

Freedom

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IMPORTANT NOTICE.

Thanks to the comrade who has supplied us with the necessary funds, we are able to give our readers this month a two-page supplement, containing a quantity of interesting matter, which we hope will meet with their appreciation. We need hardly say that we shall be delighted to do this again whenever funds permit; and if comrades will try and make their payments with as little delay as possible this will be all the more easy. We have already a quantity of interesting matter in hand for our September issue (next month), including a long article from a Norwegian fellow worker about the Anarchist playwright—Henrik Ibsen—the author of those two remarkable plays, "The Doll's House" and "The Pillars of Society," which recently attracted so much attention in this country, from the thorough going manner in which they expose the rottenness of the existing order of things. We would like then also to give a supplement, and we shall do so if we can possibly raise the funds. Donations, however small, will be welcome, and should be sent to the manager, at 7, Cancell-street, Merrow-street, Walworth, London, S.E. Orders for extra copies of the paper may also be sent there. The Annual Subscription is 1s. 6d. to all countries alike.

THE WORK OF THE FRENCH REVOLUTION.

"WHAT is the use of revolutions?" we were asked, for years and years, in every key, by our privileged manufacturers of public opinion; and we were shown France as an evident, unmistakable proof of the utter uselessness of revolutions. And we were told this so often, and with such confidence that many of the English people really began to believe the words of the above-said manufacturers. And yet, when the present middle-class rulers of France fully realised the necessity of letting some fresh air into the country which had been stifled by eighteen years of imperial rule and as many years of bourgeois republic; when they felt the necessity of deeply stirring national thought in order to revive that bold spirit of freedom and free criticism which is the essence of all progress, they found out that nothing would better suit their aims than the commemoration of—a Revolution. As to those of our fellow-workers who will have visited France during this summer, they are sure to return home under the impression that they saw nothing of the "rotten France" which is so often spoken of by our "pillars of society," but that, on the contrary, they saw a country full of vitality which again is going to take the same lead in the economical, political, intellectual and artistic life of Europe that it took before 1848, in 1848, and even on the day after the terrible invasion of 1870. And when they begin to think what has made France what it is, they are sure to find out that it was the Great Revolution of 1789-1793; so that many will probably return to these islands, regretting that their mother country has had no such revolution for the last two centuries.

If they examine, moreover, into the history of the last two hundred years, they will see this: During the eighteenth century France was endeavouring to realise in life the watchword which she had received from her forerunners—from the English Revolution of 1648-1688. She was busy in developing and spreading the ideas enunciated in this country during the great revival which followed the English Revolution; but, after having spent some fifty years in that preparatory work, she suddenly overthrew her old institutions; she also made her revolution, and after having done so, she immediately proved to have taken the place formerly taken by England in the progressive development of Europe. She proved to be the country which since that time has given the watchword for the development of the whole of the civilised world.

Indeed there are two leading facts which permeate the whole of the history of Europe during the last hundred years, and give to our century a marked place in the history of humanity—the abolition of serfdom and the abolition of absolute rule—both of which slowly spread from France towards Germany, Scandinavia, Italy, Spain, Austria, and finally to Russia and the Balkan States. And both are a direct outcome of the French Revolution. What France realised during the years 1789-1793, became the aim, the end in view of all continental Europe during the hundred years which followed.

The abolition of serfdom in Europe was the direct outcome of the revolution. After having abolished it at home, France inscribed it on the banners of the republican armies and that message of deliverance—not the military capacities of the generals, or of a Napoleon—was what permitted those armies victoriously to cross Western Europe. Nay, victory abandoned them, and defeat became unavoidable, on the day they neglected to bear that message of liberation to Russia as well. And if serfdom temporarily reappeared in Italy and Germany after the retreat of the French *sans-culottes*, its days nevertheless were numbered. It disappeared in Germany in 1848, in Russia in 1861 in the Balkan States in 1878.

The other great change, intimately connected with the former, the

overthrow of absolute rule, and the transfer of political power to the hands of the middle classes, which this country obtained to some extent in 1688, but which took a hundred years to cross the channel—that other change, again, France not only accomplished it itself in 1789-1793, but it compelled all Europe to do the same during the next hundred years. Since France had a Constitution—to obtain one has become the chief aim of Democracy all over Europe, and during our century, the wave slowly spreading eastwards, Russia is the only European nation which has not yet succeeded in freeing itself from absolute rule. All over the civilised world the middle classes have obtained what they aimed at—the political control of the nations.

And finally, that spirit which made the philosophy of the eighteenth century proclaim the equality of all human beings, and their equal rights to the possession of all that is necessary for producing wealth, that spirit which boldly attacked the hypocrisy and submission preached by all religions, and pitilessly trampled under foot the conventional hypocritical lies upon which communities are still built—the spirit which was born from the Revolution of 1688, and later on was boldly proclaimed by the French revolution—is now sown broadcast all over the civilised world. It has taken the place of the religions of old, it has become the very substance of all that means progress in science, literature, art, politics and economics, and it only awaits a favourable moment to sweep away the old rotten institutions which still prevent its free development. Neither the leagues of the monarchs, nor the tacit conventions of the wealth-possessing classes all over the world, have been able to stifle that spirit since it was proclaimed—not in a few narrow circles only, but in the streets: since it penetrated to some extent into the very life of France during the years 1789-1793. The faint voices of professors of philosophy can easily be overpowered, but what has been proclaimed aloud in the public thoroughfares, what has been nurtured by the blood of martyrs, will not die.

When her turn came France underwent the torments of a revolution; she freely shed the blood of her sons and daughters; but not for herself alone. She did it for Humanity; and we, in this country, as well as the peasants of every village in the east of Europe now reap the fruits of her struggle for freedom. If the history of our century so widely differs from that of centuries past—making of our own times one of the great breaking points of history; if we again stand on the threshold of a great revolution—international this time—which will achieve in practical life what evolution already has achieved in the minds of men, we must revert to the Revolution which France underwent a hundred years ago to find the cause and the explanation of that fact.

That is the use of revolutions in the history of humanity. That is the victorious answer which history gives to those who would like to achieve great things with trifling means, who believe that great ideas can germinate out of the vulgar meanness of daily life, and forget that great events and great struggles are as necessary for the maintenance of the growth of humanity as steady everyday work during the intermediate period.

As to France itself, one ought to see it now and compare it with what it was a hundred years ago in order to realise for what it is indebted to those who did not recoil before the necessity of using violence to uproot the institutions of old. And if one will know what France was a hundred years ago he could not do better than study what Russia is at this moment, with its starving peasantry, the submissiveness of the middle-classes and their slowness of thought, the arbitrariness of an autocratic ruler and his officials, the rottenness of all the governmental machine. It is true that in 1815 France had to submit to the restoration of the Bourbons imposed upon her both by her middle-classes and the armies of foreigners. It is true that the return of the Bourbons was the signal for a White Terror, before which the horrors of the Red Terror appeared as mere child's play. It is true again that it had to submit for a score of years to the shameful rule of a second Napoleon. But none of these governments could live. Each of them was still-born, worm-eaten at its very birth.

And—what is more—none of them could force the French peasantry back to the feudal conditions of old. The Bourbons could not reintroduce the feudal rights, not even the redemption of feudal rights, since the peasantry had burned their last vestiges during the revolution and had lived for a number of years without bending their backs under the feudal yoke. The backs once raised could not be bowed again. The combined armies of Europe were unable to return to the landlords the lands they had formerly enclosed, but which the peasants took possession of and cultivated as soon as there were no royal gendarmes to hang them for that offence. They had tilled the land since 1792, they had

conquered it on the battle fields sprinkled with their sweat and their blood, and it could not be taken back by the ancient robbers.

The Bourbons were reinstated on the throne; but the old powers of the aristocracy could never be reinstalled. Even those representative of the aristocracy and divine rule were compelled to share their power with the middle classes. And when, later on, in 1848, the toiling masses went further in their claims on the riches they had made with their own hands, and Napoleon III., supported by the middle-classes of France as well as by the bankers and the governments of all Europe, came to save the rich from the claims of the poor, even he had to assume a socialist mask in order to secure a throne for himself—for the next twenty years, no more!

And now, while Germany is on the eve of repeating the revolution of 1848; while this country indulges in talk about peasant proprietorship and free trade in land, and is looking with anxiety upon imperialism, which might come to the rescue of the capital-grabbers; while Russia stands in a position analogous to that occupied by France a hundred years ago—France has already gone through all these phases. It shows us the fallacies of constitutional monarchy, of peasant-proprietorship, of state organisation of labour; it is no more afraid of imperialism. All these are phases already lived through. Even its moderately advanced elements (like those of the Municipal Council of Paris) look forward to a federation of free Communes, and openly proclaim that the supply of housing, food and labour are nothing but so many functions of the Commune; while the more advanced elements go a step further and proclaim Anarchy and Communism—that is, the free grouping of free human beings for the achievement of all possible pursuits and the common possession of all the riches produced in common.

That is the use of revolution. The rapid abolition of the old nuisances; the sudden start for a new life; the rapid growth of ideas which become the watchword of the civilised world during its next historical phase.

As to how the above was achieved in France a hundred years ago, and why the achievement was nevertheless so imperfect, why a new revolution is necessary, we shall see it in our next number.

THE PARIS CONGRESS.

THE two labour congresses which have been sitting in Paris during a part of July may certainly claim to have put the labour problem and its relation to Socialism, before the workers of the civilised world, in a clearer form than it has appeared before. One Congress represented the French parliamentary socialists (Possibilists) and the English S.D.F. and Fabian Society, together with various other European and American Social Democratic and labour groups, most of whom accredited their delegates to both congresses. This eminently respectable and parliamentary assemblage, fully reported in the *Times* and the *Pall Mall Gazette*, and patted on the back by the middle class "friends of labour" in general, will doubtless show the toiling masses pretty well the sort of thing they have to expect from the peace and rose-water school, the people who are going to bring about a social revolution by getting a few bills through the law factories of Europe and America, and propose themselves to administer the reformed system of economic and political coercion. The would-be saviours of society are trotting out themselves and their nostrums before the public eye. We can only desire that the exhibition may be as complete as possible.

The rival congress, dubbed "the Marxist," ought to be called "the Mixture," surely. It is one of the cruellest ironies of fate that has forced the German Social Democrats, who at their St. Gallen congress denounced Anarchism as incompatible with and opposed to Socialism, to sit at the next congress of European notoriety in which they seek to play a leading part, side by side as colleagues with an assemblage of Socialist delegates, about a third of whom are avowed Anarchists! A bitter pill for the Marxist clique too, who have always drawn a sharp dividing line between revolutionary Communism and Anarchism, and since the wordy war between Bakounine and Marx in the old International, have denounced Anarchists as a parcel of police spies, dupes and fools. This was a specially *Marxist* congress, and yet here, in the very sanctuary of the orthodox faithful who profess as their creed that the revelation of modern revolutionary Socialism began and ended with Marx, appear the Anarchist heretics in full force—the chosen accredited representatives of numerous groups of workers all over Europe.

Several members of the energetic Parisian Communist-Anarchist group, *Ca Ira*, took prominent part in the discussion and the reports of the Spanish and Italian comrades describe the rapid growth of Anarchism as a political ideal amongst the workers of those countries. The report of our comrade Merlino, who represented several Italian labour societies, was received with the warmest applause when he pointed out that Social Democracy was dying in Italy and Anarchist-Communism flourishing and increasing in its stead. And he seemed completely to carry the assembly with him when he eloquently denounced the proposed Eight Hour Legislation as a trick of the combined governments of Europe to stave off the true deliverance of the workers. When he concluded, the Marxist translator requested him to translate his speech to the English and German delegates for himself!

Almost every speech and report, is said to have been received with cries of "Hurrah for Anarchism! Hurrah for Communism!" Mr. Keir Hardie's mild report of the Scotch movement and advocacy of parliamentary labour reforms was listened to in silence, whereas when the delegate of the Socialist League, comrade Kitz, rose

and corrected some of Mr. Hardie's statements about English Socialism he was followed with loud applause. The Marxists did not want to translate Kitz's speech either, but the other delegates from the branches of the League and many others insisted on fair play. The obvious advance of the League towards a new political ideal has been a shock to the Paris Marxists, who had hitherto believed that it was one of the few Socialist bodies in Europe which had remained sound in the pure democratic Collectivist faith. Of course these little incidents do not appear in the bourgeois press. The report of the Marxist congress which appears in the *Daily News* is said to be from the pen of a connection of the Marx family.

We believe that the outcome of this congress cannot but contribute to open the eyes of many to the fact that a fresh political ideal has arisen amongst the workers, side by side with the fresh economic ideal of Communism; a political ideal which is not the extension of representative government into complete democracy, but that new relation of men towards one another and their common interests which is called Anarchism.

FRANCE.

(From our Paris correspondent.)

JULY has been inclement for the workers. Two catastrophes, following upon one another within a few days, have broken in for a moment with their victims and their ruin, upon the official rejoicings of the National Exhibition.

The first was the explosion of the Pinet firework factory at Aubervilliers. The whole of the principal building was blown up, with seven unhappy workwomen. The master escaped without a scratch, for the very good reason that he was out for a walk. Finally to calm the excitement and avoid the payment of extra heavy damages, the whole responsibility was thrown on the imprudence of the workwomen. That is the usual way! This terrible accident, happening at the very gates of Paris, has much affected the whole town.

The other catastrophe was the burying of more than two hundred miners in the pits at Verpilloux (Loire). It is believed that all these unfortunate men have perished; on the 10th July the number of corpses recovered was 108. An escape of fire-damp caused the galleries to fall in.

The average wage of French miners is 2s. 6d. a day. For this ridiculous sum they must expose their lives every instant. Yet nothing would be easier than to prevent inundations, slips and escapes of fire damp; it only needs that work should be done and precautions taken that would diminish the dividends of the shareholders. At such a price perish rather all the workmen!

The approach of the general elections is distracting politicians more and more. The other day the Opportunist deputy Thomson and the Boulangist deputy Laur came to blows in the Palais Bourbon (Parliament). They fought so furiously that one of them—the Boulangist—was left on the ground and had to be carried to the infirmary of the Chamber! They are a pretty set of people to accuse Anarchists of brutality and violence!

The Authoritarian Socialists have definitely taken up their position. Whilst the Possibilists, acting under the inspiration of Ranc, Clemenceau and Brousse, no longer breathe a word of their ancient demands, the Blanquists and so-called Independents are hangers on of Boulanger and Co. A shameful thing happened the other evening. "The Equals of Montmartre," a circle calling itself revolutionary Socialist (now it adds "and revisionist") invited, listened to and applauded the ex-Prefect of Police Andrieux, the same who some years ago ordered a charge with truncheons upon the revolutionists on their way to the grave of Blanqui.

The best, most intelligent and most energetic Collectivists have become Anarchists. The high-priests Guesde, Lafargue, Deville, remain alone in their corner, the words equality and union always in their mouths; but rather than admit that they have been mistaken and return to the ranks, they prefer to be taken in tow by the "Red Jesuits," the degenerate disciples of old Blanqui.

However, even amongst the Socialists who retain their belief in universal suffrage, there are some who are beginning to be disgusted by the treachery of the leaders. Thus a committee of the XX Arrondissement of Paris, who formerly led the campaign in favour of Boulé, have just declared themselves opposed to this self-styled revolutionist, whom they stigmatise as having dealings with the Boulangists.

How sad it is to see the masses enthusiastic for or against one man, leaving out of count altogether themselves, their rights, their interests, their needs. It tempts one to ask if so many years of propaganda and of effort are about to be lost; until one is reassured by observing that the very nature of things in themselves is forcing a revolution upon us. A revolution that will only be truly social in proportion as it is Anarchist. Whether Boulanger succeeds or fails, the economic crisis will none the less run its course and end in its inevitable consequence—revolution.

Moreover, it is noticeable that in France, since the beginning of this century, every political revolution has been shortly followed by a rising distinctly Socialist in tendency. Thus a year after the *glorious days* of July 1830, the workers of Lyons were fighting beneath the black flag "to live by toil or die in combat." Thus the great June revolt of the proletariat followed upon the triumph of the republican bourgeoisie in February, 1848. Thus the Commune, preceded by the outbreaks of the 31st October and 21st January, trod upon the heels of the pacific revolution of the 4th of September, 1870.

This phenomena is easy of explanation: the people, continually crushed by its rulers, willingly applauds and even favours those, who calling themselves its friends, overthrow the masters of yesterday. But when it perceives that it has been tricked and that the new are worth just the same as the old, it suffers a shock of awakening.

It is noticeable that whilst political revolutions, changing nothing but the etiquette of government, become tamer and tamer, social struggles, on the contrary, become more and more severe in character. The first murmurs of the revolt in Prairial, 1795, were modulated in a plaintive key: "Bread! Bread!" The epic of June, more considerable than that of the 21st November 1831, paled, in its turn, before the desperate struggle, which from the 18th March to the 28th May, 1871, was sustained by the proletariat of Paris against the Army of Versailles.

Despite the politicians, the Social Revolution will continue its upward march. Boulanger may succeed; his success will not change the situation. Powerless to fulfil the promises he has made to all parties, incapable of contenting clergy, monarchists, republicans and socialists at once, he will fall beneath the shock of that mass of discontent which to-day is raising his pedestal.

THE COLLAPSE OF MARXISM AT THE TWO INTERNATIONAL CONGRESSES OF PARIS.

By a Comrade who was present at both.

THE two international congresses held last month in Paris were separated by the rivalries of cliques, but they have alike ended by voting for the so-called international labour legislation.

The Marxists who have been pretending until now to be the sole true French Socialists and who branded the Parti Ouvrier (Workmen's Party) with the nickname of Possibilists, have during this congress entirely stepped down from their eminence and have, in fact, so acted as to suggest their own full acceptance of the nickname of Impossibleists. They have added the ridiculous to the futile by resolving that on a certain day and at a certain hour all the organised workers of the world should present a petition to their respective municipalities! A sort of Chartism, half a century overdue!

The Possibilists, on the other hand, have descended in their resolution to details which are characteristic of the reactionary work they are engaged in. The resolution deals with fines, years and months of imprisonment, inspections, prohibitions and regulations so strict and severe as to suggest the corporations of the Middle Ages. In fact, the monstrosity of the illusion as to the good to be hoped from this labour legislation is only equalled by the monstrosity of the despotism it would introduce, were it ever adopted. But nobody thinks that it will be. Domela Nieuwenhuis, a member of the Dutch Legislature, said if it were passed it would put a stop to Socialism for five years. And, indeed, the only good of it is to gain votes for so-called Socialist candidates at municipal and parliamentary elections. This result being obtained and the people being edified by discovering the true worth of labour legislation, something new will be invented to keep them quiet for a little longer.

The following is the general sense of the revolution presented by Comrade Merlino, one of the Italian delegates, at both congresses. National or international labour legislation, if accepted by the workers, would confirm their slavery and be a negation of revolutionary Socialism; also it is an economic impossibility that it should be practically carried out and therefore it is holding out a false hope to delude the people. Domestic servants and wage-slaves in workshops, artisans and agricultural labourers, factory hands, and men and women engaged in home industries, can never be subjected to one set of rules; still less workers of varying races and countries. In a social order so opposed to justice and reason as ours, the attempt to subject countries in various stages of economic development to one law, would only end in the sacrifice of the weaker to the stronger.

Moreover, existing governments continually fail even in reconciling the interests of the capitalist classes whom they represent, and go always armed to the teeth; how can they unite to protect the interest of the workers, their enemies? How can that economic engine of violence and destruction, the capitalist state, whose every department is in the hands of the masters, be made into an instrument of peace and good understanding between masters and workmen?

Moreover the great moral principle of freedom is incompatible with any regulations and measures which interfere with the free development of society and would mould it on a Procrustean bed; freedom which has become a need of the civilised man, one of the most urgent of needs. The offer of labour legislation officially made by governments has only one aim, that of dressing up parliamentarism again in the eyes of the masses, when it was becoming utterly discredited, and the efforts of all true Socialists should be directed to overthrowing the great superstition of this century, the belief that social problems can be solved by the ballot box and Acts of Parliament. After the experiences of the old International, we should not go back over the ancient ground, but proceed to the overthrow of private property and, together with it, of government, that monstrous centralised engine of fraud, corruption, oppression and social discord; to establish in its place a society of free associations of workers, settling their own affairs and organising their own work. The bodies of thousands of victims and a whole humanity oppressed, lie between us and our enemies, and this abyss must be deepened more and more, not bridged over, by compromises which amount in fact to treason to the cause.

Comrade Merlino, in conclusion, called upon the congresses to remain true to the principles of revolutionary Socialism and inscribe upon their

banner the abolition of the parliamentary and governmental system as an essential condition of the real abolition of the capitalist system, and to denounce the proposed labour legislation as anti-Socialistic and reactionary.

The Possibilists gave our comrade the opportunity of reading his resolution and supporting it in a well received speech. John Burns replied that the eight hours day was the only thing the electors cared for and therefore the only means of getting votes. A French Possibilist added that if the Possibilists had not elected municipal councillors in Paris the delegates would not have been invited to the "Wine of Honour" at the Town Hall. With such arguments was the Anarchist resolution combated amongst the Possibilists.

At the Marxist congress they spent three days in discussing the fusion of the two congresses and two in reading reports which did not add greatly to what may be known as to the situation in various countries by reading the daily papers. This left them only the last day, before which many delegates had been obliged to return home, on which to discuss all the questions on the agenda paper! Though comrade Merlino sent in his name in the morning, he was not permitted to speak and in the afternoon, when he insisted upon his claim before the vote was taken, he and the French Italian and English delegates who took his part, were violently expelled from the hall after a sharp fight. The benches were left half empty, whilst many French, Italian, Dutch and Belgian delegates sent in a protest to the bureau against the clique formed by Liebknecht and the French Marxists to manœuvre the whole affair and form a new party which has no right to call itself Socialist.

The delegates of three nations voted against the labour legislation. It was voted for chiefly by the German Social Democrats, divided into Germans and Alsations, to gain another vote, and such representative delegates as a Brussels student for Roumania, etc.

The final sitting was to have taken place on Saturday night; but was omitted "for fear of the Anarchists."

This congress marks the end of the old Marxist State Socialism. Henceforward we shall have but two parties—Parliamentarians or Reformers and Socialist Anarchists.

As for the tinkering which the former have set before them as an ideal, it can only tend to push real Socialism backward.

Reform, parliamentary and diplomatic law-making is not Socialism, not even a step towards it. The fundamental principle of Socialism is that no real amelioration for the workers as a body, but only a shifting of various miseries from one section of them to another, can be attained until Private Property is abolished. This fundamental principle even the Marxists have now forsaken. Their late congress will mark their gradual disappearance from the Socialist field. That field will be seen henceforth to be held only by those who have always been the advance guard of the Socialist army—the Anarchists. The duel between the Marxists and Anarchists has been going on ever since the Congress of the Hague. It has just ended at the Congress of Paris in the complete moral defeat of the Marxists.

Unable to imagine a social organisation otherwise than as a State, the Marxist school considered the social revolution as a class struggle, and entrusted the working class with the special mission of accomplishing it. The working classes should, according to that school, conquer the power and the wealth in order to destroy the first and to socialise the latter. This is quite utopian. Never a whole class will wield the power; never will a class or a clique possessing the power abdicate it. The social question is more than a class question; it is also more than a purely economical question. The Marxist theories about the indefinite concentration of wealth and misery, that on labour and value, that on equity of exchange, and almost all the theories which Marx took from Political Economy, are disproved. The very fact that labour legislation has been thought of speaks against them. It remains now for Anarchists to push forward the claims of the proletariat, to show the identity of economical and political privilege, of property and the state, and to open the way to the destruction of both through the social revolution.

LETTERS BETWEEN WORKMEN.

THE FETISH OF PROPERTY.

From W. C. to J. B.

DEAR JACK,—I have been reading through the letter you sent me about Communism, and of course I am bound to acknowledge that a lot of what you say is very true. But you seem to speak as if things could be altered that seem to me as if they were made as they are and could not be changed. I know as well as you that every man wants enough food and clothes and a house to live in and a chance to read and hear some music, and see some pictures and travel a bit. And I see besides that it is a burning shame that some people who saunter about all day long with their hands in their pockets should have all this whilst all those of us who work hard go short of everything. But I do not see how it is to be helped. As long as anybody has land or money he will not let other people have the use of it for nothing. Even if his ancestors stole the land he has got it safe by law now and will want his rent for it. And when he has bought and improved the land, as many landlords have, is it not fair that he should ask some rent? I have an uncle who saved up money until he was able to buy a house and now he has bought another one and lets it out and the rent comes in very handy when he is out of graft I assure you. Would you take his houses away when to get them he has deprived himself of all the little comforts most men spend their money in? Suppose again a man gets together a bit

of plant by saving and industry is he to let Tom, Dick or Harry use that for nothing? If a man has got a little capital he must employ some others or he cannot make profit enough to live on, and so long as he pays them fair wages as times go I do not see how you can complain of him. Or suppose my father died and left me £200, would you have me divide it up with my mates. Surely I should have a right to start a little business for myself and try to get on in the world. Now if all this is so, and always must be in the nature of things, I do not see how your Communism comes in. I would like to know how you square it. Yours inquiringly,

WILL.

From J. B. to W. C.

DEAR WILLIAM,—I am sorry you have not better understood what I said in my last letter, but of course as it is new to you, who are full of the old prejudices instilled into you by the schoolmaster and later on by the clergyman and the employer, it is not to be expected that you should do so without a great deal of thought. The most I can do is to induce you to think. Until a revolution has taken place in your own mind you cannot understand the theories of the Social Revolution, but I am sure as we were always such close friends at school you will, if only in memory of the old time, help me to bring about the mental revolution of which I speak by carefully attending to what I say.

This monopolising of property always has been in your lifetime it is true, and therefore it seems unchangeable, but look back into the past and you will see that humanity has passed through many stages of development and that private property as it exists to-day is not so very old an institution after all. Man is essentially a social animal and it is in the full development of the social instinct in him that the prospect of happiness for the race lies. The man who is in a selfish position to his fellows is necessarily miserable, crippled, less than human; and private property goes to create such opposition. See what a miserable wretch the miser is. Indeed look at any of the accumulators of wealth to-day, be they merchants, bankers, or what-not. I tell you, wage-slave as I am, with the continual prospect before me of want, and always deprived of sufficient leisure, I would not change places with the richest of those men. Mark, I do not put myself on a pedestal of virtue and say I would refuse their wealth if it was offered me, but I do say that I would not pay the price for it they do. All their finer feelings are crushed; they see everything through gold spectacles, and gold is bad for the eyesight; they are in continual dread of being robbed and they absolutely know nothing of the world and its people. Their world and their people are quite imaginary. They grab, grab, grab, until they die. The exquisite happiness of being of service to their fellows they have never tasted, and even in their family life there is no such thing as real love between father, mother or children. They live in an unhealthy, unnatural respectability, and they make their own lives more miserable than those of the poor whom they create.

Just read this charming extract from "A Tour round My Garden," a book written by Alphonse Kerr:—

"And I call this tree mine! Ten more generations will live and die beneath its shade; and yet I call this tree mine! And I can neither reach nor see that nest which a bird has built upon one of its highest branches. I call this tree mine, and I cannot gather one of its blossoms; and yet I call this tree mine! Mine! There is scarcely anything which I call mine which will not last much longer than I shall: there is not a single button of my gaiters that is not destined to survive me many years. What a strange thing is this property of which men are so envious! When I had nothing of my own, I had forests, and meadows, and the sea, and the sky with all its stars; since I purchased this old house and this garden, I have no longer anything but this house and this garden. Property is a contract by which you renounce everything that is not contained within four certain walls. I remember an old wood near to the house in which I was born; what days have I passed under its thick shade, in its green alleys what violets have I gathered in it in the month of March, and what lilies of the valley in the month of May; what strawberries, blackberries and nuts I have eaten in it; what butterflies and lizards I have chased and caught there; what nests I have discovered; how I have there admired the stars which in an evening used to appear to blossom in the tops of the lofty trees; and in the morning the sun which glided in golden dust through what a thick dome of foliage! What sweet perfumes, and what still sweeter reveries, have I there enjoyed! How often have I gone thither at the close of day to recline upon a little knoll covered with trees, to see the glorious sun set, his oblique rays colouring with red and gold the white trunks of the birch trees which surrounded me! This wood was not mine. It belonged to an old bed-ridden marquis who had perhaps, never been in it in his life—and yet it belonged to him."

Do you not see that it is not possession but use that we all require, and that if no one monopolised there would be plenty for all.

A good many of the most primitive communities that have been discovered in modern times amongst savages have no such thing as property within the community, and it is now accepted as an historical fact that the main branches of our Indo-European race have passed through the same communist or semi-communist state. There are traces of a vast deal of such unconscious communism still lingering in modern institutions. Private property has been a growth within historic times. Therefore we cannot assume that it is essentially natural to man on historic grounds.

The existing desire to monopolise wealth has many factors besides pure greed. Fear is one of the most important of these. If you can not get money somehow as things are you lose all that makes life worth living and can only secure bread in a prison or a workhouse. If people felt that their absolute needs were certain to be supplied, half the in-

stinctive desire to possess that seems so strong now would vanish. Your uncle has in reality denied himself of comforts entirely because of his fear lest the time should come when he would not be able to get necessities. If he were guaranteed against want he would no more deny himself than his less careful fellows. He would not desire to possess two houses when he can only live in one. And in the eagerness to accumulate, which he has doubtless displayed, look what he has lost—leisure, opportunities of increasing his knowledge and enlarging his mind, healthy pleasure and friendly intercourse with his fellows, have all been neglected and he has given himself over to toil, never losing time, but rather jumping at every opportunity to work overtime. You surely do not think there is wisdom in such a course as that. When the people at large begin to thoroughly understand how wealth has been accumulated by the few, when they know how dirty are the hands of the rich, and how this wealth instead of giving real enjoyment bestows upon a man the most unmanly qualities, there will be a change in public opinion and monopolisers will be regarded with disgust. Then another large slice of the desire for riches will be gone.

The majority of men are swayed in their desire to possess by the intense instinctive need to get a chance to develop themselves, to get room to grow and enjoy. The desire for room for self-development and self-satisfaction is a root or natural instinct and private property has been a means of giving it to the few and consequently possession has been eagerly sought. But the people are learning now that this private ownership implies the crushing down of the many and this in its turn entails the degradation and narrowing of the lives of all—even of the few who themselves possess, for we are so bound together that if any are to be really free all must be so. Private ownership in the beginning leads only to the freedom of the strong, and eventually it results in the gradual loss of true freedom by the whole community. Property is a failure in every sense of the word. It has been tried and found wanting. It has developed in man the worst vices and crushed down all those who wished to lead a honest honourable life while elevating the liar and the thief. And it is doomed. Everything goes to show that Communism will be the order of society in the near future.

But, you ask, how are you going to do it? how are you going to alter things so as to establish Communism? how are the landlord and the employer and the profit-monger to be done away with? And this opens up the question of the State, the bulwark of the present system of injustice. But I hear the hooter, and I must rush off to work or I shall lose a quarter.—Yours for Liberty,

JACK.

THE PROPAGANDA.

THE rapid growth of conscious Anarchist opinion makes it a matter of interest to a large number of comrades to know where and when meetings for and against Anarchism are to be held and what takes place at such meetings. We therefore commence this month a new feature of this journal which will supply this information, and we invite the co-operation of comrades and friends to make it as complete as possible. Announcements of forthcoming events should be sent to the Editor of *Freedom*, 28 Gray's Inn Road, W.C., as early as possible, and reports directly after the meetings have taken place.

CLERKENWELL.—The hall of the Socialist League on July 7 was packed to hear Herbert Burrows oppose Anarchism in the interests of Social Democracy, which latter he defined as the whole people having a free and equal voice in the management of affairs. He could not understand Anarchism because the Anarchists were not agreed among themselves, some were individualists and some communists, while Social Democrats were all exactly alike in their ideas. "Anarchism," said he, "when it is intelligible is Social Democracy and when it is not Social Democracy it is not intelligible." In the course of the discussion John Turner reversed the phrase, saying, "Social Democracy when it is intelligible is Anarchism and when it is not Anarchism it is not intelligible," and this most people will regard as more in accordance with truth. Burrows didn't think a majority had greater moral right than a minority, but still the minority ought to give way—why? is this intelligible? An uneducated child was, he said, a great danger to the community, therefore compulsory education was necessary. Blackwell pointed out that education was desired by all, by parents for their children and by the children themselves when it was made interesting, as it ought to be. The present national system of education filled the child's mind with prejudices, and taught him or her little useful beyond the ability to read and write. If there were no fees and if the labour of the child was not so valuable to the parent crushed in poverty under the heel of the State no parents would attempt to keep their children from school. Burrows, who believes himself to be a Communist but does not grasp the meaning of the word, expressed his concern lest land in one part of the country should require more labour to cultivate than land in another part, and so enable the individuals on the better soil to gain an unfair advantage. In the long and interesting discussion several other Anarchists took part, including W. J. Clark, a former member of the S. D. F. Executive Council, and at the conclusion of the meeting Burrows challenged John Turner to a debate concerning which we hope to give particulars in our next issue.

ISLINGTON.—A series of discussion meetings, organised by the North London Anarchist Communists, was commenced on Friday, July 12th, at the Britannia Coffee House, Prebend Street, Packington Street. Tom Pearson opened, by defining the different schools of Anarchy, Communist, Collectivist, and Individualist, and pointed out that there were similar differences amongst Democrats. For example, Herbert Burrows and Andrew Carnegie were both Democrats; but one was a Socialist, and the other an Individualist. Turning to the Christians, he showed that Catholics, Methodists, Protestants, Baptists, and Congregationalists differed considerably, although they all agreed in being Christians. Anarchists and Communists based their ideas upon their faith in man; they felt sure that free men would work better and more skilfully than those who were coerced. The oppression of the people had always been the work of the State; it had invariably failed in anything else it had attempted. Christy (S.D.) claimed that men must be bound together by law, and that where Anarchy had been tried, it had always resulted in disorder. He wanted to know how the Post Office and the railways would be worked under Anarchy, and asserted that State Socialism was the next stage in the evolution of society. White (S.D.) made a characteristic speech, in which he proved, to his own satisfaction, that to make the capitalist give up the wealth he had stolen from the workers, would be coercion. He offered to open the debate on the following Friday; but, although a good many friends turned up to hear the other side, he failed to put in an appearance.

WHAT ANARCHIST COMMUNISM MEANS.

ANARCHIST-COMMUNISM means, first of all, absolute freedom for every human being of either sex, freedom not only of thought, of speech, of publication, of public meeting, but freedom in choice of work and in choice of friends and associates in every walk of life. Here is one distinction between us and the Social Democrats who want to have a Central Body, or a number of Central Bodies, organising and directing the labour of the community.

To that view of theirs we oppose the great modern principles of decentralisation and federation; that is, the abolition of all government, central as well as municipal, of the army, police, law courts, parliaments, big and little, taxes, and all other such humbug.

We wish men to associate freely for the purpose of work and production and of satisfying their needs. Free associations of workmen in each locality will be quite able to agree amongst themselves as to their common interests.

Each man ought to be regarded as the equal of all his fellows; each ought to have the right to withdraw from any association and seek other opportunities to combine with other men. Each association or federation ought likewise to be considered as the equal of the others and to be enabled to act freely by commanding the use of the means of labour. No laws, no officials, no functionaries, no red tape, no despotism, in short, however disguised; no parliamentarianism, no men chattering and hair-splitting whilst their fellows work and pay expenses.

The fundamental principle of the new society, for which we look, is the freedom of the individual, the economic freedom of the man working for himself, not for the enrichment of a master. Hence we look for the abolition, and the moral impossibility in the future, of the wage-system or any modification of it.

Men rise to your true dignity! Conquer the means of labour. Refuse to work for the sole benefit of certain others and to let others work for your sole benefit. So shall you not only win a momentary equality, but, what is infinitely more important, remain permanently equal. No one will govern you, because no one will hold over you the terrible power of wealth, no one of you will submit to such power. All will be engaged, in different directions, in work equally useful and productive.

Individual independence, political independence, economical independence, that is freedom, when it is the independence of truly social human beings, each of whom recognises that freedom for one implies the love and reverence of all for each and each for all.

Workmen rally to us; or rather, rally to yourselves and to the principles which sum up your true interests.

THE REVOLT OF THE ENGLISH WORKERS IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY.

III. THE REVOLT.

WE have cast a brief glance at the way in which the English people have been robbed. Though we have only touched in barest outline upon the economic history of the last century, that bare outline is enough to show how deeply the masses have suffered from the narrow, self-interested greed of those individuals who have succeeded in establishing a right to private property in the means of production. We have seen that at the beginning of our century the majority of English men and women found themselves excluded by law from the free use of the soil of their native land, and of the machinery which the new developments of industry were rendering as much a necessity of productive labour as raw material or land itself. With a sense of blind rage and despair they found themselves helpless in the hands of landlords and capitalists, forbidden to resist their claims to monopolise the necessities for working, not only by the terrors of the law but by the teachings of religion and morality. Priests and teachers assured them that resistance, protest even, was not only dangerous, but wicked. God had ordained that some should be rich and others poor. The duty of the poor was to submit, to be content to toil to the utmost of their ability and gratefully to accept whatever pay might be offered them from the piles of wealth they created for their masters.

Thus caught in the net of property and law; thus robbed, ground down, exploited, to whom could the people turn in their misery? where look for relief?

It is a proof of the extent to which the minds as well as the bodies of the poor have been enslaved by the ruling classes, that large numbers of workers have been so effectually confused, terrorised or deluded by this talk of the sacredness of law and order and the morality of submission and self-sacrifice, that they have seen no prospect of relief but in attempts to act constitutionally and obtain the protection of a government which obviously exists just for the purpose of preserving the "rights" of the men in possession. They have seen no hope but in forlorn appeals to the robber class for a little less cruelty in the process of fleecing; a tiny portion more of food and raiment. And this slavish temper has been encouraged and maintained by the fact that there have always been well-meaning, good-natured robbers. The majority of them have not realised what wrong they were doing or how they were doing it. Some of them have been sincerely grieved and outraged by the sight of the suffering inflicted; a few, and that few increasing in numbers as the years of wrong and misery rolled by, have even attempted in their own fashion to set things right. These humane individuals have tried to soften the hardships of the workers by government interfer-

ence and aid, and encouraged the people to demand it. And to a certain extent they have succeeded. Whenever the ruling class of property owners have felt either that the violent cruelties and restraints of existing law were needless to accomplish their purpose of holding the people in subjection, or that it was necessary to make some concession to bribe the workers into quietness, then the influence of the more social individuals amongst them has found an opportunity of making itself felt and, amidst a great flourish of trumpets, some miserable farthings of the great debt of justice have been handed over to the poor.

For example, the hanging and branding and flogging of the unemployed was given up as the numbers of landless and propertyless men and women increased to such an extent as to keep down wages by competition. Again, some of the worst horrors of the criminal code have been toned down; people are not now murdered in cold blood for taking unlawful possession of a sixpence or a sheep; such barbarities defeated their own end, for the social feeling of jurors forbid them to convict and the poor lawbreaker often escaped scot free. Then the restraints of the old landlord poor law have been removed. A man is not tied in the same fashion to his own parish; that was an arrangement inconvenient to capitalists on the look out for cheap labour; so a brand new capitalist poor law was invented by the middle class friends of the people, an experiment in teaching the human beasts of burden how best to exist on one straw a day; it was the first social measure and crowning glory of the first reformed Parliament after 1832. In like manner the laws against combination were modified when it was found that they were useless to prevent the workers from combining and that Trades Unionism was not so very dangerous to property after all; an aristocracy of labour making common cause with the Haves against the Have-nots might be the best of protection against the Red Spectre, in spite of a little cantankerousness about wages now and again. As for the positive measures, such as Factory Acts, they have generally been obtained from the timely spirit of concession in the landlord class, anxious to preserve itself against the temporary alliances of middle-class Radicalism with the workers. Thus Lord Ashley carried the Factory Act of 1833 on the backwash of the terror that had forced through the Reform Bill of the year before, and a Conservative majority carried that of 1847 in the midst of the Chartist agitation and in the teeth of the Radical manufacturers.*

So it has gone on; a sop of justice here, a shaving of humanity there, has been all that the life-long passionate devotion of a few lovers of their kind, the general good nature of a great many well-meaning indifferentists, and the pressure of the terrible needs and wrongs of the masses have been able to obtain from the fears and the humanitarianism of governments. What little freedom, what space to breathe and to live, what hope of future deliverance, exists for the workers, has been kept or won by their own direct action and endeavour.

All through this period of shame and wrong the brave spirit of revolt never died amongst the people. We have spoken of rick-burning and riots amongst the evicted peasants. Even the unhappy paupers under the old poor law had some spirit left. They are constantly complained of as insolent and insubordinate by their masters, and Toynbee tells us of a man who was employed in Bamfette to look after the paupers, but they threatened to drown him and he withdrew.

Then again in spite of the law which treated all combination amongst the workers as a criminal conspiracy to be put down if necessary by armed force, and punished by imprisonment, the workmen of the towns determinately organised themselves in trade unions and took what advantage they could of every embarrassment of the common enemy, the employer, to exact from him a little more of the wealth they produced than he cared to dole out to them.

But the manly and social spirit of independence amongst the masses took a more decided shape than the passive resistance of trades-unionism. In the early part of this century it broke into open flame in the so-called Luddite riots.

Lud was a Leicestershire village innocent who, once upon a time, broke two stocking frames in a rage, because a naughty little boy, who had been teasing him, was hidden behind them. The machine breakers of a generation later took his name and followed his policy. They did not know how to prevent the oppression of the human beings who tyrannised over them and ruined their lives, and so they revenged themselves on the unconscious implements by means of which the wrong was accomplished.

Luddite riots first broke out in Nov. 1811, in Nottingham. One Sunday evening the streets were crowded with hosiers, angrily discussing their wrongs. New stocking frames had been introduced by the masters and on Saturday numbers of hands had been turned off with no work for the next week and no prospect of getting any. After a hot debate in the street it was finally decided to destroy the new frames which had turned them out of their places. On Monday evening they marched to the premises of a manufacturer at Bulwell and asked that the frames should be given up to them or else destroyed. The manufacturer, barricaded in his house, refused. There was firing on both sides and a weaver amongst the assailants was shot dead. Then the workers became furious. They burst into the house and wrecked it, whilst the master and his family fled by the back door. The next day the insurgents broke more frames and attacked a corn mill, vowing vengeance against all millers and corn-dealers who held back the food of the people to raise the price in those times of scarcity.

In a few days the revolt had spread into Derbyshire and Leicestershire. The blackened faces or masks of little parties of Luddites appeared suddenly in the gloaming at the door of factory, or loom-shed,

* Toynbee's "Industrial Revolution."

or mill. Quietly and swiftly they entered, wrecked the obnoxious machinery and were gone before the astonished and alarmed owner could take any measures for resistance. If he fired on them he discovered that they were armed and frequently he was shot. If police or soldiers were on the scene, the Luddites showed fight and resisted to the death. Otherwise they injured no man who did not interfere with them, nor did they touch any property other than arms or the machinery they came to destroy. Their measures were so well taken and the sympathy of the people was so thoroughly with the movement, that a Luddite was rarely captured. If he were, his doom was that of the Russian revolutionist—transportation or death. But according to the report of the parliamentary committee on the riots, no instance occurred of the betrayal of a comrade or of any of the secrets of the organisation. The workers seem to have co-operated with the most perfect unanimity and mutual trust. And even in this report, drawn up by the bitter enemies of the people, there is no accusation of wanton cruelty against the Luddites. It is even *expressly noted* that they never injured any property but that of the manufacturers who had introduced the labour-saving machinery and the corn middle men who notoriously traded on the needs of the people. But their humanity and their desire to injure no one who had not wronged them, did them no service when they fell into the hands of the ruling class. Five Luddites were hanged at Chester in May 1812, and eight sentenced to transportation. At Manchester eight were hanged in June of the same year and seventeen more at York in the next November. But in spite of these ferocious sentences passed by a special commission on those arrested, and in spite of the presence of police and troops in the disturbed districts, the people refused to submit. And though the better harvest of 1813 temporarily relieved the general distress, and the active expression of discontent subsided, it was only to revive again with redoubled energy in 1816.

By this time the propertied classes were thoroughly frightened. The most stringent laws were passed against every sort of freedom of speech, of writing, of public meeting. The Habeas Corpus Act was suspended; all gatherings, public or private, forbidden unless convened with the approval of the authorities, and Lord Sidmouth sent round a circular commanding Justices of the Peace to put a stop to all "blasphemous and seditious libels," *i.e.*, all pamphlets, papers and books which ventured to state that all was not for the best in the best of all possible worlds; this they were to do by issuing warrants against the publishers and throwing newsagents and booksellers into prison, by means of a judicious reading of the Hawkers and Pedlars Acts. All this in the "free and constitutional England" of seventy years ago.

On the other hand there were public meetings (*with the approval of the government*) to discuss what was to be done for the working classes; spasmodic attempts to find employment for the unemployed that somehow remind one of what happened in London after the smashing of a few windows at the West End one February, not a hundred years since. Some fine ladies are said to have suggested that the economic problem should be solved by the return to hand corn-mills and the shelling of peas and beans in the open fields! All agreed that the great point was so to arrange matters as to cause the world to progress backward and ignore the fact that the conditions of human life were changed, and that in the process of changing, the majority, the workers, had been cruelly wronged by the minority who had possessed themselves of property in land and capital. In truth that minority were beginning to feel their ill-gotten monopoly extremely insecure. If the masses should learn to see clearly the cause of their suffering and seriously determine to destroy it, the rule of the propertied classes was over.

(To be continued).

THE GRINDSTONE: AN ILLUSTRATION OF THE MONOPOLISING OF CAPITAL.

THE Social Revolution means a moral change after all; a change in the mental attitude of men towards one another, as we say so often. For instance, when we talk in the "Revolt of the Workers" about the robbery of the masses of the people by those few men who managed to monopolise capital, don't we mean something on a big scale such as might happen on a small one something like this:

Suppose a yard where a lot of men are doing some job that requires the constant sharpening of their tools; and suppose that there is only one grindstone for the lot.

Tom, we'll say, is using the grindstone to sharpen something when Bill comes up and says, "I say old fellow, let's have a turn." "Wait a minute," says Tom, "till I've done"; and directly he's finished he makes way for Bill.

Now when things are managed like that no one can say that Tom is monopolising the grindstone or doing any wrong to his fellows while he is using it. Every man in the yard, Bill included, feels it all right, and if Bill were, by any chance, such an ill-conditioned fellow as to try to kick Tom off, why there'd be no need of police and soldiers and lawyers and magistrates to see fair play between them, for the whole yard would be ready to tell Bill that he was in the wrong and make him feel it if he persisted.

But suppose Tom has managed to set up a legal "right" to that grindstone and says to his mates, "Whether I am using that grindstone or not, none of you fellows shall come near it." If it is the only grindstone thereabouts, he will be likely to have to call in all the paraphernalia of law and order to make good his claim. For this reason; that the general sense of fairness amongst his mates won't be on his side any

longer. His precious grindstone will stand a stone wall between him and his comrades. They are not equals any more. They cannot come to an agreement on equal terms about any matter into which that wretched grindstone enters even indirectly. And, as the men must use it to grind their tools, they must make that selfish monopolist Tom let them get to it somehow. They can't kick him out of the place as they would like because the law protects him and they don't want to see the inside of prison, so they can only try persuasion and bribery. So they offer him some of whatever they are making for the use of the grindstone every time they want it. And Tom, being a sharp fellow, bargains with them till he collects so many pickings that he finds he needn't work at all himself, but just sit alongside his grindstone and see it is properly used. And finally he gets so rich that he pays another man to do even that; and his old mates have got such a respect for him that they call him Mr. Smith and not Tom any more, and send him up to Parliament to represent them in devising the best means for securing the rights of property in grindstones!

LAW, HUMAN AND NATURAL.

WE have received the following from an Individualist-Anarchist. We heartily endorse his defiance of restraints arbitrarily imposed by man upon man, restraints which outrage what is best in human nature. But we disagree with his defence of "Natural Property," founded upon the right of the strongest. Such natural property as this is the basis of the system of unnatural property of which our correspondent so justly complains. The protection of property by law was a dodge of the individuals in possession, of the strongest in hand or wits, to secure their monopoly. The present abuses have grown out of this quite "naturally" and inevitably; could we sweep them all away to-day, they would begin to grow again to-morrow, if the same principle of the right of possession by the strongest were acknowledged as the moral basis of society.—*Ed.*

There is but one *cause* of human misery. It lies in our misconceptions of Nature. Man has acquired the power of controlling himself and his fellow men whilst still in a condition of crass ignorance with regard to Natural Laws; and he has in consequence blundered and brought upon his species ages and ages of pain and sorrow. One after another he has established Gods and rendered them the homage of fear. He has enslaved himself to an old bogey of his own creation, and to please God he has put himself to endless torture. In the sexual relationship who can tell how much disease, mental misery, crime and lunacy is traceable to the idiotic attempts on the part of man to override nature by human laws and tyrannical social customs? And in the economic world see what disorder everywhere exists. Men, women and children starving in the midst of abundance, wearing their lives out to obtain a mere subsistence, and all for fear of human law.

"In a state of nature," says Burke, "it is an invariable law that a man's acquisitions are in proportion to his labours; in a state of artificial society, the law is as constant and as invariable that they that labour most enjoy the fewest things and they that labour not at all have the greatest number of enjoyments."

And there is but one *remedy* for human misery, it lies in a knowledge of and submission to Natural Law. In vain will men seek by further legislation, by revolution, or by any other means, to increase the happiness, or rather decrease the misery, of mankind, so long as they wilfully ignore nature and her teachings. Nature will not be ignored or over-ridden with impunity. State after State has fallen. Civilisation after Civilisation decayed, because these were established upon an artificial basis and maintained by error and superstition.

And the laws that press most heavily upon the people to-day are the laws regarding *property*. There is artificial property and there is natural property. In the former sense alone Proudhon uses the word and by it he means property that is a creation of human law, and such property is theft. It is a defiance of nature, for the natural law concerning possessions is this:

"That they should take who have the power,
And they should keep who can."

But human law steps in and says to yon cane-sucking noodle, "We will give you possession of these acres, and we will maintain you and your race of cane-sucking noodles after you in possession of this land for ever and ever, and they that work on the land shall provide you with canes and eye-glasses and collars and carriages and mistresses."

And there is no hope for the people but in the sweeping away of such "property" and the laws which uphold it.

MANCHESTER.—A comrade writes: "We are doing splendid propaganda about here, both by speaking and circulating literature. For instance, we speak in the small outlying town of Middleton, on Saturday night. Stevenson Square and Viaduct, in Manchester, on Sunday afternoon and evening, respectively. Ancoats, in a rougher quarter of Manchester, on Monday night, and we are thinking of opening up other stations. We preach Anarchy pure and simple; the abolition of government and private property; the fallacy of political methods; the necessity of revolution, and though we encounter much opposition, and deplorable apathy, yet, we also get plenty of sympathy for our ideas, and increasing interest in them."

Any subscriber who receives *Freedom* with a blue mark against this notice is thereby informed that his subscription is in arrears, and unless we receive it before our next issue we shall conclude that he desires to discontinue the paper.

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