

Freedom

A JOURNAL OF ANARCHIST COMMUNISM.

VOL. 4.—No. 48.

NOVEMBER, 1890.

MONTHLY; ONE PENNY.

A PUBLIC MEETING

Has been arranged by the Freedom Group of
Anarchist Communists, at

SOUTH PLACE INSTITUTE,

(Five minutes' walk from Broad St. and Moorgate St. Stations.)

ON

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 10,

To commemorate the

LEGAL MURDER OF FIVE ANARCHISTS IN CHICAGO

On Friday November 11, 1887, and to protest
against the

Continued unjust imprisonment of three others.

The Meeting will begin at 8 p.m. punctually. All the speakers
will be Anarchist Communists. Amongst them will be

**J. BLACKWELL, J. CASEY, H. DAVIS,
PETER KROPOTKINE, H. MALATESTA,
LOUISE MICHEL, C. MORTON,
W. NEILSON, T. PEARSON, G. TRUNK,**

The doors will be opened at 7 o'clock.

Several revolutionary Songs will be sung in the course of
the evening by the Choir of the Communist Club.

The Freedom Group have also arranged to hold the following
local meetings for the same purpose:—

Thursday Nov. 6.—SCANDINAVIAN CLUB, RATHBONE PLACE,
OXFORD STREET, W.

Saturday Nov. 8.—INTERNATIONAL WORKINGMEN'S CLUB,
BERNERS STREET, COMMERCIAL ROAD, E.

Sunday Nov. 9.—AUTONOMIE CLUB, 6 WINDMILL STREET, TOT-
TENHAM COURT ROAD.

Sunday Nov. 9.—LAMBETH PROGRESSIVE CLUB, 122 KEN-
NINGTON ROAD, S.E.

All these meetings will commence at 8 p.m.

"AND YET IT MOVES."

"BEFORE five years have passed the streets of our great cities will be slippery with blood—a hundred drops of blood for each gem that flashes on the necks of the pampered women of the rich; ten drops of blood for each tear that has washed the face of poverty." These words, which refer to the republic of America, were spoken by Hugh O. Pentecost, the Editor of the *Twentieth Century*, in an address delivered by him at New York on the 21st of September. Mr. Pentecost, as many of our readers are aware, is an Anarchist, but also a man of peace, belonging as he does to the Mutualist school of which Benjamin R. Tucker of Boston is the High Priest. Yet even he sees, as every thoughtful and intelligent individual must see, that the existing state of things cannot continue much longer in the plutocratic republic on the other side of the Atlantic. Just three years ago five noble-hearted men were done to death by the capitalists of that nation for having attempted to show the people the dangers ahead, for having tried to do their part in guiding the people through the perilous period in which we are living into a higher state of civilisation. Let us briefly recapitulate the main points in the story. We give the first part in the words of a compositor who was in Chicago during the time of the Eight Hour Agitation.

During April 1886 the preparations for the eight hour struggle were going on in every direction. I attended several crowded indoor meetings at which the evils of long hours were ably explained by impassioned speakers, and on the 25th of the month I went down to Lake Front, a large grassy area on the shore of Lake Michigan in the northern part of Chicago, where I had the pleasure of witnessing an imposing demonstration in which about twenty thousand well organised workers took part, marching down in fine order, with banners flying, upon which were mottoes of a very revolutionary character. Among the speakers I was fortunate enough to hear Albert R. Parsons, August Spies, Michel Schwab and Samuel Fielden, four of the victims of the Chicago capitalists; also John A. Heury, who was amongst those arrested immediately after the Haymarket meeting, but was soon released, and was not included with the accused in the great trial. The demonstration was certainly a great success and made a great impression. On the 1st of May (Saturday) a number of men struck, but it was evidently only the beginning of the movement. On the Sunday I thought I would like to go to an American Socialist meeting, and noting that the American group of the I. W. P. A. in Chicago were to hold a meeting that evening I found the place out. It was a small hall, similar in size and general appearance to many I had visited in England. The audience was by no means large, probably between forty and fifty, and the speeches were certainly not violent or extreme in tone. During the evening comrade Parsons came in and took a seat on a bench close by where I was sitting and afterwards said a few words. I refer to this meeting because no one there could possibly have imagined that we were near such stirring events as happened within the next few days. The talk was chiefly about the best methods to be employed in propagating Socialist opinions amongst the rural population. I do not remember anything having been said about the impending strikes.

Next day I went to my work as usual, and saw nothing worthy of note except a procession of sewing girls which passed through the street outside the printing office in which I was employed. On the following morning whilst walking down to the City I bought a paper and learned that there had been a row at a works in Blue Island Avenue, where agricultural machinery was made. It appeared that the strikers had been making endeavours to get the blacklegs out of the works when they were attacked by a number of police who without any hesitation fired into their midst wounding and killing several. "One of the victims," said the newspaper in question, the *Chicago Herald*, "was a boy. Five men caught him as he fell and bore him to the car barns, where he called for a drink of water. It was given him and then he moaned piteously and begged to be taken home. An express waggon was secured and the dying boy placed in it." On the next morning (Wednesday) I was surprised to find the walls covered with posters signed by the Mayor referring to the use of dynamite at a meeting on the preceding evening. I at once purchased a paper and learned that a meet-

ing had been held in a part of Desplaines Street called the Haymarket for the purpose of protesting against the murders committed by the police on the Monday previous. It appeared that just as the meeting was about to break up a body of 400 police marched on to the scene. I again quote from the *Herald*: "Just as the officers reached the barrels upon which Spies, Parsons and Fielden were standing a serpentine stream of fire burst from a window on the roof of Crane Brothers' manufacturing establishment on the opposite side of the street. It burned like the fuse of a rocket and hissed as it sped through the air. The mysterious stranger sputtered over the heads of the Anarchists and fell amid the officers. There was an explosion that rattled the windows in a thousand buildings, a burst of flame lit up the streets and then a scene of frightful and indescribable consternation ensued. The mysterious meteor was the fuse of a bomb hurled from the Crane Building by an Anarchist."* About forty policemen were wounded and within the next few days eight died. It was to avenge these eight that the authorities of Illinois picked out eight of the most prominent speakers and writers amongst the workers and doomed them to death, alleging that their writings and speeches had led to the throwing of the bomb.

The story of the trial will be well known to most of our readers. Comrades Spies, Schwab and Fielden were first arrested. Engel was taken and then released again before being finally retained in custody. Lingg, Fischer and Neebe were afterwards added and Parsons, who escaped on the night of the meeting and worked as a carpenter for some weeks at Waukesha, was eventually persuaded by the lawyers to give himself up and stand his trial. Such an action shows what a noble-spirited man he was and makes his memory more than ever dear to us, but we quite agree with W. A. Foster, a lawyer who contributes an article to the book of Parson's Life issued by Mrs. Parsons, that it was a tactical mistake which cost him his life. Our comrades were sacrificed principally through being tried at a time of great public excitement and were all tried together. Had each one been tried separately, had Parsons kept out of the way until things had quieted down, his life would doubtless have been spared; probably none of them would have died. But if for the sake of our friends we deeply regret these mistakes, for the sake of the Cause we regret nothing. Their death has done far more for Anarchy than they could have done had they lived. Their last speeches printed in all languages, circulated in every civilised country, have made thousands and tens of thousands of converts to the Anarchist cause. Able, energetic and whole-hearted as they all were, they could only do a certain amount of work in their own particular district; their names were unknown beyond the immediate vicinity of their labours. But in dying they enlarged their circle of influence until it now embraces the whole world, and they proved the sincerity of their opinions by giving up their lives for them, a proof which none can venture to gainsay. Base charges of all sorts are brought against living men as an explanation of their taking up a cause; against men who die for their cause such charges dare not even be breathed.

Three of our comrades, Schwab, Fielden and Neebe are still in prison. Neebe was sentenced to fifteen years imprisonment; Fielden and Schwab, who were sentenced to death, had their sentences commuted to imprisonment for life. November the 11th, the Anarchist Good Friday, the day which we are about to commemorate, is the day on which four of our comrades, Parsons, Spies, Fischer and Engel, were hanged by order of the State of Illinois—a State in which capital punishment even for the crime of murder has been for years discontinued. Lingg, the youngest and in some respects the most admirable of all, is said to have committed suicide in his cell two days before the date of the execution; for our part we believe that he was murdered there.

If they had only recanted! If they had testified that the Cause they had been fighting for was an evil cause, that they had been mistaken in their views, and would not offend the governing classes in future, our comrades would still be living. Two nights before the legal murder Parsons was visited in his cell by Melville E. Stone, the editor of the *Chicago Daily News*, a prominent member of the Citizens' (Capitalist) Association, and urged to sign a retraction of his principles and live. For three hours the tempter pleaded with appeals for the love of wife and children, with kindness and with sarcasm. In vain. Albert Parsons was made of too true a metal to sacrifice his principles for his life. At length he dismissed the representative of capitalism in these memorable words: "You, Mr. Stone, are responsible for my fate. No one has done more than you to encompass the iniquity under which I stand here awaiting Friday's deliverance. I courted trial, knowing my innocence; your venomous talk condemned us in advance. I shall die with less fear and less regret than you will feel in living, for my blood is upon your head. I am through. Go!"

Our comrades are dead, but the Cause for which they died goes marching on. Their death was an episode in the revolutionary movement of the nineteenth century. All revolutions, all great movements of the people, have had their martyrs in the past, and the present

gigantic universal movement is no exception to this general rule. The martyrdom of the Chicago heroes is however in some respects more noteworthy than others inasmuch as it clearly showed how small is the difference between the democratic government of the American republic and the aristocratic governments of old Europe, and also in that it demonstrated the internationality of the present movement, for these eight men, though all were condemned for taking part in the American labour movement, had been born in various lands. To-day America in common with Europe is drawing nearer and nearer to the hour of revolution, the gulf between the rich and the poor is daily growing wider and deeper. Even here in England the capitalists have already shown how careless they are of human life by the Trafalgar Square massacre, and they have not hesitated to threaten us by such incidents as that of three or four weeks ago when troops armed with ball cartridge were on the point of being ordered out to quell a strike. Evidently a storm is coming. We Anarchists at any rate are not blind to the fact that causes are at work, which owe their existence to the greed and oppression of the landlord and capitalist class, and which will very soon precipitate a conflict between the two opposing parties, the possessors and the dispossessed. If the horrors of the bloody revolution, suggested by the words we have quoted from Hugh Pentecost, are to be averted, it will be by no blind and obstinate clinging to the established order which guarantees the daily and hourly horrors of our so-called peaceful civilisation. It will be by the fearless recognition of the necessity of revolutionary change, the fearless determination to look facts in the face and dare all in the attempt to secure justice amongst men and right the bitter wrongs which are eating into the core of human society.

Let every one of us see to it that we energetically carry on the work in which the Chicago heroes have done their part and do our best to spread a knowledge amongst the people of those principles of right and truth which alone can enable them to win a true and lasting victory. Thus shall we best commemorate our martyrs' deaths, thus shall we best avenge their murder.

The following letter was written by one of the Chicago Anarchists just after the Haymarket meeting and whilst those arrested for taking part in it were in prison awaiting trial. It is addressed to the comrade whose experiences we quote above.

"Your very kind note of 12th inst. only reached me yesterday, when I met Mrs. Fielden by accident at the jail.

"Would be of course glad to meet you and talk over the subject, giving you such knowledge as I possess of the anarchistic phase of socialism. But as to this, my information is not very wide, for my life as a workman does not admit of much reading, and the most of my self-cultivation has come from contact with actualities. Fielden has read more than I; but while I have the advantage of a little more polished manner, I would be glad to exchange it for what he has in his brain.

"Generally, I am a poor student of sociology; but, to the limit of my feelings, those feelings are intense. I cherish advanced anarchy, and must leave to others the task of generalising the subject and fitting it to the thousand points and angles of existing conditions. How things may have remote relation, and how history points out paths that have been successfully trodden but are now obscured by time, I know little about. The immediate and the actual are what I think of. Perhaps you would call it the executive frame of mind. I know that myself and my neighbour want freedom, and I don't much care to know more than the fact that we are in a confined space and that by reaching out our hands we can feel the walls of a prison. To break them down is the first thought, no matter if it prove a result like that which came to Samson in his latest hour. It may be calamity for the few, but the salvation of the many is an assurance far outweighing the first and very natural thought.

"I judge from your letter and the proof slip, as well as from my reading, that you English can go into the intricacies of the subject better than we, who are more direct and expressive. There is a round-about way of treating it which seems to be peculiarly English. For instance, Spencer and others will go into volumes to put an argument which ought to be done in a pamphlet. I do not doubt that it is more thorough; but what has a hod-carrier to do with a scholarly treatise that would consume his spare time for a month? It must be put to him in ten minutes.

"This conciseness is not among my gifts, but Parsons and Fielden have it down pretty fine, as we say in slang terms; and it is my very strong idea that socialism is best propagated in that way. The humble worker is easier touched upon his monthly rent, his grocery bill, and his short time of rest than he is upon philosophic theories and the contemplation of fields that he has never entered and cannot reasonably see how he ever shall enter. The early Christian preaching was not of the telescopic character that marks it to-day.

"I repeat that it would be a pleasure to meet and converse with you, but that perhaps must remain a hope of accident. My late arrest and its publicity have interfered with my business, but it will not be long before friends in the cause can meet in public as formerly and not only comfort each other but preach to the people.

"I cannot have any other than radical feelings, for to my mind the duty before us is plain and no mistake can be made by going straight ahead. Public opinion is bound to react, and we must then make ready for the tide which comes again.

JOHN A. HENRY."

Chicago, May 23, 1886.

* The assertion of the capitalist press that this bomb was thrown by an Anarchist was entirely unproven. At the trial all attempts to prove that the bomb was thrown by the prisoners before the court, or with their knowledge, were given up by the prosecution. To this day the name and motive of the bomb-thrower remain a mystery; but the Chicago Anarchists are sure that he was not a member of their group. They had unanimously decided that the crisis was not sufficiently acute to warrant the use of violence, and in calling the meeting of protest, intended it to be entirely peaceful. It is this fact which renders the condemnation of our eight comrades on a mere charge of constructive conspiracy such an abominable outrage upon justice, even as justice is understood by judges and juries to-day.

SOCIETY ON THE MORROW OF THE REVOLUTION.

Translated from the French of Jean Le Vagre.

IX.—COMMUNISM AND ANARCHY.

We are asked: "Why do you take the title of Communist which implies authority, for if we were living in a Communist condition individuals would be compelled to share with other individuals what they had been able to obtain for their personal satisfaction and consequently they would not be free? Why not call yourselves simply Anarchists?"

The word Anarchy is only a political negation and in no way indicates our social tendencies, and, as the liberty which the Anarchists demand can only result from the economic situation which individuals will be able to create, it is, we believe, quite necessary to indicate the end we have in view.

Certainly there is not much likelihood of confusion with regard to the word Anarchist. All Anarchists are in fact looked upon not only as enemies of authority but, especially, as enemies of property; but our end, our ideas, our tendencies, our physical organisation, our wants, in a word, everything, urges us forward towards a social state where all men, united amongst themselves, would be able freely to evolve according to their different manners of regarding things. Why then should we be afraid of a word if it is capable of making clear our conception merely because it has served as a label to certain systems to which we are opposed. Let us have no fear of words but let us rather be on our guard against the meanings which some will try to cover with them.

We ought to take words for what they are worth, and not to stop ourselves at the meanings which others wish to give them. Now as we think that Anarchy will lead humanity to a harmonious social state in which individuals will live without quarrelling, without conflict, in the most perfect understanding with each other, the word Communism is perfectly adapted to the thing. What then does it matter to us that certain manufacturers of social systems have given this name to the conceptions they have dreamed of imposing, the words have only a relative value such as one wishes to give them, and the word "Anarchist," far from being out of place by the side of the word "Communist" acts as corrective of the authoritarian idea that is given to it and demonstrates that if we recognise that individuals ought to live in society we recognise also that they ought to live on a footing of the most perfect equality without any authority, neither that of the sword nor that of divine right, neither the authority of rank nor that of intelligence. Each individual ought to be his own master and should not submit to the dominating influence of anyone.

It is then most important to clearly show the end towards which man finds himself attracted by his faculties, to make clear this word which appears to frighten certain of our friends, to take from it the false meanings which have been attached to it by certain Socialists who desire to found societies based rather upon the dreams of their imagination than on the true character of man. It is this work which we are trying to accomplish, at the same time taking care to make it quite clear that we have no pretension to create from our brain a society complete in every respect which is to be imposed upon all individuals under the pretence of making them happy. To do so would be to fall into precisely the same error as our predecessors. We seek only to demonstrate to individuals that they alone are able to fully understand their own requirements, to know how to guide themselves in their evolution; and that they ought to confide this work to nobody else; that there is only one way to be free and that is to have no masters. At the same time we seek to demonstrate to the workers that a perfect society can be established on these bases. This is our only desire. If we can succeed in it we shall be satisfied.

We must throw away our Communism, we are told, if we would not fall into the vague and ill-defined sentimentalism of the early Socialists. No one is more opposed than we are to the stupid sentimentalism which induces the individual to respect the prejudices which hinder his forward march, no one is a greater adversary than we are of this idiotic sentimentalism with which the middle class poets and historians have crammed their literary productions so as to falsify the intelligence of the mass by exciting in it a stupid generosity which will always render it the dupe of intriguers whose sole object is to exploit the sentiments of abnegation that they know how to excite in the bosom of others.

The failure of past revolutions is largely due to this sentimental introduction of stupid and untimely scruples.

But under the pretext of avoiding falling into sentimentalism we must not follow the bad example which has been set us in literature and go to the other extreme so as to present man under an aspect as impossible as that under which the poets present him. Apart from this sentimentalism of badly balanced minds, there is a certain ideal, a sentiment of improvement, a need for progress, which is experienced by all men and which we ought to take into account. It is such aspirations that make man an intelligent being and, becoming the motor of his actions, serve to distinguish him from the brute. It is by taking man as he is, taking into account all the sentiments which actuate him and the conditions of existence that nature creates for him that we are able to form an idea of his future.

The question here places itself upon another footing and becomes this: can a man live alone? Given the conditions of existence in which he finds himself, the development of his industry, his physical organisation and his wants, can he isolate himself? Everything answers No! everything urges him towards association; each one of us feels himself

attracted by certain characteristics, by certain individuals. Isolation is the greatest of the tortures with which philanthropists have endowed society; sociability is the true characteristic of man, misanthropes and people who live by themselves are the victims of some sort of insanity or hallucination. And that which is perhaps the strongest proof of the force of this characteristic in man is that it has been able to survive and resist the crying injustices which are committed every day in the name of the community and has enabled them to be borne by individuals as a necessity of the social state.

But if man cannot live alone, if he is able to overcome the obstacles which are created for him by the natural conditions of existence only by associating his powers with those of his fellows, if his temperament, his tastes, his interests, urge him towards association it is evident that this association ought to be formed under conditions of perfect equality between all the contracting parties if it is to be durable, and ought not to permit of any special privileges if it is desired to preserve and render easy the understanding between the members who by the fact that they will live, (in society or in groups, no matter what name is given to the association) will consume, will produce, will act in short together according to the end for which they are grouped, and will consequently act in common.

We are told that "if we had Communism individuals would not be able to keep for themselves the articles which they might be able to create." This objection is groundless for as machinery, production, the soil the means of communication and transport would be at the free disposition of all individuals without the authorisation of any intermediaries, individuals would by no means have to divide the articles which they might make for their own use. Those who selfishly wished to keep these things for their sole enjoyment would not be prevented from doing so; that would be their business. Those who surrounded them would not even think of asking them to share their possessions for if their wants caused them to desire such possessions they would have all the facilities wished for to make them for themselves. Here again one of the stimulants to the individual (which middle class economists pretend would only exist under individualism) would make its appearance under new and more noble forms in the new society. As is easily seen Communism as we understand it has nothing in common with that of the authoritarians and leaves entire liberty to the individual.

But if man is compelled to live in society the only reason for the existence of this society itself is the advantages that individuals ought to find in it. The social state is for man simply a means of conquering the obstacles of nature and of enlarging the field of his activity, and of his liberty, by giving him the necessary force to overcome such obstacles and by reducing to a minimum the amount of time necessary for the production of the commodities indispensable to his existence and to the satisfaction of his physical wants.

This means that society (that abstract entity created by socialists and politicians to absorb human individuality in a whole that they can exploit to their profit) has no right, no power, over the individual and that in no case is the latter to be sacrificed to the interests of the former; for society cannot have any need or interest peculiar to itself alone.

Its wants are only the sum of all the wants of the individuals who compose it and consequently the social interest and the individual interest can never be in antagonism in a properly balanced society. When that is the case it is because, as at the present time, society is established on false bases and serves only to mask the exploitation of a portion of its members to the profit of another part which has known how to turn the association to its own benefit. Then the oppressed individuals have a right to break up the association, and by force if necessary.

But if man finds himself compelled for his own benefit to live in society there is no real compulsion about it. It is a very strange idea to fancy that a man will decrease his autonomy, alienate his liberty by uniting his powers to those of other individuals so as to realise a better result from his exertions. When men have acquired economic liberty, when they have no longer in their midst dealers in the products of nature and industry, when these products are at the free disposition of all, individuals will all be free and equal; for being able to satisfy all their wants they will no longer be forced to submit to the influence of anyone else, and they will not so submit, they will feel themselves quite as strong as those who wish to dominate them.

It is, then in order to clearly characterize this economic side of our propaganda that we have deemed it useful to add to the qualification "Anarchist" the word "Communist." we ought not to forget that our political slavery results only from our economic slavery; the only reason for the existence of authority being the defence of the privileges of the possessors against the claim of the dispossessed. It is then against our economist masters principally, that we should direct our blows.

Moreover, in the society we are considering we absolutely oppose the establishment of places or situations which would permit a number (great or small, more or less restricted) of individuals to dominate and support themselves at the expense of others. As our propaganda consists in demonstrating that all this machinery is dangerous without being of any use whatsoever, it follows that our Communism is well defined and admits of no doubt or equivocation. So much the more that all pictures, more or less idealistic, that we are able to evoke, of the society of the future, we present to individuals only as a more perfect state towards the realisation of which they ought to exert all their efforts; and we take care to demonstrate to them that this society can be established only by the free evolution of individuals when they shall have overcome the obstacles that now hinder progress, and cannot be imposed upon society without producing contrary results, that is to say maintaining in our relations the state of war that distinguishes our present social condition instead of supplanting it by our ideal: HARMONY.

NOTES.

THE USES OF A CENTRAL GOVERNMENT.

Greater harbour accommodation is urgently needed at Dover for the immense and increasing channel passenger traffic, and the safety of ocean-going Steamers. The local Harbour Board have been trying since 1882 to get government to permit them to construct the needful harbour. First, permission was granted (Dover Harbour Bill 1882); two years after withdrawn; Government wished to carry out the works themselves; but never from that day to this has anything been done. Now the Local Board is applying for fresh leave to proceed. "If the Government on the present occasion show any disposition to oppose the carrying out of the works, they will be asked to give a definite pledge that they will proceed at once with their new harbour works, which have been in abeyance for so many years, and thereby prevented the local authorities from providing the improved facilities which are necessary for the cross-channel traffic." THE TIMES, Oct. 6, 1890.

A STARTLING DISCOVERY.

A prominent lecturer and parliamentary candidate of the S. D. F. was put down to lecture in Regent's Park the other Sunday. To his intense disgust he could not succeed in getting a meeting together, the people having gathered around the bright red banner of the St Pancras Freedom Group. So he went over and stood at the edge of the meeting, whereupon a former member of the S. D. F. now a member of the Freedom Group, held out his hand in token of friendship. "Shake hands with you," said the budding M. P. in a tone of tragic scorn, "why I look upon you as my worst enemy." "Oh all right old chap," said the Anarchist, "no compulsion about it you know." Then the S. D. wanted to know where our comrade got his anarchism from. Our comrade gently hinted that he had been using his brains, and asked in return where his interrogator obtained his Social Democratic ideas. "From the Encyclopædia Britannica," was the crushing reply.

WHAT IS SAUCE FOR THE GOOSE IS— — ?

Truth advises the hitting on the head with a blackthorn of all policemen of a too inquisitive and interfering character.

This advice has a strong smell of Ireland about it, and we therefore hesitate to accept it, well knowing that the morality or immorality of an action is decided nowadays by the amount of political capital that can be made out of it.

We would also like to ask "Truth" whether geographical position would affect the action of one protesting practically against official impudence and tyranny.

LEGAL TERROISM

The failure of the licenced brutality of law to deal effectually with the unlicensed brutality of human beings degraded by the unsocial society in which we are living has been continually pointed out by Anarchists and Scientific Criminologists. Here is a new instance in point—"The heavy sentences that have been passed upon ruffians convicted of brutal assaults in Birmingham appear to have been very far from redeeming the town from this grave reproach," says the DAILY NEWS for October 9th, quoting the speech of the Recorder at the Birmingham Quarter Sessions. "For the last few years" (despite the increasing legal brutality to repress them) "these offences have been on the increase." One would think that this would suggest some fault in the remedy applied; but Mr Dugdale only believes the official ruffianism is not sufficiently vigorous and suggests that flogging be added thereto. And this is the acting representative of the very same legal system under which poor Hargan has been condemned to a long term of penal servitude for defending himself with his revolver against a violent assault!

Now on what principle of common sense or true justice between man and man is the direct action of an assaulted individual in defending himself with the best means at his disposal treated as a crime, an outrage upon Society? The only rational ground is that we cannot admit the use of violence even in self-defence. But if this be so, why is the action of a set of officials, who deliberately set about inflicting upon a man accused of assaulting his neighbour the long-drawn, depraving torture of imprisonment, or the brutal and degrading outrage of a flogging administered in cold blood, looked upon as wholesome, social conduct? Now from the point of view of true human experience, which is the most effectual mode of acting so as to check unsocial behaviour? The sharp, direct, personal resistance or the long drawn, judicially sanctioned process of moral and physical torture? When will men learn that imprisonment, floggings and executions neither deter nor reform?

THE UNEMPLOYED BEGIN TO MOVE IN LONDON.

It looks as though another formidable agitation on the part of the workers without work in London is likely to arise during the coming winter. The first sign of the rising movement was a meeting held on Mile End Waste on the first of September. This has been followed by a series of small weekday meetings in Hyde Park, and lately attempts have been made to hold meetings on the steps of the Royal Exchange in Trafalgar Square and outside the entrance to St Pauls.

In these places of course the authorities have interfered with the result that comrades Walter Power and J. J. Chapman have been brought before the learned dispensers of British law, Power is bound over to keep the peace and Chapman has had to find sureties to be of good behaviour for six months. Meetings have also been held on Clerkenwell Green, Tower Hill and Broad Street, Golden Square. The police also interfered in the last named place and arrested the speaker J. B. Porter, who has been sent to prison for fourteen days. Meanwhile

the reports of trade union officials show that the number of the unemployed in their respective societies are on the increase. Evidently the period of "good trade" is rapidly passing away.

THE NEW TYRANNY IN RUSSIA

It is a commonplace that the government of Russia is one of the most tyrannous and dissolute that ever cursed mankind, and that "constitutional" reforms, introduced from Western Europe now and again, have rotted or withered before they ripened in this foul soil. But many people sympathetically interested in the Russian nation hardly realise that beneath this mass of corruption and despotic cruelty there exists amongst the peasantry, not only the ancient communal system of the free Slavs of fifteen hundred years ago, but also their old political organisation; an organisation in principle one of the most brotherly and rational ever devised by man. Despite foreign conquest and native tyranny, despite even the horrible ordeal of ages of serfdom, the country folk in Russia have maintained their right to manage their own local affairs in their own village meetings; a right which over here we have frittered away and lost.

We have let the crown curtail our freedom of self-direction in one way, and the church in another and the feudal lord in a third; we have let ourselves be juggled out of our liberties by the humbug of representation; until a huge centralised administration has been manufactured, depriving groups of individuals of the direct control of their common concerns in the pretended interests of the whole community and the real interests of the richer classes and more ambitious individuals. The ghost of our free folk-mote walks as a "vestry."

The Russians have been wiser. At the present day the heads of households in very many Russian villages meet regularly to discuss and decide the public affairs of the commune, every one having an equal voice in the deliberations, and common action being taken unaimously by the consent of all concerned, not at the dictation of a majority. It goes without saying that these village assemblies often behave in practice in a manner unworthy the free and manly spirit in which their principle was evolved, nothing else would be possible in a land where thought has been strangled and education forbidden; where serfdom, with its moral degradation of slave and slaveholder, has been in existence for centuries where the central government is an absolute tyranny, acting through the agency of a corrupt bureaucracy. The Village Assembly has been bullied and made a tool of by serf proprietors and, since the Emancipation, by the still more brutal officials of the government, who have used it as a machine to wring out impossible taxes. Its free character has been injuriously neutralised by the patriarchal family system, which grew up amongst the Slavs partly because of the evil influence of the corrupt and slavish forms of christianity introduced amongst them from Constantinople; partly in consequence of the evil influence of their eastern conquerors, when Russia was over run by the licentious and servile hordes of Central Asia. Still through these evil and degrading influences, in spite of ignorance, in spite of oppression the free institution of the village, held its own and, mutilated and hampered as it was, it maintained in the unhappy peasants such manly independence and sense of personal self-respect as they have managed to retain to this day. But now at last the vulture eye of the autocracy has fallen upon this last relic of the spontaneous organisation of the Russian people and the Government have determined to undermine and destroy it by means of "Guardians of the peasants autonomy," "Guardians whose business it is to conduct the last fragments of national freedom to the grave."

These personages are called District commanders, and their one essential qualification is to be hereditary nobles. They are appointed by the Minister from Candidates chosen by the provincial administration virtually consisting of the nobles. We quote the following description of their powers from an interesting article on this subject in FREE RUSSIA for September.

No subject can be legally brought before a village Mir (Assembly) without the consent of the District Commander and he has the right of vetoing any of the Mir resolutions. The law gives him no right of substituting his own resolutions for those of the Mir, but he can impose them by vetoing all others." Note the hypocrisy of this method - - -

"He can fine or imprison any of the peasants of his districts (the elected officials included) by his own authority. - - - He is rural magistrate, judging all civil and criminal matters, excepting those which belong to the principal tribunals. Finally he is guardian, which means absolute master of the peasants' tribunal." This tribunal judges according to common rights (tradition and equity) not according to any written law and it has the right to inflict compulsory labour or flogging as punishment. The District Commander is to have the right to nominate its judges and to suspend them, his authority being only subject to the Assembly of District Commanders. It is easy to see that the unfortunate peasants are by these new regulations bound hand and foot and handed over to the nobles again, to be their serfs, forced to labour for them gratuitously and to submit to flogging and every sort of punishment and extortion as before the Emancipation Act.

The peasants have evidently realised their danger. The new officials were appointed in six provinces a few months ago and already the peasants have soundly thrashed two of them, set fire to the house of a third and plundered a fourth. The latest news tells of continued acts of revolt, but also that these obnoxious local despots, little autocrats on the pattern of their master, have been introduced into several more provinces.

District Commanders are a "reform" bequeathed to his country by the late minister Count Tolstoi, cousin of the famous novelist. To bolster up decaying autocracy by reviving the power of the nobles was the favourite dream of this estimable man.

THE FAILURE OF DEMOCRATIC EXPERIMENTS AT THE FABIAN SOCIETY.

At the meeting of the Fabian Society at Bloomsbury Hall Hart Street, on Friday, October 3rd last, papers were read upon the failure of democratic experiments, by Sidney Webb and Graham Wallas. The papers from the "Fabian" point of view were very good, the contention being that experiments in democracy had failed in the past because of the lack of attention and study bestowed upon them.

An Anarchist Communist in the hall agreed that democratic experiments had been attended by failure, but also pointed out that democracy in itself contained the germ of its own destruction, in that it had in its midst the class-making and disturbing element of majority government, which meant the exercise of unreasoning power of brute force over the minority. Incidentally, Sidney Webb gave an altogether distorted definition of democracy, claiming that it carried on society in the interests of everyone composing that society. The misrepresentation was so palpable that any emphasized opposition to such a statement was altogether needless.

Several well known Socialists took part in the discussion that followed and the writer of this note confesses to feeling rather belittled while listening to the ideas put forward as to how best to manage him and his class in the new society.

Each unit of the party with the waiting policy, has its own ideas as to the most efficient way of organizing the worker in the future society, and certainly the thought suggests itself that if the worker is to be subject to manipulation at the hands of Fabius's followers in the new society his position will be probably the very reverse of free.

We can imagine nothing better for the worker than to be let alone in the future, the position he occupies to day is largely owing to having listened too long and too often to the people who believe they have a heaven-sent faculty for organizing others, and a monopoly of intelligence.

Burns stentorian and thundering, Polyphemus-like, arose and crushed down upon our devoted heads a formidable accusation, it had been charged against an Anarchist, that, out of the evil of his soul, he had become an election agent, and since so becoming had gained a rosier view of existence, resulting in a narrowing down of aim and aspiration, thereby conclusively proving that Anarchism had a decidedly immoral effect upon the individual. Of course, as the reader will see, this was unanswerable.

Then Polyphemus changed to Gradgrind, and urged upon us the necessity for looking facts squarely in the face, a thing (by the way) that the new Trades Unionists seem to have forgotten how to do (vide recent speeches of Burns and Mann and their consistency with Marx's theory of the iron law of wages). From the clear, cutting, Gradgrind to a character something like the Artful Dodger is a long step, but Burns was equal to it; Listen, reader:—"We have a cunning enemy to fight, and we must meet cunning with cunning, we must fight them with their own weapons." In our ignorance of labor-leading expediency, we had not dreamt of asking the workers to drop down to the level of capitalistic meanness and trickery, but in our innocence, have advocated the raising of all people out of the miserable, narrow, mean life of to-day. Somehow, we don't think you can get a higher moral standard of life by practising "gutter tactics."

Burns then somehow got to the docks, and defended its sacred precincts from invasion by the "loafer and outcast," although some of these same loafers and outcasts probably helped to make the "hero of the dock strike," and the county councillor; and we could not help thinking, that it would have been better (if one accepts the position of labor leader,) to have found some other work for the odd labor dispensed with at the docks, and which is by present arrangements thrown out upon the street in absolute destitution.

We were then talked down to, in true Balfourian style, about our ignorance and "frenzy rolling fine" when we pointed out that the workers had the knowledge and capacity for voluntary organization in production and distribution already amongst them, and could carry on society in the interest and for the welfare of all, under free conditions, and without authoritarian boards and committees. We were told, with fine scorn, that the process necessary to ascertain how little you know about anything is to get upon a main drainage committee, where you meet with more people whose knowledge is about on a level with your own, which makes you all an assembly eminently qualified to discuss drainage business, while this mass of poor, uneducated, ignorant workers, who can't discuss, are doing the real drainage work.

When Burns had finished his harangue it confirmed the impression in one's mind that this New Trades Unionism, with its man-worship and expediency dodge, was having its effect: train the people to look up to you for help, and you will inevitably come to look down upon them with cold contempt and indifference, and then, 'tis not what we can do shoulder to shoulder on common ground, but what I, John Burns, labor leader, county councillor, and prospective M. P. can do for you in the way of conciliating and compromising with your enemies; and unconsciously it creeps on, that habit of sacrificing principle to personal gain, until at last we cease to be working for the good, and become simply a drag upon the wheel of progress.

One or two more Fabians joined in the discussion, but all carefully avoided any reference to Anarchism. To Anarchists who attend these meetings, one thing will suggest itself most strongly, viz:—the necessity for preaching self-reliance and independence amongst the workers wherever and whenever possible, in order to counteract the vitiating effect of this State slavery propaganda and to ensure in the future, a really free condition of society.

C. Morton.

ANARCHIST COMMUNISM OR SOCIAL DEMOCRACY.

FROM AN ANARCHIST COMMUNIST.

The Social Democrat who wrote to "Freedom" last month says that he will state what he conceives to be some of the serious drawbacks to the realisation of Anarchist Communism. This, however, he does not attempt to do, but goes on to describe the political ideal of the Social Democrats. Therefore all that is left for us to do is to point out the dangers and fallacies of his Social Democracy.

He states that Social Democrats mean by law a common sense regulation in conformity with the best interests of the community, and further on he states that, being made by the people for their own interest and comfort it would be cheerfully obeyed. Certainly there will always be common sense regulations and if they, being for the benefit and comfort of the whole community, would as our opponent says be cheerfully obeyed, what need would there be for government to enforce them. We Anarchists believe people have common sense enough to regulate their own lives in the way they think best, without electing parliaments to rule and regulate their lives for them. This, however, is not what the Social Democrat means; for, he goes on to say, that every adult will have a voice in the making of the law, such law not to become binding until accepted by the majority of the people. By this, the Social Democrat means that the majority would elect delegates, who would make laws to decide what were common sense regulations, and what would be for the benefit and comfort of the people. We Anarchists believe that the people themselves are the best judges of what is for their own benefit, interest, and comfort. It is absurd to argue that every adult will have a voice in the making of law, for what does this voice amount to? Your individual influence is not felt; you are simply a fractional part of a compact mass; no two atoms of that mass really think exactly alike on all the variety of subjects on which their delegates have to decide in their name; therefore it is impossible for your representative to represent you all; in the end he simply represents himself. If your representative has the biggest lump of this mass on his side, and happens to make the law, what is the exact measurement of your voice in the matter? You say you have a voice in the making of the law, when you simply have a infinitesimal voice in sending a representative to make laws, which laws are again submitted to the majority of the representatives. All this means that if you are in the majority, by the time the law has passed, the power of your voice has been reduced to nil. If on the other hand, you have the smallest lump on your side, you have no voice at all in the making of the law. We Anarchists are opposed not to any particular form of government but the institution of government itself, we object as much to the tyranny of the majority, as we object to the tyranny of the minority. Majority rule crushes individuality, initiative, self reliance and reduces the individual to a state slave. The lives aspirations, ideals and needs of each individual unit are so different that true representation is impossible.

Our opponent then goes on to say that the national assembly will conduct all national and international business. But does he not see that the idea of central government is breaking down among all intelligent men and the cry for home rule is growing louder and louder, which is in itself a sign of decentralisation and a tendency towards Anarchism.

Then we are told that the object of democratic laws is to teach us what is right and wrong, and to respect the liberties of our neighbours. Now first we deny the right of a government, which is simply a clique of men no better or worse than the rest of us, to set up a code of morality, we believe that each individual learns what is right and wrong for himself by observation and experience. Because government prescribes a line of action for us to follow is it therefore to be supposed that this line of action is the best for us to adopt? Quite the contrary. We could not if we would, all live according to the same rule. Moreover it seems to us that the institution of government itself is immoral and that neither by precept nor example does it conduce to the harmony of social life. Government is the arch invader of all human rights, and demands submission from its victims, and I thoroughly believe that if all crimes were traced to their source, we should sooner or later discover that invasion of individual liberty is the root of them all. It is strange to hear a Social Democrat talk about the liberties of his neighbours. Democracy implies that if you are in the majority you may invade your neighbour's liberty; if you are in the minority you must submit to be the victim of his invasion.

Our friend the Social Democrat then makes use of the usual argument of the democrats that human nature is so bad that we must have years of good government before Anarchy is practicable. But how can we have good government when you are going to draw your representatives from the workers. Will they not share the prejudices and weaknesses of the mass of mankind. We know that men are not all angels. If there were any angels in society we might think of them as rulers, but seeing as our Social Democratic friend says, that human nature is frail and prone to temptation, that we have all our faults and weaknesses, we refuse to trust our lives and destinies in the hands of others, whom we have good reason to believe are as likely to commit errors as ourselves, and cannot know, as we do, the circumstances and needs of our individual lives.

Besides can government, even "good" government, be a needful preparation for Anarchism? To grow accustomed to live under restraints is not the way to learn how to live freely and act on one's own responsibility. Is to tie a man's feet together and accustom him to use crutches the way to teach him how to walk? The person who acts wisely on his own responsibility is the person who has been accustomed to live in circumstances where he has had to think and act for himself. If the end and aim of Democracy was the gradual removal of all legal restraints, I could understand the preparation argument. But since Social Demo-

cracy implies the making of an immense number of new laws and the active and direct interference of the government with the lives of individuals in a far greater degree than to day. I fail to see how such a social condition can in principle or practice be a preparation for true Freedom. In principle it acknowledges the authority of the majority and their representatives, in practice it proposes a wider and more active interference of the state with the lives of individuals. In neither way can it be a needful measure, paving the road to Anarchist Communism.

T. Pearson.

MUTUAL AID AMONGST ANIMALS.

There is an extremely interesting and important article by our comrade, P. Kropotkin, in the "Nineteenth Century" for September last. Its subject is the wide spread and deep seated tendency amongst animals to aid one another in the difficulties of life.

We have heard enough and to spare since the days of Darwin of the pitiless struggle for existence throughout nature, and of the enormous influence of this tremendous, fundamental fact in modifying the forms of life. We have heard how this ceaseless struggle to survive amidst a world of hostile forces has been successful only in the case of those individuals who were the best fitted to fight for life under the special conditions of their existence, and that out of this ceaseless warfare of each against all have arisen and been confirmed and increased and developed all those variations from original types which have ended by dividing the animal and vegetable world into so enormous a number and diversity of species. We have been told by the Darwinians, that the survival of the fittest is the great law of nature from which there is no appeal, however cruel it may seem to us. And the Sociologists of that school have not hesitated to apply this law in its crudest and cruelest form to human beings, who are but the most highly developed of animals. Amongst men too, they have said, (and the latest exponent of the doctrine is no less a Scientist than Professor Huxley, writing in the "Nineteenth Century" for February this year) life is but a combat where the shrewdest and strongest gain the upper hand and the weakest go to the wall. This is and must be the essential condition of our existence and those who refuse to recognise it are but amiable sentimentalists.

These Darwinians, who have been so much more narrow and dogmatic than their master, have not however had this latter assertion entirely their own way. Herbert Spencer, and other students of social life as it is or might be, have pointed out and demonstrated that human beings can and do coöperate for existence to a certain extent and that this mutual assistance, which develops and enlarges the possibilities of the life of each much more than mutual struggle could do, may conceivably be largely increased as man's intelligence and moral sense attain a higher development. But people continually speak as if this tendency to coöperate with his fellows were hardly a root impulse, an instinct of man's nature; but rather a laboriously acquired virtue, to be painfully implanted and cultivated in the thankless and uncongenial soil of the human heart by the effort of reason and an austere and artificially acquired morality. Those who speak so have, however, lagged far behind the great apostle of the gospel of mutual struggle, Darwin himself. In the chapter on the moral sense, in his "Descent of Man" Darwin says that "man seems often to act impulsively, that is from instinct or long habit, without any consciousness of pleasure, in the same manner as does probably a bee or ant, when it blindly follows its instinct." The conduct of a man to his fellows is largely determined in this way and not by a reasoned search on the part of the individual for that course of action which shall secure him personally the greatest pleasure, in fact not by conscious self interest. Social actions are, Darwin thinks, continually so performed, the man acting according to his nature without calculation. "Should he afterwards reflect over his own conduct he would feel that there lies within him an impulsive power widely different from a search after pleasure or happiness; and this seems to be the deeply implanted social instinct."

Man, in fact, is an essentially social animal, and the instinct which makes him willy-nilly one with his fellows is one of the most fundamental parts of human nature. Darwin points this out and he also frequently alludes to and describes other social animals whose gregarious tendency has been of obvious assistance to them in holding their own against other species and adverse natural conditions. But having thrown out these all-important suggestions, this great thinker developed the subject of mutual aid no further. His life work was the demonstration of the universal struggle and the mighty effect it has produced. He held up to the view of the world one vast law of existence; he never asserted that this one generalisation was by itself an entire and sufficient explanation of the whole of the phenomena of nature, that there might be no other factors, factors of the first importance in that mighty truth of evolution, which the discoveries of the last century or two have been slowly laying bare to our understanding. Such an unwarrantable assumption has been left to the more narrow brained of his disciples. The larger minded have been seeking, thinking, waiting, in anticipation of the next great generalisation, which should, not overthrow but enlarge and modify his, take place beside it as a contribution towards the explanation of the mystery of things as they are, have been, shall be. The article upon mutual aid amongst animals amounts to nothing less than a suggestion as to what this next great discovery in natural law will probably be.

Kropotkin describes how he went to the Vitim district of Siberia young, enthusiastic, in company with a friend an accomplished zoologist,

but freshly under the impression of the "Origin of Species" eager to see and study for themselves the struggle for existence amongst the wild beasts of that desolate region; and how, whilst they sought for the evidences of mutual struggle here in the wildest fastnesses of nature, it was the evidences of mutual aid, of mutual interdependence they witnessed. "We saw plenty of adaptations for struggling, very often in common, against adverse circumstances of climate or against various enemies, and Polyakoff wrote many a good page upon the mutual dependence of carnivora, ruminants, and rodents in their geographical distribution we witnessed numbers of facts of mutual support, especially during the migrations of birds and ruminants; but even in the Ameer and Usuri regions, where animal life swarms in abundance, facts of real competition and struggle between higher animals of the same species came very seldom under our notice, though we eagerly searched for them." Similar impressions have been produced upon other observers of nature and recorded by them in one form or another; an "abundance of facts relating to mutual aid, not only for rearing progeny, as recognised by most evolutionists, but also for the safety of the individual and for providing it with the necessary food," have been noted and written down. Gradually their tremendous significance has dawned upon the consciousness of a few scientific men here and there. The late professor Kessler of St Petersburg was the first or one of the first to understand their full purport. Just before his death, in 1880, he delivered an address containing these memorable words; "I do not deny the struggle for existence, but I maintain that the progressive development of the animal kingdom, and especially of mankind, is favoured much more by mutual support than by mutual struggle — I am inclined to think that IN THE EVOLUTION OF THE ORGANIC WORLD, IN THE PROGRESSIVE MODIFICATION OF ORGANIC BEINGS, MUTUAL SUPPORT AMONGST INDIVIDUALS PLAYS A MUCH MORE IMPORTANT PART THAN THEIR MUTUAL STRUGGLE."

Lanessan developed the same idea in 1882, in a lecture which the "Revolte" is now reproducing. It receives valuable support from Romanes' books on the evolution of mind in animals and man and from several recent French and German writers. "The idea is in the air." Yet it has never been clearly and directly set forth as Kropotkin is setting it forth in his series of articles in the "Nineteenth Century," of which the first has been published, as we have said; the others, dealing with the higher animals and man, are yet to appear.

"Though there is an immense amount of warfare and extermination going on amidst various species, and especially amidst various classes of animals, there is, at the same time, as much, or perhaps even more, of mutual support, mutual aid, and mutual defence amidst animals belonging to the same species, or, at least, to the same society. Sociability is as much a law of nature as mutual struggle. Of course it would be extremely difficult to estimate, however roughly, the relative numerical importance of both these series of facts. But if we resort to an indirect test, and ask nature who are the fittest: those who are continually at war with each other, or those who support each other? we at once see that those animals which acquire habits of mutual aid are undoubtedly the fittest. They have more chances to survive, and they attain, in their respective classes, the highest development of intelligence and bodily organisation. If the numberless facts which can be brought forward to support this view are taken into account, we may safely say that mutual aid is as much a law of animal life as mutual struggle, but that, as a factor of evolution, it most probably has a far greater importance inasmuch as it favours the development of such habits and characters as insure the maintenance and further development of the species, and together with the greatest amount of welfare and enjoyment of life for the individual with the least waste of energy."

Such is the daring thesis which Kropotkin lays down and proceeds to illustrate by a long series of instances in point drawn from the ascertained habits of certain insects and lower animals. In his next article he proposes to pass on to the facts in proof of his theory drawn from the lives of the higher animals, and still further to develop the theory itself. His third article will deal with primitive men.

We need hardly draw the attention of our readers to the immense importance of this new generalisation in the phase of social evolution in which we are living, and in which some of us find it so difficult to know what to believe or how to act. Its bearing upon Socialism and especially upon Anarchist Socialism is so obvious that we need only allude to the subject, for does not the whole rationality of Anarchism rest upon a profound conviction that the nature of man is essentially social, and that, if we deliver it from the moral and political fetters and leading strings in which it has been stumbling along, the result will be, not chaos and universal war, but closer and more brotherly social union. And if it be clearly ascertained that sociability amongst themselves is a main factor of existence amongst animals who have no law but their own nature, it must become conceivable, even to the most timid, that mankind are not likely to break up into a confused mass of warring units directly the artificial bonds of red tape and legality are cut by an Anarchist Revolution.

FREEDOM CONCERT.

A concert and dance in aid of the Freedom Publishing Fund was given by the St. Pancras Group at the Automonie Club on the 28th of September. Songs were sung with more or less success by Messrs Dallow Neilson, Lehera Abbott and Misses Morris and Lizzie Robertson. A feature in the programme highly appreciated was the singing of the Scandinavian Choir. Recitations were given by C. Morton and Master Gunderson, there was a violin solo by A. Marsh and a violin duet given by Masters Charles and Hyde. The concert was in every way a success.

THE HERALD OF ANARCHY.

A WELCOME AND A CRITICISM.

LAST month saw not only the entrance of *Freedom* upon its fifth year of existence, but the advent of a new English Anarchist paper. The London group of Individualist Anarchists have begun the issue of a monthly "organ of social, political and economic freethought," called the *Herald of Anarchy*.*

In that this paper is Anarchist, in that it advocates the abolition of all forms of government, and favours voluntary association, based upon the full liberty of every man, we heartily welcome it as a colleague in the struggle against domination. If it devotes itself to showing how legislators are responsible for the enslavement of labour, and how social evils have their origin not in freedom but in restriction, and so combats the tendency to State Socialism, it will be doing excellent service to the cause of the workers. And we are glad to notice some smart articles on these lines in the first number.

But, as our readers are well aware, we are Communist Anarchists, and do not agree with our Individualist Anarchist comrades as to the most desirable method of economic organisation. They believe in private property as the best mode of ownership and in unrestricted competition amongst buyers and sellers as the best mode of distribution. We believe that groups voluntarily associated for mutual help would do best to hold their means of production in common; each producer only appropriating the use of what he wants, whilst he wants it; and that the best principle of distribution of produce amongst such groups would be "to each according to his needs."

Economic differences, however, do not prevent political unity; and an Anarchist may be a Socialist or an Individualist, just as a Democrat may. The bond of union between Democrats is their common belief in majority rule and the representative system. The bond of union between Anarchists is their common belief in individual freedom of self-guidance, voluntary association, general action by the direct and unanimous decision of the persons concerned. But neither of these common political faiths prevents those who are united by holding them from differing widely on other points. Mr. Bradlaugh and Mr. Labouchere, for instance, are Democrats, and so are Mr. Hyndman and John Burns, but their economic opinions are by no means the same.

But suppose that when Mr. Bradlaugh stated his economic views he began by saying "these are the principal economic views of Democrats," would not a well-informed onlooker at once observe, That statement is misleading. Mr. Bradlaugh's economic views might just as well have been put forth by a well-intentioned Tory. The only democratic thing about them is his idea of enforcing the measures he advocates by means of the will of the majority expressed in Parliament. And John Burns, if he were there, might add, Mr. Bradlaugh's economic views are those of an Individualist; my economic views are totally different, being those of a Socialist, and yet I am as much a Democrat as Mr. Bradlaugh, and I object to have Democracy publicly nailed down to opinions which are no essential part of it.

In like manner, we would suggest to our Individualist comrades that the way in which the first number of the *Herald of Anarchy* labels its individualist economic programme as "the principal economic ideas of Anarchists," is misleading and unfair; unintentionally so we are assured. But not only is this programme no essential part of Anarchism, it also differs widely from the economic views held by most Anarchists. As may be seen by their pamphlets and papers in almost every European tongue the majority of the party hold Socialistic opinions. We are sure that our Individualist comrades have no intention of setting up an orthodox church of Anarchism, with unlimited economic competition as its dogmatic creed, and that they are free from the small party spirit which seeks self-magnification by throwing dust in the eyes of the public. Therefore we have drawn their attention and that of our readers to this subject; that all such obscurities may in future be cleared up, and our common cause, the propaganda of Anarchism, not be hindered by any confusion as to the points of agreement and disagreement between the two English Anarchist papers.

Every intelligent reader who picks up the *Herald of Anarchy* or *Freedom* ought to be able to see on what common grounds of opinion both papers call themselves Anarchist, and freely allow each other that title, and further on what grounds they differ and mutually criticise one another. In *Freedom* we continually endeavour to make our position clear by qualifying the economic views we advocate as Communist Anarchism. If our Individualist comrades agree with us as to the desirability of adopting and maintaining such a mutual attitude, we are convinced that both our agreement and our differences will serve to advance the end each of us has in view—the Freedom of Mankind.

CRIME AND PUNISHMENT.

"How can crime be prevented?" is a question that has occupied the mind of men in all ages of the world.

Probably more "crime" has been committed in the cause of the abolition of crime than for any other reason.

Now there are three aspects of this question, namely, the historical, economical, and ethical. Under the former we find that not only punishments differ most materially in different ages and often differ in the same age, but the principle understood by the word "crime" is equally

variable. For example, during the Heptarchy and for centuries after, the individual known by the modern name "tramp" was not considered a criminal or a very bad person. To-day he is constituted a criminal by law. To assist a tramp was considered a commendable act of hospitality for which purpose ample provision was made in almost every household. "The means of providing for the wants of those who were the poor," says Thorold King,* "indeed were many and various. Towards the close of the sixth century St. Augustine was instructed by Pope Gregory to 'cause the fourth part of all that accrued to the altar to be given to the poor.' Concerning tithes, too, it was enacted by the Witan that a third part should go to 'God's poor and needy men.' Thus of foals, calves, lambs, pigs, measures of butter [not margarine] etc., every tenth one going to the Church, there would be something very substantial for the poor; and that the poor received it, and none but the poor, is very certain. The corruptions in ecclesiastical institutions had not yet set in, and the Church was in a very substantial sense the 'mother' of her children. There was an *hospitium* attached to every monastery, and the care of the poor was particularly the business of the clergy. These are among the exhortations to alms-giving quoted by Kemble from different sources:—'Be thou gentle and charitable to the poor, zealous in alms-giving, etc.' 'We enjoin that the priests so distribute the people's alms that they do both give pleasure to God and accustom the people to alms.' 'When a man fasts then let the dishes that would have been eaten be all distributed to God's poor.' 'It is daily needful for every man that he give his alms to poor men; but yet when we fast, then ought we to give greater than at other days; because the meat and the drink which we should then use if we did not fast, we ought to distribute to the poor.' Among the most curious is the following of Archbishop Egbert's:—'Let him that collecteth immoderate wealth, for his want of wisdom give the third part to the poor.' Athelstan commanded the royal reeves throughout his dominions to feed and clothe one poor man each. By these and other means ample provision was made for the poor, and thus was plenty enjoyed by all."

It was not until the destruction of the monasteries which was occasioned by the wholesale confiscation of their property by Henry VIII. that the wholesome spirit of hospitality and sympathy for the needy began to decline; while commerce stepping in soon after, gave the last blow to every feeling of communism which had obtained so long.

To-day's civilisation brands the tramp as a vagabond "having no visible means of existence," which is a crime punishable by law, though the conditions favourable to it are first created by the economic system of the present society.

Thus is "crime" determined by the economic conditions prevailing in a country as may be seen by a perusal of early history. "Both the punishments inflicted by the Anglo-Saxon courts of judicature," says Hume, "and the methods of proof employed in all causes, appear somewhat singular and are very different from those which prevail at present among all civilised nations. We must conceive that the ancient Germans were little removed from the original state of nature: the social confederacy among them was more martial than civil: they had chiefly in view the means of attack or defence against public enemies, not those of protection against their fellow citizens: their possessions were so slender and so equal, that they were not exposed to great danger; and the natural bravery of the people made every man trust to himself and to his particular friends for his defence or vengeance."†

Thus did they enjoy, in many respects, greater social freedom than we do to-day; and precisely because there prevailed greater equality. There is no ignoring the ugly fact that just as our national wealth has increased, so in proportion has our social equality decreased.

During the Anglo-Saxon period the inhabitants of a district were considered responsible for any crime, such as murder, and they were called upon to assist in the capture and the bringing to justice of the criminal, on the pain of heavy fine; while the family of the murdered was often recompensed by the family of the murderer in the form of a transfer of oxen, sheep and corn, etc.

Thus did the tribunals constitute others responsible for the shortcomings of one.

In this respect we have advanced, inasmuch as the most reactionary legislature of to-day, even when in their most vengeful mood, would not hear of such legislation, civilisation having advanced to a mode of thought which utterly precludes vicarious punishment. So far, then, we have progressed on the line of Anarchism.

We now reach the essentially economic aspect of this subject. Crimes may be classified under two heads, viz., (1) those directed against property and (2) those directed against persons; while their nature may also be described under two heads, viz., (a) acts in violation of prescriptive or man-made law, and (b) acts in violation of natural law, i.e., acts that do not conform to natural order.

Now crimes directed against property would naturally disappear with the disappearance of privilege and monopoly. If each individual had equal opportunity of acquiring property the necessity of theft and the desire to destroy would cease. Again, in like manner, with the destruction of monopoly would come the cessation of man-made law, and hence crimes against legal enactments would also cease.

The laws of to-day are made to safe-guard vested interests, and their violation is punished, not as is supposed, in the interest of the community, but in the interest of the monopolist. Acts against persons are generally caused by the operation of the laws to uphold the so-called "rights of property." Anarchists recognise only the natural law as

* Co-operative Labour Press, 57 Chancery Lane. Price 1d.

* "Anglo-Saxon Barbarism." *To-Day*, 1885.

† History of England, vol. i.

that which ought not to be violated; but even in this respect they are equally alive to the futility of artificial punishments. Every act in violation of natural law carries with it its own punishment sooner or later; and this is the keystone to the Anarchist position and forms the ethical aspect from our point of view.

Anarchists claim an equality of power for each individual, and hence the right of private judgment must be perfectly free in order to secure equality of power. This implies the criminality of individuals who take upon themselves the function of law-making for others, which effectually destroys the right of private judgment so essential to the revolution and the equality of opportunity for each.

Thomas Paine fully recognised this, for he says ("Rights of Man") "Men are born and always continue free and equal in respect of their rights. Civil distinctions therefore can be founded only in public utility. The end of all political associations is the preservation of the natural and imprescriptible rights of man; and these rights are liberty, property, security and resistance to oppression."

Equality of power will confer on each person the opportunity to "resist oppression," and may be confidently reckoned on as the safeguard against wrong-doing.

Our imperfections which are so much dinned into our ears by our opponents will no longer suffice as an excuse for coercion. "We are all imperfect," no doubt, and therefore being all tarred with the same brush none can lay claim to anything from which others are precluded. If we are all morally lame we must all use crutches; and to cry "lame dog" to our neighbour is to put one's self in the position of the proverbial Pot and Kettle when they took upon themselves the rather amusing task of calling each other names. Even the morality of murdering the murderer in the interest of "society," is nowadays beginning to be questioned. Indeed apart from the question of the sufferings of innocent persons—which is really very important and forms one of the many potent reasons for the abolition of punishment by law—what is gained, it may be asked, by our prison torture-chambers?

All the evil passions of which human nature is capable are there brought to the surface, causing the most "abandoned criminal" to commit acts of which he would not dream under ordinary circumstances; and when such acts are committed a cry goes up from offended "law and order" of the immensity of the "crimes" of the criminal and the justice of his punishment. Thus does law-made morality persecute and punish its victims, until they end in the perpetration of crime against the only rightful lawmaker Dame Nature.

What, then, is to be done? Why, abolish law which is the creator of crime.

I am not my brother's keeper and ought not to be; since given equal opportunity with his fellow-men he is best able to take care of himself—simply because he understands his own interest far better than others can do for him. Moreover, men are recognising more and more every day, that which has for so long been neglected, namely, the inviolability of the individual; and there is no doubt that before very long the notion that certain individuals should punish others will become an exploded fallacy which will take its right place among the relics of a barbarous age.

H. DAVIS.

THE PROPAGANDA. REPORTS.

LONDON—

St. Pancras Communist-Anarchist Group report great success of their October meetings owing to the intelligent and sympathetic questions which have been put by their audiences. The people in the neighbourhood of Prince of Wales Road have begun to take considerable interest in their meetings, and though Wayland offers the customary opposition, he is not listened to with the former reverence. The dwellers in the slums and back streets of Camden Town no longer believe their wretchedness to be an outcome of the "drink traffic," nor see in "thrift" the only remedy. In Regent's Park every Sunday afternoon the red banner of the *St. Pancras* comrades has been surrounded by attentive crowds, who have also testified sympathy with the speakers. Two of the South London comrades, Blackwell and Casey, came up to help at these meetings and were rewarded by large audiences. Sunday October 12th, C. Morton closed for the present the Hyde Park meetings, which owing to distance and the shortness of daylight had become inconvenient. But on the morning of that day Comrade Neilson held a meeting for the first time at *St. Pancras Arches*. There have also been good meetings held on Hampstead Heath. Material results of above—eight quires of *Freedom* sold and good collections made.

East London Communist-Anarchist Group have been very busy in Victoria Park and other places. Sept. 14th, Davis spoke on "Crime and Punishment" to a large and interested audience, R. Harding supporting. There was a large sale of *Freedom* and the "Anti-Statist Manifesto." Sept. 21st, Harding and Davis in the morning addressed a meeting in Jeremiah Street, Limehouse, on "Anarchism," and distributed the *Labour Leaf*, and in the afternoon held forth on the same subject in Victoria Park. Here a Social Democrat denied the Post Office as being the ideal for which he worked, but declared that it contained the principles for which he lived. Sept. 28th, Harding delivered a well thought-out address on "What a Government can do," and October 5th, Miss Lupton also addressed a meeting in Victoria Park. This Group have adopted the custom of announcing the subjects of their addresses by means of a show-card, which they find of great value and assistance in attracting an audience.

South London Anarchist-Communist Group have begun their course of lectures at the Progressive Club, 122 Kennington Road, North Lambeth. Sunday Oct. 12, Kropotkin opened on "Anarchist Communism" to a good audience who asked questions. Their interest in our comrade's eloquence was further testified by the purchase of 70 copies of *Freedom* and a collection of 7s. 6d. towards defraying cost of handbills and the rent of hall.

South Place Chapel, Sunday afternoon, Oct. 19th. Kropotkin addressed an immense audience on "Siberia." By means of a large map, which he himself had drawn, the lecturer enabled his interested listeners to comprehend the dreary length of way tramped by the wretched victims of Russian tyranny to their place of exile. The lecture was full of interesting and graphic descriptions geographical and ethnographical, and humour was not left out when Kropotkin told how the Russian official established colonies by setting up poles so many miles apart, or how the only methods to punish an unjust governor for repeated acts of inhu-

manity was to flog him by mistake, which was not done, or to set him over a more submissive province, which was. *Freedom* sold out. In fact there were too few of our paper in evidence. One comrade says she could have sold at least a hundred, which we can readily believe, seeing how many copies were sold to Fabian admirers the Friday evening before at Bloomsbury Hall. Comrades who are in the habit of selling *Freedom*, if unable to attend so important a gathering as this at South Place Chapel, might try to send substitutes.

Anarchist League (Individualist).—Sunday Oct. 12, Albert Tarn lectured before the Commonweal Branch of the Socialist League on "The Case for Anarchy." A lively discussion followed, especially on the question of private ownership and free competition.

PROVINCES—

Manchester has sent two reports. One from sympathisers in the Socialist League, which says that a vigorous Anarchist propaganda has been carried on for the last few weeks in Manchester and district. There are meetings every Sunday at St. Philips Park in the morning; Stevenson Square, afternoon; and Higher Chatham Street, at night; whilst on week nights they lecture at the New Cross and at Middleton, Blackley and Crumpsall, their gospel being the Rights of man and the Consciousness of his power. The speakers have been Mowbray of London, Bullas and Hall of Sheffield, Reeves of Liverpool, Cores and Samuels of Leeds, besides the local lecturers Barton, Stockton Bailie and Scott; and all their propaganda has been "thoroughly anarchist and revolutionary." The police tried to suppress the meetings held at Higher Chatham Street, two comrades were summoned and fined, but persistence and defiance carried the day and the Chief Constable allowed the meetings after giving our comrades a gratuitous advertisement. Our second correspondent is a member of a Jewish Club of which the majority are Anarchists, the rest "Kaiser Wilhelm Socialists." The members of this Club are persecuted by their fellow-religionists. They have invited the Chief Rabbi to an open debate on "Socialism v. Religion," but he has not yet accepted.

Norwich comrades say they are sadly in want of some able speakers; but nevertheless they seem to be holding together, despite the persecution of employers, who unmercifully boycott anyone bold enough to declare his opinions. We hope for more news in the next communication.

Dundee had a visit from Comrade Duncan of Aberdeen, Sept. 20th and 21st; he was accompanied by a Social-Democratic friend, and both made vigorous speeches in the Hall of the S.D.F. and in the open-air, besides singing some revolutionary songs. Duncan spoke on the "Universal Strike," and has promised to deliver an address on "Anarchy" next time he visits Dundee. He has already lectured on that subject in Aberdeen, but in the report of it given in *Commonweal* his name was not mentioned. Comrade Cameron takes care to introduce Anarchism as much as possible into all the lectures given at the Hall. For which we thank him.

Glasgow reports that propaganda is dull and that even *Commonweal* sells poorly there, but to a few *Freedom* is a welcome friend every month. Perhaps with the increased size of our paper our welcome in Glasgow may increase too.

Comrades and friends are requested to send communications for use in this column not later than the third week of every month.

NOTICES.

St. Pancras Communist-Anarchist Group will hold meetings on Wednesdays at 8 p.m., in Prince of Wales Road, Kentish Town, near "Mother Shipton"; and on Sundays at 3 p.m. in Regent's Park. A discussion organised by them will be held on Monday Nov. 17th, at 8.30 p.m., at the Autonomie Hall, 6 Windmill Street, Tottenham Court Road.

East London Communist-Anarchist Group will hold meetings on Sundays at 11.30 a.m. outside the South London Station, Hoxton, and at 3.30 p.m. in Victoria Park.

South London Communist-Anarchist Group will hold a meeting to commemorate the legal murder of the Chicago Anarchists, Sunday Nov. 9th, at the Lambeth Progressive Club, 122 Kennington Road, S.E., and on Sunday Nov. 23rd, Walter Neilson will lecture for this group at same address on "The Ethics of a Workman." Admission free and discussion invited.

Anarchist League (Individualist) will hold meetings on Sundays in Victoria Park, at 11.30 a.m.; and discussions in the Autonomie Hall, 6, Windmill Street, Tottenham Court Road, at 8.30 p.m.

The Cosmopolitan Research Association meet every Wednesday, at 8.30, at Temperance Bar, 46, Wharfedale Road, King's Cross, for the discussion of all questions which affect working men's interest. All inquiries, address Secretary, C. Grason, 22, Middlesex Street, Euston Road.

Manchester.—A meeting will be held at the Hall of the Socialist League, 60, Grosvenor Street, All Saints, Sunday Nov. 9th, to commemorate the Chicago Martyrs. A series of discussions will be held by this branch of the League at the above address during the winter months.

Comrade Kropotkin will lecture Nov. 16th, at Ancoats Brotherhood, Manchester; Nov. 17th, at Leicester; Nov. 23rd, at Bristol; Nov. 25th, at Mechanics' Institute, Plymouth; Jan. 9th, at Ayr, N. B. Other lectures might be arranged in North Briton if those interested in arranging them would communicate with us next month.

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