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THE USE OF THE STRIKE.

THE workers of England have been bestirring themselves again during the past few weeks. This is a good and encouraging sign, although the demands made are comparatively trifling. It shows a healthy discontent with existing conditions, a kind of feeling that the capitalist is not doing quite the square thing by the worker. We are sure that at bottom this movement is due to the impetus of the energetic revolutionary nucleus of Socialists, which now exists in every large industrial centre and amongst every large body of workers in the country. It is our work to fan the flame by increasing the number of those who strive for a really fair division of the profits of labour, that is to say, for a total abolition of exploitation.

Let us hope—and we have every reason to feel that our wish will be realised—that the growth of those little groups of energetic men, scattered amongst our miners and our artisans, will equal, if not surpass, the growth of Socialism, which the recent political census has shown us in the case of Germany. We use the words “political census,” because we cannot regard that election as useful in any other way than as a numbering of the workers’ army, although it is of course an incomplete numbering. From the action of Messrs. Bebel & Co., in the Reichstag we expect little, but from the 1,341,587 men who registered themselves as uncompromising enemies of the existing order, we hope much. Doubtless the effect of this political census in Germany has been and will be great upon William Hohenzollern and his associates, but far greater was the effect of the miners’ strike in Germany last year, and it is to that more than anything that the Berlin Labour Conference, of which some English Socialists make so much, is due. It is the Strike and not the Ballot Box which terrorises the exploiter and makes him see the shadow cast before by the coming Revolution.

Here, in England, there are many amongst the exploiting classes who see dimly the danger ahead, and the capitalist press (and more especially that portion which circulates exclusively amongst the capitalist class, such as the trade journals) contains many articles just now urging the most drastic measures against their slaves who dare to rebel against their will and feebly ask for a higher wage or a shorter working week. The interference of the State is loudly demanded to put down these troublesome strikes and labour unions. The strong arm of the law is to be invoked not for but against the worker. “We have too much liberty,” one trade journal of the “highest class” shrieks in terrified tones; and indeed we shall not be surprised if the workers speedily have to guard against attempts upon such feeble rights of combination and free action as they possess.

There is perhaps no safer rule of thumb for the worker than to do that which his enemy most denounces and to avoid that which his enemy least objects to. To be a State Socialist, to advocate legislative restriction and to pass resolutions at mass or other meetings is sneered at generally and sometimes faintly praised by the capitalist press, but hold an unemployed meeting or two in Trafalgar Square, organise a strike, or initiate a no-rent campaign, and the enemy unmasks himself and charges the workers, who do these [dreadful but practical things, with being Anarchists, enemies of society, disturbers of the public order. Long screeds are written, showing the terrible loss entailed on the community by this action, the selfishness of the strikers, the awful suffering of their families (which is never thought of under other circumstances) and so on. This unmeasured abuse on the part of the capitalists should convince even Social Democrats that the strike is a useful weapon, which will help the workers much in inaugurating the Revolution. Moreover, it is a weapon which the workers are learning to use with greater and greater effect. The association of unions, national and international, makes it possible for us to have strikes over a whole country and in more than one country at a time. The recent successful coal strike included about a quarter of a million of men and practically covered England, Wales and a part of Scotland.

The workers are beginning to learn also that not only is solidarity needful amongst the members of a trade and amongst all workers, but that the strikes which affect the greatest industrial necessities are the most important. Coal, the indignant capitalist press tells us, is of the greatest importance to our industries, few of them can go on long if the coal strike lasts. How delightfully true this is. Why do not our candid enemies go still further and tell us point blank, “If you want a general strike first stop the coal supply.” Dock labour is also a very necessary commodity, at least the capitalists tell us so, and we are quite prepared to believe them. In fact the capitalist Balaam, in cursing the despised worker at the lowest rung of the ladder, is really blessing him; he is

declaring to all the world that everything would come to a standstill but for the man whose capital is in his hands. More, he is telling the worker that, if he will but organise himself effectively and freely, make common cause, with his unemployed brother and demand the whole, instead of merely a portion, of the proceeds of his labour, there is nothing to stop him. Let us, fellow-workers, thank friend Balaam and act upon his advice; let us spread the light in every corner of the land, infusing the spirit of Revolution into every mine, factory and workshop. By so doing, we shall soon have the workers of England no longer asking for trifling increases of wages, but demanding in sturdy tones a cessation of the system of robbery which obtains to-day.

THE SITUATION IN GERMANY.

THE result of the last elections in Germany, the success achieved by the Social Democrats and the defeat of Bismarck, the last move of the German emperor and his flirtations with the workers, are often the subject of lively discussions in this country. Not so lively, however, we must say, and certainly not so enthusiastic as they might have been expected to be, just as if a certain feeling of distrust was awakened amidst the workers by the intrusion of imperialism into their struggle against the exploiters. In fact, the present conditions of Germany are of so complicated a nature, so many factors must be taken into account, that the lack of enthusiasm at the last victories of the German Social Democrats is fully justified. “What may be the outcome of all that?” is the question generally asked, and we shall do our best to sum up the elements for the answer.

The last great revolution was in France, the foretaste—in this country. In both it had the characteristic of breaking down the power of autocratic rule—and autocratic rule means the rule of the courtiers; in both countries it meant the advent to power of a more or less democratic middle class in lieu of the landed and Court aristocracy; and in both countries the revolution, before resulting in constitutional parliamentary rule, passed through a period of Republican rule. Both in France and Britain it also was the result of two distinct elements: the growth of a powerful middle class, consequent on a sudden development of industry and commerce on the one side; and on the other side of a great movement of thought and awakening of consciousness among the poorer classes, both converging together to break down the powers of landed aristocracy and Court rule.

But, while having so much in common, the French revolution evidently was a step in advance as compared with the revolution of 1640. It had the advantage of that great philosophical movement which was born on the soil of liberated Scotland and England during the 18th century, and the French encyclopedists, as well as the revolutionists of 1789-93, were nurtured with ideas which were the outcome of the English revolution. It also had the benefit of the experience of the English revolution, and that of an additional hundred and fifty years in the general evolution of Western Europe—not to speak of the genius of the French nation giving a further and more harmonious development to the ideas of Liberty, Equality and Fraternity. The movement, on the whole, was imbued with loftier ideas; it was free from the puritanical religious element; it stirred the masses much deeper and it embraced a larger part of the population. It thus developed with greater rapidity and it cleared the way for a more rapid further evolution. Therefore, sixty years had hardly passed since 1789 before France had 1848—the first move of the industrial proletariat—and 1871, which was the first revolutionary attempt at the municipalisation of property and the break down of the centralised State.

Coming a hundred and fifty years later than the English revolution, it naturally made a step more in the enfranchisement of the masses from the bonds of State, Religion and Capital.

It so happened that in the slow progress of industrial civilisation from West to East, Germany was the next country to assimilate the results of the two revolutions. She inherited most of the industrial development, the philosophical thought, the institutions which were the outcome of 1640 in England and 1789 in France. Though Italy (which only quite recently has conquered her independence), Spain, Austria, and even Russia, have also shared to a certain degree, the fruits of the new stage of civilisation inaugurated by England since 1640, nevertheless Germany was the nation which has most advanced in that direction. And, as the end of each century has been marked for the last five hundred years by a great revolution, it appears most probable that the next great revolution will have for its seat Germany. Germany

is the country which, in all probability, will soon offer us a movement analogous to those of 1640-88 and 1789-95.

But, as we often have pointed out in *Freedom*, no revolution can remain any longer confined to one single country. It was natural for England not to make a further move while France was undergoing the tempest of 1789, and even to join the counter-revolution. Her insular position and the extreme limitedness of international intercourse at that time rendered it so. It was also possible for all governments to the East and South of France to join in an alliance against the Great Revolution because at that time their respective countries were entirely in the bonds of Serfdom, Aristocracy and the Church. But steam and a hundred years of steam-civilisation have totally changed all that. Neither in the West, nor in the East and South, would the German revolution find enemies: on the contrary, it would find either allies or elder brethren also marching onwards. The two great revolutionary steps which France made in 1848 and 1871; the rapid growth of the powers of Capital and its internationalisation; and, above all, the development of international Socialist thought—all these are such important factors in our present life that no revolution can happen anywhere without being echoed all through the civilised world. So it was in 1848; it will be the more so at the next conflagration.

In fact, Germany may or may not make her revolution, but Italy is bound to do it, and precisely on the same lines. Royalty is dead in Italy; the land question is ripe; the factory slaves already in open revolt. Spain and Portugal are simply waiting for favourable circumstances for sending away their kings and courtiers, and the proclamation of a republic in Spain will be the signal for provincial independence, for communes being proclaimed, for land being seized from the landlords, and so on. Vienna is as revolutionary a centre as Paris is; and the autocracy in Russia is on its death-bed. As to the "elder brothers," whatever may be the state of affairs in middle Europe, France cannot avoid a Communalist Revolution which necessarily must become Communist; while the old rotten institutions of this country can stand no longer, especially in face of the breakdown of an industrial system based on benefits ripened from the rapidly decaying export trade. The change must come, and all that can be said is, that the two countries which have made their revolutions in 1640 and 1789 have most chances of achieving the greatest results with the least amount of foolish resistance and bloodshed; while Germany and the other continental nations are sure of meeting with plenty of that same foolish resistance which resulted in Cromwell's and Robespierre's Terror.

The French revolution was in advance of Cromwell's revolution. So also the German revolution must be in advance of that of 1789. In its economical life Germany already has made the step which the French peasants imposed upon France by burning the châteaux. Serfdom was abolished in Germany after 1848. So also in her political life Germany has obtained what France strove for in 1792. She has representative government, manhood suffrage and middle-class rule, and the attempts at Cesarism now made by Wilhelm II. can only be the means of accelerating the crisis. Having thus middle-class rule, and having put an end to serfdom, Germany strives now, in politics, for a republican form of government, and in economics for Louis Blanc's State management of production. She is where France was in 1848.

As to the economical views of the Social Democrats, no one who is acquainted with their writings will doubt of the close analogy between their programme and that of Louis Blanc's *Organisation du Travail*. Their ideal is the State ownership of the chief branches of production.

As to the republicanism of Germany, it is not so generally noticed as it ought to be. An English Social Democratic paper wrote the other day that one million Germans have voted in February last for common property. But that is a great mistake. The thirteen hundred thousand voices given to Social Democratic candidates are a most heterogeneous aggregate, and we have no means of judging what their opinions as to common property are. That question has long since disappeared from the S. D. electoral programme as well as from their writings. The question at issue during the last elections was not common or private property, but—Bismarck or not; the Cartel (the alliance of parties which support him) and exclusive legislation against the Socialists, or not—"Down with the Cartel," and nothing else, was the official watchword launched by the Council of the S. D. party before the ballots.

Certainly we know that there is a considerable number of real Socialists in Germany, and we know perfectly that a very great number of them are revolutionists; we know and appreciate their devotion to the cause, their powers of joining together in common work, their cheerful and steady activity. Precisely, therefore, we are sure that the coming revolution will have a Socialist tint as pronounced, and possibly even more pronounced, than the revolution of 1848. But we maintain that the voices given to S. D. candidates represent the greatest possible variety of programmes, aspirations and political tendencies. The real meaning of the last elections must be looked for in another direction, and we see in them a *great and important manifestation of Republican feeling*.

Two parties have made sudden progress in February last—the Radicals who have added 42 seats to the 38 seats they had before, and the Social Democrats who have won 37 seats instead of 11. Both together they have 117 deputies, out of 347; and, whatever the shades of opinion among the deputies, we may say that one-third of the German electors have voted for the Republic, and that nearly one-third of the Reichstag is already republican.

That is, in our opinion, the chief lesson of the last elections, and that is what so much alarmed the Government and induced the Emperor (who foresaw it, though not to that extent) to seek among the workers for the support of some Social Democrats against the Republicans. Just, as on former occasions, in Lassale's times, Bismarck resorted to

the support of the Socialists in order to defeat the Liberal bourgeois. To endeavour to win the support of the workers was the last anchor of salvation to be cast out against the growing wave of Republicanism.

That manifestation of republican feeling has nothing to astonish us. In 1878, after Hoedel's and Nobiling's attempt against the emperor, several hundred men were condemned to many years of imprisonment for having openly, in public houses and public thoroughfares, expressed their regret at Hoedel's and Nobiling's failures. Such an expression of republican feeling, seven years after the great war and against so old a man as Wilhelm I. was the more significant; and the present elections fully confirm it.

If we take into account that all men less than 25 years old and having less than a six month's residence in their district have no voice in the elections, and that few Social Democrats do reason as Liebknecht is reported to have reasoned at Brunswick (he is said to have promised the emperor the support of one million and a half of Social Democrats); if we remember that the emperor *can* do nothing for improving the conditions of the workers even if he obtains a ten hours law from the Parliament (the eight hours already have grown to ten), and finally, if we take into account that the German army is the German nation—we must conclude that a republican revolution is ripe in Germany. The days of the Empire are numbered, and all that a war against Russia could do by reviving German jingoism, would be to prolong imperial rule for a few years more.

Germany rapidly marches towards a Republic, and a Republic in Germany would mean the United States of Central Europe. It will also mean, as we said, attempts on a large scale at expropriation of certain branches of industry by the State. That would be the beginning of the Social Revolution. As to how far it would go in Germany, nobody can predict. All that our German friends have to do is, to abandon their tactics of Bismarck-fighting which has absorbed them until now, and openly, plainly and energetically set to work for the spreading of the so long forgotten *Socialist* idea. Not the authoritative Socialist idea they indulged until now, but the Anarchist Socialism, without which their revolution in so heterogeneous a country as the German Empire would be sure to be drowned in blood.

"WORK WHILE IT IS DAY; THE NIGHT COMETH WHEN NO MAN CAN WORK."

The time was Spring and the man's heart was glad within him at the thought of his garden and of the flowers which he would plant there and the seeds he would sow. And he rose in the morning and the sun laughed through the fleecy clouds and soft showers that kissed the breast of the fruitful earth.

In the orchard among the blossomed fruit trees the birds were making love. The whole world laughed to see itself so beautiful.

A morning of sunlight and soft airs and hope and promise.

Who could work on such a morning?

So the man said: "I will walk with my beloved between the green hedges and gather the primroses and violets, and I can think and talk about where the roses and lilies shall grow in my garden and plant them later on." And he walked with his beloved along the happy woodland ways; but ere noon she said to him:

"Dear one—our gardens—we must sow the seed or there will be no flowers."

But he said: "I do not want to work now. I want you—only you. It is early. I can work later."

"But I must work now," she answered. "How dare I delay for a single hour the summer in my garden?"

"But we may never see the summer," he murmured, for his heart was languid and full of love; "and to-day is ours, and thou and I are mine and thine."

"Nay," she answered, "but others will walk in our gardens and be glad of summer and pluck the flowers we sowed; and to-day indeed is ours, but whose are we? Not only mine and thine, dear heart."

But he would not hearken and so presently she left him and passed through her own garden where she sowed the seeds that flower in Love and Brotherhood and Freedom.

When she was gone his heart was sad; but now he said: "I will drink the peace and rest of this noontide and later I will toil."

But later he found himself too sleepy and stupid to work. And the shining showery day passed by, and evening came and the birds sang louder as the sun sank lower—the sky grew heavy and dark. Only a red streak of light shone in the west over the line of shivering gray poplar trees.

Then he sprang up with a cry.

"It is night," he cried, "night, and my work not done!" And the deepening dusk and the silence echoed dumbly "Night!"

"But what matter," he tried to think, composing himself to sleep. "To-morrow I can put things right."

But from the dim orchard where the blossoms still glimmered palely in the dying light, he heard a voice, and it was as the voice of his beloved—

"Oh, Love, my Love, is all thy work undone? And what if there be no to-morrow?"

And he reached out his arms to her; but the dividing darkness fell between them—the night came wherein no man can work. And for him there was no morrow.

E. NESBIT.

NOTES.

The great strike.

So the coal strike has ended in a victory for the strikers. So will that bigger strike to come, the strike that will be even more general than this, the strike that will bear upon its banners, "The mines for the miners." Such pluck and calm resolution and broad social feeling as these strikers have shown only needs a wider aim to become the finest sort of revolutionary energy. Just fancy, you comfortable people who have never gone short of a meal, what it means to be so convinced of the righteousness of your cause as to risk a strike, when you know you can expect no help from your Union for three weeks and then less than seven shillings all told; and yet to be so public-spirited as to be willing to give up your own chance of higher wages altogether, if only the masters will lower prices for the general consumer and not merely take advantage of the good times to fill their own pockets. Fabian comrades, don't you see some glimmer of a moral solution of the "rent problem" in such a spirit as this?

The Commune Celebrations.

The meeting at South Place Chapel, 19th March, to commemorate the 19th anniversary of the Paris Commune, was characterised by an intense earnestness far more significant than noisy enthusiasm, although that too was not lacking at due intervals. The resolution that—The struggle so nobly sustained by the Communards in 1871 should never cease until Labour had been freed from class domination—was carried unanimously. Stirring speeches were made by C. W. Mowbray (in the chair), D. J. Nicoll, H. H. Sparling, Wm. Morris, Mrs. Marx-Aveling, P. Kropotkin, and J. Turner. Morris expressed the opinion that the Socialists' great opportunity would come through the labour war now being waged, but bade them remember that we must be prepared to see the workers confronted by the red coats as our masters would not give up their position at the blast of a horn. He concluded with the admonition, "Workers of all countries unite to win your freedom." Feigenbaum, who spoke in German, reminded his hearers that the special reason the Commune fell was that there was not harmony within it and that we should not ask a man if he were Communist, Anarchist, or Socialist, but an enemy or a friend. And every man that was wronged should be a friend. Kropotkin mocked at the stupid objections to Communism, and the doubts as to the abilities of the workers for self-organisation. In his opinion every step of progress has come from the masses of the great unknown and not from the writers of books. He thanked the London workers for their protest in Hyde Park against the brutalities of the Russian Government and said that the news of the demonstration had already created something like a panic in the Court at St. Petersburg. Space forbids reference to the other equally interesting speeches.

A meeting which was large and enthusiastic from beginning to end was held at St. Andrews Hall, Newman Street, Oxford Street, on Monday March 17, under the auspices of the S.D.F., to celebrate the 19th anniversary of the Paris Commune. Some very vigorous speeches were made, recent events seeming to have inspired most of the speakers with fresh hope. The most advanced and revolutionary sentiments were received with the greatest approval by the audience. Letters and telegrams expressive of sympathy with the Commune were read. The atrocities of the Russian Government were denounced amidst the execrations of the audience. The impression of all must have been that the world is at last awakening to the necessity of a great social change. Our comrade P. Kropotkin was amongst the speakers.

"A guilty conscience doth make cowards of us all."

A Russian exile had a parcel of English books sent to him, amongst them Shakspeare, which was detained by the Governor. Mr. — called at the Governor's office to ask why. This book, he explained to the great man's secretary, contains the works of a world-famous poet who died nearly three centuries ago; it is hardly possible that it should be considered a serious danger to his Majesty's Government. I am well aware of it, replied the secretary, but his Excellency knows nothing of English literature and the title of this book appears to him dangerously suggestive; Shakespere sounds much like con-spire—conspiracy. Oh, said Mr. — gravely, tell his Excellency that "Shaks" is English for "Against"; it is a work directed against conspiracy! Ten minutes later his Shakspeare was sent to him. We have the story from Mr. — himself.

RUSSIA.

Our Russian correspondent writes:—

The details of the events which took place last November in the convict prison of Kara in Eastern Siberia, are now too generally known to need repetition. No further news has yet arrived. The Russian Government, so far, has taken no steps in the matter; neither Commander Mossionkov, whose behaviour to the female prisoners was the cause of the "starvation strikes," nor Baron Korff, who ordered the flogging of Nadyezhda Sigida, have been dismissed. It is well known that Ostashkine, the Governor of Yakutsk, received a decoration after the slaughter of exiles last year. The letters from Siberia speak of a report that all the female political prisoners in Kara are to be transferred to the Criminal Department.

An account of the letter sent to the Tzar by Madame Tzebrikov has appeared in the *Times* with some quotations from the letter. The *Times*, however, omits to mention that together with the letter to the Tzar Madame Tzebrikov printed and circulated another pamphlet, entitled "Penal Servitude and Exile;" an attempt to prove that the Government is actuated in its dealings with political offenders, by the desire of revenge, not by a wish to preserve peace and order in the land.

The *Times* states Madame Tzebrikov's age as "about 50." This is a mistake; she is over 60. She is the daughter of Admiral Tzebrikov, a favourite officer of Nicholas I. She is not, and never has been a conspirator. For many years she has been a well-known and highly respected figure in St. Petersburg society. Herself an able writer, her drawing-room has been the meeting-place for all that is most brilliant in the literary and scientific world of the Russian capital.

On receiving the heroic old lady's letter, the Czar's first impulse is reported to have been to take refuge in his strong fortress of Gatchina, whether he fled after his father's execution. On calmer reflection he inclined to put her in a lunatic asylum. Now he has regained sufficient presence of mind to leave the police to send her into administrative exile. There must be something in the old idea of divine qualities in the Lord's Anointed; their stupidity is really quite supernatural.

The *Daily News* has fallen a prey to an ingenious atrocity manufacturer. On March 20 it published an exciting little Siberian romance, duly copied with sensational comments by the evening papers, to the effect that after the accidental explosion of a bomb at Zurich, in March, 1889 (note the date) which put the police on the track of some Terrorist Russian students in Switzerland—a plot implicating many students in Russia itself was discovered; that these were exiled to Irkutsk in Siberia; that they set up a secret printing press and succeeded in smuggling many thousand secret seditious proclamations into Russia; that therefore some of them were sent to hard labour in the mines and the rest ordered by the Governor of Irkutsk to wild, outlying districts; finally that it was in consequence of this order that they barricaded themselves in a house in the town and were shot down by the soldiers after a smart resistance, on 3rd April 1889, as we have all heard before.

This cock and bull story professes to arrive from Siberia; it probably arrives from the London lodgings of the Russian Secret Police.

First, it confuses *Yakutsk*, the town where the exiles were really massacred in April 1889, with *Irkutsk*, a place 1500 miles off. Second, it supposes the events above recorded to have taken place between March and April 1889, when the journey to Yakutsk takes between two and three months, travelling day and night!

The *Daily News* has been enlightened as to the absurd impossibility of this story, by a Russian comrade who has a thorough knowledge of Siberia, but has taken no notice of the communication. It has, however, since published a correct and detailed account of the Yakutsk massacre.

If, as there is every reason to believe, Russian officialdom has been intensely exasperated by the indignation shown in England and America about their cruelties to the political exiles, it is not difficult to understand this attempt at the falsification of news. The Russian Government will try on its side to get hold of the European and American press, circulate wild stories, mingling fable and fact, utterly confusing those ignorant of the country and the details of the liberal and revolutionary movement, connecting, if possible, the sufferers with "explosions" or acts of unprovoked violence. It will try to show the Friends of Russian Freedom that two can play at the game of influencing public opinion abroad and that the honours fall to the least scrupulous. The idea would be a smart one, smartly carried out; but the devil has a mean trick of leaving his servants in the lurch—and this Irkutsk-Yakutsk bungle looks as if he were at his old game.

Meanwhile an influential committee has been formed at the National Liberal Club to arrange for further demonstrations to supplement that held in Hyde Park on March 9th. And Mr. Kennan is coming over from America to tell Englishmen by word of mouth what he himself saw in his Siberian travels.

We have still a few pamphlets giving an exact account of the Yakutsk massacre and the flogging of political exiles on Saghalien Island, which with the circulars of the Society of the Friends of Russian Freedom, we shall be pleased to send *gratis* to any one who writes for them to Freedom, Labour Press, 57 Chancery Lane, W.C.

A LETTER FROM CAPE COLONY.

Owing to the energetic prosecution of enterprises which have for their object the exploitation of south-central Africa, a large increase of commercial activity is to be observed in this colony. Yet, though more hands are employed, and though the absolute rate of wages has been somewhat raised, no corresponding improvement in the condition of the wage-workers is felt; in fact those who like myself have been in permanent employment for some years find that the cheapening of money is a positive disadvantage to them. This fact having been asserted, the explanation is as follows. The limited and gradual increase in the requirements of the employment market has been more than kept supplied by the number of persons who flock to this country as to an Eldorado, while at the same time the expenses of living, such as rent, food and clothing have increased—the two former items to an enormous extent. The cottage for which two years ago I was paying £2 10s. a month I am now paying £4 for.

Certainly wages have been increased, but that is simply because otherwise the workers could not in any way make ends meet, and we know of course that there is a certain minimum below which wages cannot remain without either exterminating the workers or provoking a revolution. The fact remains that the ignorance, indifference to economic questions and narrow-minded selfishness too prevalent among the mass of the workers prevent them from uniting in such wise as to compel their masters to grant them such an increase of wages as would produce a real, though as Socialists well know, only limited and temporary improvement of their condition.

How long the present boom may last is a question to which no certain answer can at present be given. If the undertakings of the South African Company and other enterprises turn up trumps, then we may look for an indefinite prolongation of the present capitalistic harvest time (always of course reckoning independently of the Social Revolution, that sword that will cut the most involved of Gordian knots). If on the other hand events should cast a barrier in the way of the development of markets for the absorption of merchandise, and fields for the profitable investment of capital, a return of depressed times must be the result.

The teaching of experience is that neither good nor bad times affect the root of the social problem; if in good times the pinch of suffering is less keenly felt, so also is there less stimulus to revolt against a servitude whose chains are a trifle less galling; on the other hand, if in adverse times the smart of penury arouses the most indifferent to indignation against the social system which coolly ignores the sufferings of the victims of its selfish stupidity, it is not at such times that they are in the best position to make their indignation felt with the best and most productive effect.

We may draw from this teaching of experience the moral that it is our interest and our duty as convinced Anarchists to make use of both bad and good times for the diffusion of our opinions among our less enlightened brethren—in bad times appealing to the popular discontent which then turns a readier ear to revolutionary doctrines, in good times making use of whatever we can spare in aid of our propaganda, feeling that whatever means we thus devote to the enlightenment of men's minds and the nerving of their hearts to action cannot be better invested for ourselves, for our children and for the world at large.

Port Elizabeth.

H. G.

THE ANARCHISTS OF NORWAY.

A SKETCH.

(From our Norwegian correspondent.)

IN one of the highest parts of Norway, in the wide and beautiful Osterdalen (East Valley), there lies a large and rich country named Tynset. The winters are long and very cold up there, but it is a summer resort, and people from all parts of the country, but mostly from England and other foreign lands, come up the fjord in steamers to breathe the fresh and healthy mountain air.

This remarkable place is the head-quarters of the Anarchist movement in mountainous Norway. That is to say, that in this place the Norwegian Anarchist paper *Fedraheimen* is published. The present editor-in-chief Rasmus Steinsvik, is living in a little cottage, very little indeed, living the rich life of a man fighting for truth and freedom; but living also in the conditions to which such men always are subject, a life of economical poverty. But his faith in Anarchism, his belief in our great ideas has made him strong and unselfish, so he has sacrificed what was dearest in his life to fight for the coming revolution. It is through such men that the victory will be gained. The other editor is the well-known Ivar Mortenson, a highly educated man who studied to become a parson in the Norwegian State Church. Now he is preaching the gospel of Anarchism, preaching in churches and preaching at meetings. He also is living the life of an idealist. His immense hatred of the capitalists has made him live like the workers, sharing with them their conditions, their poverty and their faith in the future.

These two are our most prominent comrades, real workers for our cause. Their paper *Fedraheimen* is becoming the paper of the Norwegian youth.

It must be remembered that in so large a country as ours, the two millions of inhabitants are scattered, and that there are few factory towns; thus the propaganda must be carried on by writing. It is only at Tynset, that there are organisations founded upon the principles of Anarchism. In the cities we have none that are public. None of our comrades have yet dared to openly take up the work; for one alone it would be dangerous to do so. But I venture to call the Social Democratic organisations of Kristiania and Bergen in a measure Anarchistic. The leaders have told me that they believe in Anarchism, believe in it as the most highly developed form of society, but they think that we must first go through Social Democracy before we can reach it. This stand-point will be better understood when I say that the social movement in this country has not yet been divided into several parties as in England and elsewhere; consequently Social Democrats and Anarchists stand as comrades, fighting, they say, for the same cause—the abolition of poverty and the freedom of the individual, and the motto of the Socialists is, "Without economic liberty there is no individual freedom."

On returning from America two years ago I took up the propaganda of Anarchism. In various papers and reviews I have written plainly about the matter, and it is yet so new that every paper takes my articles.

At Trondhjem some youths formed a group, called "The New Time," where we held discussions, but on account of the smallness of the town, in secret. At Vossevangen I have delivered an address upon Anarchism in a Young Men's Society. Very few of them were not Anarchists. We shall always have the youth on our side. The editors of *Fedraheimen* now intend to carry on more propaganda by word of mouth than before. It is surely the first means to make way for the new ideas.

We wish to publish some of P. Kropotkin's articles as pamphlets, but like all Anarchists we are in need of cash. However *Fedraheimen* is now printing most of them. We are never so happy as when we find a paper of his to translate. He is loved as if he were our own countryman.

We have translated from *Freedom* "The Wage System," "Past and Future," "Is Communism Just?" and extracts from other articles; and I have translated your last month's review of Ibsen's "Lady from the Sea" for a Christiania Liberal paper.

I think the Norwegian movement is founded upon a sound basis, and when we get strength enough to organise, we will be a party of which foreign comrades will have to be proud. But it must be remembered that we work under other conditions than those of England. May our efforts succeed.

THE PROPAGANDA.

ANARCHISM IN ST. PANCRAS.—On Sunday, March 23, Comrade Neilson lectured to the St. Pancras Branch of the S. D. F. on "A More excellent Way," advocating Free Communism as against Social Democracy. There was a most energetic discussion. Evidently Communist Anarchism is making rapid way in this part of London.

GERMAN ANARCHISTS IN LONDON.—On March 3 the German Anarchist Club Arbeiterbund and Gleichheit held an enthusiastic public meeting at Cooper's Hall, to show up the policy of "the Social-Democrat's new comrade," that mighty potentate known amongst the Berlin street Arabs as "mangy William."

DARLINGTON.—On 9th March Kropotkin spoke before the Sunday Lecture Society at Darlington, upon "The Problems of our Century." Taking the historical development of society as his text, the lecturer pointed out the necessity of Socialism. The lecture was extremely well received and in the discussion which followed the audience admitted the perfect reasonableness of the arguments put before them.

MANCHESTER.—The Socialists here, like those of Norwich, have largely adopted Anarchy as their political ideal. "They are distinctively Anarchist in their propaganda," writes a local correspondent, "and it is none the less appreciated in consequence." Things have been very quiet since the failure of the gas strike, but the members of the Socialist League have succeeded in starting a Club, where they hope to begin a regular course of lectures. They have persevered in their open-air Sunday meetings all through the winter and project a vigorous country propaganda for the coming summer.

NORWICH.—On Saturday March 8, Comrade T. Pearson went down to address a meeting here; but the continuous and heavy snow-fall made it impossible to hold one. He, however, received a hearty welcome from the Norwich comrades and took part in some interesting discussions in their Club-room. Communist Anarchism is the order of the day with the Norwich Socialists, and beside a flourishing branch of the Socialist League, there is an earnest and energetic Freedom Group in the town.

EDINBURGH.—James Blackwell (Freedom Group) addressed a very satisfactory meeting under the auspices of the Scottish Socialist Federation, at the Moulder's Hall, on March 2, on "Socialism without Government." A long discussion followed in which Fabians, Anarchists and State Socialists took part. It is quite evident that Anarchism is making way here, especially amongst the young members of the local association. A group of students of Anarchist thought is in course of formation. The members of this group are to meet and read articles from *Freedom* and other Anarchist literature and discuss among themselves the points brought forward by their reading. This example might be followed with excellent results wherever two or more comrades can meet together. *Freedom* sold well and is evidently much appreciated in Edinburgh.

NOTICES.

Freedom Discussion Meetings.—A series of public discussions will be held by the Freedom Group in the Hall of the Autonomie Club, 6 Windmill Street, Tottenham Court Road, on Thursday evenings, at 8 o'clock. Those at present arranged are as follows:

April 3,—“Why we are Communists.”	Opener, Peter Kropotkin.	} Admission free.
April 10,—“Democracy v. Anarchy.”	Opener, Tom Pearson.	
April 17,—“The Workers' Ideal.”	Opener Neilson.	
April 24,—“Free Co-operation.”	Opener J. Turner.	

A lecture on Communist Anarchism will be delivered by T. Pearson at the Balls Pond Branch of the National Secularist Society, Balls Pond Road, on Sunday, March 30, at 8 p.m.

Publication Fund.—H. G. 10s.; H. W. C., 5s.; J. M. F., 5s.

Annual subscription, post free to all countries, 1s. 6d. Communications may be sent to FREEDOM, at the Labour Press, 57 Chancery Lane, London, W.C.

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SOCIETY ON THE MORROW OF THE REVOLUTION.

Translated from the French of JEHAN LE VAGRE.

IV.—THE PUBLIC SERVICES.

THOSE who advocate a system of division of products in the future society argue that on the morrow of the Revolution there will not be enough to meet the unlimited wants of all. We believe this to be a mistake. Even to-day, when waste is everywhere to be seen, and when through the sordid calculations of shameless speculators uncultivated land abounds, production so much exceeds consumption that the unemployed are ever increasing their numbers. What then will it be in a society where no one will have any reason for monopolising because every one will be sure of having his wants satisfied every day; in a society where every arm will be productive, where all those who compose the army, the bureaucracy, as well as that innumerable crowd of domestic servants, having no other work to do to-day but to satisfy the caprices of our exploiters, where, in short, all those who to-day consume without doing any useful work in society, will be productive workers; moreover, when all those lands would be given over to agriculture which are now allowed to lie fallow by their over-fed proprietors, as well as all those lands, still more extensive, which are now abandoned because the harvest would not be sufficient to cover the expense necessary to put them into a productive state and also to give the owner a usurious interest, but which in the future society would cost but little to put into cultivation, since the indispensable material would be in the hands of the workers, when we should be able by means of the steam-engine to ransack the earth unceasingly and take from it those nourishing essences that are given to the soil in the form of the manure which chemistry is able to produce to-day. Without estimating the future we can, therefore, very well think and even assert that production will be able quite well to answer all the requirements of consumption.

The fact has been specially insisted upon that there are some products, such for instance as silk and similar articles, which it will not be possible to make so quickly as to satisfy all requirements. It appears to us to be a strange idea of the Revolution to imagine that workers who have become so intelligent as to understand the origin and study the causes of their misery and to apply the remedy, could possibly be so stupid as to fight amongst themselves if there was not some authority to divide amongst them a piece of silk, a basket of truffles or any other article which is often sought for only on account of its rarity. This objection is so stupid that we do not think it worth replying to; we prefer to believe for the sake of humanity that the workers having obtained the satisfaction of their urgent material and intellectual wants, for which they have fought, will be sensible enough to arrange amicably amongst themselves as to the division of the products which cannot be put at the disposition of all. If necessary the more intelligent will know how to abandon their share to those who are not wise enough to patiently await their turn.

We should have liked to have gone more fully into the question of what the Collectivists call public services, but we feel compelled to limit ourselves to a few brief remarks. In passing, let us say that the Collectivists have invented this term "public services," merely for tactical purposes. They include under this denomination all the services such as the Post Office, Telegraph Department, Railways, etc., which as they say are not actually productive, inasmuch as they do not give any product which may be stored away in the warehouses, and say that it will be necessary to deduct the salary of those who perform these services from the produce of the other associations, which would simply be to establish a tax under another name. By making this distinction amongst the workers they doubtless hope to pass through their commissions of statistics and all the officialdom which they desire to create in the new society, thus confounding these parasitical officials with the workers we have mentioned, whose activity, although it is not bestowed upon the creation of objects of consumption is none the less one of the forces necessary to society.

But the motive is too apparent. Is not everything that contributes to the well-being and progress of society by that very fact a public service, and whether any one is employed in the production of grain, or no matter what other commodity, or in its transport to the place where it is needed, an equal service is rendered to society. But the commissions, sinecures and official employments of the Collectivists would only be a bad service to society of which we should have to rid ourselves as speedily as possible.

It has also been said that for works of general utility embracing one or several particular districts, it will be necessary to appoint delegates to arrange matters, even if only temporarily and for the single purpose for which they would be appointed. This also is a mistake. In fact as we have tried to explain the individual interests would be founded upon the general interests and therefore the relations between the groups would only be affected by general matters that each group would be very well able to consider at its particular point, and which would all tend to secure the same result. Moreover all these distinctions of village, township, country, etc., would disappear or at most would only be geographical expressions. If then we take for example the making of a road, a canal or a railway line, we see no necessity to send delegations to organise these works. We will suppose that the idea of this work arises spontaneously in the brain of a single individual. The first thing he would have to do would be to make his idea known amongst his neighbours, to seek for those who desire to adopt it and to assist him in his enterprise, to find some engineer, if he was not one himself, to make the plans, decide on the places where the canal, road or railway ought to pass, collect the excavators or other workers necessary to the under-

taking. Then when he had obtained the necessary nucleus for his operations, when the matter had been discussed and considered, when the plans were ripened, the details decided and the division of the work satisfactorily arranged, the undertaking would be commenced and the work would be carried out as can easily be seen, without any authority or delegation whatever and by the simple initiative of the individuals.

To-day we see all sorts of associations springing up. Railways, canals, bridges, commerce, industry; all are the prey of strong societies formed for the purpose of exploiting such or such a speciality of human industry. On a smaller scale we find little societies formed for the purpose of procuring material advantages for their members or for the satisfaction of some pleasure. Such are the co-operative societies, the choral and instrumental groups, and the bodies organised for scientific perigrinations or simple walking clubs. Now, incomplete as they may be, these associations respond in a great measure to the wants of their members. What then will it be like in the society of the future where individual initiative will have elbow room and will no longer be shackled by the question of money, where affinities will be free to seek each other and dispositions to harmonise without difficulty. Nothing will prevent individuals from grouping according to their tastes, aptitudes and temperaments so as to produce or consume whatever they may please. Posts, railways, educational institutions, etc., will enter into the social organisation on just the same footing as shoes and copper kettles. A division of work will have to be established in this order of ideas as in the other; that is all. As nobody would be shackled by material difficulties, by considerations of economy, everybody would accustom themselves to go to the group which best responded to their wishes, so that the group which rendered most service would have the greatest chance of developing itself. As man is a complex being agitated by a thousand different sentiments, actuated by various wants, the groups formed would be very numerous, and it is exactly their diversity that would assure the satisfactory working of all the services necessary to the well-being of the individual, and that would lead us to the end we all dream of—HARMONY.

And let no one cry out at this that it is utopian and improbable, referring us to the actual organisations for proof of their criticism. It is necessary to remember that the situation will no longer be the same that it is to-day. To-day all the associations are authoritarian and individualist; amongst the members, if the body is a large one, there are distinctions of offices or of salaries, often of both at the same time. But in spite of all these causes of disunion, unity is generally maintained for a good length of time, dissension only arises when there is one who is more greedy than the others and who tries to over-reach his fellow-members or seeks to profit by the position which he holds in the body to dominate over his comrades. Then distrust commences to creep in amongst them, quarrels ensue and finally there is a complete break up of the body. But let us bear in mind that in the society to which we look forward there will be no special profits to be obtained from any enterprise, that all individuals will be placed upon a footing of the most perfect equality and will be free to withdraw from an association whenever they wish, having no money invested, and that the economic situation will be the same for all; and—we again repeat it—let us above all not forget that to establish such a society the workers will have to be intelligent enough to destroy the present society which keeps them in subjection.

[Though agreeing in the main with Le Vagré's conception of the general outlines of the future society, we do not necessarily endorse every one of his opinions in detail.—ED.]

INDIVIDUAL OR COMMON PROPERTY.

A DISCUSSION.

From a Communist Correspondent.

"N'importe qui" says "Common property is advocated only by those who believe the present evil condition of society is due to individual property." But what does he think the present evil conditions of society are due to if not to individual property? To monopoly? Then will he please distinguish between individual property and monopoly? In other words will he point out *exactly* where individual property ends and monopoly begins? "It is much easier to be inexact than exact." Let us be exact on this point.

Now, what is Communism? To begin with, I doubt if "N'importe qui's" interpretation of Malato's definition is correct. "That the products shall not be taken from those who produce them," I take as meaning simply there will be an end of exploitation. At any rate there can scarcely be two opinions as to the meaning of the word "Communism." It means *producing and sharing in common*; therefore, to my mind, there is a spirit of perversity in the following sentences of "N'importe qui's." "But what does Communism propose? Evidently that the same dishonest system should be maintained, but in another form, that the idlers should live upon the workers precisely as at present, but that it should be a different idler." The unanimous laughter of all Communists will greet this statement; and "N'importe qui" may safely assure himself that his definition is "incorrect."

There are many things in "N'importe qui's" article (contradictions included) which I cannot deal with now, though I hope I may have an opportunity of returning to them later on. I must, however, just have my say in regard to the question of the right of the producer to his product. There are two things to be considered in the production of to-day. Most important of either of course is the labour force of the individual. A free man has the choice of producing in co-operation

with his fellows, or singly and on his own account. The advantages, even to the most assiduous workman, are on the side of co-operation. I think this will go undisputed. If he is an ordinary sociable man, sensitive and lovable, something far dearer to him than his product is assured by living and sharing in the Commune—the charm of free social intercourse. Think, now, for a moment. Could this be attained in a society where “the owl-winged faculty of calculation” reigned supreme; a society of weights and measures—the Individualist ideal? I assert that for nine-tenths of human kind it could not. There would be no light-heartedness, no spontaneous laughter in a social gathering to-day where your share, where each one's right to a share in the refreshment had been arrived at by an algebraical equation. Human nature revolts from this quibbling about “rights” when its best instincts are aroused.

But take the Individualist in relation to his product and see if he is quite just. As I have said we have first to consider the labour-force of the individual; but scarcely less vital is the second element in production, namely the tools, the means he uses to a given end. But the wealth of to-day, the tools and instruments of production are our common inheritance. Now your product is not the result of your labour alone; it is also partly the result of the labour of past generations. Your appropriation of it, therefore, would be an injustice to us all. Not that we deny your right to live as you like, or even to commit suicide; but as we want neither capitalist exploitation nor your charity we will be Communists, as free as you, as to the development of our own natures, but not destroying human self-respect by reminding the weak “that there is something of the nature of charity” in supplying their wants. M.

From another Communist Correspondent.

I cannot agree with the distinction drawn, in the letter you published last month from “N'importe qui,” between private property and monopoly. It seems to me that property is the *domination* of an individual (or a coalition of individuals) over things; it is not the *claim* of any person or persons to the *use* of things; this is usufruct, a very different matter. Private property means the monopoly of wealth, if we take the ordinary dictionary meaning of the word monopolise, which is “to engross the whole of.” Roman law defined private property as the right “to use and abuse.” The secondary meaning of monopoly is “the sole power of dealing in anything,” as where the sovereign in old times used to grant to a certain merchant letters patent entitling him to deal in a certain commodity and to prevent any one else from dealing in it. It seems to me, therefore, that to draw a line between private property and the monopoly of things is to make a distinction without a difference. I think private property may fairly be taken to mean the monopoly of wealth, the assumed right to prevent others from using it, whether the monopoliser is using it or needs it, or not. Usufruct, on the contrary, only implies a claim to the use of such wealth as supplies the user's needs. And it is this claim to use which we Communists advocate as against the Individualist “rights of property.”

The only claims, as it seems to us, which any member of a community can fairly put forward to a share of the social wealth are, *first*, that he requires it to develop and maintain all his faculties and powers in efficiency; *second*, that he has done his best to contribute towards the production of the general wealth; *third* (in special cases and in reference to certain special articles) that he has put so much individual thought and labour into some particular thing that he is particularly attached to it and cares to keep it about him or give it to some particular friend. In the latter case the creator's special feeling towards his creation, which is, as it were, a part of himself, would be respected in any social community, just as his feeling for his children would be respected, without recognising any “right of property” in the matter.

As to claim two, it simply amounts to saying that a comrade who shares the efforts ought to share in the resulting enjoyment of any group he belongs to. It seems to be quite clear that the efforts will be both slighter and more pleasant when they are made in common and that the fruits of them will be decidedly larger than if the same number of persons, with the same materials and tools, worked each separately and apart. Your readers no doubt remember the chapter in Karl Marx's “Capital,” where attention is drawn to the increase of produce due to collective effort and he is by no means the only economist who has noted it. In most cases it is impossible to say what portion of the produce is due to the common character of the work and what would have resulted if all those who created it had worked separately. What is possible is for each of the workmen to feel it his business, his highest interest to do his best, and that by doing so, be he weak or strong, he is adding something to the common stock, something which would not be there without him. A man who feels this and acts upon it, seems to us to have a special moral claim on the community to have his needs supplied. If he does not feel it and does not attempt to act upon it, he is in the position of any other imperfectly developed human being—an object of pity; one to be helped by the genuine and outspoken opinion of his fellows as to his conduct, like a liar or a person who gives way to violent fits of temper.

The first claim is a part of that larger claim that each individual has upon the social feeling of the community of which he is a member; the claim that he shall—as far as the means of the community will admit—have space and opportunity for the fullest development of which his nature is capable. Not only is such opportunity pleaded for by the social feelings of such of us as believe the highest development to lead to the highest happiness, but it is urged by the self-interest of the com-

munity; for the best developed members of a community are certainly the most useful to it as a whole and the most inclined to work hard.

AN ENGLISH ANARCHIST.

From an Individualist Correspondent.

THERE are a few points in Tom Pearson's criticism of my article that call for a reply. It would be as well, I think, if my critic would define the meaning of the word “right” in the sense in which he uses it. I should say that a man has a right to anything he has got and can keep or anything upon which he has got an effective claim.

Thus at present Earl Dudley has a “right” to certain possessions, or rather, what is more important to his lordship, to an enormous tax on the industry of the people in the Black Country. He has a right to this as long as he can get it, but if the people who labour upon his estate and who are naturally more powerful than he, declined to pay him any more, and he had no means of enforcing the payment, he would cease to have a right to it.

If I have a £5 note in my pocket, and the Bank is in a sound condition, I have a “right” to the sum of £5 in the possession of the Bank; but if the Bank has failed and can't pay its creditors, I no longer possess that right.

My critic also seems to forget that the institution of private property as it exists now (I refer rather to the exaggerated and unnatural forms of ownership perpetuated by law) rests, not so much upon the selfishness of the few as upon the unselfishness of the many. It is well for Communists also to bear in mind that the institution of private property in the soil has arisen out of that of common property. It was the communistic arrangements of early tribes that to a large degree gave rise to government. The sovereign was selected to look after the “common welfare,” and naturally, being a man, he generally managed to make this synonymous with his own welfare, just as politicians do to-day. The land therefore gradually passed from the hands of the people into those of the king. Then the king waged war with other kings—for the “common welfare” of his subjects, of course. Any therefore who fought bravely for their sovereign were rewarded with portions of the common land. Hence grew up our present landed system, simply because the people were forced by circumstances to delegate the protection of their interests to others.

Yes, I evidently differ from Pearson on some important points, or I am not in favour of recommending the worker to “seize the accumulated wealth and use it for the common benefit.” If any worker did seize any of the accumulated wealth I think he would most likely use it for his own benefit—at least I should advise him to do so. I think, however, that I may say that the chief point of difference between the Communistic and Individualistic schools is in this: that whilst the Communists would convert the workers into thieves, the Individualists would convert the thieves into workers.

Pearson asks me further if the wealth is to be distributed according to the natural abilities and merits of each, who is to decide what these abilities and merits are? I may say in reply that I try to decide the natural merits and abilities of those I come in contact with and reward them accordingly. Thus I employ the bootmaker who makes me the best boots for the least money. I have to find out by experience, aided by recommendation, who are the best workmen to go to for this or that service, and I expect most other people do the same; and I claim that in the absence of monopolies protected by the State, free competition and free contract would necessarily distribute the wealth according to the merits and abilities of each.

But why do not the Communist Anarchists illustrate their principles by a practical example? Surely as Anarchists they are not waiting for the majority to accept their ideas, and if they do not make a start, how can they ever expect Communist Anarchism to be established? Nor are their ideas likely to make much headway amongst intelligent and practical reformers unless they can show by their own example that the principles they advocate are sound.

ALBERT TARN.

WHO WILL GO?

A comrade writes to us from Staffordshire: “I am sorry I cannot report any progress in propaganda or increase in numbers. It is difficult to agitate here; the workers live scattered about and are in a deplorable state of ignorance. Many of the elder men and women can neither read nor write and the “adult classes” here only serve the purpose of hypocrisy and superstition, the “education” consisting merely in reading and writing from the Bible. What we require is a few intelligent and energetic young fellows to *settle down and work* amongst the miners, quarrymen, brickmakers, sanitary pipe makers, iron-founders or furnace-men. Wages, of course, are very low, but a single man can board and lodge very well for 15s. weekly. We should certainly do our best to find such a comrade a job at something, but he must be willing to go amongst the men where they meet, that is, in the various public-houses, where he must mix with and talk to them. I am confident they would listen. It would require some sacrifice, but I am of opinion that we English should learn a little more than we have done from our Russian friends and their mode of propaganda. I believe a private agitation conducted in such a manner would have more chance of success than any public meetings or lectures.”

Will any one volunteer?