him to a cell simply for speaking his mind. He maintained that Lord Palmerston had pardoned him, not through a feeling of justice to him, but because it was his policy so to do. He had been requested to pardon Smith O'Brien [*the government needed the Irish votes in Parliament- and this was the only way to secure them*] and he could not brave to do this without pardoning him [Frost] also, so that he had nothing to thank Lord Palmerston for. He stated his intentions to be to get the people of this country to aid him in prevailing upon Government to take his evidence before a committee of the House of Commons. He read lengthy extracts from a pamphlet published by him when in America; by which he thought he could prove that he was most desirous to free all parties from a place which he declared to be as bad as hell. He described the method of flogging at Port Arthur. The whips were made of the hardest cord, then steeped in salt and water, and afterwards dried in the sun, which made them become like a wire, and then were tied eighty knots which cut the flesh like a saw. He was placed in the office, he was placed in the flogging yard, in fact he was put into every place where he would be likely to see and feel the greatest amount of misery and distress; and it might yet be, perhaps, that they would regret letting him witness and feel what he had done, for it was his intention to make the matter fairly known to the world. He next made an attack upon the Press, stating that, when in America he published a small book, one of which he sent to every paper in London, and none did him the kindness to notice it except Mr. Ernest Jones, of the *People's Paper*. He retired amidst partial applause. Mr. Finlen then spoke, after which the meeting broke up.

**October 18<sup>th</sup>** 1856 *Leeds Times* – Queenshead – report on Frost and Finlen's talk on Sunday afternoon in the Hall of Freedom. LEEDS – a fuller report on their visit at the Music Hall on Monday evening. Reporter 'sorry' that Mr. Frost 'furnished many disgusting details' while many females were in the audience (!) *In Frost's talk he took the Leeds Times to task for inaccurate and unfaithful reporting. Strangely, it is the opposition reporting that really shows what the Chartists were up against.* After Mr. Frost came John Finlen who 'in a rabid speech of great length' in which he enunciated the virtues of the movement and pointing to the 'bloated aristocracy' and quoting the cases of 'Strahan, Paul and Bates, the Royal British Bank direction [*the Bank failed*], William Palmer the Rugeley murderer [*a doctor; the price of poisoners, murdered his mother-in-law, four children, wife and brother – for money*] and 'our own poor Dove [*poisoned his wife, insane and wrote to the devil*].'

**October 18<sup>th</sup>** 1856 *People's Paper* – HUDDERSFIELD

THE VISIT OF MESSRS. JOHN FROST AND FINLEN TO HUDDERSFIELD,

On Wednesday and Thursday evenings, the 8th and 9th instant, Messrs. Frost and Finlen addressed the people of Huddersfield, in the Theatre, Ramsden-street, when they were greeted with much enthusiasm. The number present was about 600.

Mr. Patterson, of Ripponden, was called to the chair. He said he did not anticipate the honour of being chairman on the occasion, but he believed his duty in keeping order would be light, though he had been given to understand that the parties who had let the theatre had afterwards regretted having done so, as they pretended to be apprehensive of a riot. He did not believe that was the real motive which caused them to wish to evade the contract; but he, however, had confidence in the people—that there would be order on the occasion. He believed the working-classes of Huddersfield had been better instructed by men whose memories they revered, and whose principles they cherished, than to disgrace them by any disorder. He would, therefore, content himself with reading the placard calling the meeting; after which he called upon Mr. Finlen.

Mr. Finlen made a few preliminary observations, and then announced himself as being there to support and defend the People's Charter, as the only remedy for the evils which so much abounded in society, sin, sorrow, woe, despotism, and depravity, were seen on every hand, not only among the lower classes, but among the rich. There were the Doves, the Palmers, and the Sadleirs, &c. He alluded to such examples because his order was twitted with being a criminal and dissolute class. He had confidence in the principles which he advocated, as being the true remedy, the real panacea for existing evils. They would remove the pernicious extremes which now afflicted their country; for while poverty and want were the lot of the industrious, and extreme wealth was possessed by those who did nothing useful, society could never be in a healthy and happy state. He was for every man having the franchise because he was a man. It was an old cry, but he held it to be a good cry, and one that ought to be re-echoed from one end of the land to the other. Lord John Russell said the people were too ignorant to exercise the franchise. He denied the truth of Lord John's dictum. But what did it prove if admitted. Why, that the laws of the country had been made to keep the masses ignorant, by obstructing their education. The aristocracy had not neglected themselves. They had abundance of seminaries, besides the universities of Cambridge and Oxford: but, till lately, it was a Tory sentiment that it was dangerous to give the people knowledge, and even now it was doled out in as scanty a form as possible. Such notions and such injustice were the real cause of outbreaks and revolutions. Mr. Finlen contended that the House of Commons was inimical to a sound education of the people, by showing that systematic attempts were made to defeat every liberal measure, having that end for its object. Here, then, was a necessity for the people holding the franchise, because the electors did not send the proper men; in fact, the present constituency were a corrupt body, or why did they elect so useless a piece of machinery? But Lord John says the people are too ignorant. They might not be able to jabber French, construe Latin, or read Euclid, but he (Mr. Finlen) contended that every man who knew a trade was a learned man, and the trades of England were of more importance than all the other classes put together. But, says Lord John, if the people were educated the "Church would be in danger." Yes, it would, if they removed the prop of the state—for the Church was upheld by the state—it did not, as now constituted, command the affection of the people, and he confessed he was for free-trade in religion. To endanger the Church, as now constituted, would be doing good service, What is that religion worth which exists on the denial of human rights on account of alleged ignorance, and perpetuates the ignorance in order to withhold the rights! And what had the parsons accomplished in London, the centre of modern civilisation? According to Mr. Mayhew there were 60,000 prostitutes, 30,000 professional pickpockets and 10,000 houseless vagabonds, who slept under archways, and in obscure nooks and corners, and who knew not where the morning's breakfast was to come from. While 100,000 persons thus existed, they necessarily lowered the dignity, the prestige, and the importance of the city and the country. The church and the aristocracy revelled in the wealth which they did not create nor deserve.

But, said Mr. Finlen, we are pointed to the numerous charitable institutions which exist around us for the relief of the poor. He accepted discussion upon the subject. He regarded them as indicative of a horrible wrong, and proving the necessity of a change; for it showed a perverted, state of society when the industrious classes had to look for refuge to such charities, and to seek eleemosynary aid from the white hands of those who never did an act of useful work in their lives. Mr. Finlen gave a humorous picture of the misused strength of many an aristocratic idler, and, lastly, he referred to the House of Commons, as a huge museum, occupied by a majority of *dummies*, whose business there was merely to vote with the ministry or party in being, at the beck of the whipper-in, when they knew nothing of the subject or the debate—they ought to be whipped out, and their places supplied by such men as John Frost, (Great cheering.)

The Chairman then announced the Newport exile as the next speaker, who would address them on the "Horrors of Transportation." Mr. Frost then gave a harrowing description of the penal settlements. On the second night motion passed to the effect that the Charter was the only effectual remedy for our social and political evils, which was supported by Messrs. Frost and Finlen.

Frost and Finlen visit WINDHILL - Friday 24<sup>th</sup> October to lecture on the horrors of Transportation. [Note: the last transportation to Australia took place on January 9<sup>th</sup> 1868, though to Tasmania it had ended in 1853]

Tomorrow (Sunday) Mr. James Finlen will lecture in St. George's Hall, Southwark.

BRADFORD Tea Party in the Temperance Hall, Leeds Road, Bradford on Monday 20<sup>th</sup> [for Frost and Finlen] who will lecture there on 21<sup>st</sup>, Tuesday. [*Bradford Observer* states that Frost was indisposed and Finlen ('an itinerating compatriot') took his place.

RIPPONDEN Frost and Finlen's tour for next week Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> Keighley [*and* Southwark? - in the event Finlen missed the Keighley meeting] 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> Bradford; Thurs 23<sup>rd</sup> Bingley; Friday 24<sup>th</sup> Windhill Cragg; Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> Leeds.

**October 25<sup>th</sup> 1856 *Leeds Intelligencer*** On Monday evening a great assemblage gathered in the Music Hall (Leeds) to welcome Mr. Frost...Mr. James Finlen, of London, in a speech of great length and equally distinguished for truthfulness and ability, of which we regret to state, no report has been supplied to us.

Mr. John Frost and Mr. James **Finlin** addressed a meeting at the Oddfellows Hall, Bingley, on Tuesday evening last.

Mr. James Finlen lectured to a numerous audience in St. George's Hall, Southwark last Sunday evening...he delivers a second lecture in it next Sunday evening October 26<sup>th</sup>. [he was to have lectured with Mr. Frost at Keighley on the same day, Sunday last, but Mr. Frost lectured alone]

**October 30<sup>th</sup> 1856 *Bradford Observer*** BINGLEY This town was visited on Thursday last by Mr. John Frost, the returned convict, who delivered a lecture on the Oddfellow's Hall on "Transportation," which was preceded by a lengthy statement of evils, by Mr. Finlen, of London, arising to the working classes from the present state of the House of Commons, which he (Mr. F) would remedy by supplying some of the members' places with men of the working class, who would defend their fellow labourers' cause.

**November 1<sup>st</sup> 1856 *People's Paper*** – A WALK OVER AND AROUND SALTIRE –

In one of the prettiest and one of the wealthiest valleys of England, is situated one of the largest factories in the world—Saltire is its name. The owner of it is called Titus Salt. After the river Aire, the rich and forest-favoured river, which waters, enriches, and beautifies the vale, and the big, rich man, Salt, has the mammoth mill been named. It is like a palace, it is like a barrack, it is like a madhouse, it is like an hospital, it is like a prison; it is like a workhouse, a pandemonium, a vast, deafening, deadening rattlebox. Messrs. John Frost and James Finlen were permitted to go through it, and the permission was a great and exceptional favour, for very few visitors indeed are permitted by the proprietor within the precincts of that almighty mill. It is approached by bridges, passages, and special roads. Ponderous gates close the entrances to it. At each gate there is what may be called a lodge porter, whose duty it is, apparently, to note and check the workpeople as they arrive and leave. Upon passing through the principal gateway, the above gentlemen found themselves in a kind of courtyard. Substantial sheds were distributed about it, and now and then were seen passing through them a child, a woman, or a man. The bulk of the building bounds it on either side.

There was a strange quiet in the place; it was like a vault, and nearly as circumscribed. You could hear a constant, well regulated, muffled, modified noise; but it was the noise of another place—all these were still,



cold, and clean. The windows, rising tier upon tier above it, were of a rough, hammered, unfinished, greenish glass, so nothing could be seen through them distinctly from either side; but one incessant coming and going of mechanical and impulsive shadows told at once the why and the wherefore of that noise. Children, women, wool, cotton, steel, leather, iron, timber, silk, oil, fat, hearts, hopes, virtue, vice, disease, health, time, were all being welded, blent by one force there behind those windows, for, and in the interests of one man—that man a modern alchemist—a getter of gold from that heterogeneous congregation.

After awaiting for few minutes in that strange place, they were introduced to Mr. Salt. His manner was affable, his appearance pleasant. In age he appeared to be about forty-five. but he had a very suspicious looking head of hair—quite black, while his whiskers, very ample ones, were perfectly white. He might have been sixty, but he did not look it. His face was very red; and, in fact, one might think the good things of this world had not been overlooked by him. A little conversation took place between them. The markets, Napoleon, masters and men, were then touched upon. “I’m desirous,” said his Majesty Salt, “to have the problem solved as to whether employers and employed cannot live and work upon amicable terms with each other—hence, I have endeavoured to make such arrangements here for my people as will, I hope, give them much comfort, and promote proper feelings.” By this time a young gentleman who had been summoned to attend, made his appearance. Some people said that ‘it was young Mr. Salt.’ It may have been, as his manner smacked much of the heir apparent. He came awkwardly into the room to which they had been conducted by his father. He was evidently ill at ease, and his appearance did not favour him at all. He was rather long, with broad shoulders, a tiny head, and spare legs. Upon his upper lip, in spite of his juvenility, there was an unfortunate looking delicate moustache; in clothes and trinkets he was well appointed. He was there to accompany the strangers through the building. First of all, he led them to the engine rooms. At the basement of these rooms were ten great fiery furnaces: there, too, was the immediate source of all the mechanical action of the mill. Higher up and further back, in the handsomest part of the building, were two exquisite engines, of seven hundred horse power each. The appearance of these in full activity can hardly be described. The word “confusion” describes it best, It was only in the house of these engines that any particular quantity of transparent glass was to be seen. Immense plate glass windows, not inferior even to the best that are to be seen in London, were in them. Why such an arrangement? The railroad and the high-road were within a few yards; hence the ostentatious show of the elaborate machinery. To parade the other machinery—the “hands’—might be to provoke comment and comparison disagreeable—hence all that opaque glass. The other parts of the mill were gone hastily through. Everything was immense—much incomprehensible. The guide was not communicative, so there was not a great deal learnt. As he opened one door he said “there are eleven hundred women working in this room.” Eleven hundred women in one weaving shed! Eleven hundred looms all in impetuous motion! Twenty-two hundred shuttles flying, flying, flying! Yes, there, in that place—that one place alone, with the dense, dusty atmosphere; with the stench, the noise; the ‘distracting, head-splitting din; with the positive task-master and the task; there, in that unmatched recess of that prodigious mill, were plying, plying, plying for bread and lives, eleven hundred of “old England’s fair young daughters,” eleven hundred hand-maids of Mammon. The Chartists left it tired, and more convinced than ever of the necessity of a change. The Chartists left it with Mr. Salt’s “problem” for a theme, wondering whether the five thousand men, women, and children, “cribbed, cabined, and confined” there —“his hands” —would find in the end that their interests were interwoven with his. JAMES FINLEN.

**SOUTH LONDON LECTURE HALL [Leeds]** On Sunday last Mr. Finlen delivered his second lecture to a numerous and attentive audience, receiving at the conclusion of the lecture the marked concurrence of his hearers..

**BRADFORD** Mr. Frost attended a tea-party and meeting in Bradford on Monday last. attended by Mr. Frost...Mr. Finlen supported the resolution [that the People’s Charter is the only measure of political reform] at great length, in a speech of singular ability. On Tuesday evening Mr. Finlen took the place of Mr. Frost who was indisposed.

**WINDHILL** We had a visit from Mr. Frostand Mr. Finlen on the 24<sup>th</sup> in the Hall of Freedom, Mr. A. Deacon in the chair. The address that Mr. Frost gave was listened to very attentively; and the graphic picture of the convicts in the penal settlements was truly heart rending. Mr. Finlen then addressed the meeting in glowing terms, which created a profound feeling throughout the audience. This is the first time that Mr. Finlen has visited Windhill, but probably will not be the last. Deacon

**November 8<sup>th</sup> 1856 *People’s Paper*** **JACOB’S WELL** The members of this locality held their usual meeting at the King’s Arms, Charles-street, City-road near the Canal Bridge on Sunday evening, 2<sup>nd</sup> inst. Mr. J. Nash gave a very interesting lecture on Ancient history – a discussion ensued ably carried out by Messrs. James Finlen, Slocombe and the lecturer.

**November 15<sup>th</sup>** 1856 *People's Paper* Mr. James Finlen will address a public meeting in Newcastle-on-Tyne next Sunday (to-morrow evening) Chair to be taken at half-past seven o'clock.

**November 22<sup>nd</sup>** 1856 *People's Paper* GREENWICH AND DEPTFORD The Red Lion and Wheatsheaf, High Street, Deptford – proposed that we invite Mr. James Finlen to deliver a lecture on Sunday evening November 30<sup>th</sup>. [*he is otherwise occupied – see next*]

**November 29<sup>th</sup>** 1856 *People's Paper* Mr. Finlen will address a public meeting in the Democratic Hall, Glasgow next Sunday night, November 30<sup>th</sup> 1856

Books, Newspapers. Periodicals and Stationery of every description can be had of James Finlen, 29, Cranbourne-street, Leicester square, London; and 22, Nelson-street, Glasgow. All orders and letters to be sent to Glasgow.

NOTTINGHAM At a meeting held at Mr. Radford's Temperance Hotel, Drury Hill, Nottingham, a new locality of the National Charter Association was formed, bearing the name of the Working Man's Improvement Society, acknowledging Ernest Jones and James Finlen as the executive committee. The objects of the society are to form a library in connection with the association, and to promote discussions.....

Finlen's new address in Glasgow also advertised in the *Glasgow Sentinel* of December. 6<sup>th</sup> and the 20<sup>th</sup>.

**December 20<sup>th</sup>** 1856 *Glasgow Sentinel* James Finlen - Bookseller, publisher and news agent, 22, Nelson Street, Glasgow, and 29, Cranbourn Street, Leicester Square, London.

## 1857

**January 3<sup>rd</sup>** 1857 *People's Paper* TRURO A Democratic dinner was held at the Eagle Tavern, Pydar-street, in this town on the 27<sup>th</sup> inst. Mr. Murray, the chairmen gave an address on the People's rights and the Clergy – the toast: "The health of Ernest Jones and James Finlen, the people's defenders."

**January 3<sup>rd</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup>** 1857 *Commonwealth* (Glasgow) list of newsagents who take the paper includes J. Finlen of 22, Nelson Street, J. Finlen of 53, Trongate.

**January 17<sup>th</sup>** 1857 *Paisley Herald and Renfrewshire Advertiser* CRIMES OF THE POPES

On Tuesday night Mr. James Finlen of London delivered the first of a course of lectures on the crimes of the Popes, in the Mechanics' Hall, Canning street, Calton. The lecture embraced the "sins and iniquities" of the various August sinners who filled the pontifical chair from Boniface II to Urban II, at the time of the first Crusade. *Also reported in the Commonwealth and Glasgow Chronicle.*

**January 24<sup>th</sup>** 1857 *The Atlas* – The Chartists of Glasgow are moved by the same persons as the Chartists of London. At a Scottish rights meeting at Glasgow this week in favour of the extension of the English county franchise to Scotland, they appeared, summoned by placard, and headed by Finlen, the joint dictator to the movement with Jones, but in an immense gathering they were beaten by 5 to 1. This is encouraging to the reformers of London, as showing that these noisy braggarts are powerless even in the great towns of the North.

**January 24<sup>th</sup>** 1857 *The Glasgow Sentinel* Scottish Freehold Movement - public meeting in Glasgow - on Monday night in the City Hall which was crowded in every part with an eager and enthusiastic audience. *The reform movement wanted all property owners to get the vote, similar to the English franchise.* A Dr. Begg spoke first and several other speakers followed ending in a second resolution calling for the principle of the forty shilling freehold existing in England be extended to Scotland. A Mr. James Adams rose to move an amendment, and was received with hisses and groans from the promoters of the meeting, and cheers from his supporters. He said he was induced to take this step because of the crude, trifling, and imperfect character of Dr. Begg's

measure. He objected to this extension of the privileges of the mere property class, while no recognition was made of the working men as such. - Universal manhood suffrage was the reform needed - his amendment was "Resolved, - That as the House of Commons very inadequately represents the people of Great Britain and Ireland at the present time, this meeting cannot but conclude that the extension of the electoral system under which it has been created would be a positive aggravation of the existing evil of bad representation. Therefore, as a radical change in the system is manifestly needed by all men subjected to it, this meeting is of the opinion that it would be utter folly on the part of any portion of the British People to favour or in any way advance any measure of an exclusive and superficial character, and more especially the invidious one propounded by Dr. Begg. It likewise declares that it regards as a waste of time any movement for electoral reform that has not for its object universal manhood suffrage, the arrangement to vote by ballot, the equalising of the electoral districts, the shortening of the duration of Parliament to the period of one year, the paying of the representatives, and the abolishing of the property qualification."

Mr James Finlen seconded the amendment, and said—As it is now late, getting on for twelve o'clock, I will, if you give me a patient hearing, be as brief as the lateness of the hour and the important questions under consideration will permit me in being. Statistics of crime have been alluded to by preceding speakers, and employed by them to illustrate their views, and favour their propositions. The first speaker, Dr. Begg, said that there were in Scotland three thousand criminals, and in Great Britain and Ireland, altogether, thirty thousand—a whole army of them. Now, I wish to avail myself of the rev. gentleman's statement, because it will be of much service to my cause—ininitely more than it could be to his, as I will presently show you. The population of Scotland is three millions, of England seventeen, and of Ireland seven; in round numbers, a total population of thirty millions for the three countries. Now, gentlemen, it has been asserted that the Scotch criminals number three thousand, so if you take the respective populations of the countries named, you will find that those supposed to be in possession of a better electoral system than Scotland are undoubtedly in possession of a proportionate complement of criminals with Scotland. So, if we are to take the statistics of crime as a criterion by which to judge of the nature of political arrangements, we must, in all fairness say that Scotland, as her crime is precisely proportionate to that of England and Ireland, is no worse politically than those two countries are (Hear, hear), I am quite prepared to say that it is a fair criterion. And then, what conclusion am I led to? Why that as the British political system has engendered amongst men vices at once so prominent and so dangerous, that they have brought within the grasp of rigid law. in the space of one year, an entire army of criminals. I am using Dr. Begg's own language—it must necessarily be a bad, a vicious, and a vitiating system; consequently, one that, instead of being enlarged by being introduced into Scotland, ought to be annihilated at once and for ever. (Cheers). Besides, if we look to the character of the House of Commons, we shall find it deplorably disreputable; finding it so, we will not, I apprehend, be enamoured of the source from whence it emanated; we will not wish to enlarge that source at all events. You would enlarge it were you to succeed in introducing the forty shilling freehold system into this country. Have you nothing better to agitate for? Have you no loftier aspirations than to be able to do what the forty shilling freehold men of Warwickshire have done?—furnish the Legislature with a crotchety intolerant Spooner, and an unfortunate Newdigate—a man who is the woe-begone representative of a ragged, rotten system, the awkward mouth-piece of your most inveterate feomen. Surely the exploits of Mr. Taylor's friends have not been so efficacious and productive of creditable representation as to warrant you, who have been waiting and working so long for political freedom, in abandoning your old cause, and surrendering your hard won vantage-ground in foregoing a creditable position, and a character for constancy, in the mere hope of effecting by some sort of a change a good which to some men is utterly problematical. (Hear, hear). Allow me to tell you that this movement will not advantage working men at all. Allow me to tell you, gentlemen, that any movement not embracing the interests of working men will be, must be abortive. Allow me to tell you that working men have been made cat's-paws of too long and too often. They worked for you in '32; they enfranchised you then; you have worked against them ever since. Now that you have got the boroughs pretty well into your own hands, and that through the credulity and confidence of the toilers, you want the same men, you have ever snubbed and choused, and kept from their due inheritance, to apply themselves once more to the heat and dangers, the toil of another agitation that they may enable you to dominate in the counties. Yours is simply a struggle against the landed aristocracy; you are not working—you never have worked for the people, you merely seek your own aggrandisement. Wherefore, then do you call on the people to work for you? (Cheers).

Now, working men, be careful. Mind, as far as I am individually concerned, I don't care a jot about what may be the issue of this discussion, for I am qualified to vote both in Scotland and England, so I seek nothing for my own gain. But I want you to be careful for your own sakes, for your own credit. It is not because I have the vote that I should sit tamely by, when I know that those who have it not are equally as well entitled to it as I am. I seek it, I demand it, I work for it for the poorest man in the empire—I claim it for him, not as a

privilege, but as a right. His claim is embodied in this amendment. Accept nothing less at the hands of these men, for even Palmerston or Russell will give you much more without agitation than these individuals, who are disposed to "Begg" political rights—or promising you after you have agitated. (Cheers).

The Chairman then took a show of hands on the motion and amendment, when the former was declared carried by a large majority. About one-third of the hall, as near as one could guess, voted for the amendment.

#### **February 4<sup>th</sup> 1857 *Glasgow Herald* - FIRE**

Between nine and ten o'clock on Monday [2<sup>nd</sup> Feb] night, fire broke out in the premises of Mr. Finlen, bookseller and news-agent, 53, Trongate. The constable on the beat observed smoke issuing from the premises some time after they had been closed, and immediately gave the alarm; but before the engines could be brought into play the whole interior was in a blaze. The shop was opened just the other day, but the stock, we believe, was not very valuable. Such as it was, however, it is entirely destroyed, as well as the fittings and woodwork. The tenant was insured to the extent of £300, which will probably cover the whole loss.

According to the *Paisley Herald* of the 7<sup>th</sup>, two engines from the Central Station, under the direction of Mr. Bryson, were speedily on the spot and succeeded in preventing the flames extending to the flat above.

**February 28<sup>th</sup> 1857 *People's Paper* TO THE CHARTISTS.** - A circular has been issued by certain friends in Glasgow, for starting a weekly newspaper to advocate Chartist principles, and calling for the subscription of one pound shares towards the same. The direction of many of the circulars is in the handwriting of our friend, James Finlen, who is settled as a newsagent in Glasgow. We are also informed, whether correctly or not we cannot say, that Mr. Gammage is associated in the undertaking.

Far be it from us to seek a monopoly in the democratic press, Messrs, Finlen, Gammage, and others have as good a right to start a Chartist newspaper as any one else, but we put it to the Chartists of Glasgow and the country at large, whether the starting of the proposed new paper will not cause a competition fatal to the new and to the old alike. We should hail with delight the accession of a dozen new Chartist organs, if there were room for all, and each got a new class of readers: but in the case before us the circulars are sent to our old friends. They appeal to the old supporters of the "*People's Paper*," so that the infallible result could only be to compete for a portion of our circulation. While freely admitting that any one has a right to start a newspaper, we do say it would be a sin to try to destroy the work of five years—to make the subscriptions of the Chartists go for nothing at last, and all the toil and anxiety expended thereon by our noble-hearted friends be frustrated. We say nothing of our own efforts and struggles, and the £700 we have ourselves sunk in the undertaking. But there is more at stake: the organ of Chartism, that has braved the storm and trial for so many years, is established at last, in a proud position, and has piloted the good ship onward in the time of its greatest danger. The Chartist movement is just rising to a prouder position than it ever occupied before. To lose its organ would prove fatal, and a reckless competition might cause that loss.

We do not think it in either case, friendly or democratic to run that risk, and trust Messrs. Finlen and friends in Glasgow, will reconsider the step they have taken; if not, we trust the Chartists throughout the United Kingdom will weigh the matter well.

The New Paper – we have been deluged with copies of the circulars sent by Mr. Finlen and his friends in Glasgow for starting a newspaper. .... We say better one than none.

**March 7<sup>th</sup> 1857 *People's Paper*** – letters of support from some districts for the PP and hoping Mr. Finlen will consider his issuing a rival publication.

*Letter from Mr. Hamilton of Glasgow (February 28 1857) explaining that Glasgow newspapers run down the Chartists on every occasion and they think a paper, called the Northern Star, could be issued to reflect their news and views.*

*He explained that Mr. Gammage was NOT involved in creating this new paper.*

*It is intended to run alongside the PP [which doesn't circulate well in Glasgow] and not against it – and they had written to Mr. Jones in that vein not expecting it to be published, in the way he did.*

Jones writes ‘We trust our Glasgow friends will not be made the dupes of any designing individuals whose purpose it may serve to profess friendship for us that they may the more securely knock us down. *No going back on that! PP then contains further accusations, recriminations and counters.*

*PP of March 14<sup>th</sup> continues the ‘discussion’ on both sides. Hamilton says the Glasgow democrats wanted a journal pre-Finlen, but he was good enough to join them in getting one started. The March 21<sup>st</sup> issue much the same, PLUS backlash about the price of the PP to bring it closer to the price of Reynold's Newspaper.*

**March 25<sup>th</sup> 1857 Glasgow Chronicle** On Monday evening, a meeting of Advanced Liberals was held at the Trades hall - Councillor M<sup>c</sup>Adam in the chair. *An amendment was proposed that manhood suffrage be demanded rather than household suffrage.* Mr. Finlen rose to address the assembly. *There were strong objections to this on account of him not being an elector (nor a Liberal) and, despite support for Finlen, he was refused permission to speak.*

**April 11<sup>th</sup> 1857 People's Paper** Under NOTICE TO CORRESPONDENTS is the following letter which just about sums up what many thought Ernest Jones had really achieved with the *Peoples Paper* under his leadership. He follows the letter with his excuses and usual explanations, including amongst his achievements - 'We first introduced Mr. Finlen to Manchester' - though having turned on *him* just as he did with all his previous allies and friends.

A LETTER FROM A PARTICULAR FRIEND.

Sir,—You have now been five years the acknowledged head and chief of the Chartist movement, and during that time the Chartist body has subscribed funds to start a paper for you; and year by year they have made subscriptions to keep that paper in existence; and now you ask for a further sum of £500 to bring the price of the paper down to the level of the other metropolitan journals. And what right have you to ask or expect such a thing? What great benefit has the Chartist body derived from your advocacy, that they should subscribe such a sum? Are we any nearer the Charter now than when the paper was started? I think not; and I think the longer we acknowledge you as our leader the farther off we shall get from it. This is no hasty conclusion of mine; for till the last few weeks I have been one of your most ardent admirers; till then I had the greatest faith in your integrity and abilities; but now that confidence has been shaken, and you will have to alter your mode of proceeding very much before I have confidence in you again. I will endeavour to give you my reasons for thus losing faith in you. Ever since the paper was first started you have been at war with most of the old advocates of the Charter, whom you have denounced as enemies in the guise of friends, and by such means you have driven every man of talent from the movement, and you put yourself forward as the only man fit and willing to conduct the movement. With Mr. Frost, however, you acted different. You found the Chartists, as a body, took some interest in his fate, and, of course, you, as their leader must do the same, though you wished him anywhere else rather than in England advocating the Charter; and lest he should have the confidence of the Chartist body, you took him in hand, got up a demonstration for him; wished him (once) put at the head of the movement; sent him through the country to cause an agitation, and then, when he had served your purpose, you treated him with contempt, making it appear that he left the movement of his own accord. Subtle policy that; but, fortunately, the Chartist body is composed of men who can weigh actions as well as words, and who are not always to be carried away by brilliant speeches, if the speaker lacks consistency. You ask the Chartists to raise £500 before you will consent to lower the paper to twopence. And why should we do it? Is the paper such a talented one? Are there so many talented editors and writers engaged on it? Has the paper such a standing and reputation as to be acknowledged as the chief paper in Europe, that we should make such a sacrifice to keep it going? I really think it is not worth it. In the first place it is got up worse than any penny paper now published. We have no editorial articles to compensate us for the price; and the few paragraphs on the middle page are scarcely worth reading; and to fill up the papers you put in stuff about Holloway and his pills, and things that are of no interest to the readers; and this week you have printed in it the “Paper on Emigration” which you made us pay a penny for before, but which, compared with other publications, is not worth half the money. Besides, these articles on emigration were published in the earlier numbers of the paper, and you call your paper “The People’s Paper,” with a few thousand readers, at an aristocratic price, and far below every other metropolitan paper in talent and interest; and with this, after beating every other man of talent out of the movement, you think we can put faith in you when you tell us you are going to get the Charter for us. Why, man, had you faith in the principles which you so loudly profess—had you no other interest at heart than the Chartist cause—and did you give your services so disinterested as you say—you would have associated with every man of talent whose principles led

him so far (and there are plenty in the country), and by this time you would have raised an organisation which might have had some weight in the country, and would have carried your election and many others besides. But you have done none of this. On the contrary, you have shown such a selfish fear if any one else took a prominent part in the movement as must lead us to infer that you had other longings besides the Charter. You told the men in Smithfield you had a good business and a large income, and did not want money to help the election, Yet a few weeks after, your only cry is "Money! money!" And when you are defeated you tell us, who helped you with the money, we were to blame for not sending it before; if you could have had the money before and have brought the 614 independent electors to the poll before noon, you could have carried the day. Did your voters want buying (this requires explanation), if so where was your own large income, or could not some of your wealthy committee advance funds, if necessary? It's all nonsense to write us such senseless twaddle for fourpence. You lost the election because you did not organise it well before the time. You are so graspingly selfish that you won't keep any one to help you on the paper, and so you could not attend but a few days in Nottingham for fear the paper should suffer too much. As it was, the week you were away, there was not a duller paper published. And since, though you did not scruple to spend the money, you have scarcely condescended to let us know what you did there, and did not report a line of your own speech. You might have done this to make up for our disappointment; you might have given us some of the brilliant speeches which you delivered, and not have insulted us by telling us we should have subscribed earlier. If the money was not sent soon enough to be of service, you ought not to have spent it. You yourself showed no energy before the time of election; but sent out a whining address for a split vote. You tried to coalesce with the Whigs yourself. You found it would not do, and then threw the defeat on our backs. I have given you our reasons for want of faith in you, and if you can justify your conduct I trust you will, for you may depend on it others are as dissatisfied as we are in Bristol. We think also it requires some explanation why you refused to review Mr. Frost's last pamphlet on transportation.—Yours, on behalf of the Bedminster Chartists, H. Wilkins.

[P.S.—Enclosed is an article from "Paul Pry;" by this you will find there are other eyes on you besides the Chartists, and if you carry on much longer, as you have done lately, you will sully your reputation as a philanthropist, and instead of being beloved by the people, your name will be a bye-word and a reproach, and future historians in writing of our times will rank you with Castlereagh instead of Wilberforce.]—Bristol, April 7, 1857.

**April 25<sup>t</sup>** 1857 *People's Paper* Ernest Jones wife died 'last Saturday' leaving him with four boys. He writes that Finlen is projected to make a Chartist tour – but don't let it be to sell his newspaper and break up the Chartist cause. He also states that a new London newspaper "The People" is being issued, supported by very rich people, to undermine his own paper.

**May 2<sup>nd</sup>** 1857 *People's Paper* Jones complains that; *The "Northern Star," (not yet in print,) has applied to the publisher of PP to get it printed – and there is another rival 'The People' which Jones finds 'emanates from the Evangelical-Shaftesbury-Bishops-Apronstrings-Crystal-Palace-Closing-Sunday-Humbug-Association.'* He calls the *Northern Star* and *The People* two thieves between which they hope to crucify the PP. The following issues of **May 9<sup>th</sup>** and **16<sup>th</sup>** similar.

**May 23<sup>rd</sup>** 1857 *People's Paper* CAMBERWELL – That as Mr. Finlen is trying to crush our movement, we consider him no longer a member of the Executive Committee.

**May 30<sup>th</sup>** 1857 *People's Paper* WALWORTH The following resolution was carried unanimously;- That we think the Camberwell friends premature in their conclusions respecting Mr. Finlen. It is possible that a well-trying man may think he is serving, rather than "crushing our movement," by starting a very good and cheap democratic paper, which many thought was much wanted, and we regret that the professed friends of liberty should not be more liberal.

**July 18<sup>th</sup>** 1857 *People's Paper* Central London – Hand and Shears, Cloth Fair, West Smithfield Sunday July 12<sup>th</sup> – at the conclusion of the locality business, very important topics of the Indian and Italian questions were introduced by Mr. Leno in which Messrs Travers, Bloomfield, Slocombe and Finlen took part.

SECOND AGGREGATE MEETING HELD AT THE ST. GEORGE'S HALL, ST. GEORGE'S ROAD.

On Tuesday last a second aggregate meeting was held at the above hall.

Mr. Stedman was elected to the chair and said,—this meeting was called to take into consideration what reform is necessary to secure equal rights and justice to the whole people, as also to consider the propriety of convening

a conference of the leading democrats of the nation, to aid and give effect to such a measure of reform at the next session of Parliament, as can alone lay the basis of a full, fair and free representation of all classes, he therefore hoped the meeting would see the necessity of organising together for that purpose; he hoped there would be some difference of opinion in the meeting, as by discussion we arrive at the truth. He then read a letter from Mr. Locke, one of the members invited to attend, saying other business prevented him.

Mr. Thompson moved the first resolution; he said he moved the resolution, and he differed with the chairman, for he wished to see the meeting in conformity of feeling; he did not regret the absence of Mr. Locke, as he generally neglected to attend to any meeting where the working classes' interests were at stake. He opposed the Ballot as a measure by itself, but if it were given in conjunction with other measures of reform he would accept it. The middle classer opposed the people at the time of Hunt, at the Repeal of the Corn Laws, and all peoples' movements. They have promised you cheap bread, high wages, and plenty to do, but what is the result, when we see thousands of the working classes with nothing to do—when we were meeting the middle classes foot by foot we told them that the working classes would have less to do after the repeal of the Corn Laws than they had now, and what is the result? That sentence is verified to the very letter. We also foretold the scarcity of cotton—again are our words verified. He believed the middle classes were forging the chains to bind up the working classes in abject slavery, by advocating the ballot measure. Therefore let the working men be warned in time—resist the Ballot by itself, but if the middle classes will come out for Universal Suffrage, support it. That which dignifies man is the having a voice in his country's laws. Some say we want something more than political power, we want social rights as well; but let us have political power first. (Hear, hear.) I see an old friend on the platform (Mr. Finlen), therefore I will not detain you any longer. I therefore move the following resolution:—"That in the opinion of this meeting any reform short of the people's charter will fail to confer the just rights to the people of these realms, but seeing the present position of the middle classes standing in need of great reforms, we are willing to co-operate with them in any reform movement that would be beneficial to the whole people." Loud applause greeted it.

The resolution was seconded by Mr. Kent in a short neat speech, and supported by Mr. Finlen, who said he was happy to meet so numerous an audience that evening. It was the first meeting he had had the honor of addressing in London for this last eight months. In regard to the middle class they will carry on their own cause, and care not for England's poor—they never did and never will. The ballot or universal suffrage would be no benefit to the people, either collectively or separate, as the proletarians could then only vote for those persons possessed with the property qualification. He, therefore, would not budge one inch from the people's charter, that had been sanctified and made holy by the blood of patriots shed in its defence, and the tears of widows and orphans mourning the loss of those brave and isolated martyrs. He knew that a conference was held in London in 1848, he believed that conference had done good, had it not been for some men. It was Feargus O'Connor that prevented the Whigs from sweeping the people into their silent graves, and glory to his name. Could we ensure such a convention as in '48 we should again bring good measures before the people. Let it be no crotchet movement of one individual, no back-room assembly of six persons; let's have no such men as Roupel, &c., they have before courted the Chartist Association, but at what price did they want you—that you should give up some part of your principles, and throw your weight into their movement for their benefit. You are journeymen in your workshops, and they want you to be workmen in your politics. Let not the Chartist go to the conference to discuss Chartism, they know that already, but let them go to the conference to rise the dignity of the working classes, and gain their popular rights. The working classes are the foundation of this nation's greatness, without them this mighty kingdom would go to decay; therefore, which are we to have, more land or more shoddy? Again, this country might be brought to ruin, as was the Indian empire, by the imposture of that popular prime minister, Lord Palmerston. He had no doubt, from what he had studied, that he was as great a despot as the Emperor of Russia, Louis Napoleon, or King Bomba (tremendous applause), and by the familiarity he has displayed to those three despots, he believed that he was guilty of pandering to the Russian despot during the Russian war; therefore, let the Charter be the battering-ram to break down the crushing wrongs now oppressing the people. (Immense cheering.)

Mr. Sale said that the middle classes were grumbling about the amount of the Poor Laws and prison allowances, which was about £3,000,000, and it kept increasing, and if it continued we should be all swallowed up. He recommended the people, if they wanted to be eased from their present oppression, they must become possessed of political power, and no political movement would benefit the people like the people's charter. (Loud cheers)

Mr. Lee said he differed with Mr. Finlen in respect to a conference, as he believed that there would be a conflicting number of ideas, and out of that might arise such measures as would benefit the people. He did not believe the middle classes were so opposed to the lower orders as some would suppose. If a meeting of all classes were to take place he believed that by such a coalition we might bring some good measure forward for the public weal. He hoped and believed with Mr. Finlen, in not having a hot-house conference, with measures already concocted cut and dried. He believed in the whole points of the People's Charter, but if we could not get the whole let us have part. He believed the march of intellect was going ahead, the march of mind was going forward, Look at the cheap press to be met with in all the small beer-shops and coffee-houses, and therefore he

hoped the Chartists would not press the whole of their points, but take part or any instalment of the same, that we might still "continue to go onward, and wipe the dust of slavery from off our feet.

A working man said, let this conference be made one that would bring about some tangible good to the working classes. In speaking of the press, that was in the hands of the millionaires of the country, who crushed the working classes, and drove them to despair. (Cheers.) Was it justice to make the poor man carry heavy stones about the yards of various workhouses, at the time of the severe distress last Christmas. He did not believe the suffrage would benefit the people as the people were not enlightened enough to become possessed of the vote. (Uproar.)

Amid cries of "Question, chair," he said he did not believe there was any necessity for a conference. The chairman then read the resolution.

On the motion being put the whole assembly held up their hands, with the exception of one person, who held up both hands.

Mr. Bligh said he moved a second resolution, viz.,—"That this meeting, seeing the disunion among all classes of society, deem it expedient of the Chartist body to convene a conference of Chartists to meet in the Metropolis, re-organise the Chartist movement for the Purpose of carrying through Parliament such measures of reform as will give equal rights and justice to all, and pledges itself to support the said conference to the utmost of its power," and the last speaker wanted to know what the conference was to do. If we knew what the conference would do we should not want a conference. He never knew a navigator who once struck on a rock ever to pursue the same course again, therefore, if one conference might have failed before, that was no reason why another conference should become a failure also. Friends, it is high time we were at work again; it is an insult to tell workmen they are too ignorant to have the vote. Who made the giant steam-engines, ploughed the briny ocean, or built the gorgeous palaces of the world, but the working classes? Three or four of the middle classes had been invited to attend this meeting, viz., Mr. John Locke, Sir Charles Napier, Mr. Williams, and Mr. Roupell, and, as he expected, none of them attended, but one of the gentlemen sent a letter of excuse. He assured the meeting that Chartism was more favoured than it was eight years ago; for, at one time, if he went into a village at that time he was likely to be torn to pieces; but now, when he brings the measure before the people in any small village, town, or hamlet, they cried out "we will have it, and if they try to oppose us we will get our scythes and cut their legs off."

Mr. Lucraft seconded the resolution, and said, if we had the suffrage we should not have such bad laws as we have now. He was an enemy to the working classes that pointed to the failure of the suffrage in France, as that was gained in the time of revolution and bloodshed. He should wish you to obtain it in time of peace, and it would be a blessing to the people-

Mr. Knighton spoke at some length, showing the benefits of the franchise in America, where he was some years—in the home of the free—and if the men of this country had the vote they would soon know how to use it to their own benefit, as they do there.

The chairman then put the resolution, which was unanimously carried.

A vote of thanks was moved, and carried, complimentary to the *People's Paper* and *Morning Star*, and, after a vote of thanks to the chairman, the meeting separated.

**July 21<sup>st</sup> 1857** *South London Journal* - Chartism at St. George's Hall - *article, about the previous, mentions the illustrious people who would speak but didn't actually attend (including Ernest Jones) It goes on to state: We think this appeal was best honoured by the fact that this attempt to raise a Chartist agitation proved a failure. ...later mentions; Mr. Kent seconded the motion and Mr. Finlen, editor of the Northern Star, supported it. The latter gentleman contended that the sympathies of the middle classes were not with the working classes on the great subject of reform. He advocated the whole Charter, without one jot or tittle of abatement, and he would not rest content with anything less. He eulogised Feargus O'Connor, and treated his hearers to a new romance of Kennington-Common and the 10th April, 1818. Mr. Finlen having wound up his harangue, was rewarded with a prodigious amount of cheering.*

**July 25<sup>th</sup> 1857** *People's Paper* CENTRAL LONDON Hand and Shears, Cloth Fair West Smithfield Sunday July 19<sup>th</sup>. Mr. Finlen in opening the debate for the evening gave us a very excellent outline of the present and future prospects of the Chartist cause, in his usual and well-known eloquent and impressive manner, reviewing also the political aspect abroad....

PUBLIC MEETING IN DEPTFORD - A Public Meeting was held in the Hall of the Institution, Deptford, on Wednesday evening, to further the proposed Conference, and elect a Delegate to the same. The audience, though not large, was very enthusiastic, Mr. J. Morgan presided, and the Lancashire Lad, James Finlen, and Ernest Jones, addressed the meeting.



The Lancashire Lad, in moving a resolution identical with the first moved at the Cowper-street aggregate meeting, made a truly brilliant and remarkably argumentative speech, which, from the absence of a reporter, we regret our inability to give. Mr. James Finlen devoted almost the whole of his speech to a tirade against the Conference, and an indirect attack on Ernest Jones. He believed the Conference was a sham and a humbug—he was sure it would fail - he had no faith in pumped-up Conferences, got up at the beck of an individual. That individual was now, to suit his own purposes, calling on the Chartist body to knuckle under to the middle classes, though he had, a short time ago been the loudest to declare against them—and had sought to make a compromise of principle with them in the case of the National and Constitutional Association, the Administration Reform Association, and other associations. He was seeking to make a compromise of principle now. He called on them not to support such a Conference. What they wanted was, not to be at the beck of an individual—they wanted union, one united movement. He (Mr. James Finlen) would give it them. He had, during the last fortnight, put himself in communication with the leading minds, the real democrats—and he would, in about another fortnight, be able to show them a great, practical movement. The above remarks of Mr. Finlen, were listened to with silent astonishment by the audience, whereon the speaker changed his ground, and alluded to the justice and truth of the Charter, and the treachery of the middle classes.

Ernest Jones, who was received with loud cheers, explained the objects of the proposed Conference and that the proposition for a Conference, with the reasons for the same, had been deliberated on calmly by the entire Chartist body and adopted unanimously by the same. The resolution was unanimously carried, and Ernest Jones was elected as Delegate for Greenwich and Deptford for the Conference, amid enthusiastic acclamation.

*[elsewhere in the paper Finlen seconded a motion]*

**August 1<sup>st</sup> 1857** *People's Paper* CENTRAL LONDON – Subject for discussion on Sunday August 2<sup>nd</sup> ‘The events of the week’ by J. Finlen. Hand and Shears, Cloth Fair, West Smithfield.

*Elsewhere the PP demonstrates that opinion pro and con Finlen is splitting the Chartists [the religious and- temperance sections being anti-Finlen].*

New Opposition - Mr. Finlen, *or his friends*, are sending round circulars for starting a penny paper in London. The opposition of the new paper-"*The People*"- is not considered enough, but the pretended champions of our cause must also help the capitalists, our enemies, to try to crush the organ of the Chartist movement. We think it right to let our friends know.

*From this date the PP is ‘anti’- it would last until September 4, 1858 when Jones had turned from a Chartist to a Radical.*

**September 19<sup>th</sup> 1857** *Manchester Times* A public discussion on “The Maine law and Teetotalism.” in the People’s Institute, Heyrod-street, Ancoats on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday, 22<sup>nd</sup>, 23<sup>rd</sup>, and 24<sup>th</sup> September between Mr. G. E. Lomax and Mr. Finlen, late editor of the *Spirit of Freedom*.

**November 14<sup>th</sup> 1857** *People's Paper* Letter from John Frost, Stapleton, November. 4<sup>th</sup> 1857 to Mr. Vardy, secretary of the Chartists of Nottingham. *This letter warns of the disunion caused by bickering amongst themselves by the Chartists and the damage done similarly in the past. He broadly takes the line of support for Finlen against the increasingly bitter Ernest Jones and stresses that all the classes must come together – divided we fall.*

*[The Indian ‘Mutiny’ was the principal news item of the time]*

**November 28<sup>th</sup> 1857** *Manchester Times* Political Reform Meeting in Manchester On Wednesday evening the working men assembled in the People's Institute, Heyrod-street to declare in favour of the recent reform programme, and to elect two delegates to the proposed National Conference. Mr. Finlen moved an amendment in favour of an agitation for the Charter in its entirety, but the original motion [union with the middle-class movement and partial charter acceptance] was carried by a

large majority. Mr. G. Hooson of Manchester and Mr. W. Hill of Stalybridge were appointed delegates.

**December 3<sup>rd</sup>** 1857 *Bradford Observer* The Manchester Chartists and Reform – On Wednesday night a meeting of the working men of Manchester was held in the People’s Institute [to send two delegates to the National Conference] A resolution in favour of uniting with the middle classes to secure a large measure of reform was agreed to. Mr. Finlen endeavoured to destroy the object of the meeting by an amendment in favour of the Charter, “pure and simple,” [and the resuscitation of the National Charter Association - *People's Paper Dec 5<sup>th</sup>*] and was defeated by a large majority.

## 1858

**January 2<sup>nd</sup>** 1858 *Christian News* (Glasgow) – agent for the newspaper – Jas. Finlen **45**, Nelson Street, City. Advert continues to appear on Feb. 20

**January 16<sup>th</sup>** 1858 *Ashton Reporter* – A NIGHT WITH OUR POETS – The Clergy, Gentry, and Inhabitants of Ashton-under-Lyne and its neighbourhood generally are respectfully informed that Mr. James Finlen (of London), will give a Miscellaneous DRAMATIC ENTERTAINMENT, in the Oddfellows’ Hall, Stamford-street, Ashton, on the evening of Monday, January 18<sup>th</sup>, 1858. Programme.

Part First.....an introductory address.

Hamlet’s Advice.....Shakspere.

Lochinvar.....Scott

Manfred’s Soliloquy..... Lord Byron

The Slop worker.....J. B. Leno

Pierre and Jaffier.....Otway

William Tell.....Knowles

Immortality.....Shakspere

Deserted Village.....Goldsmith

Othello and Iago – A Dialogue.....Shakspere

An Interval of Ten Minutes

### Part Second

Critical Remarks – the Mission of Authors and Actors

Othello’s Apology.....Shakspere

A Poem on Progress.....E. Jones

The Three Preachers.....C. Mackay

Brutus and Cassius – Their Quarrel....Shakspere

The Revolutions.....G. Massey

The Jacobins of Paris.....Smyth

The Seven Ages.....Shakspere

Besides the above, Scenes and Passages from some of our leading Comedies will be introduced, making in all one of the most popular, elevating, and interesting entertainments of the day. Admission Reserved seats 1s., 2<sup>nd</sup> seats 6d, Area and gallery 3d. Doors open at 7 to commence at 8 and terminate at 10 o’clock.

**January 23<sup>rd</sup>** 1858 *Ashton Reporter* A NIGHT WITH OUR POETS – Mr. James Finlen, a gentleman from London, gave an elocutionary entertainment in the Oddfellow’s Hall, on Monday evening last; the programme consisting of selections from our most eminent poets. The attendance was very far from encouraging, but notwithstanding Mr. Finlen announced that another similar entertainment would be given in a short time, when we hope he will have an opportunity of displaying his powers as an elocutionist under far more favourable circumstances than he met with on Monday evening.

*NOTE: Shortly after the performance on the 18<sup>th</sup>, James married Mary Caroline Magee in Newcastle-upon-Tyne, on **January 21<sup>st</sup> 1858**. They went to his home address of Egerton Grove, Hulme, Manchester, as given on his wedding certificate.*

**February 6<sup>th</sup> 1858 *People's Paper*** [biased report on Finlen's doings in Manchester]

MANCHESTER,

On Sunday evening last, the council met, forming the largest number since the times of '48. Mr. Gutteridge in the chair.

The chairman requested the reading of previous minutes of the council, and observed that it would be also necessary to read the minutes passed at the special meeting called by the secretary during the week in reference to the movements now taking place by the middle classes. The minutes were passed unanimously.

The question of deficiency of funds for South Lancashire Delegation was then considered, and means were adopted to raise the same by the appointment of collectors to various gentlemen who had not previously been applied to.

Mr. Bowes asked the council what course they would adopt relative to the meeting called by Mr. James Finlen. He thought this council was bound to support the policy adopted, and to defend all absent parties connected with the movement from personal attacks.

Mr. W. Brown regretted much the spirit that could actuate a person of Mr. Finlen's talent in so impolitic, unwise, and anti-democratic a manner to come forward at a time like the present, with a view to vent his spleen and endeavour to divide the democratic ranks. He was sorry that our friend Hooson on that night would be from home, but in lieu of him he begged that Mr. Longmaid attend, and if necessary, see to the defence of the council. Carried.

It was also determined that the secretary be empowered to convene a members' meeting for Sunday afternoon, Feb. 14<sup>th</sup>, at 2 o'clock precisely, for the purpose of electing a fresh council for the ensuing quarter, and to elect delegates for South Lancashire Delegate meeting taking place on the 21<sup>st</sup>.

The meeting then adjourned to Wednesday evening, to meet at Crossley's to report progress, and the meeting at the Albion Hotel. W. LONGMAID.

On Tuesday evening, Feb. 2<sup>nd</sup>, according to announcement, Mr. Finlen addressed, as one of his own supporters said, a 'small fireside company,' at the People's Institute, Herford-street, Manchester. The appearance of the small knot of admirers surrounding Mr. Finlen gave evident signs of a frost bitten condition and trembling props of a policy that they feared to carry out. Mr. Finlen had made a great exertion to secure a large attendance—the disappointment was, therefore, appalling—there being scarcely more than thirty persons in that large building. In the gallery were observed two ladies [*one being his new wife?*], who certainly must have experienced an evening of unpleasantness from the cold and the spiritless reception the lecturer received at the hands of his old associates. He commenced, as his tremendous placard announced, a 'lecture,' combining subjects that gave the working classes of Manchester a full knowledge of his intention to divide, if possible, the Democratic ranks. They refrained from being present to hear his rigmarole and venom. He said 'he would not allow an opportunity to pass to expose a sordid unscrupulous knave, who how sought to drag the Chartists of this country through muck and mire for his own personal advantage. He afterwards assailed the Manchester council, South Lancashire Delegates and their doings, assisted, he said, by a gentleman he saw amongst them, and he trusted that the working classes of Manchester would now see that their only hope was in forming an association, freeing themselves from the machinations of those who sought only to make tools of them to aid the Manchester school.'

At the conclusion of the tirade of abuse offered by the gentleman named, who alone stood on the platform, Mr. Longmaid rose for the purpose of correcting him in most of his slanderous statements, and caused him to appear as the one on whom no trust or confidence could be placed, either as a leader of the people, or even as one to advocate their claims, proving to the meeting his gross inconsistency, and charging him with giving utterance to falsehoods he could not sustain.

Mr. Finlen in reply, attempted to show that he had nothing to reply to. He did hope that in the course of a week or two he would meet them again. The meeting then adjourned.—W. LONGMAID.

Central London - Hand and Shears Locality – *vote for the HQ of the Association to be moved to Manchester and no union to be made with the middle classes and newspaper editors banned from the executive. The PP comments that the object and spirit are plain: Manchester is chosen because Mr. Finlen has a situation there in an Insurance Company\*, and editors excluded in order to throw out Ernest Jones.*

\* he was a director of 'United Brothers Assurance Company.' but maybe had already taken up working for the 'Friends in Need Assurance Company.'

## February 25<sup>th</sup> 1858 *Morning Chronicle* MEETING OF THE CHARTISTS

A meeting of Chartists (convened by "the Manchester Council" of that body) was held on Monday, in the People's Institute, Heyrod-street, to receive a report from the deputation appointed to attend the Reform Conference recently held in St. Martin's Hall, London, as representing the Chartists of South Lancashire. The attendance was small; there being about 300 working men (and a few women) present.

Mr. J. E. Nelson was called to the chair, and he commenced the business by some observations strongly condemnatory of Lord Palmerston and his policy, and commenting upon the recent vote of the House of Commons. He said he thought that a few more years of Lord Palmerston's misgovernment would not be without advantage; for he believed that if manhood suffrage existed to-morrow, the working men would not have sense enough --certainly without the ballot they would not do it—to elect, one of 658 members, 40 who would fairly represent the claims of labour.

Mr. William Hill (Stalybridge), one of the delegates, said that the Conference was as good a reflex of Chartism and Chartists as any that ever assembled in this country. As to the appointment of Mr. Ernest Jones as 'the executive' of the movement on behalf of the Chartists, it was proposed because, in previous movements, instead of a policy being put before the associations which all could adopt, the associations were occupied with dissensions that arose among the executive; so that the movement was destroyed not elevated. The South Lancashire delegates opposed the motion, simply because they thought that to have one man as the executive was not sufficiently democratic; and they proposed an executive of three. This was, however, not carried; a large majority being in favour of the executive power being vested in Ernest Jones. A motion proposed by Ernest Jones was modified, simply to show that if amendments were proposed at public meetings in favour of manhood suffrage rather than Roebuck's ratepaying clause—it was done simply as a matter of principle and an expression of opinion, not as a threat or an attempt at coercion. The speaker explained the other resolutions of the Conference; and especially the mode adopted to secure an organisation for the purpose of agitating for manhood suffrage, vote by ballot, and the other points adopted by the delegates. Cobden (he said), much to his own surprise, had discovered, and so had others, that it was to the working-classes rather than to the middle-classes that they must look for the support that was absolutely necessary for their progress in future. Bright had found out that it was not the great landowner that was to be feared so much as the stupid moneyed mill owner—therefore he advocated the ballot; and all the members of Parliament who spoke at the conference declared unhesitatingly that the working classes were more independent than the middle classes. If there had been manhood suffrage, Bright and Gibson would never have been turned out of Manchester. Gibson's excellent motion had sent Palmerston to the right about; and that motion had done more to promote the Liberty and progress of the people than all else that had been done in the house for many long years (applause.) But the working men must reform themselves before they could hope to reform abuses in the State; and if they would subscribe and organise, first to reform themselves, and thus to affect the State, they would do much to check despotism, destroy tyranny, and elevate the condition of the working classes in general. (loud applause)

Mr. Hooson (Manchester), the other delegate, briefly confirmed his colleague's statement.

Mr. Cropper proposed a resolution approving the course adopted by the delegates; and tendering to them 'our warmest thanks for the services they so ably and effectively rendered on that occasion.'

Mr. J. H. Longmaid seconded the resolution, which was carried unanimously.

Mr. Hooson moved a resolution expressing appreciation of the resolutions of the Conference and approval of the Charter; but adding a willingness to co-operate with the middle classes in advocating universal manhood suffrage, vote by ballot, the abolition of the property qualification for members, shortening the duration of Parliaments, and more equal electoral districts, If they got this it would be tantamount to the Charter; or, at least, it would give them so much as to enable them to get the Charter (applause) A Chartist could consistently go to a great Free-trade Hall demonstration of the combined body; and he could attend his own weekly meeting or lecture just as though that demonstration had never taken place. If any one could show how the Charter could be gained at one stride better than it was now proposed to gain it by two, he would yield and adopt that course; but he believed the course now recommended would amount to this—One step with the middle classes, then the Charter. Granted that the payment of members was a most important point; but there was no reason why, with the proposed points of union gained, the first session of Parliament that followed should not see men enough returned to the house to influence it to grant payment of members (applause) He believed that the union was quite practicable. The working men must persevere; they must show that they were consistent, and saw clearly the end for which they worked; and while those who had not perseverance would assuredly meet with disappointment, there would as assuredly be success for those who worked honestly, faithfully, and determinedly, adhering always to principle, and ever avoiding anything like agitation that depended upon tumult or violence. (applause)

Mr. Bowes seconded the notion.

Mr. J. FINLEN addressed the meeting, contending that for the working men to ask favour from the middle classes with a view of getting the charter by "hook or by crook," was simply for working men to waste their time. He concluded (after having been frequently interrupted in his long speech) by moving, as an amendment—"That in the opinion of this meeting any measure embracing less political principles and

arrangements than the People's Charter does, is unworthy of the support of the unenfranchised portion of the community, and it cannot, therefore, countenance the equivocal and retrograde conduct of the Conference recently held in London.”

Mr. SCHOLEFIELD seconded the amendment, and Mr. Hooson replied.

On being put, there were only four or five hands held up for the amendment, and the original resolution was carried all but unanimously. The proceedings terminated at a quarter after ten o'clock.

**February 27<sup>th</sup>** 1858 *Manchester Times* – THE REFORM CONFERENCE – Public Meeting in Manchester – A public meeting was held on Tuesday in the People’s Institute, Heyrod-street, Ancoats to receive a report from the deputation sent from this district to the reform conference recently held in London.....

James Finlen challenged the propriety of the working classes making overtures to the middle classes to obtain the charter by hook and crook. He declared that, as an advocate of the claims of the working men, he had never discovered anything in Cobden and Bright which should establish them in the good opinions of the people. (Hisses) They doggedly and obstinately opposed the diminution of the hours of the working classes. He moved, as an amendment:-

“That in the opinion of the meeting any measure embracing less political principles and arrangements than the People’s Charter is unworthy of the support of the unenfranchised portion of the community, and cannot, therefore, countenance the equivocal and retrograde conduct of the conference recently held in London.”

He urged them to adhere to the principles of O’Connor, Cooper, and O’Brien.... The amendment was then put, and lost, only five voting for it.

**February 27<sup>th</sup>** 1858 *People's Paper* THE REFORM CONFERENCE *Jones' account of the conference is naturally biased and approving of the middle-class element voting at the conference [which had been paid for by the working men]. It was a promise of a scrap today and jam tomorrow by the two classes coming together and supporting the Reform Bill - in order to get the Charter in the future.*

*Finlen pointed out that Cobden and Bright had doggedly and obstinately opposed the diminution of the hours of the working classes. He said he had been stupid enough to waste three hours in watching the proceedings of the delegates and he did not find that the principles of the Charter in their entirety had been set forth. He looked upon the new movement as one got up by lame politicians ambitious for power, and literary hacks. The paid member point of the Charter had been left out, he supposed, to conciliate the peculiar devotees of John Bright. He urged them to adhere to the principles of O'Connor, Cooper, and O'Brien.*

*[the fact that the Glasgow Sentinel repeated the PP article shows how much Jones had moved to the 'right' and away from the Charter]- the PP issued its last issue on September 4th.*

**Mar 6<sup>th</sup>** 1858 *People's Paper* The death struggles of the remnant of the London Factionists Chartists – *more biased reporting against Finlen who in his 'vanity' still stuck to demanding the full Charter.*

**Mar 13<sup>th</sup>** 1858 *Middleton Albion* Shakespere’s Othello. The inhabitants of Middleton are respectfully informed that Mr. James Finlen of London will on the evening of Tuesday next, March 16<sup>th</sup>, 1858, Recite from memory, in the Temperance Hall, Middleton. Shakespere’s Five Act Tragedy of OTHELLO

**Mar 27<sup>th</sup>** 1858 *Manchester Times* ASHTON On Saturday evening, Mr. JAMES Finlen, of London, recited from memory, in the Temperance Hall, Francis-street, Dukinfield, “Othello.”

**April 3<sup>rd</sup>** 1858 *People's Paper* Conspiracy by Finlen against the United Brothers Assurance Company. [*Finlen wrote to Mr. Blacker telling him to buy shares for six people in order for them to vote – there was trouble ahead!*]

Monday March 8, 1858,  
6, Egerton-grove, Stratford-road,  
Manchester.  
My dear Blackler,

In duty I am bound to tell you to cause the Members of the United Brothers at present under you to become Shareholders in that Company immediately. Votes will be wanted shortly upon matters most important, The Members cannot vote unless they be Shareholders, therefore get them to take up shares now. Should they be too poor, I, with others, friends of ours in London, will pay for six shares for six of them. Get as many more as possible, but get six any how. I tell you that it is of the utmost importance, and I do so upon my own responsibility. Those sordid speculators are conspiring against the true interests and tendency of our Institution—conspiring that they may get it into their own hands, now that true-hearted, disinterested men have made it promising and great.

This is a hint—I shall tell you no more now. Make votes, that's what you should do. Our very excellent friends, Slocombe, Travers, Washington, and the like, will tell you much anon. In the meantime, as an old friend of yours, and one of the most industrious promoters of the Brothers, I impress upon you the propriety of the action I have suggested. Let friend Washington have at least six applications for shares from you by Friday at the latest. Mind, this is no idle business, Blacker, as a friend I tell you so. In a few days the whole matter shall be put before you, but get the votes ensured at once. Fraternally yours, JAMES FINLEN.

*Jones regards this as underhand and similar to how he viewed Finlen's conduct in regard to the Chartist movement. His own notice: To the shareholders and members of the United Brothers Association Company. Gentlemen:- Be not deceived by the false information circulated by Finlen and Co. Those men who have done all to destroy your political movement would destroy your company also. Examine for yourselves. Actions speak louder than words. Finlen seems to have cut his ties with the Association after this.*

**April 10<sup>th</sup>** 1858 *People's Paper* A sensible letter from a shareholder, insurer and agent for the United Brothers from its establishment – Mr. S. Rumson. He lauds the good faith and good work of James Finlen for the company and claims that if there is any disreputable behaviour it was from Mr. Howell. The fact that Finlen had gone to Glasgow and founded a newspaper, which failed, was the sole reason for objecting to him becoming a director [his only sin being the founding of a paper in opposition to Jones]. He was not elected and instead hounded and his supporter Mr. Washington, the secretary, slandered. He calls for an enquiry since this sort of behaviour can only lead to bad outcomes. [*Jones persists with these slanders on Finlen in subsequent issues*]

**April 17<sup>th</sup>** 1858 *People's Paper* Jones now intends to bring out a 'penny paper' in his own private hands, alongside the *People's Paper*! Exactly what Finlen had done and been slated for, even though Finlen's paper was company owned! Finlen's paper would destroy the *People's Paper*, according to Jones, but his own penny paper [*The London News* – it lasted from May 8<sup>th</sup> – November 15<sup>th</sup> 1858] will save the *People's Paper*!

**June 19<sup>th</sup>** 1858 *Ashton Reporter* A VOTE OF EVERYMAN – A Political meeting was held on Sunday afternoon last, in the Market for the purpose of raising an agitation in favour of the "six points of the charter," reduced to five during the present week by the passing through the House of Lords of the bill for abolishing property qualifications for members of parliament. It was presided over by Mr. T. Ward, agent, in Dukinfield, and the principal speakers, both *pro* and *con* were Mr. James Finlen of London, who spoke in an able manner in favour of Chartism, and Mr. Henry Johnson of Manchester, who votes in favour of educating the masses before giving them greater political power than they at present possess. None of the old Radical party in the town took any part in the proceedings.

**July 17<sup>th</sup>** 1858 *Ashton Reporter* THE PEOPLES' CHARTER – Public meeting in the Temperance Hall – On Tuesday evening, a meeting called by the Ashton Branch of the National Political Union for obtaining the People's Charter was held in the Temperance Hall; Mr. Storer of this town presiding. The number present was very small. [it cost 1d to attend!]. The meeting was addressed by Mr. Cropper of Manchester and Mr. Finlen of London. Mr. Finlen explained that he couldn't see anything in the five points of the charter that could be dispensed with – and explained them all.

**July 31<sup>st</sup>** 1858 *Manchester Courier and Lancashire General Advertiser* – Turkey and the Danubian Principalities. A meeting was held in Stevenson Square, Manchester last evening. The promoters of the meeting were members of the “Foreign Affairs Association” of this city disappointed at the postponement of a meeting to be held at the Free Trade Hall due to the “sudden illness” of Mr. Roebuck, M.P. About 2,000 people present when the meeting began at eight o'clock. After the statement “The cabinets and statesmen of Europe are the tools with which Russia works.” Mr. Finlen mounted the rostrum, a cart, and claimed a hearing. He made a statement regarding Turkey's position and England's position on intervention. [He argued that the principle of intervention could be acted upon, under certain circumstances, with utmost propriety, benevolence and honour - *Birmingham Daily Post August 2<sup>nd</sup>*]

**September 4<sup>th</sup>** 1858 *People's Paper* [its FINAL ISSUE] mentions that Finlen appeared or was discussed at Shoe-lane on Saturday last.

**October 10<sup>th</sup>** 1858 *Lloyd's Weekly Newspaper* A meeting of Chartists on Manchester and district was held on Monday evening at Ancoats for the purpose of expressing their opinions on the question of parliamentary reform. Mr. E. C. Cropper was in the chair. There was a very large attendance of working men. James Finlen made a speech of great length arguing that the interests of the middle and those of the working classes were so essentially opposite as to be utterly antagonistic and irreconcilable. [The *Chester Chronicle Oct 9<sup>th</sup>* called his speech 'somewhat violent']

**November 13** 1858 *Ashton Reporter* – Prosecution under the Friendly Societies Act, at Oldham. Mr. W. P. Roberts, of Manchester, at the instance of Mr. James Finlen, district manager of the 'Friend in Need Life Assurance Society', appeared before the Oldham Borough Bench on Saturday to proceed ... against William Robinson of Oldham.. who refused to pay over a balance of £18 3s 5<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub>d.

**November 20<sup>th</sup>** 1858 *Bolton Chronicle* – Mr. James Finlen, the district manager.

**December 9<sup>th</sup>** 1858 *Morning Post* – Manchester Manhood Suffrage Association – Public meeting held on Tuesday evening, Mr. Alderman Heywood presiding. Importance of a ballot. The Secretary stated that a letter had been sent to Mr. Bright MP containing the resolution passed at the late meeting in the Free-Trade Hall, informing him that the Manhood Suffrage Association had been formed – Bright replied - Rochdale December 7<sup>th</sup> 1858 – stating that the old property/rent value of £6 more popular and likely to be adapted than *every* man getting the vote. Mr. Finlen (Chartist), who also spoke to the resolution, advocated the payment of members as one of the points which ought to be introduced into the Reform Bill. The resolution was passed unanimously.

## 1859

**January 15<sup>th</sup>** 1859 *Middleton Albion* – Parliamentary Reform Dinner – on Monday evening about 100 persons, principally working men, dined together at the house of Mr. James Howarth, Hare and Hounds Inn, Long-street, Middleton. Among the strangers present was Mr. James Finlen, of Manchester who spoke about Mr. Bright [who had voted against the 10 hours Bill - *Manchester*

*Courier Jan 15<sup>th</sup>*] and the Reform Bill. He spoke for universal manhood suffrage and the ballot box. 'There were too many females and children in competition with man's labour.' Others in the meeting thought they should accept any offer, even if it was less than full suffrage etc. because it was still progress. Also reported in Rochdale Observer, Manchester Courier

**January 29<sup>th</sup>** 1859 *Bolton Chronicle* – In a case of Fraud, Mr. James Finlen the provincial manager of the *Friend in Need Society* called as witness for the prosecution.

**February 19<sup>th</sup>** 1859 *Manchester Courier and Lancashire General Advertiser* – Parliamentary Reform – Meeting at Chorlton-on-Medlock. Held previous evening at the Town Hall. Mr. Finlen, a chartist, wished to move an amendment but was not allowed to speak, he not being a ratepayer in the township. [*though in the January– March quarter, 1859, Finlen's son James' birth was registered in Chorlton*]. Mr. H. F. Pankhurst moved for the Bright Reform Bill and was against the Ballot (!) which motion was then carried.

**March 7<sup>th</sup>** 1859 *Daily News (London)* Meeting in Hyde Park

It having been announced that a meeting of the working classes was to be held yesterday in Hyde-park, a considerable number of persons assembled to witness the demonstration. Up to half-past two o'clock the Park exhibited nothing more than its usual aspect at that hour on Sunday; but after that a larger influx of persons began to take place, and about three o'clock something like four or five thousand persons were grouped round the parties who came to take the prominent part of speakers on the occasion. The meeting was intended as a manifestation on the part of the working class against the government Reform Bill, and as a protest against the declaration of the Chancellor of the Exchequer that the bill met with the approval of that portion of the public. Mr. Shaw, who—we cannot say that he acted as chairman—led off the Proceedings, stated the object for which the meeting had been called, and entreated his fellow-workmen to show, by their peaceful conduct, that they were fit to be entrusted with the franchise, which was again about to be denied to them in the new Reform Bill. Mr. Henrette, in a temperate and argumentative speech, asserted the right of the working class to be represented as well as the pensioned soldier or the man who had 60*l.* in the savings bank. With regard to the 60*l.* savings bank franchise, if the bill passed, the wealthy would place 60*l.* in the savings banks for their servants, and a dependent class of voters would thus be created. The surgeons, the lawyers, and the clergy already possessed, or might, if they chose, possess, the franchise, The 8*s.* lodger franchise would add very few to the number of voters, as that class of persons, for the most part, consisted of young men who were constantly shifting their place of residence, and the 10*l.* county franchise would not add to the independence of the county voters. The bill was a bad bill, and could not be accepted by the working class. He proposed a resolution in favour of manhood suffrage, which was carried by a show of hands. Other resolutions in favour of the ballot and equal electoral districts were proposed, Mr. Mantell, of Newcastle, and Mr. **Finlan**, of Manchester, being amongst the speakers. Long before the proceedings terminated the crowd, for some reason or other, broke into groups, and two or three speakers were addressing the people at the same time. There did not appear to be the least disposition to disorder, and few policemen were about. One of the incidents of the day was the recognition of Dr. Bernard as a French spy, in the first instance, but when the mistake was corrected, and it became generally known who Dr. Bernard really was, he received a perfect ovation, and it was with some difficulty, and only by the exertions of the police, that he could get clear of the enthusiastic crowd which encompassed him. [*widely copied in other papers*]

**March 16<sup>th</sup>** 1859 *Birmingham Daily Post* Manchester – An open air meeting of the working classes of this city convened for the purpose of protesting against the government Reform Bill, and maintaining the principles of the People's Charter, was held on Monday evening in Stevenson Square. The weather was exceedingly unfavourable, a heavy rain falling almost incessantly, and the attendance was consequently but small, not exceeding 200 or 250 persons. Mr. Ernest Jones, Mr. W. P. Roberts, Mr. Hooson and the other speakers took their station on a platform formed by a lorry (lorry) drawn up in the middle of the square, at a few minutes before 8 o'clock, and Mr. W. P. Roberts was called upon to preside. He opened the proceedings by a brief speech, after which Mr. Finlen moved a resolution declaring that the meeting, after a full consideration of the ministerial Reform Bill, considered it to be an insult to the people, and protested against its progress. Mr. Fithian seconded the resolution, which was carried unanimously. Hooson and Ernest Jones then supported this and like resolutions. *Jones and Finlen appearing together and agreeing on policy.*

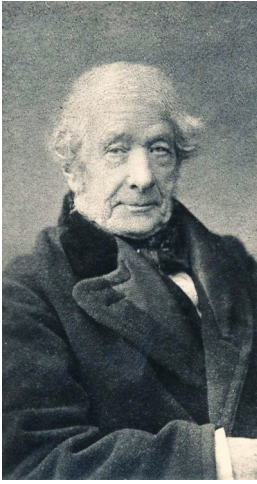


**March 17<sup>th</sup>** 1859 *Morning Chronicle* Manchester – On Tuesday night a public meeting, convened by the Lancashire Reformer's Union, was held in the Free-trade Hall, "to support Mr. Bright's measure of Parliamentary Reform, in opposition to that of Mr. Disraeli." Mr. E. Hooson moved an amendment in favour of manhood suffrage and Mr. James Finlen seconded it. About 150 supported the amendment [but it was negatived] and the original motion was passed.

**April 16<sup>th</sup>** 1859 *Manchester Times* The Representation of Manchester – On Tuesday evening, an adjourned meeting was held at the Union Chambers, Dickinson-street in reference to Alderman Abel Heywood's candidature for this city. Mr. Hooson was in the chair and called on Mr. Finlen to report the result of the interview. Mr. Finlen said that the council of the Reformers' Union, which had assembled in good force, deliberated very patiently upon the question introduced, and came to the opinion, that, while they were individually favourable to the candidature of Alderman Heywood, and each, according to the declaration of Mr. Wison, was prepared to support him in the contest, it was not competent for them as a council - as it would be in violation of a standing rule - to adopt any man who undertook a parliamentary contest. They said that with considerable reluctance, and connected it with the statement, that they would do all it was possible to promote his election.

**July 17<sup>th</sup>** 1859 *The Era* (London) p. 12 MANCHESTER – On Friday next a complimentary benefit will be given to Mr. Norton Forde by members of the Histrionic Garrick Club, the pieces being *Othello* and *High Life below stairs*, Mr. James Finlen, the Chartist orator, enacting the character of Iago.

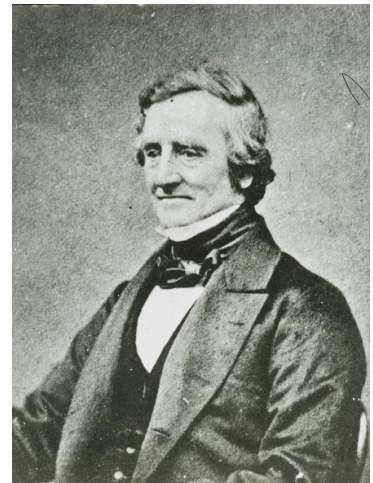
**September 8<sup>th</sup>** 1859 *Morning Post* The Builders' Strike – Meeting in Manchester – On Tuesday evening a numerously attended meeting was held in the Corn Exchange, Hanging Ditch, in accordance with a placard issued a few days ago, "by order of the Manchester Building Trades," which stated the object to be "to devise the best means of supporting those men who are being victimised by thousands of the combined employers in London, who demand signatures to a detestable document surrendering the undoubted rights of every English workman." *Several workmen argued against the document and for the resolution [St. James Chronicle 8<sup>th</sup> Sep]*. Mr. McDonald, painter of Manchester, moved the first resolution:- "That this meeting views with regret the conduct of the combined master builders of London, throwing every man out of employment until he has abandoned every trade benefit society, by which agency the operative is enabled to command a free and fair market for his labour." Mr. Finlen, Manchester, supported the resolution, which was unanimously adopted. The *Manchester Courier* of **Sep 10<sup>th</sup>** adds that Finlen said "that if all the great capitalists left the kingdom, as some of them had threatened to do, they would leave behind them the broad lands and the rich mines of England, and the strong arms of the workers would create new capital to supply the place of that taken away by those who might superciliously expatriate themselves."



John Frost 1784 - 1877



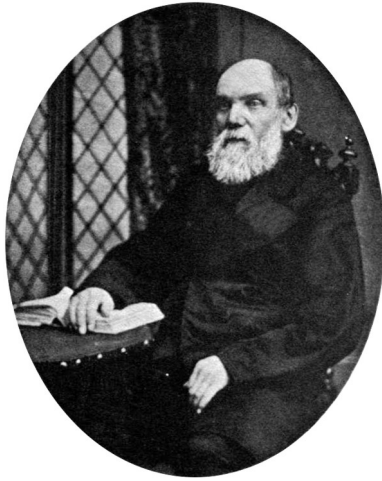
Feargus O'Connor 1796 - 1855



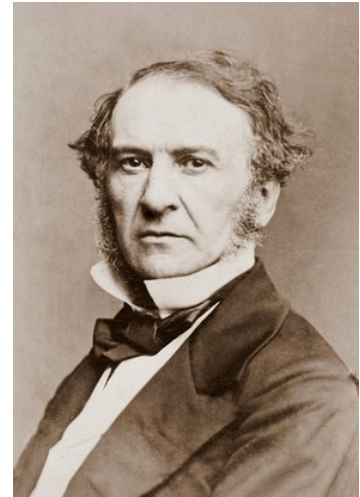
James Watson 1799 - 1874



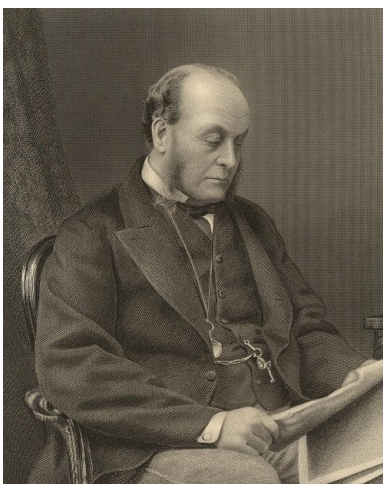
Jones, Ernest 1819 - 1869



Robert G. Gammage 1820 - 1888



William E. Gladstone 1809 - 1898



Gathorne Hardy 1814 - 1906



John Bedford Leno 1826 - 1894



Karl Marx 1818 - 1883