

Freedom

A JOURNAL OF ANARCHIST COMMUNISM.

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MONTHLY; ONE PENNY.

THE COMMUNE OF LONDON.

THE composition of the new County Council of London, with its overwhelming majority of Progressives, is an unmistakable evidence of the progress of Socialist ideas and the growth in importance of the workers' claims during the past few years. The voice of the worker is beginning to make itself heard, and there can be little doubt but that he is making its tentative efforts towards emancipation. Roughly and generally speaking a London Progressive is a very mild kind of Municipal Socialist. Some Progressives are more socialistic than others but they all have the tinge, from John Burns, Sydney Webb, and the erstwhile Anarchist, Fred Henderson, to Lord Roseberry and Lord Carrington. This in itself is a tribute to the power of the worker, and a sign as to which way the wind is blowing. The programme of the Municipal Socialist is not so sweeping as that of the Social Democrat; at any rate he does not at present dream of carrying his municipalisation of industry beyond a certain limit. Gas, water, tramways, and perhaps docks: these are the particular branches of industry which it is sought to bring under the control of the London Commune, and it is quite possible some earnest attempts may be made to commence this transfer of management within the next three years. Sydney Webb, the clever propagandist of that watered form of Social-Democracy known as Fabianism, may perhaps be looked upon as the leader of the Extreme Left, which may be said to consist of the eight or ten Socialists and Trade Unionists, and one or two men like Saunders, of Walworth, who poses as a land nationalizer. Some of this group—perhaps more than half—are earnestly imbued with the idea that the municipalisation of industry is a step towards making the life of the worker more bearable. True, this has not proved to be the case in some provincial towns, such as Manchester, Leeds, Birmingham, etc., where strikes and complaints of sweating and hard treatment have on more than one occasion been the order of the day amongst the toilers. Yet they think that the London Commune will be able to do better, and they are certainly justified in accordance with their honest belief in trying to realise their ideal. It is fairer to judge men by their motives than by their actions. John Burns, we know, has done very excellent work in a small way in getting a reduction of the hours of labor, and raising the wages, of the employees of the Council, during his former term of office. He deserves every credit for this.

But where these men, and the thousands of London householders who back up their policy by making them councillors, make the great mistake is in their failure to realise the immensity of the work of emancipating mankind, and the utter insufficiency of the means they are employing for the purpose. It is Mrs. Partington and her mop over again. The Council of the London Evolutionary Commune like the Council of the Paris Revolutionary Commune will do little or nothing to solve the great problem of Misery and Want, because the energies of the well-meaning, intelligent friends of the workers will be dissipated in struggling with the enemies of progress, the representatives of the capitalist and landlord class. The men who would be an immense power and strength in agitating amongst their fellows in the streets and workshops, will fritter away their time in discussing how to keep the rates down how to raise the wages of a few employees a shilling or so a week, what particular uniform such and such a class of employee shall wear, how much shall be paid to the tramway companies they seek to buy out, for their rolling stock, and so on—useful enough work in its way, but pitiful when we only think of the huge army of miserable unemployed and starving people, who are dying all around us whilst the Spring Gardens Council is discussing the expediency of opening a public garden or some such trivial matter. That is just what we Anarchists object to and why we criticise our Socialist friends. They are wasting their time on trifles while the great ocean of misery is left untouched. Look at Burns, for instance. Over and over again this man has shown us his capacity as a leader of men, an organiser of strikes and an apostle of revolutionary truth. It is enough to make the angels weep to see such a man spending his life on the petty details of local government. And there are other half-a-dozen men on the Council of whom the same may be said to some extent. At any rate it is quite certain that they would be infinitely more useful devoting themselves to the workers directly, than they are in fooling about with an empty title on a sort of glorified vestry, ambitious to become a government, but at present with very limited powers. Some of these Socialists and Socialist-Radicals, in the innocence of their hearts, sneer at the Anarchist as a visionary, while all the time they are totally

ignoring the vital problems of London life. What, we would ask these worthy men, what do they propose to do about the vast army of unemployed for whom Mr. Charles Booth has acted as Census enumerator: how do they propose to deal with this question, and how do they propose to deal with the hundred thousand prostitutes, the innumerable thieves, the starving children who are being made into thieves and prostitutes through their evil surroundings in their tenderest years? How do they propose to supply the workers generally with decent homes; how do they propose to do away with the squalidness of London; to give the worker something like the result of his labor? Surely they must realise that the municipalisation of gas and water can scarcely affect these great questions at all.

The work before us, the task which all lovers of humanity desire to accomplish, cannot be done by tinkering. We must set to work resolutely to build up the social edifice anew, on a new foundation and new principles. Freedom in all things, free scope for the development of individual initiative; that must be the keystone of the arch. There is no other way of dealing with the matter. Over and over again the methods advocated by the National and Municipal Socialists, have been tried and failed—failed that is to seriously improve the condition of the workers. The new method, which is the old, of men and women working out their own salvation, must be resorted to if we really wish to make England a pleasant place to live in. We will not say London, because London is impossible under a reasonable condition of Society, London is, as the Chairman of the County Council himself pointed out the other day, an unnatural monstrosity. It is the product of a bad civilisation. For men and women to live under the conditions which obtain in London is no doubt possible, but to be happy, No, emphatically No! To be cut off from the green fields, the trees, the plants, the rocks, birds, wild flowers, hedgerows, animals, and all the wealth of nature, is an irreparable loss to those who dwell in this city. London is really a huge prison, from which the more fortunate can occasionally escape for a time, but in which the mass of prisoners are for ever confined. They have their tasks to do under unhealthy conditions, their insufficient food, their exercise in the courtyard, and their jailors, just as these are provided in her most gracious majesty's houses of hospitality at Pentonville and Wandsworth. The occasional opening of a churchyard as a recreation ground, or a park barely large enough for you to stretch your legs in, cannot replace the country to these millions of prisoners. Ah, no, the prison doors must be thrown back with a clang, the jailors must be disbanded and the jail-factories demolished. Here is a task worth our while to devote our energies to. But to struggle in order to get a seat upon such a body as the County Council and to limit our energies to its tinkering proceedings, is it worth our while? Surely not! For those workers who have entered upon the slippery paths of legislation and municipal administration, we are truly sorry. We shall hear almost less of them in the future than we have in the past; honest in intention as several of them no doubt still are, we fear very much that in a little while they will have sunk in the mire of personal ambition and fallen to the level of such men as Broadhurst, Howell, Cremer, and other equally useless—or worse than useless—"representatives of labor." Once more we ask them, as they will perhaps ask themselves some day when they stand on the edge of the grave and have not even achieved personal happiness as the result of following the will-o'-the-wisp of ambition: Is it worth while?

THE REIGN OF HUNGER.

III.—REVOLT.

HUNGER, emptiness, unsatisfied craving, the deadness of irksome routine and motiveless, helpless habit or the brain-sick revolt of crime,—is this all that life to-day can offer us? In our moments of despair sometimes it seems so. And many, but too many there are whose despair is chronic, who only escape desperation because their vitality is too low for complete consciousness of the plight they are in. But the young, the vigorous, the energetic, who have courage, initiative, whose human faculties and activities clamour for space and opportunity for fulness of life, cannot accept the necessity of the intolerable. Present conditions are miserable, but are they like "the law of the Medes and Persians which altereth not?" Certainly not, when we see men in all parts of the world co-operating with each other for existence in an endless variety of different ways, some producing happiness, others misery.

Certainly not, when we know that our own race has continuously changed its mode of co-operation, and the present methods have only grown up within the last few generations. Certainly not, when we feel within ourselves, and see in others, not only the desire, but the capacity to form relations with our fellow-men on a different and far better footing. Whilst we know and feel this, we cannot sit down under the reign of hunger, accepting it as inevitable; it becomes the one great end and aim of our lives to understand how it has arisen, how it is kept up and how it may be overthrown. Our eyes once opened to the misery, hollowness, unreason of the present social state, our inmost soul revolts against it; not for ourselves only, but for all the countless men and women whose desires and aspirations it satisfies as little as our own.

But this has not always been so. We were born into the present state of things, and there has been a time in the life of each of us when we regarded the social system around us as as much an essential part of life as the air we breathe. We always felt it unsatisfactory, or gradually we came to feel it so, but we bit our lips to restrain our passionate cravings. What was the use of crying out? Then, like a revelation, came the idea: these social conditions which hem in and crush my life and the lives of those round me are not unchangeable, inevitable, like the raising and setting of the sun. They arise out of human co-operation for existence, they are the wounds and bruises we inflict upon one another in the process.

Some of us, under the influence of this new thought, rushed into the wildest individualism. "Let us break up this cruel co-operation," we cried. "It is a fatal mistake; no advantages it may yield can make up for the misery it inflicts. What are the power, the wealth, the knowledge of society if the total result of them is to make each individual or the majority of individuals each personally wretched? What shall it profit you or me if that the total life of society be increased, while each individual life in society is curtailed and mutilated?"

Thereupon there turned to us certain worthy and well-meaning persons, and with an air of shocked reproof, said, "You are mad. You are but cells of the body politic and it is the duty of the parts to sacrifice themselves for the corporate life of the whole." And we in the blind rage of our revolt replied, "What is the community to us or we to the community? Let it be broken up. The free man's motto is Each for himself. If each keep to that, all will be free."

Or again, under the inspiration of this same new idea that our hunger of heart and mind and body was due, not to the immutable laws of nature but to the social co-operation in which we were living, and therefore changeable by our will, some of us rushed into another extreme. "Social co-operation," we said, "has been arranged and is now organised and controlled by law and authority; let us seize upon this mighty force; let us make laws and take the authority into our own hands and see if we cannot make some adjustments which will cause the restraints of co-operation and the advantages accruing from it to be distributed as evenly as possible."

But after a little while we have not been satisfied with either of these two practical deductions from our new idea. The most defiant individualist began to feel within himself his close relationship with his fellow-men. He began to feel that, whether he liked it or no, his life was interlinked with theirs, and therefore dependent upon them in a thousand ways outside the interference of any temporary and oppressive social institutions.

The most ardent State Socialist, after a few essays in current politics, began to feel inward misgivings as to the capacity of authority to transform social co-operation so as to equalise its burdens and benefits.

Experience and reflection having brought some order into our thoughts and proportion into our feelings, we turned to the problem our new conception had laid bare to us and began to study its essential nature.

The evil is somehow embedded in social co-operation; but it does not follow either that it is in the very essence of this co-operation in itself, or that it is so superficial and exterior to it as to be removable by mere changes of the outward and visible authority which now seems to control it. The first thing to be done then is to study the history of social co-operation in the past and analyse it in the present, so as to discover what are the elements in it which make its results so cruelly unsatisfying.

(To be continued.)

Correspondence.

FABIANS AND THE WOMAN QUESTION.

MY DEAR EDITOR,—I see that you devote three columns of your current number to reviews of the papers read at the Fabian Society's meeting of the 19th ult. on "Women under Socialism," and that in your note on the subject you suggest that the State regulation of motherhood is to be taken as a Fabian doctrine. I think this suggestion was hardly justified by the debate, such as it was, on the two papers in question, and I should suppose that most members of the Society were more in sympathy with the views of your contributor S. M. than with those of Mrs. Ritchie on this particular point. I, for one, should probably concur with him in thinking that the proposed control would be a *reductio ad absurdum* of the principle of economic organisation, if I could at all succeed in constraining my imagination to conceive how the proposal could be practically put into effect; but I am not so amenable to verbal logic as to admit that there is any necessary connection between the opinions as to the utility of State Socialism held by most members of the Fabian Society, and such a conclusion as to the destined extension of the State's good offices. And, in vindication of my protest against the suggestion that the Fabian Society in general is to be credited with acquiescence in the views which your reporters criticise, I may observe that the Executive Committee, who may presumably be taken to represent the average formulated opinions of the members, have for years abstained

from arranging any discussions on the "Woman Question," precisely because they believed that the principles which guide the opportunist efforts of the Society in adapting political institutions to serve the economic needs of the workers, to "ensure the material life of the people in order that they may enjoy a higher life intellectual and moral" (I cannot allow S. M. to quote Fabian Essays as anti-Fabian doctrines), did not involve the holding of any particular opinions as to the probable position of women, or as to the operation of intersexual love "under Socialism"—whatever that phrase may mean. But, some women of the Society having expressed a wish to make known their opinions on these subjects, the Executive Committee, like good Anarchists, provided them an opportunity, and no doubt will do so again, when such wish shall again be expressed. But we are not so State-Socialistic as to permit no speculations to be uttered from our platform save those which have been or would be endorsed by a plebiscite of the Society.

SYDNEY OLIVIER.

Limpfield, 17th March, 1892.

A TIP FOR ANARCHISTS.

To the Editor of Freedom.

COMRADE,—A religious young man is in the habit of calling every Sunday at the houses in my street. He leaves a tract at each house, changing it the following Sunday for another, changing it again the following Sunday for another, and so on. Could not some of our comrades copy this system to the benefit of our cause? Suppose some man or woman invested in six copies each of our pamphlets, there would be enough for an ordinary small street for some weeks and there can be no doubt that good results would follow. To many the pamphlets would be attractive by their novelty. They would not be cast on one side, like a religious tract, but would, I am sure, be carefully read. This might then be followed up by the introduction of *Freedom*, and I fully believe that anyone acting on this plan would easily be able to get rid of half a quire regularly. This is the sort of work that anybody can do. It does not require a speaker or a writer to do it. It appeals to all and I hope we shall hear of some comrades trying it, as by so doing they will help to spread our principles immensely, and help to strengthen the work of the Freedom Group.

Yours fraternally,

A FRIEND OF "FREEDOM."

EQUAL FREEDOM AND BLACKLEGS.

(AN ANSWER TO C. P.'S REPLY.)

Can we reach equal freedom by a system of limitations, by preaching Hands off? No, because we have got to put hands on. When the workers attempt to take possession of the instruments of production, they will be faced by an army, and the man at its head will say first thing: "Hands off! You must not touch; it does not belong to you." But the workers can only cry "Hands on." They have been keeping their hands off for the last hundred years and more, and it has not brought them equal freedom yet. C. P. seems to think we have already equal freedom when we keep our hands off now-a-days. What sort of freedom does he want? If it is full liberty of action, he will wait till doomsday before he gets it by a policy of hands off. We workers cannot obtain freedom to work, to live, unless we use the force of organisation which we have in our hands. C. P. admits that the co-operation of two individuals renders it possible for them to carry out many projects they could not manage each by himself; but is he so blind as not to see that the workers have to face the force of a big co-operation to keep them down, the co-operation of those who are bitterly opposed to their freedom? When we see persons co-operating together against the interests of their fellow-creatures, like the ruling classes are now doing against the wage-workers, surely we workers, on our side, are doing the only right and wise thing when we co-operate to oppose the enemies of our liberty. Would C. P. have us, handicapped as we are, meet this powerful organisation each alone and single-handed?

Then again, he says that the principle that no force must be used as long as none is offered is simplicity itself; it is only a question whether actual violence to the person is offered or not; a blackleg does not use personal violence against a trades unionist, therefore he is not offending against the freedom of unionists. But look at the cab strike for instance. If the cabmen are to support their wives and families, they cannot earn enough to pay their employers the price per day these last demand for the loan of the horse and cab. If a man were to go and drive a cab for the day on the employer's terms, whilst the men who have formed a union to fight for a redress of their grievances are putting these grievances forward, I am sure that the unionists would feel somehow that he was wronging them, preventing them getting a little more freedom, and they would go for him. I can associate with men who are trying to free themselves in some way or another, but not with men who know only of equal rights to work but not of equal rights to be free.

"Have I not as good a right to the job as you or any man," C. P. seems to say, "and if you will not take it, what right have you to prevent me?" But now, look here. Suppose I, or any of the men where I work, were to say, "Well Jack, or Bill, or Charlie, do you think we are getting money enough?" "No," he answers. "What shall we do? Shall we ask for more, or leave?" And suppose we all decide to ask for more money. It seems to me that, if the employers refused, and we still decided to ask a higher price for our work, it would be a mean, sneaking action for some other men—working-men like ourselves who know very well how hard it is to make both ends meet—to come in and help the employers to cut us down or turn us out altogether. Of course, if we were willing to leave, or gave up our demand for a rise, there would be no harm in the others taking the lower wage too. Quite a number of strikes have been successful lately, e.g., dockers, coal-porters, busmen, and some in the building trade. But, says C. P., if the unionists win, the blackleg starves. It is not the strikers' fault if he does, they have enough to do to look after their own affairs. If the blackleg starves it is his own fault; there's plenty in the world and nobody ought to starve—and the way to prevent it is a general strike, which I for one am trying to force on every day.

C. C. DAVIS, Gas Workers' Union.

AT OUR BEST.

We tell thee, poor toiler, how hard we had striven,
To better thy lot, and to sweeten thy life;
How much of our health and our brains we had given,
Engaged for thy sake, for thy weal in long strife.

And thou, ever-grateful to those few who love thee,
Wouldst listen, and never remind us of this:—
That but for thy toil, there would none be above thee,
Not even to work in thy cause, for thy bliss.

M. W.

ANARCHY.

BY ENRICO MALATESTA.

(Continued from previous number.)

But let us hasten to pass on to those functions for which government is thought indispensable by all who are not Anarchists. These are the internal and external defence of society, *i.e.*, War, Police and Justice.

Government being abolished, and social wealth at the disposal of every one, all antagonism between various nations would soon cease, and there would consequently be no more cause for war. Moreover, in the present state of the world, in any country where the spirit of rebellion is growing, even if it do not find an echo throughout the land, it will be certain of so much sympathy that the government will not dare to send all its troops to a foreign war for fear the revolution should break out at home. But even supposing that the rulers of countries not yet emancipated would wish and could attempt to reduce a free people to servitude, would these require a government to enable them to defend themselves? To make war we need men who have the necessary geographical and technical knowledge, and, above all, people willing to fight. A government has no means of augmenting the ability of the former, or the willingness or courage of the latter. And the experience of history teaches that a people really desirous of defending their own country are invincible. In Italy everyone knows how thrones tremble and regular armies of hired soldiers vanish before troops of volunteers, *i.e.*, armies anarchically formed.

And as to the police and justice, many imagine that if it were not for the police and the judges, everybody would be free to kill, violate or injure others as the humour took him; that Anarchists, if they are true to their principles, would like to see this strange kind of liberty respected; "liberty" that violates or destroys the life and freedom of others unrestrained. Such people believe that we, having overthrown the government and private property, shall then tranquilly allow the re-establishment of both, out of respect for the "liberty" of those who may feel the need of having a government and private property. A strange mode indeed of constraining our ideas! In truth, one may better answer such notions with a shrug of the shoulders than by taking the trouble to confute them.

The liberty we wish for, for ourselves and others, is not an absolute, abstract, metaphysical liberty, which in practice can only amount to the oppression of the weak. But we wish for a tangible liberty, the possible liberty, which is the conscious communion of interests, *i.e.*, voluntary solidarity. We proclaim the maxim: DO AS YOU WILL, and in this our program is almost entirely contained, because, as may be easily understood, we hold that in a society without government or property, each one WILL WISH THAT WHICH HE SHOULD.

But if, in consequence of a false education, received in the present society, or of physical disease, or whatever other cause, an individual should wish to injure others, you may be sure we should adopt all the means in our power to prevent him. As we know that a man's character is the consequence of his physical organism and of the cosmic and social influences surrounding him, we certainly shall not confound the sacred right of self-defence, with the absurdly assumed right to punish. Also, we shall not regard the delinquent, *i.e.*, the man who commits anti-social acts, as the rebel he seems in the eyes of the judges nowadays. We shall regard him as a sick brother in need of cure. We therefore shall not act towards him in the spirit of hatred, when repressing him, but shall confine ourselves solely to self-protection. We shall not seek to revenge ourselves, but rather to rescue the unfortunate one by every means that science suggests. In theory Anarchists may go astray like others, losing sight of the reality under a semblance of logic; but it is quite certain that the emancipated people will not let their dearly bought liberty and welfare be attacked with impunity. If the necessity arose, they would provide for their own defence against the anti-social tendencies of certain amongst them. But how do those whose business it now is to make the laws protect society? Or those others who live by seeking for and inventing new infringements of law? Even now, when the masses of the people really disapprove of anything and think it injurious, they always find a way to prevent it very much more effectually than all the professional legislators, constables or judges. During insurrections the people, though very mistakenly, have enforced the respect for private property, and they have secured this respect far better than an army of policemen could have done.

Customs always follow the needs and sentiments of the majority, and they are always the more respected, the less they are subject to the sanction of law. This is because every one sees and comprehends their utility, and because the interested parties, not deluding themselves with the idea that government will protect them, are themselves concerned in seeing the custom respected. The economical use of water is of very great importance to a caravan crossing the deserts of Africa. Under these circumstances water is a sacred thing, and no sane man dreams of wasting it. Conspirators are obliged to act secretly, so secrecy is preserved among them, and obliquely rests on whosoever violates it. Gambling debts are not guaranteed by law, but among gamblers it is considered dishonorable not to pay them, and the delinquent feels himself dishonored by not fulfilling his obligations.

Is it on account of the police that more people are not murdered? The greater part of the Italian people never see the police except at long intervals. Millions of men go over the mountains and through the country, far from the protecting eye of authority, where they might be attacked without the slightest fear of their assailants being traced, but they run no greater risk than those who live in the best guarded spots. Statistics show that the number of crimes rise in proportion to the increase of repressive measures. Whilst they vary rapidly with the fluctuations of economic conditions and with the state of public opinion.

Primitive laws, however, only concern unusual, exceptional acts. Every-day life goes on beyond the limits of the criminal code, and is regulated almost unconsciously by the tacit and voluntary assent of all, by means of a number of usages and customs much more important to social life than the dictates of law. And they are also much better observed, although completely divested of any sanction beyond the natural odium which falls upon those who violate them, and such injury as this odium brings with it.

When disputes arise would not voluntarily accepted arbitration or the pressure of public opinion be far more likely to bring about a just settlement of the difficulties in question than an irresponsible magistrate, who has the right to pass judgment upon everybody and every thing, and who is necessarily incompetent and therefore unjust?

As every form of government only serves to protect the privileged classes, so do police and judges only aim at repressing those crimes, often not considered criminal by the masses, which offend only the privileges of the rulers or property-owners. For the real defence of society, the defence of the welfare and liberty of all, there can be nothing more pernicious than the formation of this class of functionaries, who exist on the pretence of defending all, and therefore habitually regard every man as game to be hunted down, often striking at the command of a superior officer, without themselves even knowing why, like hired assassins and mercenaries.

All that you have said may be true, say some; Anarchy may be a perfect form of social life; but we have no desire to take a leap in the dark. Therefore, tell us how your society will be organised. Then follows a long string of questions, which would be very interesting if it were our business to study the problems that might arise in an emancipated society, but of which it is useless and absurd to imagine that we could now offer a definite solution. According to what method will children be taught? How will production and distribution be organised? Will there still be large cities? or will people spread equally over all the surface of the earth? Will all the inhabitants of Siberia winter at Nice? Will every one dine on partridges and drink champagne? Who will be the miners and sailors? Who will clear the drains? Will the sick be nursed at home or in hospitals? Who will arrange the railway time-table? What will happen if the engine-driver falls ill while the train is on its way? And so on, without end, as though we could prophesy all the knowledge and experience of future time, or could, in the name of Anarchy, prescribe for the coming man what time he should go to bed, and on what days he should cut his nails!

Indeed if our readers expect from us an answer to these questions, or even to those among them really serious and important, which can be anything more than our own private opinion at this present hour, we must have succeeded badly in our endeavour to explain what Anarchy is.

We are no more prophets than other men, and should we pretend to give an official solution to all the problems that will arise in the life of the future society, we should have indeed a curious idea of the abolition of government. We should then be describing a government, dictating, like the clergy, a universal code for the present and all future time. Seeing that we have neither police nor prisons to enforce our doctrine, humanity might laugh with impunity at us and our pretensions.

Nevertheless, we consider seriously all the problems of social life which now suggest themselves, on account of their scientific interest, and because, hoping to see Anarchy realised, we wish to help towards the organisation of the new society. We have therefore our own ideas on these subjects, ideas which are to our minds likely to be permanent or transitory, according to the respective cases. And did space permit, we might add somewhat more on these points. But the fact that we to-day think in a certain way on a given question is no proof that such will be the mode of procedure in the future. Who can foresee the activities which may develop in humanity when it is emancipated from misery and oppression? When all have the means of instruction and self-development? When the strife between men, with the hatred and rancour it breeds, will be no longer a necessary condition of existence? Who can foresee the progress of science, the new sources of production, means of communication, etc.?

The one essential is that a society be constituted in which the exploitation and domination of man by man are impossible. That the society, in other words, be such that the means of existence and development of labor be free and open to every one, and all be able to co-operate, according to their wishes and their knowledge, in the organisation of social life. Under such conditions everything will necessarily be performed in compliance with the needs of all, according to the knowledge and possibilities of the moment. And every thing will improve with the increase of knowledge and power.

(To be continued.)

FREEDOM.

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NOTES.

NO POLICY OF PERMEATION FOR THE S. D. F.

An hour at the Commune Celebration held by the S.D.F. at St. Andrews Hall, Newman St., on March 18th, revealed the fact that there is good stuff in the Federation yet. The two first speakers, Hunter Watts and H. Quelch made no bones about stating that it was not the intention of the Federation to tack itself on to any political party, in order to obtain the rights of the workers. Their plan is still to organise themselves into knowing what they want, and then to go and take it. Good luck go with them! The Commune was held up to the large audience as the forlorn hope that led the way to the breach, and had been blown to pieces by a mine of treachery and brute force. The death of the Paris Communards, however, made it possible for the succeeding ranks of Social Revolutionists to pass on up to the breach and through it into the enemy's citadel. That depends on unity in the ranks though, does it not?
N. F. D.

LAW AND HUMANITY.

A comrade writes:—I do not care to discuss the motive which impelled Mrs. Osborne to take jewels and then attempt to fasten the blame upon others. I expect the motives are of the kind that pervade the minds of all those who live a mean life, i.e., profiting by the hard work of other people; and such persons as Mrs. Osborne, being accustomed to have every thing they want without the labor of getting it, are induced at times of temporary distress to lay hands upon any wealth that comes in their way. But apart from this, what I desire to point out is, how utterly at variance are the working of law and humanity. Here are two women who at the outset view each other with anything but friendly eyes, yet who are drawn together at last by the sufferings of the one breeding sympathy in the bosom of the other. All strife between them is ended, and the result is mutual aid. The free play of a truly natural and human feeling has conquered, and an affinity is attained. Yet what says the law? What says the tyrannical meddler? This is not sufficient; the power of the law must be upheld and its right to impose penalties; to allow a better human feeling to prevail is to hasten the downfall of the property-owners, whom it is our business to protect. And so this woman, shortly to be a mother, is hurried off to the poisonous atmosphere of a jail for nine months, not for perjury (as witness police evidence, perjury with impunity, in the courts day by day), but for the sake of displaying the existence and power of that governing force which helps the robber in his robbery and keeps the poor where they are—in deadening poverty. Our aim must be to show the people that, whilst man-made laws exist, social harmony and true feeling is impossible, but that when we are all really free from the monster Law, the mental suffering coming from a knowledge of an unsocial act we may have committed will in itself be a sufficient deterrent against repetition of such acts. All the cruelty, poverty, lying and cheating we see to-day has, as its foundation, the superstition amongst the people as to the necessity for governed and governors. That superstition once got rid of, the whole flimsy structure of force and fraud falls to the ground."

THE WALSALL TRIAL.

The six Walsall Anarchists come before the judge and jury at Stafford Assizes on March 30. The arrangements made for their defence are as follows. The London Defence Committee have engaged Mr. Thompson as counsel for Ditchfield, Battolla and Cailles, instructed by Mr. Cottrell, Walsall; Deakin's friends have chosen to defend him a local barrister, Mr. McCarthy, instructed by Mr. Maw; the Sheffield Defence Committee have engaged Mr. Holmes Gore of Bristol as solicitor for Charles, whose friends are providing him with Mr. Willis, as counsel; the S. D. C. are also assisting Westley, whose solicitor is Mr. Rose and his counsel Mr. Boddam.

Contributions may be sent to J. Turner, 7, Lambs Conduit St., W.C. (for the London D. C.); or to Edward Carpenter, Holmsfield, near Sheffield (for the Sheffield D. C.). Received £1, collected by N. F. D., given to the L. D. C.; 2s. 6d., J. W. Henry, sent to Sheffield.

ANARCHISM AND BRUTALITY.

The pretended Anarchist revelations, contributed to a Birmingham paper by the police agent McCormick, have been exposed in an excellent letter to the same paper by Comrade Cores. Of the abominable article from "L'Internationale," brought forward by the police at Walsall as evidence of the objects of the pretended Anarchist conspiracy, Cores remarks, that he himself and every Anarchist he has spoken to regard its inhumanity with horror, and that the paper containing it, instead of being published and distributed openly as are genuine Anarchist publications, is issued secretly (some French comrades say by a police agent), and only sent now and again to prominent revolutionists.

IS IT SO SINGULAR?

The Manchester "Evening News," March 17 th, says:—"A singular incident has occurred at Oldham. At an inquest on a collier who received a fatal injury at a colliery, the jury, finding there were not sufficient props in the mine to prevent the fall of roof, returned a verdict of manslaughter against the colliery owner. The coroner, whilst recording the verdict, said he was not obliged to commit the man for manslaughter because the jury returned such a verdict. He would not commit the colliery owner, and nothing more would be heard of it." But we have heard of this kind of thing before, and the wonder is that we do not hear much more of the like. With Henry Matthews refusing to bend his individual merciless will to the verdict of the nation, no wonder the petty subordinates in the system of "law and order" are declining to accept the verdict of twelve men. The people should by this time have learned that Law means Officials.

THE XERES REVOLT.

In Spain some light has been thrown upon the Xeres revolt. The comrades accused of complicity with the rebels have been acquitted by the court martial. This does not prove that the insurrection was got up by the police, as the Paris "Socialist" insinuates. It seems that there are people who, having ceased to be revolutionary themselves, think that no revolt is possible unless the police have a finger in the pie. But, quite apart from the professional leaders of the people, there are the masses; and these, when they are much oppressed and feel their patience exhausted do rebel—whether it pleases the said leaders or not. And of course, when they rise, the people are liable to make mistakes: they may not do what would be beneficial and may do what is injurious to their cause. The Xeres insurrection was no exception to the rule. A Spanish Anarchist publication, "Acracia," writing immediately after the affray, very rightly pointed to the enormous sufferings of the people, and contrasted the very few acts of revenge (committed, in fact, by a small, self-detached band, not by the bulk of the rebels) with the horrible atrocities which characterised the bourgeois revolutions that have taken place in the course of this century in Spain. The wonder is not that the people have done some regrettable things, but that they did not do much more, considering what just cause they had for violent exasperation.

THE ANARCHIST TRIAL AT ROME.

The trial at Rome which was suspended in such strange and unusual circumstances (through a FORGERY committed by the court), was resumed at the beginning of February, and after many scenes as lively as those witnessed at the close of last year, has been carried on in the absence of the accused. Notwithstanding this prudential measure taken by the court, the whole prosecution collapses. A witness for the prosecution, a former police official, has caused a great sensation by affirming that he was induced to leave the force because he was requested to give evidence in conformity with a plan devised at the police office. As he refused to do so, the trial was suspended by the forged ordinance the very day he was to have appeared in the witness box. Besides this, all the police agents who appear as witnesses for the prosecution have committed themselves to statements which are proved to be false. The court has been obliged to admit that it is so, and has often complained of the conduct of these officials; but of course it has refused to prosecute them for perjury.

HOW ANARCHIST PAPERS FARE IN ITALY.

In December last our comrades in Milan began to publish a paper, called "L'Amico del Popolo" (The People's Friend). As each number appeared, it was suppressed. Finally the paper was prosecuted. Here are the reasons given in court by the Attorney General of the free constitutional government of Italy:

The article "To the Republicans" in the said paper contained threats against the existing constitutional monarchy; especially the remark that the state, whatever the form of government, is an instrument in the hands of some men, whether one, a few or many, for oppressing the rest; and the conclusion which extolls Anarchist-Socialism.

The article "The necessity of Revolution" proclaims that a wide spread revolt, which shall destroy the present economic system, is inevitable; this present social organisation being based on exploitation, speculation, fraud, domination, hypocrisy and sophistry. The said article is therefore revolutionary.

The article "St. Ambrogio again" offends against the inviolability of the rights of private property, hinting that the riches monopolised by the few must be put at the disposal of all.

The article "A drama in barracks" offends against the respect due to the existing law, and military discipline, by saying that soldiers are taught fratricide and invited to commit it.

The article "Respect the laws" offends against the reverence due to law, and rouses class against class, by stating that law is the product of

a privileged and exploiting class, and framed to support and favor capitalist and social parasites, and ought to be abolished; as also the article beginning "Anarchy and negation of government," and breathing nothing but a desire for the destruction of the monarchical constitution from beginning to end.

Finally, the article "The Victim of the Livonian police" expresses approval of criminal acts, by maliciously describing in full a bloody deed perpetrated by the police, in the execution of their duty, and relating that the by-standers exclaimed "Gallant youths!" to some ill disposed persons who shouted "Death to the assassins! Long live the Social Revolution!" at the funeral of the man who was killed.

The government make more propaganda in a day or two by such prosecutions as this than our comrades could hope to accomplish by months of speaking and writing.

A DOLE.

The bread I eat
Fills me to-day with shame.
Lo, here I fling it to the street,
Not money—just the bread I eat.
My brothers, for your lofty claim
Take, an you will, in Freedom's name
The bread I eat.

E. RADFORD.

INDIVIDUALISM, ANARCHISM AND SOCIALISM.

THERE is undoubtedly at the present moment in a certain section of social-democracy, especially after the significant split in the German party, a strong feeling that there is something true in Anarchism; that too much discipline, too much State-providence, too much electioneering may prove, after all, a fatal mistake.

Open minded Socialists see that Socialism, *i.e.*, a system of social co-operation, can only be successful if based on the foundation stone of individual liberty; and try to incline their party in that new direction, disclaiming any idea of centralisation and revolutionary dictatorship.

"There is no ultimate incompatibility between Socialism (meaning State Socialism) and even the extremest Anarchism," writes Mr. Salt to Bellamy, and the latter endorses the view that there is no reason why they should not work hand in hand, instead of considering each other as enemies.

Now about the "extremest" Anarchists, there is much to say. We understand Mr. Salt by that expression to be referring "individualist" Anarchists like Mr. Tucker and Mr. Tarn. Individualists certainly they are, to the extent of considering society as a mere numerical addition of individual units. But certainly they are not Anarchists. Mr. Tucker, in commenting on Mr. Salt's letter, distinctly affirms that Anarchism "does not mean no laws and no coercion"; and Mr. Tarn advocates the institution of "Defence Associations," otherwise called Pinkerton Police. What individualists advocate is but a system of petty monopoly; industrial, commercial and financial companies (which is also the ideal of M. de Molinari and other bourgeois economists), struggling against each other, the stronger prevailing over the weaker, the richer over the poorer, the first over the late comer. This leads us necessarily to the constitution of a government "to keep the peace." To think that there may be, as Tucker claims, unrestricted competition between men enjoying equal opportunities and equal social chances, is sheer contradiction. If there be real equality in society, competition is not possible; and if there be competition, then equality will soon be gone. Individualists lack the fundamental principle of Socialism and Anarchism—solidarity.

To return to Mr. Salt's letter. The proposal which he makes for united action on the part of Socialists and Anarchists is founded on a double assumption.

Firstly, that Socialists are well alive to the necessity of giving free scope to the liberty of the individual. Secondly, that Anarchism is but an ideal, the ideal of Socialism.

We do not want to disparage the efforts of open minded Socialists to drive their party in the paths of liberty and spontaneous social action, instead of that of centralisation and State-omnipotence, which would in our view, and, we may say, in the view of all thinking men, prove fatal to the Social Revolution. But we are afraid that such efforts will only be partially successful; at any rate, THERE STILL EXISTS THE NECESSITY FOR A TRUE PROPAGANDA of Anarchist principles.

Should a revolution break out to-morrow, we are convinced that, in spite of all good preaching by individual Socialists, there would be a tremendous rush for State, law and dictatorship, and all good intentions would be forgotten in the straits of the moment. There is only one hope, that the Revolution may be saved, and this lies in our being able to open a new current towards decentralisation and self-government. It is our duty to gather our forces and to prepare, at this eleventh hour, to accomplish this task, that the Revolution may not land us in despotism and reaction, and finally perish. No co-operation with State Socialism, no hand in hand policy can bring about better results than an uncompromising attitude and the strong and consequent advocacy of our principles.

The mistake into which Mr. Salt falls, in common with many other people, is to conceive Anarchism as but an ideal; and to remove its realisation to a distant future. Besides being an ideal, and because it

IS A TRUE IDEAL, Anarchism is a working principle even nowadays. Nay, the most important task of Anarchism is nowadays to revolutionise the minds of the people, to destroy fetichism as government and authority, and to open the way for a free, popular Revolution, a Revolution BY the people as well as FOR the people. S. M.

COMMEMORATION OF THE PARIS COMMUNE.

Two public meetings were held in London, on March 18th, to celebrate the Paris Commune of 1871. One was convened at South Place Institute by the London Anarchist Groups, the other at St. Andrews Hall by the S. D. F.

The South Place meeting was crammed; standing room was a luxury; and many of the speeches were received with great enthusiasm. This is the second distinctively Anarchist Commune celebration at South Place, and it has been as successful as the first. This year the Commonwealth Group, having completely cast their "revolutionary socialist" slough, co-operated with the other Anarchist Groups. There was of course no chairman.

The meeting was opened by C. W. Mowbray, who spoke of the causes which gave birth to the Commune, and the causes which brought about its failure. The ideas of the Commune influence the workers to-day. Referring to Walsall, he denounced the police spy as one whom even a Christian would admit had no soul. After Xeres, Berlin, Vienna, what may we not expect to happen this year. Toasting one's toes in front of a fire and philosophising will not bring about the revolution. We want comrades who will carry the truth to the street corners.

C. Morton, after reading a telegram of sympathy from Aberdeen, said the Commune was the outcome of the aspirations of the workers. Why should we blame the mistakes that were made? The English workers make mistakes to-day. Can we not see how the active revolutionary work of the London Socialists is being now diverted into useless political channels? The workers do not want people to tell them what to do. If they have sense enough to produce, they have sense enough to enjoy what they produce. Burn your vote; it is the badge of slavery. Let trade-unionists rid themselves of officialism, and act the important part they might in the future.

T. Parris: We are told that Socialists and Anarchists have no religion. We have the greatest of all religions, the glorious cause of humanity. The Commune will never be forgotten. It has been defamed, like all good causes at first, but its memory is outliving slander. It was overthrown by the State, which has committed more crimes than any other human agency. How great is the force of intellect, but it must be touched with love, if it is to be truly powerful. Nothing can be beautiful made for gain, and the opportunity to put our soul into our work will be one of the greatest joys the revolution will bring to us.

D. J. Nicoll: The rich and powerful, when they cannot slay, can always slander the friends of the people. What is the use of replying to them with votes? Do they slay with pieces of paper? No, with brute force. Men are sacrificing their lives because they are sick of them, and wish for the great change. As the hour of revolution approaches, the army of quacks becomes enormous. The eight hour bill, the pension scheme (to benefit the worker at an age he never reaches), County Councils and Municipal Workshops, all these political will-o'-the-wisps are being used to delude the workers. For all that, perhaps the year 1892 may prove as eventful as 1792, if the workers know how to fight for themselves.

P. Kropotkin dwelt on the importance of the Commune and the change it has produced in men's minds. The idea of independent communes has grown and developed, and largely shaped the Anarchist Communist movement. But in future the first care of the workers in revolt must be to see that food and shelter are supplied to ALL. They must organise their work and the distribution of the produce with this special aim in view. For the success of the great Social Revolution two things are mainly needed: freedom of individual initiative and mutual trust. Without confidence in each other, courage is undermined and initiative paralyzed. Tactics and leaders seem of great importance when the few revolt against the many. But when the masses revolt, what need have they for tactics? Let those who will be called upon to act endeavour to know each other thoroughly, and work only with those whom they can completely trust.

Louise Michel believed that now, as in 1871, the government would attempt to divert the Revolution by a war. Let the workers of all lands stretch their hands across the frontiers in brotherhood, and defeat these wicked attempts. The Commune, if successful, might have established a new tyranny, that of the aristocracy of labor, but since then ideas have been enlarged, and the workers demand the abolition of all authority and privilege, not for one city, but for the world. In the present society no one can live as a true man. Those in this hall, even the poorest, act an unbrotherly part by their brethren, in that they have food and clothes and shelter, whilst there are some who have neither. The present society is unnatural, and "those who walk against nature walk in iniquity."

J. Turner noticed that this is the 21st Commune celebration. Still the Commune lives. Some people, Fabians and such like, consider the Commune a failure, and are very much to the front with a policy of "permeation." That means, to civilise a savage you must send missionaries who will adopt cannibalism and other savage conventionalities in order to wean him from his love of human flesh! Strikes are likely to attain such proportions as to create the very atmosphere for a successful revolution. The police hunt down Anarchists, not because they

really fear their physical violence, but because they dread their propaganda. It is for the workers of the world to say how long it shall be before they come into their great inheritance.

Trunk remarked on the spread of the idea that private property should be abolished. Despite the integrity of many Social Democrats, Social Democracy is on the wane and Anarchism on the increase; the principle of authority as well as that of monopoly is doomed. The wholesale crusades of rulers against the Anarchists serve to open the eyes of the masses. The lives lost in Spain, America etc. are not sacrificed in vain.

Short speeches were also made by Leggat, Yanovsky and Barker. The collection amounted to £3 1s. 3½d., one French sou, and one button (not silver).

We have received towards expenses £1 from the Vorwärts Group.

ANARCHIST MORALITY.

By P. KROPOTKINE.

(Continued from previous number.)

VII.

We have hitherto been speaking of the conscious, deliberate actions of man, those performed intentionally. But side by side with our conscious life we have an unconscious life, which is very much wider, and was formerly far too little recognised. Yet we have only to notice how we dress in the morning, trying to fasten a button that we know we lost last night, or stretching out our hand to take something that we ourselves have moved away, to obtain an idea of this unconscious life and realise the enormous part it plays in our existence.

It makes up three-fourths of our relations with others. Our ways of speaking, smiling, frowning, getting heated or keeping cool in a discussion, and so forth, are unintentional, the result of habits, inherited from our human or prehuman ancestors [only notice the likeness in expression between an angry man and an angry beast], or else consciously or unconsciously acquired.

Our manner of acting towards others thus tends to become habitual. And the man who has acquired the most moral habits will certainly be superior to the good Christian who pretends that the devil drives him to do wrong, and he can only stop himself by recalling the pains of hell or the joys of heaven.

To treat others as he would wish to be treated himself becomes with man, and all sociable animals, simply a habit; so much so, that a person does not generally even ask himself how he must act under such and such circumstances. It is only when the circumstances are exceptional, in some complex case or under the impulse of strong passion, that he hesitates, and a struggle takes place between the various portions of his brain; for the brain is a very complex organ, the various portions of which act to a certain degree independently. When this happens, the man substitutes himself in imagination for the person opposed to him; he asks himself if he would like to be treated in such a way, and the better he has identified himself with the person whose dignity or interests he has been on the point of injuring, the more moral will his decision be. Or maybe a friend steps in and says to him: "Fancy yourself in his place; should you have suffered from being treated by him as he has been treated by you?" And this is enough.

Thus we only appeal to the principle of equality in moments of hesitation, and in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred act morally from habit.

It must have been obvious that, in all we have hitherto said, we have not attempted to enjoin anything. We have simply set forth the manner in which things happen in the animal world and amongst mankind.

Formerly, the church threatened men with hell to moralise them, and she succeeded in demoralising them instead. The judge threatens with imprisonment, flogging, the gibbet, in the name of those social principles he has filched from society; and he demoralises it. And yet the very idea that the judge may disappear from the earth at the same time as the priest causes authoritarians of every shade to cry out about peril to society.

But we are not afraid to forego judges and their sentences. We forego, with Guyau, even sanctions of all kinds, even obligations to morality. We are not afraid to say: "Do what you will; act as you will"; because we are persuaded that the great majority of mankind, in proportion to their degree of enlightenment, and the completeness with which they free themselves from existing fetters, will behave and act always in a direction useful to society; just as we are persuaded beforehand that a child will one day walk on its two feet, and not on all fours, simply because it is born of parents belonging to the genus *homo*.

All we can do is to give advice; and again, whilst giving it, we add: "This advice will be valueless if your own experience and observation do not lead you to recognise that it is worth following."

When we see a youth stooping and so contracting his chest and lungs, we advise him to straiten himself, hold up his head and open his chest. We advise him to fill his lungs and take long breaths, because this will be his best safeguard against consumption. But at the same time we teach him physiology that he may understand the

functions of the lungs, and himself choose the posture he knows to be the best.

And this is all we can do in the case of morals. We have only a right to give advice, to which we add: "Follow it, if it seems good to you."

But whilst leaving to each the right to act as he thinks best; whilst utterly denying the right of society to punish any one, in any way, for any anti-social act he may have committed, we do not forego our own capacity to love what seems to us good and to hate what seems to us bad. Love and hate; for only those who know how to hate know how to love. We keep this capacity; and as this alone serves to maintain and develop the moral sentiments in every animal society, so much the more will it be enough for the human race.

We only ask one thing, *i.e.*, to eliminate all that impedes the free development of these two feelings in the present society, all that perverts our judgment: the state, the church, exploitation; judges, priests, governments, exploiters.

To-day, when we see a Jack the Ripper murder, one after another, some of the poorest and most miserable of women, morally superior probably to numbers of wealthy ladies, our first feeling is one of hatred.

If we had met him the day when he murdered that woman who asked him to pay her three-pence for her slum lodging, we should have put a bullet through his head, without reflecting that the bullet might have been better bestowed in the brain of the owner of that wretched den.

But when we recall to mind all the infamies which have brought him to this; when we think of the darkness in which he prowls, haunted by images drawn from indecent books, or thoughts suggested by stupid books, our feeling is divided. And if some day we hear that Jack is in the hands of some judge, who has slain in cold blood a far greater number of men, women and children than all the Jacks together; if we see him in the hands of one of those deliberate maniacs, and such people as those who send a Borras into penal servitude, to show the middle classes how well they are protected, then all our hatred of Jack the Ripper will vanish. It will be transferred; transformed into hatred of a cowardly and hypocritical society and its recognised representatives. All the infamies of a Ripper disappear before that long series of infamies committed in the name of Law. It is these we hate.

At the present day our feelings are continually thus divided. We feel that all of us are more or less, voluntarily or involuntarily, abettors of this society. We do not dare to hate. Do we even dare to love? In a society based on exploitation and servitude human nature is degraded.

But as servitude disappears, we shall regain our rights. We shall feel within ourselves strength to hate and to love, even in such complicated cases as that we have just cited.

In our daily life, we do already give free scope to our feelings of sympathy or antipathy; we are doing so every moment. We all love moral strength; we all despise moral weakness and cowardice. Every moment, our words, looks, smiles express our joy in seeing actions useful to the human race, those which we think good. Every moment, our looks and words show the repugnance we feel towards cowardice, deceit, intrigue, want of moral courage. We betray our disgust, even when, under the influence of a worldly, *i.e.*, hypocritical, education, we try to hide our contempt beneath those lying appearances which will vanish as equal relations are established amongst us.

This alone is enough to keep the conception of good and ill at a certain level, and to communicate it one to another; it will be still more efficient when there is no longer judge or priest in society, when moral principles have lost their obligatory character and are considered merely as relations between equals.

Moreover, in proportion to the establishment of these relations, a loftier moral conception will arise in society. It is this conception which we are about to analyse.

(To be continued.)

LARKS WITH THE PARIS POLICE.

THE young English Anarchist, T. H. Bell, of Edinburgh, who made a speech from a lamp-post in Paris last month has given us the following account of his adventure:—

"During the year I had been living in Paris my ire had been often roused by the incredible amount of police intermeddling tyranny. (The French, so heroic in stirring revolutionary times, seem strangely apathetic in regard to the petty tyrannies of everyday life). No public meetings, for instance, can be held in France without the authorisation of the police. They have the "right" of public meeting, but they must also have the authorisation! The authorisation is, of course, never refused in these days, but I was told that the prefect has a funny little way of being exceptionally busy sometimes, so that the authorisation arrives just the least bit too late. Just after I had decided to leave Paris I had a sample of police domination which raised my bile to overflowing. One day, happening to be a little late, I jumped on board a 'bus. On arrival at my destination, half-way between the starting places of this particular 'bus, I came down from the top intending to get off. To my surprise as I appeared on the steps, the

conductor shut the little platform door which exists on these Gare St. Lazare 'buses and planted himself before it. "Confound the man," I thought, "he thinks I was going to jump off suddenly and cheat him out of his twopence. That old hat of mine must be getting pretty bad." But I was wrong. He wasn't going to let me off at all, pay or no pay! On my demanding the reason of his extraordinary conduct, he pointed out an inscription above the 'bus door. I could scarcely believe my eyes. "Nobody is allowed to descend from this omnibus during the journey from the Place de la Republique to the St. Lazare Station.—By order of Monsieur le Prefet de Police." This, as the conductor explained, was to prevent competition between these 'buses with the privilege of running to and from the railway station and the 'buses of the company which works the regular monopoly of the ordinary town 'buses. In vain I pointed out to the conductor that as a foreigner, I knew nothing of this; in vain I pointed out that the station was as far from the place I wanted to go to, as had been the place where I had got on. In vain, too, I denounced the impudence of Monsieur le Prefet de Police in the very strongest French I knew. The conductor's hair stood visibly on end, but he would not give in; as he explained he would be liable to a fine himself if he let me get off. He was not a very big man, but as I had turned Quaker only a week or two before and had since been enthusiastically preaching Quakerism, I could not hit him without a little inconsistency. The difficulty was solved at last by my giving him a good shove into the inside of his 'bus and scrambling over the platform door.

No, this isn't a traveller's tale at all. It is absolutely accurate, even down to that reflection about my old hat. And that very night, in my restaurant, I was told by the man with whom I had entered into conversation—an ordinary bourgeois republican—that he could not understand why these "poor" English ("poor" used advisedly) submitted so meekly to the oppression of those "milords." I ventured to remind him of the three or five years' conscription slavery, hinted that after all it was hardly worth while pulling down the aristocrat to replace him by the policeman, etc., etc., but he remained unconvinced.

It happened that about this time I had come to differ very considerably from my French comrades, and wanted an opportunity of speaking my mind and spreading my views. Naturally French and English Anarchists differ more or less on minor questions, but in regard to the important question of violence I had come to differ very much indeed. At first it was only a question as to the degree to which we should use violence or rather, perhaps, to what extent we should preach it; but during my residence I heard so much jawing about it, so much utter rot, that it finished by actually making me think, with the result that I became a Quaker, convinced that to do harm on any pretext to anyone with whom we are living in society, is wrong as a matter of principle and mistaken as a matter of policy. I wanted to spread this view, but did not like the idea of asking a policeman's permission before speaking my mind. Even had that difficulty not been present, it would have been folly to hire a hall as nobody would have come to listen. Accordingly I resolved to hold a meeting in the open air in defiance of the police. I decided on the Place de la Republique, the busiest square in Paris, prospected it carefully and taking a hint from a Trafalgar Square incident, soon made up my plan of operations. I wrote and published a manifesto, intended for the ordinary Parisian non-Anarchist workman, but setting forth my views as to Anarchist policy and announcing an open-air meeting for the following Sunday.

The manifesto was distributed and at the appointed time I turned up at the place. Before going out I had securely padlocked a stout chain round my left wrist, leaving both ends free. My hand was kept in my pocket till I had arrived at the lamp-post I had previously selected, a very tall, ornamental one in the most prominent situation. On arrival I clambered up at once, got my feet on some projections half-way up, forming a capital rest, whipped the chain round the small part at the top and fastened it with an automatic padlock. I had then a splendid tribune and on beginning to speak I became at once the centre of a large crowd, which went on increasing till it assumed extraordinary dimensions. The police, of course, had been waiting for me and came up at once. I explained the matter to the first comers and pointed out that they had better leave me alone as I would be the sooner done, and told them that when nearly finished with my speech I would tell them where to find the key. Squad after squad of them came up from the various parts of the square, each squad evidently wondering why the other fellows did not make me come down and with a "clear-the-way" air about them which meant "we'll bring him down." Threats, coaxing, pulling, all were tried, but all in vain. The crowd had taken in the situation and roared with laughter at the repeated failures to remove me. Meanwhile I went on with my speech. I spoke till my voice was nearly gone, until I had distributed and tearing up the rest. They acted again in accordance with good old police traditions, stared in surprise till the deed was done and then sprang at me, twenty-five at once. Oh! yes, they were very quick—once they had made up their minds. Fortunately they were prevented from recovering that signature by certain insurmountable difficulties connected with human physiology. Evidently, however, I was a desperate character, and the post-card something important—containing names no doubt, giving instructions, perhaps, about the disposal of dynamite, Russian or incendiary pamphlets. They took more care of me after that and I became somebody of importance. The pieces I had dropped were carefully gathered up and put together. They did not make much out of them but I translated it myself a few days afterwards to oblige the *juge d'instruction*. It was a card I had written at the last moment to a friend, telling him that I would send a letter

later on as I had not time just then, signed "Tom," and giving no address.

Next I had interviews with the Sous-Commissaire de Police and the Commissaire himself, and was finally deposited in the "boite" (station cell). This was not at all a pleasant place. It contained two or three prisoners, a fixed form, a broken form, an evil smell, and nothing more. The company was certainly more amusing than select, still I owe a debt of gratitude to one of its members. The rule is so long as the prisoner is at the station, that he must pay for his own food. No money means, perhaps, twenty-four hours starvation. I had had money, but it had been all taken from me at the Commissaire's. So that it would have been a sad case with me had it not been for the bread and cheese and generous communistic spirit of a fellow-prisoner, arrested for *begging*. I was not done for the day though. At nine in the evening I was taken out and popped into a cab along with the Commissaire, his sub, and a detective. Whilst I was wondering what was up, one of them asked me if the Rue de Villiers was anywhere near the gate of that name. The Rue de Villiers, I remembered, was the address I had given in my manifesto. I had had to put on a name and address, or my distributors would have been arrested—another instance of the tender solicitude shown by the French police for the safety of society—and I had taken care to pick out a street outside the fortifications and as far off as possible, so that the police might not have an opportunity of going there on the Saturday and stopping the distribution on the Sunday, after finding out that the address was a bogus one. I had not given any address to the Commissaire and now, preferring a drive in a nice, warmed-up cab to a seat in the cold and somewhat dismal cell, I did not feel called upon to volunteer any information, except as to the whereabouts. We drove off, therefore; they invited me to explain my theories, we argued and joked and we had a very lively, comfortable journey to Lavallois-Perret. On our arrival at the street, however, we found it consisted of large villas, not at all likely to contain ruffianly, anarchistical workers or hard-up Russian refugees and on descending we discovered that the number I had taken (O, happy chance!) was that of a house to let. The Commissaire and his sub did not seem to like it, but the cabby and the detective grinned broadly and I laughed myself fairly into knots as they went round ringing the bells of respectable, law-abiding *bourgeois*. Not one of these same *bourgeois* could we induce to open a hospitable door to us at that late hour. As they now seemed rather non-plussed I reminded them of my agility in getting up the lamp-posts and proposed that I should go over the garden wall for them and rouse somebody. My well-meant offer was declined, the detective was instructed to come back in the morning and I was hustled into the cab again. However, they were very decent fellows after all, took the joke in good part and we made quite a merry party to the station. There, through the friendly intervention of the sub, I got my dinner at last and a bottle of wine even made its appearance, despite the regulations. I was able also to get a bit smuggled into the cell to pay back my friendly beggar and to give a bite to the other poor wretches. There were five of us and only forms enough for four to lie down on, a damp floor and a temperature in comparison with which I thought freezing point would be a joke. Any of these men may have turned out entirely innocent.

Next day I was sent off to the *depôt*, where I was kept for several days. Luckily for me they treated me differently to the other prisoners. I was placed in one of the rather comfortable cells, reserved mainly, I understand, for prisoners with suicidal tendencies, instead of in the big hall where the ordinary prisoners are herded together, two hundred or more sleeping side by side and closely packed. This was not meant as a favor, however. As they afterwards explained to one of my friends, a man who had made a speech from a lamp-post might be inclined to make a speech in a prison. When taken before the *juge d'instruction* I was told that they did not propose to treat the matter seriously and I was only charged with "vagabondage," as being without profession or visible means of subsistence, so that I would get off if I gave my name and address. This I declined to do, protesting against their interference with my liberty when I had done no harm to anyone and demanding why they made an exception in my case and let alone thousands of idlers I had seen on the boulevards, people without occupation or pretence of one, without visible means of subsistence, but in circumstances which gave good grounds for the suspicion that they lived on the labor of other people. It was explained to me that these folks were people with property and I was transferred to the Prison Mazas to wait my trial. They worked hard to identify me. I had been taken to the anthropometric department twice and my measurements compared with those in their lists of murderers, burglars and pickpockets. Without success. They thought there must be something mysterious about me. As I found out afterwards, all the letters I wrote in English were translated, and, as to fill up the slowly passing time I wrote long letters to every friend in Great Britain whose address I could recollect, I reckon I kept the *prefet's* staff going pretty well.

They established my identity at last, however, and after the law's usual delays I was released a fortnight after my arrest. Cheap, I think. They had intended to expel me, but a bourgeois friend of mine, anxious to get me right, made great exertions on my behalf, assuring them that I was such a nice exemplary young man, whose head had probably been affected a little by bad health and who had besides made up his mind to leave France at once for foreign climes. They took his word, and much to my mortification I had to pay my own fare to England after all. "The best laid schemes o' mice and men gang aft agley."

all the manifestoes I had brought with me and the people had been driven back a little. By that time a policeman was filing away at the chain. If I had had to depend on his filing I would probably be there still, but luckily before going out I had taken the precaution of hiding the key in my hatband. I now produced it, unlocked the padlock, descended with dignity by means of the ladder which had been brought by the police, and was marched off to the station, giving them a few parting shots as loud as I could shout. The crowd had received me very well indeed, laughed uproariously when I was chaffing the police and listened attentively when I was speaking seriously. I was cheered when entering the station. That police sergeant was a smart chap however. When I afterwards saw the newspaper reports, I discovered that the laughter of the crowd had been ascribed to my having spoken in French "acquired on the banks of the Thames." The reporters had evidently got their account from him, and I had been exceptionally brilliant too, the jokes had come off beautifully! He may have thought it fit for tat, but I call it an unscrupulous and despicable revenge, confound him!

Taken to the station I was questioned and searched. Naturally I declined to satisfy their curiosity about my private affairs, and I had taken care to go through my pockets that morning. They discovered some pamphlets, however—one or two ordinary French Anarchist pamphlets and a German one. The German characters on the cover of the latter puzzled them for a second, but only for a second, and then with that lightning-like instinctive insight of the trained policemen, they recognised it as *Russian*. They discovered also, somewhat to my surprise, a post-card. It was in English but as I thought it must be something I had overlooked, I took an opportunity, when they left my hands free, of snatching it, biting out and swallowing the signature

THE PROPAGANDA.

REPORTS.

LONDON.

Kentish Town.—Several of our comrades have been attending the S.D.F. meetings at Phoenix Hall, Preston Street, Malden Road, N.W., where some very interesting and useful discussion has taken place. March 14, Bernard Shaw, Fabian, lectured on the result of County Council elections and contended that S.D.F. must either adopt the "permeation" of the political parties by the same means as the Fabians, or else, like Anarchists, be consistent. March 21, Hyndman in reply to Shaw, attacked the Fabian policy. A lively discussion followed, in which a number of Anarchists took part, asking how a party which avowedly goes in for electioneering, like the S.D.F., differs from a political party. March 28, Sparling (Hammersmith S.S.) lectured on "Blind Samson" and advised him to make use of all means political and other. Morton and Neilson pointed out that the ballot box was an absurdity and that no government had ever yet dissolved itself.

Regent's Park.—Successful open-air meetings have been held when weather permitted, on Sunday morning; good audiences and often lively discussions.

Berner Street Club.—Tuesday night lectures last month were well attended; several members of the S.D.F. turned up and we have had some good discussions.

PROVINCES.

Walsall.—Some good propaganda work has been done in Walsall during the past two months. The shop-window of the club in Goodall Street has been stocked with Anarchist and Socialist literature for sale, thousands of old *Freedom*s, *Commonweals*, *Sheffield Anarchists*, and leaflets have been distributed in the streets; and during the past month a local weekly paper has been published under the title of *Walsall Anarchist*. In addition to propaganda through the medium of the local press a series of Sunday morning meetings has been held at Town's End Bank, Park Street. The audiences have been invariably sympathetic, although on the first occasion there was some disposition amongst a section of the crowd to show hostility. The speakers have been comrades G. Cores, P. Russell, R. Bingham (Sheffield), G. Tooth (Birmingham), R. Pellier (Sheffield), J. Emery (Norwich), and A. Barton (Manchester). The police plot has done more to spread Anarchism in Walsall than anything that has been done in the past by means of ordinary propaganda. Several meetings have been held in Wolverhampton and Birmingham. Comrade Mowbray will be here on April 3rd.—G. C.

Aberdeen.—Large crowds assemble in Castle Street on Sunday evenings to hear Comrade Duncan preach the gospel of Anarchy. The only regrettable feature of these meetings is that we can get no opposition or questioning, not because all are converted to Anarchy, but that no one seems to have the game to tackle our comrade. Literature sells well. Our singing has shown a distinct improvement of late, and we can make Castle Street ring with our songs of Liberty, whilst the smug-faced bourgeois troop past from their chapel.

Manchester.—Owing to the bad weather we have not been able to do much open-air propaganda during the past few weeks, but we have by no means been idle. Good work has been done at various debating societies and discussions. Com. Barton gave a lecture on "Anarchy: what is it?" at the Upper Brook Street Free Church Debating Society, and on the "Coming Revolution," at the Knott Mill Mission Hall, both of which provoked lively and interesting discussions. The debate at the latter place, where there is always a thorough working class audience, showed a keen appreciation of Anarchist principles, and was very encouraging. The other lectures at this place also shew the influence of the Socialists partaking in the discussions. They all treat of the social question from a purely working-class standpoint. Lectures have also been given before the Salford S. D. F. with good results, and we are glad to find several good Anarchists amongst them. Advantage has also been taken of the lectures of the renowned anti-infidel lecturer, Celestine Edwards, to spread free-thinking and revolutionary ideas, and the "boys," as Mr. Edwards politely terms the Manchester Anarchist speakers, became somewhat notorious by their vigorous onslaughts on the champion of Christian humbug and superstition. Mr. Edwards obliged us with a lecture on "Anarchy," in the great St. James's Hall, a subject which he treated with his usual vast capacity for misrepresentation. These were well shown up in the discussion by Comrades Barton and Stockton, and what was most encouraging, the applause of the large audience was excited by every effective point, and a Fabian friend present estimated that at least one-third of the audience appreciated the Anarchist position above that of the lecture itself. We have now again started open-air speaking and we hope soon to be able to start our summer work in earnest.

Newcastle-on-Tyne.—On Monday, March 7th, James and Pearson held a large meeting in Durham market, walking all the way from Newcastle for the purpose. Notwithstanding the fact that this is the first Anarchist or Socialist meeting held in Durham city, they had a large and interested audience. There

was a little interruption from a few scholars from Durham college, but when asked to come on the platform they showed their good sense by walking away. On Sunday, March 20th, A. Stewart, Social Democrat, lectured at the open platform, Rye Hill, on the "Future of Trade Unionism." In the course of an interesting lecture he said: "The trade unions of to-day are too narrow. In the future not only must a union embrace a particular section of a trade, but all engaged in it; for instance, the Engineers' Society should be a union of all, whether men or boys, mechanics or labourers, engaged in the engineers' trade." At the end of a good lecture, however, his democratic ideas came out in the proposal that the state should give grants towards general unions. An interesting debate followed, Anarchists and Radicals taking part. We are getting out a manifesto for the miners, and hope during the next month to do a good deal of propaganda amongst the Durham miners on strike.

Yarmouth.—Owing to our removal to more commodious premises, several of the notices given of this month's work were not carried out. Two large meetings were held on the 20th; in the afternoon commemoration of Paris Commune, in the evening "Anarchism outcome of growth of Mentality;" speakers: Saunders, Headley and Poynts. We mean to continue our open-air propaganda. The cause is making good progress in Yarmouth, our numbers gradually increasing; also the attitude of "men who are not Anarchists" has completely changed.—G. P.

Edinburgh.—March 17th, the Scottish Socialist Federation and friends held as usual a meeting in commemoration of the Commune of Paris. Leo Melliet, a member of the Commune, was in the chair. The speakers were Leslie, Melliet, Connelly, Bell, Gilray, Miss D. Forster, and Glassey.

Bristol.—March 1st, Comrade E. J. Watson lectured on "Anarchism" at the Shepherds Hall. This is the first lecture, we believe, that has ever been given in Bristol on the subject. Watson lectured for upwards of an hour and a quarter, and in the course of his remarks said that for centuries a majority of the inhabitants of the globe had been existing in the extreme superstition and ignorance, and nothing but a revolution could disperse the darkness settling over coerced and turgid lives. The causes must be shown that allow endless night to dwell upon the people; light must be brought to bear upon every existing institution and belief, for only by that could the evils under which the world is suffering, ever be uprooted and the way cleared for a nobler and higher existence. A spirited discussion followed in which some of the best known local Socialists joined, the Sharlands, Shepherd, Irving and Oxley defending their position as Social Democrats with great skill.

The Celebration of the Paris Commune was held by the Bristol Socialist Society on March 15. E. J. Watson commenced the speeches, and after giving a short historical sketch of the Commune, said that it failed on account of the people depending on a government, instead of acting on their own responsibility and trusting to themselves. So long as they acted spontaneously success attended their efforts, but when they began to wait for orders from central authorities, the knell of the Commune was rung. Comrades Gore and Irving sympathised with the efforts of the Communards, but attacked Watson's speech with right good will, saying that the institution of a government in Paris could not possibly have been the cause of the failure. Fred Charles (who has been staying with Watson since his admission to bail) followed and made an impassioned Anarchist speech. He spoke of the glorious example set the world by the Communists and said that probably a revolution would be commenced by certain sections of the community seizing the land and means of production as did the Parisians of '71. Charles argued as to the probability of a law of revolution, and gave some instructive facts from Gerormis and Ferrari to substantiate his assertion. The Bristol comrades were delighted at Charles' address and applauded him heartily during its progress. Numerous lectures have been given during the past month by Comrades Weare, King, Oxley, Gore, Watson, and others.

Glasgow.—Our Friday night lectures continue to be very interesting. During the past month we have had J. H. Smith of Edinburgh on "Socialism and Theosophy," Professor Jas. Mavor on Karl Marx's "Theories of Value," W. Mackay, sen., on "Bab, a Persian Socialist." Sunday, 6th March, De Mattos of Fabian Society, London, lectured here in the large Albion Hall, on "What Socialism is" (from a Fabian point of view) to a crowded audience. Good sale of literature; *Freedom* and Morris's pamphlets selling well. Friday 18th March, Leo Melliet, Mayor of Paris during the Commune, lectured for us in the large Liberal Association Hall on "The Commune of Paris." We had a splendid turn out, there being scarcely standing room left. Melliet gave a most interesting account of the rise and fall of the Commune, which was listened to with rapt attention by the audience. Several revolutionary songs were sung during the evening. A dance took place afterwards, when members and friends enjoyed themselves for a few hours.

Hull.—Owing to bad weather, etc., we have had no outdoor meetings, but we have done good work by propaganda meetings in our Clubroom. C. Reynold's step in joining the Fabians and going in for parliamentary action, has brought on good discussions. We have also Comrade J. Sketchley with us again. He has already lectured to the Sunday Association and takes always the most prominent part in discussions. He has also lectured for the East Hull Labour League, a body brought to life by our activity. Gustave Smith lectured on March 6th, to the Secularists, on "Who and what are the People," and to the Sunday Association on "The Tactics of Anarchism," on March the 27th. We had a Commune Celebration in the Cobden Hall, on Sunday 20th. The meeting was not very large, but it was an intellectual one. We opened by singing the Marseillaise, which we had printed on the back of the handbills. J. Sketchley was the chief speaker. On Monday we had also a meeting in our Clubroom, after which we indulged in dancing and singing. After Easter we start our outdoor meetings, and so we peg away in hope of the glorious revolution.

NOTICES.

LONDON.

Discussions on unsettled questions in Socialism and Anarchism will be held at 19, Fitzroy Street, W. (International School, on fortnightly Thursdays, at 8 p.m. First Series: April 7.—II. Tendencies of the Present Social Economy. April 21.—III. The Theory and Laws of Politics. May 6.—IV. The Doctrine of Hedonism. Communications to be addressed to A. Henry, 29, Doughty Street, W.C.

A course of lectures on Anarchist Communism will be given, at 8 p.m., at the Hall of the Social Democratic Federation, 337, Strand.—April 16, C. Morton, "Anarchist-Communism v. State Socialism."—April 23, P. Kropotkin, "The Anarchist View of Revolution."—April 30, A. Marsh, "Differences between Communist and Individualist Anarchism."

P. Kropotkin will lecture at South Place Institute, May 1st, at 11 a.m. on April

PROVINCES.

Yarmouth.—Sundays, Hall Quay, 11.30 a.m. Saturdays, Village of Bradwell, on Church Plain, 4 p.m.

Aberdeen.—Sunday, Castle Street, 3 and 6.45 p.m. Tuesday, Odd Fellows' Hall, 8 p.m.—Sec., Eglan Shepherd, 1 Mitchell Place.

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