

Freedom

A JOURNAL OF ANARCHIST COMMUNISM.

VOL. 5.—No. 50.

JANUARY, 1891.

MONTHLY; ONE PENNY.

NOTICE.—CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

"FREEDOM" will henceforth be published by the New Fellowship Press, at 26 Newington Green Road, London, N. The Supplement will continue to be set up at our own office by volunteer labour as before.

THE IRISH SPLIT.

"God be praised Home Rule is saved!" the grand old word-spinner is reported to have said when he heard of the split in the Irish parliamentary party. Later events would seem to show that the wily leader of the Liberals is by no means out of the wood. The "Uncrowned King" of Ireland is not at all disposed to resign after one defeat. The memorable words, "Tell them I will fight to the end," are still ringing in our ears and no one now at any rate can doubt that he intends to keep his word. That indefinite hybrid thing which politicians call "Home Rule," and which the Liberal party regards as a euphemism for the loaves and fishes of office, seems to be very much in Queer Street at present. Whether it will be saved at the next general election is now extremely doubtful and for our part we are glad.

Truly a great divorce case would Captain O'Shea's have been if upon it hung the fate of a nation, as politicians would have had the world believe. But the common sense of the common people has given the lie direct to their assertions, and "Home Rule for Ireland" stands out at last cleared of the intrigues at St. Stephen's. It is seen, as it should always have been seen, as the righteous claim of a long-abused people. Not merely the prize of Parnellism or the charitable gift of Gladstonians. The Irish Oracle has had its veil torn away by the rude hands of those curious in private affairs, and there has been revealed, not the golden treasure of wise policy, expected by the faithful, but the 'Ego' of Parnell. If Irishmen accept the moral and see the fallacy of vesting the sacredness of any cause in the person of a leader, however great, all will be well, and Parnell will, like Samson in his death-throes, pull down one of the greatest temples of oppressive Philistinism. Let the Irish seek the guidance of their actions in the needs of their nation, and let them remember that at this crisis in their affairs the third party in English politics stands like Iago, with cynical grin of anticipation, murmuring,

"Now whether he kill Cassio,
Or Cassio him, or each do kill the other,
Every way makes my gain."

We believe, however, that the Unionist Iago will have his grin for his pains, and that the Irish nation will have what they are demanding under the name of "home rule," whether they have or have not Mr. Parnell's or Mr. Gladstone's version of it; for the honest part of the English people are at last waking up to the fact that they have been doing their neighbours a great wrong and that they have no right to force themselves upon them as rulers. The English workers are demanding "home rule" for Ireland, and therefore the politicians who are playing to the gallery will be forced before very long to go in for "home rule," such as it is.

The recent episode in the history of the *Star* was a curious illustration of this. Some of the staff being anxious to bring English questions to the fore in the paper, the experiment was tried. It proved an obvious failure and the *Star* was forced to replace the home rule question in its previous pre-eminent position. The same sort of indication of the drift of public opinion occurs in the experience of every public speaker. In an address on any topic, it suffices merely to mention the words "home rule" to raise an instant chorus of "hear, hear" and applause. Every one is sick of the subject and every one feels, or is beginning to feel, that the way to be rid of it is to give the Irish what they ask.

As for us, we heartily wish that the Irishman's red herring of "Home rule," together with the English worker's red herring of "an Eight Hours' Day," had been seized upon and assimilated, that both the English and Irish dupes might realise what unsubstantial game they are hunting down.

Doubtless all "home rule" is a step in the right direction, but what an infinitesimally tiny step is this which seems a question of first magnitude to the Irish to-day. When they talk about Ireland for the Irish, and managing their own affairs, they are really only asking that the affairs of the Irish people be put into the hands of a governing class of Irishmen instead of a governing class of Englishmen. Of real home rule, the direct management of all affairs by those whom they immedi-

ately concern, the rule of the individual man by himself alone they seem as yet to have no conception. When they have obtained a middle-class Irish government, instead of a middle-class English government, they will find the whole great problem which lies before the civilised world to-day, lying before them, as before other nations, unsolved. The workers are everywhere in revolt against masters of every kind, mankind in revolt against the very principles of authority, whilst the Irish are eagerly occupied in exchanging old masters for new. Let them do it with all speed, that they may find out their delusion and learn by experience what an insignificant effect a mere shifting of the whip of government from one hand to another, has upon the life of the people. It is a lesson quickly learnt in the seething ferment now taking place in Society, and before long we may hope to find Irish workers and peasants fighting shoulder to shoulder with the oppressed of England, of Europe, of America, in the great international contest against the domination of man by man, beside which all merely national causes sink into insignificance.

TRUE FREEDOM.

WHAT is true freedom in human relations? Does real human freedom simply imply elbow-room for the individual, as far as the direct interference of his fellows is concerned, or does it imply something more? A man who is boycotted has plenty of elbow-room allowed him, but certainly a mutual boycotting is not the ideal of freedom in social relationships.

A man is really free, has a sense of unrestraint and self-fulfilment, when he is in such a position with his fellows that both they and he can exercise their faculties to the fullest possible extent in the way that comes most naturally to each of them. Doubtless this implies that each should be willing to grant the others elbow-room, but it also implies that each should endeavour to co-operate with those in connection with him for the common purpose of securing each and all the largest amount of scope. Complete freedom is impossible of attainment where each man does not see that the possibility of the fullest freedom for himself lies in making such mutual arrangements with others as shall secure for them too the largest freedom for the development of their activities. While each is occupied in trying to draw a fence round himself and include inside his own fence as much room to move as possible, regardless of how much he is trespassing on the room to move of others, he is not going the way to secure the most complete freedom even for himself. Real freedom is quite as much a state of mind as a state of body.

"Stone walls do not a prison make,
Nor iron bars a cage."

And freedom of mind can only be attained among social beings by means of mutual aid and furtherance. Mutual concession is an extension not a curtailment of liberty. Next to the active attempt to coerce others, the selfish attempt to attain one's own liberty at the expense of the liberty of one's neighbour is the most fatal foe to true freedom for oneself as well as for him. We are all fenced in and restrained by the natural conditions of existence; but the restraint imposed by these upon each individual is rendered less irksome when there is mutual co-operation between him and his fellows, than when each endeavours to adapt himself to them alone; even when he carefully respects the equal right of others to do the same and does not attempt to put arbitrary hindrance in their way. Let us try to illustrate what we mean by a rough and ready illustration.

If two men are shut up together in a cell, each of them has the greatest possible freedom of movement if they mutually agree to let each other walk up and down the whole available space. If they are not wise enough to do this there are three courses open to them.

First, the stronger occupant of the cell may be filled with the mistaken notion that social feeling implies self-effacement, self-sacrifice, self-renunciation; he may, therefore (feeling himself highly virtuous all the time) crowd himself into a corner of the cell, leaving all the rest of the walking space free for his companion. Now either his companion is a selfish fellow, who calmly accepts the sacrifice as his due, and the self-sacrificing person has only hardened him in his stupidity and silly greediness of disposition, or he is a weak well-meaning person, who accepts the sacrifice, at first under protest, and then, gradually, grows accustomed to the idea that another should be sacrificed for him and thereby he becomes degraded to the level of the selfish man; or he is a sensible, social person, who is made thoroughly uncomfortable by the unreason of the self-sacrificer and until he has brought him to a wiser

mind, gets little good and no pleasure from the exercise he takes. And note that either way the self-sacrificer has given his comrade less space to move than if he had not persisted in immolating himself in one corner.

Or, secondly, we may suppose the case reversed. The stronger man may be a brute who forces the weaker to crowd himself into a corner and remain there. This is unmitigated individualism—the narrowest egoism—stupid tyranny, the reign of the strongest. But by all his self-assertion, his successful selfishness, the strongest man has *not secured so much room*, is not so free to exercise to the full his own faculty of locomotion, has less personal, individual freedom than if he had had the sense and good feeling to come to a common understanding with the feebler man, and arranged with him that both should walk over the whole space at command.

The third possible arrangement is an advance towards better things. Each man may agree to keep half the cell to himself and respect his neighbour's claim to the other half. This is strict justice, the first step towards social co-operation. The two have gone so far as to recognise that they have a common interest, *i.e.*, to secure the freedom of each of them, and that the way to do this is mutual respect and agreement. This is the sort of thing the revolutionists of the last century understood by liberty and equality and, as it seems to us, very much what our individualist Anarchist comrades understand by liberty and equality now.

But if two Communist Anarchists of the Nineteenth Century were shut up in the cell they would not be content with this arrangement. We want more liberty, they would say. Each of us wants the whole cell to walk up and down, and if we come to a mutual understanding we can do this. By means of mutual concession each can enjoy as much walking space as if he were alone, and can moreover enjoy the mental enlargement that comes from a sense of companionship, good understanding and the common exercise of faculty. And so the two Communist Anarchists agree to take their exercise at the same time, one walking in one direction and one in the other, or make some other mutually accommodating arrangements, so that the whole space is available for both, and indulge at the same time in some pleasant and stimulating conversation.

If, however, one of our Communist Anarchists finds he is shut into a cell with a man stronger than himself physically, whose one idea is to assert himself against his fellows, he will not do like the meek self-renouncing person and crush himself humbly into a corner. He knows that by doing that he will only be morally injuring his unsocial companion and fostering his dominating tendency; therefore he neither acquiesces nor submits, but leaves no method untried to persuade, or if that be useless to force, the tyrant to allow him free play. A true Communist Anarchist, imprisoned with his fellow men in the cell of conditioned existence, never ceases to protest and revolt against all attempts on their part to dominate him, for when on his own account he is tempted to give up in despair a struggle that seems useless, he remembers that he is not fighting for his own hand, but for every oppressed human being. He remembers that every man or woman who yields to oppression makes the fight harder and less hopeful for all that are oppressed; while every one who fights a good fight, cheers and inspirits the rest; every one who wins and frees himself brings victory nearer for the rest. Nay more. Victory, the winning of true freedom for the oppressed, means the winning of true freedom for the oppressors, their deliverance from the chains which their own narrow understanding has rivetted round their necks; it means the liberation into a larger life of the tyrants as well as the slaves.

ANARCHISM V. LAW AND AUTHORITY.

(From a continental comrade.)

IN setting forth once more our principles and tactics we do not intend to dwell on the misery and degradation of present society, as the socialist agitation and current events have within the last few years brought this side of the question more prominently to the front than ever before; and as almost all parties admit it and appear to be busy finding means of alleviation, it is the more necessary to point out that for us the only remedy is the destruction of the present industrial system; for its only supports are oppression, fraud and hypocrisy, and the abolition of these offers a sufficient guarantee for an improved state of things. We refuse to delude the workers by urging them to place their faith on this or that "stepping stone," or in any partial reform which is now being vigorously advocated.

One of the worst features of the present condition of things is the disposition of nearly all critics to neglect the real issue upon which alone the labour question can be settled. This fact only strengthens our reason for pointing out once more that under a system of monopoly, defended by law and authority, all individual development and collective progress are checked, first, by the economic impotence of those who strive forward, and also by the very existence of law processes themselves; while every step of progress achieved becomes a new and often a more powerful instrument for capitalist exploitation, and so a curse to the workers—at whose instance it has been secured. Discouraging as this may appear, however, it would be a mistake as well as a misfortune to become indifferent about exertions of the human intellect at all.

The grand cause of the tightening of the chains of monopoly at every step of progress is apparent in the fact that an immense mass of intellectual power is wasted by never coming to any wide development, while the intellects that gain any development are stunted and blunted by the oppressive fetiches of law and order, customs and regulations; withered by tradition and authority, which are taught to the workers from childhood to the grave. Most people neither care nor dare to think independently upon any subject, and this helplessness is encouraged and fostered by their rulers, who lead them to believe that all provision will be made for them by those in authority. Thus are they led, like sheep to a fold, to a place where they are told to drop a paper in a box, fondly believing that all they require will come out in due time at the other end.

Many, indeed, are without hope or prospect of a much brighter future—believing the present system to be unalterable; while those who do think a change possible, do so on the condition that it be achieved by the "will of the people," whatever that may mean. They may even see the present evils clearly enough, but believing in "democratic" principles, they will join this or that party which is making the usual political agitation to influence parliament, or to get a majority of that enlightened assembly to vote them their liberty. In short, they will and must repress their best individual feelings, independent thought and self-respect, a course that only leaves them free to join this or that gregarious host following a noisy, self-seeking "leader."

Still those we have just described may reflect that nothing can be said to have ever been gained by "the great mass of the people"; they have merely stepped on to the ground which was sufficiently prepared for their reception by a small number of *independent* forerunners, who defied the old order and revolted against it regardless of abuse, persecution and death.

Indeed this is largely characteristic of the Anarchist movement of to-day. There are those who prefer to work among the bigger crowds, in the existing organisations, advocating labour reforms and parliamentary Social Democracy rather than to join the small band of outspoken Anarchist propagandists. In doing so, however, they only become the tools of the "masses," to the prejudices of whom they pander; while their very associations compel them to confound the everyday stirrings of the people for higher wages or shorter hours of work, or even the ephemeral outbursts of bigoted enthusiasm for some demagogue, with demands for freedom.

It is impossible to combine immediate success with ultimate progress; nor can a cause march onward without victims.

Opportunism, wanting to reap without sowing, never hits at the root of any of the real obstacles of progress; and least of all at the law and order superstition upon which it builds up its schemes and dodges.

We may be asked: What, then, should really be done?

The answer can be but short and general.

We must on all occasions, by words and deeds, impress upon the people the great truth of free individual initiative. This, clearly understood, involves rejection of the present laws and their upholders; of centralisation and "leadership"; the rejection of any system of majority rule and government by force.

This position can only be maintained by our abstention from all electioneering humbug, while the sham fight which is being made with the real enemies of liberty by the political leaders must be noticed by us only when it affords opportunity for pushing our ideas or exposing the tricks played on the workers by either party. At the same time we must be very careful not to interfere with either party, whether we approve of it or not, either to increase the power of the one or decrease the power of the other; while in so far as they assume to represent the people we must actively boycott them and all their supporters who represent, between them, law and order.

We must, too, use every occasion to point the people's attention to the riches and luxury the starving worker daily passes on the way from the fever-den of "home" to the modern hell of work-shop or factory. By such action we must engender in these dull, weary and hopeless slaves a wholesome disrespect of the privilege of the exploiter, while they must be taught that the wealth they produce is their own—thus destroying the old-time notion of the sacredness of the property of the monopolist. We must also study to safeguard ourselves against new deceptions which may be ushered in in the name of freedom, but which will be nothing more than a new and more powerful state-control. We must also *act* as well as *speak*, and by individual protests of a thousand kinds against the miserable tyranny of law and wealth, teach by example disrespect for authority and monopoly. The State Socialist must not move without orders from his leaders, and he humbly obeys; but Anarchists have full scope to manifest themselves in every way, and it will be their own fault if they do not more widely spread their ideas. They have too long trusted to the ordinary, we might say, almost accidental methods of propaganda; while they have ignored a wide and fertile field that lay open before them.

We may take hope, too, from the fact that when once the law and authority deception is effectually shaken, Communism becomes self-evident; for to what other system than one leaving the natural wants and necessities of people to arrange themselves by mutual consent would free men and women submit? For surely those who reject coercion otherwise, would refuse to be coerced in the most important domain of life.

Let us then wage relentless war upon law and authority, always refusing to turn aside from our main object to exact petty palliatives; only content to lay down our arms when we have gained Anarchy and Communism.

NOTES.

A LOST OPPORTUNITY.

The Anarchist night which was to wind up the recent Session of the Fabian Society has come and gone, and an opportunity of discussing our principles before a large and intelligent audience has been missed owing to an unfortunate display of ill-temper on the part of certain Fabians and Anarchists. The papers read by two Fabians were supposed to show how impossible it was to dispense altogether with Government, and the arguments of both were so weak that the Anarchists might easily have bowled them over had they concentrated their attention on the lectures, instead of turning it upon the individual Fabians, who allowed their temper to get the better of their judgment.

Mr. Just's lecture was a neat little historic summary of Governmental development up to date, and we were told that the laws were now being made by the people. He admitted that repressive laws were falling into disrepute and that in fact organisation was becoming every day more industrial and less political. But notwithstanding all this he still maintained that the people should have delegates and that they should give those delegates a power which they themselves had not. He termed this power "Administrative," but the impartial hearer could not mistake it for anything but "Coercion" writ large.

Mr. Bernard Shaw, who read the second paper, fought a paradoxical round for Government, in which he first knocked it down and then did his best to set it on its legs again. He did not make it quite clear to us that we should submit to Governments, although they were nests of jobbery and corruption, for the simple reason that he believed Private Enterprise jobbed and robbed with even greater impunity, and because it was safer to insult a State Official than a private individual. Even that most democratic bait contained in the suggestion that although Tom might imprison Bill this year, he might comfort himself with the thought that he Bill, might have a chance of hanging Tom after the next election, did not convince us of the charms of Social Democracy.

Very much off the lines was the debate which followed. Instead of argument, there was a great exhibition of party antagonism. There were, however, two features worth noting, nay three: Mr. Graham Wallas's surprise to hear that Anarchists favoured organisation; his belief that there would have to be Acts of Parliament to prevent the people in the galleries of theatres spitting upon the heads of those in the pit; and Mr. Hubert Bland's offer to fill the post of Lord Chief Hangman under the rule of Social Democracy.

"LET HIM WHO IS WITHOUT SIN CAST THE FIRST STONE."

Mr. Parnell has committed the unpardonable crime of being found out; the greatest crime a man can commit in respectable English society. It makes so many people feel nervous. Only the pen of Swift could do justice to the attitude of these excellent Christian politicians in the act of repudiating a colleague who has been caught breaking one of the ten commandments which they, of course, observe so rigidly. Who would think that these are the very men who are fattening on the poverty and misery of the masses, the very men who trample on the interests of those who send them to the so-called People's House, the very men who are the mainstay of that system of cruel oppression, of unspeakable tyranny which drives the vast army of unfortunate women to walk our midnight pavements in search of a morsel of shame-bought bread?

A COMMON-PLACE INTRIGUE.

Not that we have any particular sympathy with the hero and heroine of a vulgar, sculking intrigue; people who deliberately choose to permanently fetter their minds with the numbing chains of a life of deceit and false pretence that they may indulge the temporary desires of their bodies. And all this when there is nothing to prevent them living honourably and openly as they think fit but a cowardly terror of social prejudices. Either they believe in the sanctity of legal marriage and are in their own opinion guilty of a shameful breach of good faith, or they believe that mutual love is the only real and honourable marriage bond, and have not the courage openly to say so. Their conduct is emphatically their own affair; but as onlookers we cannot say we admire it.

THE WORKERS' MOVEMENT IN RUSSIA.

(From our Russian correspondent.)

MUCH has been said in the English press about the Socialistic movement in Russia, and the reading English public already knows that, under the influence of the so-called "Nihilists", many Russian working-men have taken an active and energetic part in the struggle against autocracy. It does not, however, appear to be so well known that, quite apart from any such influences, there is among the working-classes of Russia and Poland intense and steadily increasing disaffection. I speak now, not of peasants, but of the proletariat, and especially of factory hands.

In the present condition of Russia, any organised protest on the part of working-men is attended by peculiar difficulties. It must be remembered that, in Russia, to strike is a crime, punishable, not only by imprisonment, but by exile to the savage districts of eastern Siberia, and even by flogging. (It is true that this last is not warranted by any law in the Russian code, but it can hardly be supposed to make much difference to the victim whether such a punishment be inflicted by sentence of a court or by "administrative order.") To Russian subjects, free meeting, free association and free speech are as much unknown luxuries as a free press, while any attempt at propaganda or organisation means simply—penal servitude. Taking into account all these con-

ditions and the extreme difficulties which the imperial government places in the way of all intellectual development among the working-classes, it is easy to understand that, in such a country, any purely economic protest must necessarily be of a somewhat fitful and spontaneous character, although, perhaps, not less tragic in its way than the fully conscious protest of the revolutionists.

On the other hand, the intolerable circumstances of hired labour in Russia, the long hours, the murderous hygienic conditions, the exceptionally low rate of wages, the innumerable fines and humiliations, irresistibly drive the workmen to rebellion, at the risk even of such consequences as Siberian exile, penal servitude and corporal punishment. The result is a constant struggle, blind and desperate, of which good care is taken that even Russian society shall know little and western Europe hardly anything. This is one of the ugliest among the skeletons which the Russian government keeps locked up in its private cupboard. A few instances, chosen from among many others, may suffice to show the readers of *Freedom* that I am not exaggerating. These facts have, I believe, never before appeared in any English organ:—

In 1884 the women employed in the Dourouch and Shishman tobacco works in Vilna struck, demanding higher wages, and the workmen took their part, maintaining that the women's demands were only reasonable. The Governor-General sent a body of cossacks to "restore order." Several of the ringleaders were arrested—and have never come home. The other strikers were lashed with the cossacks' "nagaiki" (a kind of horse-whip) and forced to resume work.

In the same place, at almost the same time, there was a strike among the cabmen, who demanded the repeal of certain obnoxious rules newly introduced by the Police Director, Vlassovsky. After three days the strikers received an order to appear before Vlassovsky. Several were flogged, others arrested and exiled by administrative order; the rest submitted and resumed work.

In 1884, 10,000 men struck at the station of Zhlobin, on the Libava-Romny railway, where they were employed in unloading the barges of corn. The official report in the Russian newspaper runs as follows: "Troops were sent to the place, and restored order." What is sometimes meant by "restoring order" the following case may show:—

"In 1872 the then heir-apparent (now Alexander III.) passed near the Oural iron-works. The economical position of the men employed in these works had long been exceedingly bad, and three times there had been general strikes in almost all the works at once, which had been put down each time by whips and bayonets. . . . Hearing of the arrival of the heir-apparent, the men of several works secretly sent deputies to him with a petition, imploring him 'for Christ's sake' to deliver them from their unendurable position, either by giving them land, there, in their native country, or by permitting them to settle on "free land" in Siberia,—to go on living as they were was impossible, for their wages were so low that they were unable to obtain even black bread. For two months they waited for their deputies to return with an answer. The deputies have never returned to this day, but as for an answer—that came; an order to the following effect: *The 'ringleaders' to be arrested, to receive 50 lashes each and then to be exiled to the furthest parts of Siberia. The 'more orderly' rebels to receive 30 lashes each and to be strictly forbidden to again annoy his Imperial Highness with illegal requests, on pain of still severer treatment.*

"In 1875 the men again rebelled in several factories and the result was as before, flogging and Siberia for the more obstinate, flogging and threats for the more submissive. . . . So matters went on till 1879; every year they sent deputies,—and the deputies never came back.

"Finally, in January 1879, a letter arrived from the deputies last sent, stating that they had succeeded in giving their petition into the Tzar's own hands, and had seen him read it. . . . In the end of February the Governor of the province received the following order from St. Petersburg: *The men of several iron works to be flogged all round; the number of lashes to be unlimited, the more the better; troops then to be quartered on the most rebellious settlements.* This sentence was literally fulfilled; everyone was flogged, from children to old men. The soldiers broke into the houses, seized upon the sick and flogged them too. 37 persons were flogged to death on the spot, and 25 more died soon afterwards from their wounds. The people were so panic-stricken that they fled into the forests (in spite of the cold) and hid themselves there for a fortnight. The soldiers, meanwhile, ate up everything that was eatable and stole everything else. The destruction was complete." (Vestnik Narodnoy Voli, No. 2. 1884.)

Under such conditions and at such a price do Russian working-men attempt to assert their independence. Nevertheless, they do assert it, and more vehemently now than ever before. In Poland, especially, where the population is less ignorant than further east, the labour holiday of the 1st of May this year was kept in spite of spies and gendarmes. In Poland, altogether, the movement is more organised and has more resemblance to that of western Europe, and the strikers sometimes offer armed resistance to the troops; as in the case of the great strike of Lhirdov, where 7000 men went out and, encouraged by the Polish revolutionists, presented so formidable a power that the troops, after some fighting and bloodshed, found it advisable to retire.

In Russia itself, however, the struggle is a very hopeless one. Sometimes matters have gone so far that several hundred men have lain down together upon the railway lines, blocking the traffic with their bodies and defying the authorities to have the trains driven over them if they choose.

That is what an economical struggle means in a country where there is no political liberty.

A LETTER FROM CAPE COLONY.

If I am asked what are the present prospects of wage-workers in South Africa, I can only reply that they are bad and may yet become much worse, as a steady downward tendency is noticeable. Rents and prices of commodities continue to be high here in Port Elizabeth, owing to the overgrowth of population causing a lively demand, this overgrowth being due to an influx of the same individuals who a year or two ago swarmed from all parts of the world to the mining centres of the Transvaal. As a stifling atmosphere drives one to an open door, so these disappointed ones seem to gravitate to a port whose shipping suggests escape from a land of industrial and commercial stagnation. Undoubtedly rents at least will begin to fall as soon as landlords become convinced that tenants can no longer pay the exorbitant rents now demanded, but this is a lesson which that greedy class learns but slowly. Immigrants continue to arrive from England, and both this colony and Natal encourage their introduction, although the government of the latter country has already given notice of its intention to reduce its staff of railway servants, and lower the wages of those who are to be retained.

I am glad to say that a quantity of Socialist literature distributed in this town has met with a fairly good reception, and I note that those who are favourably disposed appreciate it exactly in proportion as its revolutionary tone is more accentuated. I have faith in the future of a movement that wins thorough-going supporters; better are ten such than a hundred half-hearted adherents; and I fancy the leaders of English New Unionism must think so too just now, since, after having by the exercise of "prudence," "moderation," and "conciliation," brought within their ranks a vast array of all sorts and conditions of workers, they find that the biggest are not always the strongest battalions.

For my part, I am impressed with the conviction that there are a very large number of persons who will never be serious Socialists or Anarchists until the yoke is already lifted from their necks, and that we must look to an active and, of course, sufficient minority to break down the domination of capitalism in the first instance. It will then be for those who are now the timorous or undecided mass to accept the Social Revolution which will have wrought their emancipation, and thus complete and cement the work accomplished. We need not doubt as to which side they will take when once they see that at last "Jack is as good as his master." There are many whose temperament is such, that nothing short of accomplished facts can appeal to them with sufficient force to make them definitely take their stand upon revolutionary principles.

H. G.

Port Elizabeth, Cape Colony, Nov. 9, 1890.

BOOKS, PAMPHLETS, Etc., RECEIVED.

- "A Symposium of the Land Question," edited by J. H. Levy.
- "The Outcome of Individualism," by J. H. Levy.
- "Report of the Land Nationalisation Society."
- "Voluntary Taxation (with letter from Auberon Herbert)," by J. Greevz Fisher.
- "Ideo Kleptomania," by J. W. Sullivan.
- "Ought Women to be Punished for having too many Children," by Marie C. Fisher.
- "L'Italie, Telle Qu'elle Est," by Xavier Merlino.
- "Procès des Anarchistes de Vienne" (12th August, 1890).
- "Almanach de la Question Sociale." P. Argyriades.
- "In Tempo di Elezioni" (In Election Time). "La Politica Parlamentare Nel Movimento Socialista" (Parliamentarian Politics in the Social Movement). "Non Votate" (Do not Vote). By Enrico Malatesta.
- "Blandt Anarkistr," by Arne Dybbjst.
- "Volné Listy."
- "The Chicago Martyrs." Song by E. J. Watson. Words and music to be obtained from Composer, 22 Clare Street, Bristol, 2s. per 100.

We call the attention of our readers to a reprint of a portion of Godwin's "Enquiry concerning Political Justice," treating of that "momentous question" Property, which Godwin himself declared to be "the keystone that completes the fabric of political justice." The reprint is one of the Social Science Series ("Political Justice—on Property," Sonnenschein & Co., 2s. 6d.) and has been carefully edited by H. S. Salt. In the scholarly and sympathetic preface the editor gives an admirable sketch of Godwin's life, and reminds us of the fact that it was from his writings Shelley drew the inspiration of his finest poem "Prometheus Unbound," it being, Mr. Salt says, "the poetical and idealised counterpart of 'Political Justice.'" It should be remembered that Godwin was the first Englishman who declared himself an Anarchist.

The Italian pamphlets mentioned in above list, written by our Comrade Enrico Malatesta, have already played a great part in the Anarchist movement. Since they appeared there have been 75 per cent. of abstentions from voting in recent Italian elections. There are usually 50 per cent. who abstain, but as the Clericals have been voting, it was expected to have lessened the number of abstainers very considerably.

We hope to be able to notice in future more fully the books and pamphlets which bear upon our view of the revolutionary struggle, and to publish quarterly a list of our exchanges, for which we have not space this month.

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THE PROPAGANDA REPORTS.

LONDON—

East London Group.—Dec. 9th, Comrade Pearson lectured at the International Workingmen's Club, 40 Berner Street, E., on "Names and Opinions." There was a good audience; a Social Democrat made some interesting remarks in opposition.

PROVINCES—

Leicester.—Tuesday, Nov. 18, Comrade Kropotkin lectured in the Co-operative Hall, his subject being "Is Socialism Practicable." He met the objection to Socialism and Anarchism, which is continually brought forward when these forms of development are advocated, i.e., that they might be suitable some hundreds and thousands of years hence, but at present they were quite impracticable, by showing that the only obstacle in the way of realising Socialism was the basing of our industry not on principles of satisfying the wants of the community, but on the giving a certain benefit to employers. The ideal of Socialism was that everything necessary for producing riches must belong to the whole community and not to individuals. Realisation of this ideal must take place either with or without fighting. If there was blind opposition on the part of the ruling classes there would be fighting, but through the ripening of public opinion the solution of the question might be arrived at with the least possible amount of disturbance. What the English working-man lacked was, not intelligence, but audacity to take the bull by the horns. As to Anarchy it was the agreement of man with man, not a government. The greatest things of this century had been done by voluntary agreement. Those who were Anarchists should apply their principles in their mutual relations as it would prepare for their use on a large scale in the future. Everything that tended to limit the functions of government and promoted the growth of the community would be an advance in the real direction of progress. A discussion followed and several questions were asked and answered. There was a very large audience.

Bristol.—Comrade Kropotkin lectured on "Siberia," Nov. 23rd, to a very large audience, Edward Watson (Fabian) in the chair. The lecture has already been reported in our columns. Our correspondent there informs us that the death of our Chicago comrades was commemorated for the third time, Nov. 11th, and a song in honour of their martyrdom, written and composed for the occasion by E. J. Watson, was sung with much effect.

Great Yarmouth.—The report from our comrade there reached us too late for publication last issue. The propaganda is evidently going well as 18 meetings have been held within the month in different parts of the town, including three splendid meetings in commemoration of the Chicago Martyrs. John Oldman, the Apostle of Anarchy from Manchester, stayed in Yarmouth several weeks and did much in the way of propaganda. The subjects of his lectures have been "The Wage Swindle," "The Voting Swindle," "The Morality of Force." The Yarmouth comrades have opened a new club, the motto of which is "Educate! Agitate! Organise!" They hope to make it an active centre and its Secretary, J. Headley, 56 Row, Market Place, would be glad to hear from any comrade, who could afford to pay his own travelling expenses, willing to go down and lecture there. The workers' wage in that neighbourhood ranges from 10s. to 25s. per week, and any public expression of Socialism entails a strict boycott by employers.

Aberdeen.—A comrade writes, "until recently Anarchism was almost unheard of here." On one occasion at a meeting of the Socialist League the Anarchist position was mentioned in friendly terms by one of the members. This aroused the Democrats, but it also awakened our friend to his position in the League. Since then there has been many a brisk discussion on Anarchism and a great demand for information on the subject, and during the last month the members of the League have read and discussed Kropotkin's lecture on "Law or Authority," and the "Scientific Basis of Anarchy." Oct. 26th, a new hall seating four hundred, was opened with a debate on "the best means of securing an Eight Hours' Day." There was a full attendance. The debate was opened by Comrade Duncan's advocating a general strike as the best and swiftest means in opposition to a debater who upheld parliamentary methods. Duncan carried the audience with him so entirely that it was admitted that he had the best of the argument. Comrade Duncan also opened a discussion on the same subject before the Bon-Accord Inquirer's Society, where there was also a lively discussion. He advocated the general strike, not because it would bring about an Eight Hours day of labour, but because he thinks it would mean the Social Revolution.

Edinburgh.—Comrade T. H. Bell lectured 9th Nov. on "Anarchy and the Chicago Anarchists." The bad weather prevented the assembling of a large audience. The Chicago Anniversary was commemorated Nov. 11th, in the Labour Hall, the speakers being Glasbe, Millist, Bell, Hillman (London) and others, "La Carmagnole" was sung by Lebeau.

NOTICES.

St. Pancras Group.—Discussion meetings at the Autonomie Club, 6 Windmill Street, Tottenham Court Road, on the first and third Mondays in the month, at 8.30 p.m.

East London Communist Anarchist Groups.—A series of discussion meetings will be held every Tuesday evening at half-past eight in the hall of the International Workingmen's Educational Club, 40 Berner Street, Commercial Road, E. As further numbers of the *Anarchist Labour Leaf* cannot be printed, No's 1, 2, 3, 4, the only copies extant, have been put in pamphlet form, and can be had from H. DAVIS, 97 Boston Street, Hackney Road, London, N.E., at the rate of 8d. per quire of 24, or single copies one halfpenny each, post free 1d.

International Federation of all Trades and Industries.—Morley Coffee Tavern, Mare Street, Hackney, Jan. 16th, Comrade H. Davis will lecture on "Is Law the Cause of Slavery?"

Kropotkin's Lectures.—Jan. 8th, at Salcoats, N.B.; Jan. 9th, Ayr, N. B. Subject on both occasions being "Siberia."

Donations.—A. M., £2; H. G., 8s. Collected by W. W. at the I. W. M. Club, Berners Street—S. L., 6d.; W. W., 3d.; S., 6d.; S., 6d.; G., 6d.; L. R., 6d.; B. G., 6d.; H. P., 6d.; F., 6d.; J. G., 6d.; M., 1s.; H. S., 1s.; O., 6d.; L. C., 6d.; B., 6d.; P., 6d.; G., 3d.; B. C., 6d.; S. C., 1s.; W., 3d.; H., 3d.; S., 3d.; L. R., 1s.; R. G., 3d.; L. W., 6d.; E. P., 3d.; B., 3d.; N., 6d.—Total 14s. Norwich Freedom Group, 3s. (for pamphlet fund).

Erratum.—We are asked to correct the statement in our last issue as to the sum recovered from N. F. Charrington by the Berners Street Club. It was not £20, but £10, 4s.

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SOCIETY ON THE MORROW OF THE REVOLUTION.

Translated from the French of Jehan Le Vagre.

XI.—THE CHILD IN THE NEW SOCIETY.

—o—

One of the most complex and delicate questions to deal with is certainly the question of childhood. When we think of the feebleness of these little beings, when we consider that the first sensations which are imprinted upon their brains will influence, more or less, the remainder of their lives, we feel a profound sentiment of sympathy towards them.

It is just because they are feeble, because they would die if we did not come to their aid, that in an Anarchist society, where no one would have any reason to fear want, everyone would hasten to the help of the children and their physical and moral development would be absolutely assured.

But before opening up this question, we must have a clear idea of the social relations, we must consider the ties between men and women. It is necessary, in short, for us to rid ourselves completely of the prejudices which now serve as the bases of legal family life.

Seeing that the Anarchists wish to have no authority in their organisation, seeing that organisation according to their idea results from the daily relations between individuals and the producing groups, relations which are direct, without any intermediary, working by the spontaneous action of those interested, group with group, individual with individual, discontinuing at will, without any committee which represents, or at least which pretends to represent, the social organisation; seeing in fact that the relations of the sexes will have become what they are naturally: a free arrangement between two free beings, an arrangement which has nothing to do with the social organisation, the question is greatly simplified and can no longer be put in the form in which it has up to the present been put by the authoritarian socialists—"To whom should the child belong?" for the child is not a property, a product that more rightfully belongs to the one who has created it, as some wish to say, than to society as others pretend.

In Anarchy, as we have said, there is an association of individuals who combine their efforts in order to obtain the largest amount of enjoyment possible, but there is no society properly so-called, such as we understand the term to-day, that is to say forming a series of institutions which act instead of, in the place of, and in the name of, the masses. How therefore are we to assign the infant to a thing, to an entity which does not exist in a palpable and tangible form? Who would take possession of it?

As to those who wish that the child should belong to those who have created it, who regard it in the light of a product, we would ask them to observe that the child, although arriving in the world under conditions not very favorable for it, by the fact of its weakness, which makes it the inferior of those who care for it and attend to its wants, is none the less a being who in being born brings with him the right to existence, and that his feebleness in no way weakens this primordial right since this period of feebleness is one of the phases common to all human beings. Therefore the child cannot be the property of those who have preceded it. It ought to be supplied with all the things necessary to its complete development, in the same way as those have been supplied into whose hands it has fallen. The question then is no longer as we have quoted above, but should be worded in the following manner:—"Who in the new society shall attend to the wants of the child?"

In fact the legal family being abolished, the relations between men and women being no longer hampered by economical or social difficulties as is the case at the present time, these relations will freely assert themselves by the simple attraction of affinities.

The character of individuals will be necessarily modified by this situation; the idea of the father and the mother will necessarily be amplified. Individuals finding in society the satisfaction of their wants, the education and maintenance of the children being no longer by this fact a charge for the parents, the father and mother will be no longer, as they are now in consequence of the privations that they impose upon themselves, allowed to consider the child as a thing belonging to them and of which they can say "I have created it, I have nourished it, I maintain it, it belongs to me; the law has proclaimed me its master, I have the right to do with it whatever seems good to me."

The position will be entirely different: individuals no longer submitting to any constraint, being no more subjected to any privation, instead of seeing in the child another expense, another misery, an unconscious being that they will fashion according to their interests, will see in it a little creature to develop, to instruct, and being no longer harrassed by the cares of existence, they will perform their task admirably.

The family being no longer regulated by any law—since they will all be abolished—here as in all the social relations, the diversity of characters and temperaments, the free play of the various aptitudes, will smooth away the difficulties of the situation and will allow of everyone finding his place in the Social harmony without any jostling or difficulty.

There are some individuals who do not like children, for whom it is a punishment to have children around them; these are they who in the existing society make martyrs or slaves of their children; being compelled by the law to keep them and raise them; they make these little creatures pay for the disagreeableness of a bad social organisation.

There are other individuals on the contrary who enjoy having these little beings to fondle and pamper. It is a supreme joy for them to guide them in their first steps, to teach them to say their first words.

How many persons of this class we see become school teachers,

especially women, in spite of all the unpleasantness that this profession now carries with it, being attracted towards it solely by their love of children. And how many others there are who are not able to develop this sentiment in consequence of the economic difficulties which the present bad social organisation brings in its train.

Now there is nothing to prevent us supposing that in the new society these individuals will be able to group themselves and come to an understanding so as to undertake the charge and attend to the wants of those children whose parents consider them a trouble. In looking at the question in this way it resolves itself without difficulty and there is no need to call for the intervention of society in order to settle it. Everyone takes his share of the work as he thinks fit and finds his personal satisfaction in it since in choosing it he is suiting in the best manner his tendencies and aptitudes.

This objection has often been raised: "If society does not take possession of the child, but leaves the parents free to bring it up according to their will, and if their intelligence is narrow or little developed, the child will run the risk of not receiving all the attention that his complete development will require. Those who have him under their control will instill into him all the prejudices with which they themselves are filled. It may happen also, for instance, that a mother, blinded by the maternal love, will wish at any cost to nurse her child when it would be easy to prove that its state of health will not permit of her doing so."

We shall take these objections one by one and shall try to demonstrate that the mere exercise of liberty will not only smooth over the difficulties better than authority could do, but that the latter could only aggravate the situation. It will not be difficult for us to answer the last objection. If, from the point of view of natural law, anyone is able with some show of reason to claim any rights over the child, certainly it is the mother. More than society, more than no matter who, she can prove the validity of her claim, since it is through her that the infant comes into the world, and she can give him the attention and the food necessary to maintain the life which she has given. Now, if this mother wished to maintain her rights, how could we possibly withdraw the child from her care without doing some authoritarian and consequently arbitrary act? We have already pointed out that under Anarchy no organisation whatsoever can be substituted for society. It would therefore be impossible to appeal to society to take away the child from the mother; it could only be done by falsifying the idea of Anarchy and creating again the authority which we seek to destroy. For the Anarchist idea admits of no equivocation: either complete liberty, or else a new submission to authority.

By means of complete liberty we shall see that the difficulties of the situation will solve themselves. Even in the present society, in spite of all the difficulties and the bad conditions of existence, which hamper individuals in their evolution, mothers raise no objection to putting their children out to nurse for motives less serious than the health of the child; perhaps if they are workers to enable them to go on with their work, or if they belong to the middle class to admit of their going to balls and evening parties. How then can anyone allege that in the future society a mother will refuse to do that which it will be proved to her will affect the health and life of her child, especially when every facility will be at the free disposal of individuals? In the first place there will be no more of these mercenary cares of to-day! Those who devote themselves to the education of children will do it from taste, by vocation, and not to gain money; consequently the sentiment which will have led them to concern themselves about children will be the best guarantee that one could wish for the welfare of the new born. They will strive to find all sorts of kindnesses and refinements to amuse and to aid in the development of the children given over to their care.

Then it has not been proved that the suckling of the child by the woman is an indispensable condition of health for the infant; we know very well that certain doctors pretend that for a normal development of the child it ought to be suckled by the mother, but we also know that certain so-called scientific assertions are in the existing society dictated rather by the interests of a class than by science itself, for every day we have under our eyes children who develop in the most perfect manner although they are artificially suckled. This will be managed still better in the new society when all the articles of consumption will no longer be adulterated by dealers greedy for gain, as is now the case, and where it will be possible to appropriate the nourishment of animals that may be selected for the feeding of children whose mothers do not wish to separate from them. Moreover if a change of climate is considered necessary people will be able to go to the chosen place without being stopped by pecuniary difficulties such as exist to-day, being assured, as they will be, of finding the same facilities for existence in their new place of abode as in that they leave.

We have just seen that the sentiment which urges individuals to concern themselves with children is a guarantee for the latter and that people will have in the new society all the conditions which are necessary in order to satisfy and develop this sentiment. It remains for us to refute the objection of those who fear that parents of limited intelligence will seek to cramp the intelligence of their offspring. Here again there is no serious ground for fear. What is it that prevents parents from sending their children to school? Always under varying forms the money question. And yet, in spite of all the difficulties which exist, the number of the illiterate decreases every day. How can anyone imagine that parents in the new society, when they are no longer influenced by this question, will think of allowing their children to be ignorant, at a time, too, when every facility wished for will be at the disposal of every individual for his physical and intellectual development.

In what has been said we think we have shown that it would be contrary to the principles of Anarchy to confide the education of children to a centralised organisation; but it remains for us to show that it would also prevent the complete development of the child himself. We all know that everyone of us comes into the world with different sorts of capacities and that these capacities develop only in proportion as we find an opportunity to exercise them. Now seeing that we have these varieties of temperament and character, it is evident that these capacities would be smothered in children if they were subjected to an educational government. We have already before us in the present society an example of what this sort of action results in: those who devote themselves to the education of children must then study their character, their inclinations, in such a manner as to develop in them the abilities that are able to manifest themselves instead of unconsciously smothering them by means of a single arbitrary method. More than this we say that it is necessary for the free development of humanity that the education of children should be left to individual abilities and methods. What is it that has contributed to mislead the judgment of man? what is it that has helped to retain in his brain all the prejudices, all the stupidities which he finds it so difficult to rid himself of? What is it indeed, if it is not the centralisation of education which has always come to him through the medium of the State or the Church, and is easily able to overcome that received in the family since the parents have received the same prejudices, have been deluded with the same nonsense. If in the new society the education of childhood were to be centralised in the hands of a few the danger would be as great as in the existing society. If those who charge themselves with the work of education were able to get rid of the prejudices with which we are all nourished all might be well, but if, as is more than probable, they were still under the influence of those prejudices, it would be a great stumbling block to progress.

Even if, after the suppression of Church and State, it pleased certain individuals to try to make simpletons of their children, we think they would be quite unable to do it. In the first place the desire to know is inborn in man. Now as it is presumable, certain even, that groups would form themselves in the new society in order to make it easy for their members to study certain special branches of knowledge, and as these groups would be formed in connection with every variety of human knowledge, we can see the intellectual movement, the exchange of ideas that would take place. Besides, relations being much more extensive and much more fraternal than in the present society based as it is on the antagonism of interests, it would follow that the child, by what he would see within his own field of observation, by what he would hear every day, would escape from the influence of his parents and find all the facilities requisite to acquire the knowledge which his parents refused him. Moreover if he found himself too unhappy under the domination which they sought to impose upon him, he would abandon them and go and put himself under the protection of persons with whom he was more in sympathy, and the parents could not send the police after him to bring again under their rule the slave that at present the law accords to them.

It will be objected, perhaps, that nevertheless, in spite of all, there may be some exceptions who profiting by the absence of regulations will be able to stunt the intelligence of the children they may have. We reply that the suppression of authority will certainly not prevent the exercise of solidarity. It is for us to combat by our educational Anarchist propaganda the absurdities of these few idiotic parents. Because it pleases half-a-dozen brutalised beings to go in opposition to common sense, it is not necessary to entangle the rest of humanity in the meshes of a legislation which would be opposed to liberty by the very fact that it would be the Law.

THE ANARCHISTS OF NORWAY.

(From FREEDOM's Norwegian Correspondent.)

SINCE "Fedraheimen" this summer ceased to be published, its editor, Rasmus Steinsvik, has been travelling around doing propaganda. He has been over the most of Norway, in the cities of Trondhjem and Bergen and out in the country, and the journals have written much about his work, so that Anarchism now is brought nearer the people, and is discussed everywhere. "Fedraheimen" should have been published again this autumn, but it was registered too late in the Post department, and will not come out before the new year. Steinsvik is still doing propaganda and spreading anarchist pamphlets.

In the great congress of Scandinavian workingmen, which was held in Kristiania in August, two Norwegian Anarchists took part, Ivar Mortenson, the sub-editor of "Fedraheimen," and Arne Dybfest, together with two Danes. Their appearance created a great sensation, as it was the first time that Anarchists in Scandinavia had taken part in a workingmen's congress, and they had many a sharp fight to fight out with the numerous Social-Democrats.

The Wage System by Kropotkin will soon be published. Another book, "Among Anarchists," by Arne Dybfest, was published nine weeks ago. It contains several sketches and impressions from Paris and America, and a biography of Kropotkin. It is the first literary Anarchistic book which has been published in Scandinavia, and will do much to kill that misunderstanding among the bourgeoisie, that the Anarchists are murderers and robbers. If anybody will translate the book into English and German, I think it will do a great deal for the propaganda.

THE PLACE OF COMMUNISM IN ANARCHY.

AN ENQUIRY.

Comrades,—

Of late I have been seriously thinking over the many things involved in the title of this enquiry, and am obliged to confess myself dissatisfied with the result of my research up to the present point.

Of one thing, however, I feel quite satisfied; namely—that whether we couple Communism with the demand for Anarchy or not, we are all anxious for freedom.

This being so, it is the more necessary and incumbent on us to make sure, or as sure as possible, that we do not become the mouthpieces of reaction out of mere goodness of heart and unconsciousness of our true position.

There are, it seems to me, three things to determine in this enquiry, which must be satisfactorily settled before we can feel confident of the ground we tread.

Firstly, are competition and freedom opposed to each other as opposite principles? Secondly, is property-owning opposed to freedom? Thirdly, does communism limit freedom, and, if so, to what extent?

With regard to the first point, it seems to me that competition is not, in itself, to blame for the evils by which we are surrounded, but rather the MONOPOLY and PRIVILEGE which often accompany it, giving to certain persons more favourable positions than they would obtain if they had to depend on their personal initiative when others had the same opportunities as themselves. Besides, I wish to be free, and I am certainly inclined to the view that I should not be free if I were prohibited from competing with others, if I wished to do so. Competition, then, in my view at present, does not seem to negate freedom, nor indeed to limit it, all that seems to be necessary is that it shall be free.

The second point seems to me to be more difficult to answer. The formula of Proudhon: "Property is robbery" is now well known and often made use of, but I am afraid with carelessness by many individuals, to whom he would not feel grateful, were he among the living.

In Anarchy, as in Capitalism, we could not live except by the owning of property. The very bread we eat, the coat we wear, the house we live in, is property-owning; and I am quite satisfied that Proudhon could not have meant any of these things, when he wrote his formula.

The property of the capitalist, landlord, and other monopolists was indicated; and if this be admitted, then it resolves itself into the obtaining of artificial advantages by certain individuals in society that is pointed to and condemned. I conclude, then, that PRIVILEGE and MONOPOLY are again met at this point and seem to be the cause of the present evils, and not, as is supposed, the principle of property-owning.

I now reach the third point, namely, does Communism limit freedom, and, if so, to what extent? In so far as it is to be made compulsory it certainly does seem to me to limit, I may say negate, freedom. If, however, I can accept the position of Jean Le Vagre, in November number of FREEDOM, compulsory communism is not meant by those of the Anarchist-Communist school. He contends for the autonomy of the individual in all things. "As is easily seen," says he, "Communism as we understand it has nothing in common of that of the authoritarians, and leaves entire liberty to the individual." Many quotations might be made from Le Vagre to show this, only it is unnecessary. The only question remaining, then, is, why insist on coupling the word communism with Anarchy, when it is only meant to express the disposition of the person using it? Besides, if we again refer to Le Vagre, he contends that Communism is an indispensable and natural part of man, which grows on him the more, as he becomes more enlightened and will come into full and free play when the freedom of individuals is once established.

Speaking for myself, I am not opposed to Communism but favour it in many things, but, at the same time, there are things to which I would lay claim and which I should refuse to submit to introduce Communism in connexion with, regarding them as my personal property and rights.

These are my thoughts and feelings at the present moment, and I am anxious to hear the views of other comrades on this important subject.

Of course, I may be wrong, and, if so, I hope it will be pointed out. My only object in opening this question is to get at the truth, which will hurt none, and enlighten yours in the cause,

H. DAVIS.

"IN DARKEST ENGLAND AND THE WAY OUT."—General Booth's book has made a sensation and the money he asks for comes rolling in. Why? Because he promises to do away with poverty and misery without doing away with the rich and idle at the same time. He is going to remove the effect without touching the cause, and so the said cause joyfully hands him its thousands. He does not believe in "the Socialistic clap-trap which postpones all redress of human suffering until after the general overturn." He is an eminently "practical" man. And so he has rushed in like a fool "where angels fear to tread." Robbing Peter to pay Paul, is the key-note to the whole scheme. He will start workshops in which some people will receive food, lodging and pocket-money—not wages remark—but to supply them with work he will deprive other men and women of their employment. Already complaints are beginning to be heard from the mat-maker, the rag and bone man, the wood-chopper and others; and before the General has got on very far with his scheme he is likely to learn how impossible it is to patch up the present society. If he really means to help the poor let him follow the example of his master Jesus Christ and attack the rich.