

FREEDOM

A JOURNAL OF ANARCHIST SOCIALISM.

VOL. 3.—No. 29.

APRIL, 1889.

MONTHLY ; ONE PENNY.

SOCIAL DEMOCRACY AND ANARCHISM.

THE most complicated pieces of mechanism are often not the latest but the earliest results of the inventor's skill in a particular direction. Improvements in machinery very frequently take the form of a reduction in the number of wheels and principles of motion necessary to obtain the desired result, and a machine is considered to be more nearly perfect in proportion as its action becomes more direct. It is safe to conclude, too, that this law of human progression from the complicated to the direct, is by no means confined to mechanics. In philosophy and in sociology similar phenomena may be observed. Thus the Social Democratic scheme for reorganising society—based as it is upon an insufficient knowledge of the principles which govern the relations of mankind—is full of expedients to reconcile the individual, the municipality and the state, all of which are unnecessary and if tried would prove to be unworkable, unless coercion was introduced. And the public will object quite as much to the coercion of the Social-Democratic Municipality and National Government as it does to government in its existing forms. It is useless for the Social Democrat to say that such coercion would be for the good of the individual coerced: the same thing is said to-day in defence of the existing laws. A government without officials, police and soldiery to prevent the people exercising their liberty; a government that issues no decrees and passes no laws; a government that has no prisons for the recalcitrant, no punishment for those who refuse to obey its decisions—do our Social Democratic friends dream of such a government as this? Surely not, for in that case it would simply be a committee of talkers to which people would pay just as much attention as it deserved, and would exercise no more influence upon the society of to-morrow than Queen Victoria does upon the society of to-day. We Anarchists have no objection to a government of this kind, but we would point out to the gentlemen who propose to constitute such a government—if any there be—that they will be wasting their valuable time: whilst they are talking the people will be acting. If, however, the Social Democrats propose that this government of theirs should have powers similar to those exercised by the existing governments then we can detect no difference in kind but only a difference of degree between the despotism of the present time and that which we are asked to establish. And we ask them by what right they propose to coerce a single individual who objects to their proposals?

We do not believe, however, that the Social Democratic workers of Great Britain have as a body given much attention to this matter. They have not, we think, considered the possibilities of the future up to this point—and therefore they remain Social Democrats. We Anarchists on the other hand foresee this contingency of the to-morrow of the Revolution, and we plainly declare that we are against coercion of any kind whatsoever, and entirely in favour of voluntary agreement. In opposition to the Social Democratic scheme—which is based upon the old plan of transferring authority from the Government, or the King, to the Parliament, from the Parliament to the County or Municipality and so on—we place before the workers a thoroughly democratic ideal—Freedom to every individual limited only by equal freedom to others. The complicated and, as it will be found, expensive machinery of the Social Democratic State is entirely unnecessary if we are to have, to quote from the programme of the S. D. F. "a free condition of Society . . . with Equal Social Rights for all and the Complete Emancipation of Labour." Anarchists have faith in their fellow-workers and in their ability to organise freely in accordance with their needs. As our Spanish comrades have put it in their declaration of principles recently adopted at the Congress of Valence: "The principle of authority or of the direction of society is based upon the assumption that those associated are incapable of ruling themselves, and this principle always degenerates into tyranny." Surely our Social Democratic comrades do not think that they and their fellows are incapable of managing their own business. We don't believe it. But as they have always been governed, they imagine society cannot be held together except by authority.

Let us return to mechanics. After the locomotive was invented and when the idea of a railway system was first conceived early in the present century, progress was delayed for several years through a very curious error. The inventors were of opinion that the adhesion of the smooth wheels of the engine and the carriages upon the equally smooth iron rail must necessarily be so slight that if it should be attempted to drag any considerable weight the wheels might indeed be driven round, but the train would fail to advance because of the continued slipping of

the wheels; or that at best a considerable part of the impelling power would be lost through their partial slipping. As a remedy for this supposed evil, Trevithick provided for the rims or tyres of his wheels projections similar to the heads of nails, or otherwise made their surfaces uneven by cutting in them transverse grooves. He further proposed that wherever, as in ascending elevations, any greater amount of the evil was to be apprehended, additional claws or nails should be projected from the rims of the wheels in order more effectually to take hold of the road. Several other inventors went in for rack and toothed wheels and one ingenious gentleman set himself to work to devise an engine with legs similar to those of a horse. He was getting on finely with his invention when the discovery was made that all these contrivances were needless, and that nature in this case required no imitation having herself provided by an immutable law that the adhesion of the wheels with the surface of the rails upon which they are moved is amply sufficient to secure the advance not only of a heavy engine but of an enormous load dragged after it. This law was discovered by Mr. Blackett of Wylaw Colliery, in 1813.

In sociology, Social Democrats have made a mistake similar to that made in mechanics by the early inventors of railways. They have overlooked a natural law which is far more efficacious than all their artificial expedients—the law of the common interest. That law will compel every member of society, when the workers control their own destinies, to consider his neighbours and his action towards them, because each one of us is by nature a social animal; we need our fellows and cannot exist alone; nature obliges us to come to terms with one another. No force, no authority is necessary. It is to the individual interest of each one of us to deal with one another as we would be dealt with, and when the incubus of the State is removed and private property is abolished, we shall do so. As free citizens we shall combine as best will serve our purpose in groups, in combinations of groups or communes, in federations of communes or groups, in societies, etc. Our idea is not to take the clumsy, complicated machine of society as it stands and attempt to reorganise it from high to low, from the state to the individual; but to discard altogether the ill-contrived mechanism which after so much expenditure of time and energy has failed to promote true association, and leave human nature free to continue that process of organisation from simple to complex, from individual to federation, which is only hindered by governments and codes of law. We shall have conferences such as are held now in various spheres of activity—scientific, religious, industrial—and the opinions of those conferences will have weight with us in proportion as the individuals there assembled appear to us to have knowledge of their subjects. We shall act on those opinions when we think it advisable, and if we do not agree with them we shall disregard them. Having perfect freedom of initiative the most advanced amongst us will set an example to those who have not attained that standard, which they will assuredly follow if it meets with their approval, just as to-day men and women follow each other's style in dress, in architecture, in manners. What think you of the Anarchist ideal, comrades, the Social Democrats?

PAST AND FUTURE.

A Speech delivered by P. Kropotkin at South Place Chapel at the Commemoration of the Paris Commune.

We are commemorating to-day the eighteenth anniversary of the Paris Commune, and this number of eighteen years, elapsed since the last uprising of the Paris workers, has a great signification. Eighteen years of life is about the average life of the different governments which have succeeded each other in France since the beginning of the century. Napoleon Bonaparte ruled less than that. The Bourbons did not last more than fifteen years: in 1830 they were swept away. Then the Orleanists ruled for eighteen years till 1848 sent them away, covered with general contempt. Then came the dark period of the Empire, which lasted nineteen years, and again it was swept away as soon as it reached that critical period of less than twenty years' life.

Now eighteen years already have elapsed since the Commune was proclaimed in Paris, and when we examine the present system of government—the Third republic, or rather the *bourgeois* republic—we cannot but say that its years already are counted; it cannot drag on its existence for more than a very few years in any case. The system has been undermined, it has fallen so low in the public opinion that it cannot live. It is not merely against the men who now govern France

that the wave of popular feeling is rising: it is against parliamentary rule altogether, against parliamentarism itself. There are countries, like France, where the vices of a system of government come to the front in the most prominent way, in the most striking forms. Remember how the royal power, the parliamentary monarchy of Louis Philippe and the Caesarism of Napoleon III. appeared in France in such a manner as to display in the most abhorrent forms their inherent vices. So it has happened also with the parliamentary middle-class republic. In some odd eighteen years all the vices of the system have been brought to the front in such an obvious and revolting way, that France is now sick of that system, as it was sick of Caesarism in 1870, of Parliamentary Monarchy in 1848, and of Absolute Monarchy in 1789.

Nobody believes any longer in France in the parliamentary republic; nobody trusts it, and that is why a man like Boulanger who has not one single idea, who represents no principle—nothing but himself—could acquire the importance he has acquired. That all reactionaries—monarchists, Bonapartists and financiers—gather around him is nothing to wonder at. Boulangerism is the last attempt of the reactionaries of all descriptions to re-establish monarchy. Having nobody in their own houses to represent the past, the Orleanists and Bonapartists make use of Boulanger as of a battering-ram. And all the reactionaries gather around him. It is the richest classes in France which furnish him with the money he lavishes so freely.

But, you may say that there are also workers who support him. Yes, unhappily there are. Workers who know only that he preaches the dissolution of the present system and, without caring about what he means to put in its place, support him on that account. "Destroy what exists, whatever may come will be better than what is now." That is what they think while they vote for Boulanger. Nobody expects from him anything but to be the battering-ram.

And yet, even that kind of support given to him is most regrettable, because when the next revolution comes in France, it would be desirable to have no futile political struggle to meddle with it and to obstruct it. There should be the workers on the one side, the possessing classes on the other side, and the social economical problem in its purity between the two.

However, it is certain that even his agitation only helps to bring about the downfall of the present middle-class rule. If the reactionaries who gather around Boulanger succeed in their plans, the French people will seize the arms, and when the people of Paris is armed it acts. And its act will be the proclamation of the Commune.

Socialism in France has passed through three different periods. At its beginnings it was philosophical and religious. It tried to convince, and believed in the force of argument. Fourier, who for ten consecutive years went every day to a certain house, waiting for the millionaire who would come to help him to start his community, was a striking illustration of that belief in the force of argument and religious creed. But the millionaire did not come, while the exploitation of the working class was becoming worse and worse.

Then in 1848 the Socialists tried to introduce Equality and Liberty through the government: they expected that the republican government would organise labour. You know the result. When the middle classes saw that the workers were in earnest, and really meant to re-organise labour on Socialist principles—the revolution was drowned in blood.

For the third time the workers of Paris tried to get rid of the exploiters by means of the Commune. Of course the Commune did not even attempt so much as to realise those vague ideals which inspired the Paris workers. It lived only seventy days. But it is notorious that by the end of the Commune, it was decided to take possession, in the name of the Commune, of those factories which had been abandoned by their owners. And this first step undoubtedly would have led to the idea of considering all the factories as the common property of the city. They took possession of the houses abandoned by their owners, and it was loudly said that the empty apartments ought to be taken for those who still inhabited the slums; and if the Commune had lived it would have been led to take possession of all houses and to administer them as the common property of the Commune. And these two steps would have necessarily led them to consider the stocks of food as common property; nay, the first steps in that direction were already being made.

Now it is evident—it is almost a historical law—that the next Commune will begin where the preceding one ended. The workers of Paris know what an unsuccessful revolt against middle-class rule would mean. One of the speakers who spoke before me has told you some of the horrors of the massacre which followed the fall of the Commune. But if any one were to take "*La Semaine Sanglante*"—a book in which Camille Pelletan has embodied the results of a most careful inquiry—and read you a few of its pages to show what the bourgeois repression was, you would listen but a very short time before you would break into the most violent rage against the exploiters. The French workers know these horrors, many are alive to tell them, and therefore be sure that when the next revolt comes, they will do all they can to secure victory for themselves.

They will act in such a way as not to have great numbers of the urban proletariat indifferent to the revolt; they will not forget the emancipation of their peasant-brothers. They will act so as to secure the land to the agricultural labourers. The Commune of 1871 did not meet with the support of the rural population, which was indeed rather hostile to the Paris workers. But now, the misunderstanding will be removed. And that is not my personal opinion only. Listen to Zola who wrote that if the next Commune only proclaims the abolition of the land-taxes and the end of the military conscription, the French peasants will cry all over France "*Vive la Commune!*"

The present condition of France shows that we shall not have long to wait for the next revolt. I should not be astonished at all if next year, instead of commemorating the past, we were engaged at this very same date in preparing the future. But I am sure that two or three more commemorations of the Commune will not have passed before some new great revolution occurs in France.

Moreover we may be sure that the next Paris Commune will not be so isolated as it was in 1871. At that time it was surrounded by German armies: the flower of the French working men had been taken to the battle-fields, and massacred for the glory of Napoleon III. Half of the French territory was occupied by German armies.

And yet the Commune was proclaimed also at St. Etienne, Lyons, Marseilles and some smaller towns. It went over to Spain, and the Commune of Carthage was even more revolutionary than the Commune of Paris. And people who know Vienna used to say at that time that if the Paris Commune had lived, Vienna might also have seen something like a Commune proclaimed.

We all begin to understand that if a great change is to be made in our present economical conditions, the start must be made with a small unit. We cannot expect that a whole nation of thirty or forty millions will come at once to Socialist opinions and be ready to begin a Socialist life. This would be contrary to all that history has taught us. History shows that intellectual development always spreads in some centres in advance of others. And therefore it would be the duty of a big centre like Paris, or like London, to begin the necessary reorganisation without waiting until the whole country was ready to make the same changes. It would be its duty to preach by example. Take for instance Switzerland. The Swiss did not wait till all Europe was converted to republicanism, they founded their small republics, and amidst the great monarchies of Europe this small place remained where freedom was to be found.

So it will probably be during the next movement. Paris will perhaps take the lead, and its example will be followed by Lyons, Marseilles, maybe Bordeaux, and so on. We do not believe that these Communes will make a full application of our Anarchist principles. But we do believe that while the revolution will be the result of all revolutionary parties, our ideas, our teachings also will have their effect. There surely will be less reliance upon authority, and very much more upon our own efforts.

We may be sure that as soon as separate groups of workers are able to alter the present bad system, they will try to do so. If they can take possession of a factory they will. And from these separate efforts will result the revolution, extending its sphere, co-ordinating and combining the separate acts.

But the first work of every revolution ought to be to see that the people have food to eat immediately the movement begins. What is the use of making a revolution if several hundred thousand men, women, and children remain for months without bread and lodging? That would be no revolution at all. We can produce plenty of food for all, we can provide decent houses for everybody; and so, to provide the necessities for those who are most in need of them, and then set to work to reproduce what will be consumed—that will be the duty of every revolution to come.

THE SITUATION IN FRANCE.

(From our Paris correspondent.)

THE position of parties, political as well as Socialist, has been considerably modified in France, since three years ago. Then there were only two well-defined antagonistic camps facing each other; on the one side the middle-class—Opportunists in power, Monarchists resigned, Radicals waiting their turn; on the other the Socialists of different schools—Revolutionists, Possibilists, Marxists, Independents, Anarchists.

Now a new-comer, Boulangerism, has made its appearance upon the scene, and has thrown the two camps into confusion. Exploiting the general discontent against those who govern, who have made the Republic a fraud and dishonoured this name once so dear to the multitude; working on the bad feelings, the hopes, the dissatisfied and growing ambitions of the Bonapartists, the Clericals, the Republicans and the pseudo-Socialists; releasing like a tempest the jingo prejudices, the ideas of the Revenge; using as a catapult the Patriotic League, which has in France about 200,000 adherents—Boulangerism has come with its bullying manner and poses as the heir to the parliamentary republic. Flattering all the parties in opposition without declaring himself in favour of any; multiplying his vague declarations, proclaiming himself a partisan of the Republic, but of the Open Republic—General Boulanger has become a sort of Sphinx whose slightest act, whose most insignificant word is commented upon by the crowd of simpletons. "For whom is the General working?" they ask one another, "for Philippe VII., Victor Bonaparte, Prince Jerome, or the people?" The answer is simple; General Boulanger is working for himself. It is important, however, to recognise that the Clericals and Bonapartists, especially the latter, form the most considerable part of his followers; whilst the Orleanists, who include the great bankers, show themselves more favourable to the present form of government when it is represented by such ministers as Ferry, Rouvier, or Tirard.

Frightened by the spectre of Caesarism, and at the same time delighted to have a pretext to turn their back to the Social Revolution which they formerly extolled in the hope of turning it to their exclusive advantage, the Possibilists, who formed the most numerous and th

most moderate amongst the Revolutionary Socialist schools, have abandoned the principle article of their programme—the Class War; they have allied themselves to the middle-class Opportunists and Radicals, with whom they founded the famous Society of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen, the offices of which are situated in the Rue Cadet, whence is derived the name Cadetists, which is frequently applied to them by their opponents. The Possibilists, whose actual chief is Dr. Paul Brousse, include amongst their number nine municipal councillors of Paris. Their newspapers are the weekly *Proletariat* and the daily *Parti Ouvrier*. We can also almost describe as Possibilist the journal *La Bataille*, which was formerly independent and revolutionary, almost Anarchist, and ceased publication from want of funds, and which reappeared during the recent electoral contest between Boulanger and Jacques in the Department of the Seine as a mere republican, anti-Boulangist sheet. Its principal editor Lissagary is a writer of great talent but sceptical and fond of pleasure. The conditions under which *La Bataille* was resuscitated have proved to demonstration that the journal is supported by secret service money. The Marxist section, whose chief is Jules Guesde, an unlucky rival of Paul Brousse, includes only a few publicists, talented sectarians. It is a staff of officers without an army. By the side of the Marxists, to whom they are nearly allied by their very authoritarian temperament, gather the Blanquists, who are also very much diminished in number. Disciplined revolutionists, rather politicians than Socialists, their ideal is limited to a Jacobin republic. They played a great part during the Commune of 1871, and so they have raised to the point of fetishism the worship of the Commune; and this word enables them to call themselves sometimes Communists sometimes Communalists, according to circumstances. Violent and at the same time crafty, they have been called the red Jesuits. Since Boulangism has made its appearance they have adopted quite opposite tactics to the Possibilists: patriots and authoritarians, they have allied themselves to the National Republican Party of which General Boulanger is the chief. M. Henri Rochefort has served as their intermediary. Their leaders are Granger and Vaillant, the last of whom has a seat on the Paris Municipal Council, as also has Chauvière, the best orator of the Blanquist party. After having had as their organs *L'Homme Libre*, *le Cri du Peuple*, and recently *l'Egalité*, they are at the present time without a newspaper. The Independents are limited on the right by the Radicals and on the left by the Anarchists: some are voters, others abstentionists. With the exception of a few ambitious nobodies they are sincere and have maintained a straightforward line of conduct, combatting at the same time the middle-class government and Boulangism.

The Anarchists who, although inferior in numbers to the Possibilists, have made great progress both at Paris and in the country, form the real heart of revolution and Communism. We must admit that at the outset they were rather mixed, many calling themselves Anarchists who were only unconscious rebels or ambitious individuals wishing to fish in troubled waters. To-day this party stands free from all compromise with the middle-class parties; it is purified. It has still much to do to gain over the workers of the towns who are addicted to politics, but in the agricultural districts of the Centre, and especially of the South, it has secured a very large number of adherents. The Anarchist organs are *La Révolte*, a weekly journal, the *Ca Ira*, which appears irregularly as finances permit, and the *Père Peinard*, a periodical pamphlet written in the familiar language or slang of the workshop and the street. We may also add *L'Attaque*, a weekly journal which started as a Marxist sheet but has nearly become Anarchist. The revolutionists have not a daily organ. We may, however, mention *l'Egalité* which was recently in the hands of a Blanquist-Guedist-Radical coalition, and since the departure of its editorial staff has opened a "free tribune" in which the letters of Socialists of all shades of opinion are published. The director of this journal, M. Jules Roques, is Boulangist; but whatever may be the motives which have induced him to appeal to this economic collaboration, the propaganda will certainly benefit in some degree.

In conclusion, the old organised parties are in a state of complete confusion. Anarchism has progressed, but it is doubtful whether it will be able to successfully oppose Boulangism, which in less than a year will perhaps have swept away the parliamentary republic, and will then endeavour to dam up the revolutionary torrent. The economical situation has arrived at the acute stage, and whilst the general elections, which will take place towards the end of the year will bring upon us a lively political agitation, everything seems to show that the beginning of the year 1890 will witness a commercial and industrial crisis of the most intense kind. After the Universal Exhibition, which will have created only a fictitious burst of prosperity, the misery will appear blacker than ever; failures, strikes, great additions to the unemployed, will succeed one another. Then perhaps will be the psychological moment.

THE MOVEMENT IN ITALY.

(From our Italian Correspondent.)

THE labour agitation is spreading in town and country. A general labourers' strike is expected in the Varesotto, whither the government have dispatched two companies of soldiers to frighten the peasants into submission. At Bregnano, near Como, the peasants have revolted against the hearth tax (*fuocatico*) lately increased by the parish authorities: the mayor passed a bad quarter of an hour. The movement has gained the neighbouring localities of Lomorro, Belforte, Casa Litta, and others. Here also troops have been hurried to maintain order. But by far the most alarming troubles have broken out at Olgiate in the

same province of Como, where bands of labourers on strike, 4000 strong—men whose wages were less than 4d. a day—wander through the country singing revolutionary songs to this effect: The whole day the peasant handles the spade, working, sweating, toiling, to live upon water and soup (polenta); whilst the meat and the poultry are for the master's mouth.

The number of unemployed arrested during the last month at Rome was over 1000; 700 of whom have been sent back to their native places in the provinces, whilst 300 undergo imprisonment, charged with the dire offence of conspiracy to overthrow the Government. The inquiry, which in Italy is secret, is conducted by a single magistrate: an unpropitious circumstance promising our comrades a long imprisonment before trial.

In spite of these measures the temper of the workers rises high. At the conclusion of a representative meeting of shoemakers—whose resolutions, not indeed far-reaching but energetic, have been adopted by their comrades in many other towns—a street demonstration was started; which, owing to the interference of the police, almost resulted in a revolt. As the king and the queen were passing in their carriage through the streets of Rome, a workman spit in their faces. He was arrested. From the Puglie heartrending descriptions of starving peasants reach the chief bourgeois papers of the peninsula. The misery extends even to the farmer and the small proprietor. The first, having rented uncultivated soil for a long period, on the understanding that he should fertilise it at his own expense without compensation, is now ruined; because, unable as he is to pay the rent, he is evicted just at the time when he hoped to indemnify himself from the increasing productiveness of the land. The second is victimised by the State: in the year 1887 not less than 67,000 small proprietors were evicted by the State for default in payment of the land tax. The number is now becoming still more alarming.

The economical situation is altogether so bad and critical, that even the bourgeois republicans are moved by it. They propose at this year's Congress to deal with the questions of nationalisation of land and property in general—at last! The government, however, dreams but of repressive measures, by which, of course, Anarchists are the chief sufferers. On the occasion of the 18th March, endless searches were made at the clubs of three Anarchist groups in Milan, and at the houses of their members. The police boast of having found material for a big indictment for conspiracy. Three Florence comrades have just been sentenced to two years' imprisonment and one year's police supervision each for the awful crime of having been found in possession of a manifesto commemorating the Chicago martyrs. A pamphlet concerning the same, entitled "Memento," is now the pretext of a prosecution against some Milanese comrades; whilst two more Anarchist publications, one of which appeared at Molfetta (Puglie) under the title "Misery and Revolution," and another at Turin entitled "The Hunger Show" (a satirical exposure of the obscenities of the Beauty Show recently held in that town) have been likewise denounced. This prosecution mania of the government, however, has not deterred the Neapolitan Anarchists from posting revolutionary manifestoes, nor our comrades all over Italy from pushing the propaganda with the utmost zeal and energy.

We must record with special sympathy and honour comrade Gerbi, sentenced at the Florence Assizes to 11 years' penal servitude on suspicion of having put a harmless bomb near the walls of a church at Leghorn. Another martyr, the man who openly attacked the king of Italy nine years ago in Naples, Giovanni Passannante, has been so much broken down by continuous reclusion and systematic cruelties in his five feet cell at Portoferraio, that the government, seeing that his end was near, and fearing the hatred that would accrue to them if he died now, have decided to transfer him to the Penal Asylum of Ambrogiana, near Montelupo, in the Arno Valley.

At Finicino, near Rome, the labourers of the "Campagna Romana" gathered on the 18th March to the cry: "Hurrah for the Paris Commune, hurrah for the Social Revolution!" Similar demonstrations took place on the same day at Rimini, Leghorn, and other towns, almost everywhere attended with conflicts between the population and the troops, followed by arrests. There are unmistakable signs of an approaching rising in Italy, whose extent and results cannot be foretold, especially as they would very likely coincide with similar events in other countries.

NOTES.

When the civilian Monro succeeded the soldier Warren at Scotland Yard, there was talk in the Liberal press of harmony between police and public. No more Endacotting, no more batoning of defenceless men and women, no more political assaults. The guardian lions of existing society were to roar as softly as any sucking dove, reserving their teeth and claws for "real criminals." The last few days have furnished some striking instances of the methods of our admirable police for the preservation of peace and good will amongst men.

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First, English detectives spy upon the privacy of certain Armenian journalists in London, pay them, in fact, a domiciliary visit à la Russe, and Lord Salisbury confesses in Parliament that this is at the bidding of the Turkish ambassador, because the despots of Turkey object to the opinions of the journal in question. Do the English workers wish that the fruits of their labour, forcibly taken from them in the form of taxes, should be devoted to paying spies to do the dirty work of the

Sultan? Yet this is the sort of thing that necessarily comes of delegating the business of self-protection to a government. "Birds of a feather flock together," and rulers everywhere sympathise with one another.

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Next comes a raid upon the unhappy prostitutes of the West End. The police may run in any woman in the streets whom they choose to imagine guilty of the crime of solicitation. It is known to every honest person who has reflected thereupon, that so long as increasing crowds of women can only get wages on which it is impossible to live and increasing crowds of over-fed idlers loaf about seeking the gratification of lust, so long must the buying and selling of human beings continue and police interference only magnify the evil. Again and again it has been admitted that when the slight check of partial publicity is removed and vice driven into concealment, the only result is the increased suffering and degradation of its victims, the increased cruelty of those who prey on their misery. Yet here are the police again "suppressing vice" in the interests of the hypocritical respectability which dare not grapple with its causes.

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The absolute power of Endacott & Co. in the streets is a standing menace to half the population. Every woman who has occasion to pass through our thoroughfares at night has as much to fear from the policeman on the prowl for blackmail as from the licence of the loungers. A friend of the present writer was stopped at her own door by an officer who alternated his outrageous accusations with nudges and whispered invitations to square matters, whilst he was all obsequious servility to the man who had escorted her home. She happened to be well known and influential, and the constable's indiscretion was followed by elaborate apologies from head-quarters; but for one woman thus in a position to defend herself, there are thousands of working girls, who in such a case have no alternative but to buy off the tyrant of the street if they would avoid the shame of being haled to the police station amidst every sort of insult and next morning brought before the beak and condemned upon the unsupported testimony of the disappointed blackmailer.

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Another example of metropolitan police activity. On the 22nd of March the Jewish workers of the East End organised a demonstration against the sweating system, and at a mass meeting on Mile End Waste passed a resolution condemning it. After the proceedings were over, Mr. Monro, scenting Socialism, not to say Anarchy, beneath this audacity of the wage-slaves, sent some of his men to break, *without any sort of pretext*, into the Berner's Street Working Men's Club. The representatives of law and order broke windows, tore down pictures and posters and fell with their fists and batons upon a few of our comrades who happened to be there. One, the wife of the steward, they threw down and kicked, others they beat until the blood streamed, three were dragged to the station, again beaten, and then charged with assaulting the police!

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"Enthusiasm was never yet maintained in the history of human movements by trimming and compromise," writes Comrade Hyndman in *Justice*. A truth if ever there was one. But how does it stand in relation to Socialists who admit that Communist-Anarchism is the end of the Revolution, the goal of Society, and yet spend their lives in attempting to bring about collectivist democracy on the ground that it is more immediately practical? Or Socialists who whilst acknowledging the absolute rottenness of the present system of government, strain every fibre to hoist men into its ranks? What possible reason have they to suppose that amidst the universal torrent of parliamentary humbug Socialist candidates will keep "class war" and "collective ownership" pledges any better than their Radical predecessors have kept theirs? Can a man touch pitch and not be defiled? Can the best amongst us persistently take a false position and remain true to himself? To suppose so is to suppose that a living organism can remain entirely uninfluenced by its environment.

THE REVOLT OF THE ENGLISH WORKERS IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY.

INTRODUCTION.—WHY THEY SHOULD REVOLT.

UNIVERSAL dissatisfaction is abroad. No man worth his salt who works and thinks in England to-day can be other than dissatisfied. The difficulty of making a living, to say nothing of leading full and complete human life, even if we have been so exceptionally fortunate as not to feel it for ourselves, is continually burnt into our consciousness by the efforts and struggles of our friends and neighbours—efforts crowned as often with failure as success in spite of honest endeavour—struggles frequently ending in the indifference of despair.

A few succeed. A few even force their way out of the class of workers, to live idly on the labour of others. But the vast majority exist always upon the edge of an abyss, into which they can only save themselves from falling by a never-ceasing round of toil. If they stop for a moment; if from illness or ill-luck, or any other cause for which

they are or are not responsible, they drop out of the ranks, no one knows but themselves what a long, weary hopeless fight it is to regain the lost position.

Many never regain it. They sink into "the Residuum"; into that wretched, struggling mass of human beings whose one interest in life is how they shall get their next meal; who stand ever ready to undersell their fellow-workers for a starvation-wage; who live the life of beasts, without a beast's careless enjoyment of the present; who in the midst of the pleasures and luxuries, the knowledge and culture of our modern civilisation would have been ten thousand times happier if they had been born savages.

"To me, at least," said Mr. Frederic Harrison at the Industrial Remuneration Conference, "it would be enough to condemn modern society as hardly an advance on slavery or serfdom, if the permanent condition of industry were to be that which we now behold, that 90 per cent of the actual producers of wealth have no home that they can call their own beyond the end of the week; have no bit of soil, or so much as a room that belongs to them; have nothing of value of any kind except as much old furniture as will go on a cart; have the precarious chance of weekly wages which barely suffice to keep them in health; are housed, for most part, in places that no man thinks fit for his horse. . . . This is the normal state of the average workman in town or country."

Out of a population of about 7,000,000 families, the insecurity and poverty described by Mr. Harrison is the lot of 5,000,000 or thereabouts, in the richest country in the world. How is it that the great mass of Englishmen have fallen into such miserable and helpless degradation?

It is because they have lost their control over both land and capital, and so have nothing to work with, and consequently nothing to live upon, unless they can come to terms with some one who possesses these necessary means of production; unless they can find an employer in the class which owns property. And no property owner will employ men, that is to say will let them use his land or capital, unless he can make a profit for himself out of their labour over and above the wages he pays. It is on this profit that he lives, often lives luxuriously and without doing a stroke of work himself.

Now the land of this country, and the wealth created by past labour, have been stolen from the people by certain selfish and cunning individuals. The history of this sort of robbery, says Karl Marx, "is written in the annals of mankind in letters of blood and fire." Suppose we turn to the last page of our own history and see.

I. THE ROBBERY OF LAND.

Now-a-days out of a population of over 35,000,000 souls, there are only 180,524 people who own more than a house or field; and this handful of men own between them 10-11ths of the soil of the United Kingdom.

At the beginning of the last century, out of a population of somewhere about 5,499,520* there were 940,000 freeholders in Great Britain, something like one-sixth of the population, and of these 660,000 were small yeoman farmers, each his own master, with no landlord over him, tilling his own 12 or 15 to 100 acres.

These little farms were mostly arable land, cultivated on the old three field system, one third of the farm lying fallow every year to rest the land. The farmer and his family cultivated their bit of land themselves, with the help, on the bigger farms, of two or three hired labourers, who often lived in the farm-house and ate at the farmer's table with the family.

Of course there was no yawning gulf of class distinction between those who thus lived and worked together. Their interests were in common and a labourer would very often remain on one farm all his life. When he married he would remove to a cottage on the village common which belonged to all the villagers, had been their heritage from the dim far-off days when their ancestors first colonised the country side. Here all the people, farmers and labourers, had free right to pasture their cows, sheep, pigs, donkeys and geese, and to cut timber, firewood and turf. Besides the common, many cottagers had from two to four acres of ground for vegetables and corn. Of course labourers in such a position as this were independent men, vastly different from the unhappy hirelings of to-day.

(To be continued).

* Gregory King. Finlaison gives the probable numbers as 5,134,516.

Editorial communications to be addressed to "The Editor of FREEDOM," 28 Gray's Inn Road, W.C. Orders for copies of the paper, payments, etc., should be sent to "The Manager of FREEDOM," 28 Gray's Inn Road.

FREEDOM can be obtained in London as above and from W. Reeves, 185 Fleet Street; the Socialist League Office, 13 Farringdon Road, E.C.; or ordered through a newsagent.

Annual subscription one shilling. Post free in England and within the Postal Union one and sixpence.

RECEIVED—Freedom Publication Fund—L. Diem, 1s.; C. Gallopp, 6d.; Kitt, 6d.; Dushkiss, 6d.; Rabinovitz, 6d.; H. S., 6d.; C. Gillsher, 6d.; D. Noskin, 6d.; H. Pinkus, 6d.; E. Allen, Desborough, 2s.; J. M. Fells, 5s.; P. Regnier, 10 frs.

Printed and published for the proprietors by C. M. Wilson, at the Labour Press Agency, 28 Gray's Inn Road, London, E.C.