

Freedom

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THE WILD BEASTS OF SOCIETY.

IN consequence of the recent events in Paris, Madrid, Xeres, Vienna and elsewhere—not to speak of the Walsall affair—the literary serfs of capitalism have been piling on the agony in their lucubrations in the daily and weekly press. Anarchism, according to these worthies, is a sort of organised murder and robbery, and its advocates are the vilest creatures that ever breathed the breath of life. “The confession of Ravachol” says one paper, “shows what Anarchy is when carried to its legitimate conclusions, and we see that Anarchists are not only public enemies but that in pursuit of their objects, theft and murder are regarded by them as justifiable. Anarchists are, indeed, the wild beasts of society, and as they war against society, so society in self defence must carry on a war of extermination against them.” The object of this sort of stuff is of course to prejudice the minds of the masses and to prevent enquiry into our principles and, as far as possible, their dissemination. That it may have some such effect is probable, for the defenders of the existing society have been, and are, by no means slow to take advantage of their opportunities, and not content with recording the actual acts of desperate men calling themselves Anarchists, they term almost every one who revolts against their tyranny an Anarchist although he may have no knowledge whatever of Anarchist principles and not care in the least as to the future of society so long as he himself gets along all right. Moreover, whenever they can they father any act of violence or robbery which takes place upon the Anarchists, and back up their lying statements by screeds of vituperation, so that many a poor plundered and ignorant worker who detests the present state of things as heartily as anybody, would turn pale if you told him you were yourself an Anarchist. Acts of violence, such as the blowing up of individuals or buildings by dynamite, robbery and forgery, have no more to do with Anarchy than they have with Liberalism, Conservatism or Christianity. Because a member of Parliament appropriates trust money, or keeps a mistress, or uses a Frenchwoman as a tool with which to seduce a respectable English girl, or flies the country to avoid trial for an unnatural offence, is the dignity of M.P. to be considered a sign of dishonour and are embezzlement, adultery, etc., to be considered a part of the Liberal and Conservative political faith? Perhaps some “right honourable gentleman” will supply us with the information. Almost every week we notice one or more cases in the paper of indecency or theft charged against a clergyman. Are these black sheep to be held as representative of the whole flock? Oh, dear no! we shall be told, certainly not! But a Ravachol is to be considered a typical Anarchist!

As a matter of fact, amongst those calling themselves Anarchists—and there are many varieties, Communists, Collectivists, Individualists, Peaceful or Quaker Anarchists, and those of the Revolutionary type—there is a far higher standard of morality, even according to conventional ideas than amongst any other section of the community. When an Anarchist is arrested for some political offence, the first thing the prosecution does is to inquire about his character—and what do they find? Take the case of the Chicago men—all with records pure as snow. Kindly, honest, upright citizens, whose only crime was loving their fellow-men. Take the case of the Walsall men, their employers came forward to speak of them as good and steady workmen, and in two cases at least supporting their aged parents. The mere fact of a murderer like Ravachol adopting Anarchy as his political faith proves only one thing that the criminal classes, the “wild beasts” manufactured by our present system of society, are beginning to realise how it is that they are made what they are, that it is because of present inequalities, because of their evil surroundings created by the capitalist and the landlord that they have been made thieves and murderers; they recognise the truth of what Anarchists are saying, and they, too, are endeavouring, according to their own ideas, to do their part towards pulling down the old and building up the new society. “Wild beasts,” they may be, but capitalist society has made them what they are, and instead of taking matters quietly they are beginning to turn and rend. The French Revolution of a century ago struck its first great blow in destroying a prison, it would seem that the Parisian rebels wish to commence the coming upheaval by making life unsafe for judges. No doubt it is a very unpleasant thing for a judge to be unable to get lodgings and for him to be a source of terror to his neighbours, shunned as though he had the plague, but he can hardly expect to have all the fun on his own side. It is a simple matter to sit in an easy chair and send men off to penal servitude for a number of years, or to death, as the case may be, at the same time reading them a lecture on the enormity of their crimes, which after all would never have been committed if society had not made them what they are. But it is not to

be wondered at that the “wild beast” should seek to have revenge for the vindictive sentences passed upon him, and claim an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth. “Do as you would be done by,” said the revolutionary Anarchist of Nazareth, who laid the foundation of the Christian religion. But the learned magistrates and judges do not seem to have come across that command of the one whom they profess to obey. “Let ‘em have it hot” is their motto and “hot” it is accordingly. Some of the Parisian revolutionists seem desirous of drawing the attention of these worthy dispensers of heavy sentences to the divine command in a rather forcible manner. We pity the neighbours, but we think the tribe of Jeffries can hardly be surprised at their recent experiences.

But Anarchism has nothing to do with all this. Anarchism is, and always will be, whatever may be said of it and whoever may claim to be Anarchists, the No Government theory of Socialism; the doctrine which teaches that people can only be truly happy and prosperous when tyrannical authority is abolished and freedom and comradeship prevail. That is what all Anarchists teach now and always have taught. There will no doubt be many differences of opinion as to the best methods of realising it. Even now the several schools of Anarchist thought are continually arguing the question. For our part we do not believe much can be done unless public opinion is with us and we are doing what we can to bring around the great masses to our side. Whether a struggle will come then is a question for them and not for us to decide. But those Anarchists who suffer most from the whip of want, the tyranny of government, and whose patience is under such circumstances naturally exhausted, are not content to wait for the conversion of the masses. They want to act at once and their desperate condition makes them care little what they do. These are the men the capitalist press talks of exterminating. Well it seems to us a big job, especially as their ranks are being continually recruited by fresh victims of the tyranny of capitalism and government. The only way we see of exterminating the “wild beasts of society” is by removing the conditions which create them. Make life only bearable to the worker, and he is such a patient dull animal that he will submit to be governed for many a long year yet and the advent of Anarchy will be put off for a considerable time. It is because the exploiters have no pity, no humanity, because their greed is insatiable, that the “wild beasts” increase and multiply, and it appears as though the Social Revolution, which we would fain see brought about as the result of a peaceful understanding between the whole of humanity, will be inaugurated by wholesale massacre, by relentless cruelty. Surely the French Revolution, when the masses repaid the cruelty of the classes by acquiescing for a while in the bloody Jacobin Reign of Terror, should teach our present rulers that as they sow so they will reap. Surely the massacre of Saint Bartholomew should show them that a belief is not to be exterminated by any amount of bloodshed. Twenty-two years ago thirty thousand communards were murdered in the streets of Paris, and what is the result? That the Paris revolutionist of to-day has no pity and expects no mercy. You cannot crush out an opinion in blood, but you can make its upholders more determined, more relentless and more revengeful. If tyranny could do aught surely Russia's Czar could exterminate his “wild beasts” the Nihilists, but the autocrat of all the Russias knows that he is surrounded by a host of enemies and is in constant fear of meeting his father's doom.

All the talk of extermination and of international leagues of the governments will only make the “wild beasts” more determined and turn what are to-day open associations into secret societies. And after all what is a mere name. Our enemies are more responsible than we for the word Anarchist. It is applied to us as a term of reproach; we accept it and make it a term of honor. If the governments seek to bring the word into disuse by rendering it impossible for any man to claim it as descriptive of his opinions, what of that? The word may perhaps be suppressed, but the idea itself is insuppressible. As a matter of fact it is impossible for society to go on much longer on the present lines. If the rich would only themselves begin to study the social problem and read some of the many books which are now issuing from the press dealing with it in its different phases, they would marvel at society having lasted so long and, wondering at the patience of the poor, would regard the “outrages” which have taken place as nothing to be surprised at. We are living on the eve of great events. An Economic and Moral Revolution, whose far-reaching consequences no man can foresee, is in the making. What utter madness it is for anyone to attempt to stop it. Anarchist-Communism is simply the embodiment of all the great aspirations of civilised mankind. Anarchy, which is only another word for Freedom carried to its logical conclusion, is the solution of the enigma which modern civilisation must solve

or perish; Communism is but the Brotherhood and Solidarity of Man spelt in another way. Anarchist-Communism is not the theory of a few dreamers, which would die with them. It is the verbal expression of the people's actual needs, and sooner or later it is bound to be realised whatever change of name it may undergo. If the powers that be drive it underground they may make the struggle more cruel and bitter but they cannot avert it.

"THE ALLEGED ANARCHIST CONSPIRACY."

A BETTER title for the proceedings which occupied the Stafford Assizes, from 30th March to 4th April, is *The Great Police Conspiracy*; inasmuch as the whole affair seems to have been worked up by an informer for the sake of the money he received from the hands of the police, who, eager for promotion and increased pay, used the information with which he furnished them without troubling themselves perhaps to enquire, whether their agent was simply betraying the men he professed sympathy with, or vilely concocting a series of events, that taken in the whole would be sufficient to establish a charge of conspiracy against those out of whom he decided to coin blood-money. Those most fully acquainted with the proceedings, believe the latter to be the case; but even giving the police the benefit of the doubt as to their knowledge of their informer's real position, i.e., of plot-fabricator, does not absolve them from the charge of getting up the case at Walsall more in behalf of their own interests than in defence of the general public. In England it is difficult to believe that such things are; they take place openly in France and other continental countries; but in England, never, say the incredulous. Never is a long day, and within the century there has been more than one case of little affairs "put-up" by the police in England; whilst in Ireland they have been of common occurrence; from Leonard McNally to the Walsall informer stretches a chain of natural sequence. This is only in accordance with the law of supply and demand. The police want cases that will bring them the approbation of their employer, the Government, and substantial recognitions of its approval, and the needy knave, whose training at the hands of society has made him hate nothing so much as honest labour, will be always found by such as want him ready to concoct or provoke crime. Which is to be condemned most, the seducer or the seduced, the police or the informers? Both are loathsome, but the toss-up is in favour of the latter.

Details of this latest instance of police meanness and judicial vindictiveness are already known to our readers. A summary of the police evidence before the magistrates was given in *Freedom* for March. Nothing further of importance was brought to prove their case at the trial. Nevertheless, after three months imprisonment, January to March, and a trial lasting five days, Charles, Cailles and Bertola have been sentenced to ten years imprisonment, and Deakin to five. Ditchfield and Wesley have been acquitted, but are probably ruined by their unjust association with a conspiracy, which to our minds was not proved as having ever existed. It goes without saying that these men were tried by a partizan judge, but the jury on the case was furthermore worked upon to the prejudice of the prisoners by the reiterated reading of a document now known to all, the "Feast at the Opera." Most Anarchists in this country up to the time of the trial had neither seen nor heard of this mad raving, which the judge in his charge to the jury read to show "the methods by which Anarchy should be carried out." We have never met one who did not regard it as brutal and insane. But the Attorney General in opening the case for the Crown also took care to dwell upon this irrelevant and outrageous composition as explaining the meaning of an Anarchist association! To be sure the judge, in summing up, went so far as to say that "all Anarchists were not bloody-minded;" but that was after repeated readings of extracts from the aforesaid document, which could not fail to prejudice the minds of the jurymen against the prisoner. The evidence was of the most scrappy nature, the materials produced to prove a conspiracy against human life, ridiculous in their scantiness, may be summed up in the following list: 2 bolts; 1 supposed brass shell; a piece of mining-fuse that would burn one minute, not longer; yet on such flimsy grounds three men are doomed, unless we see that public opinion is rightly educated on this matter, to spend ten years of their lives in durance vile. The comparative mercy shown to Deakin, was no doubt owing to the admissions extorted from him when weak with hunger. Those of our readers, who still doubt the part played by the police in this matter, are advised to consider the scene that took place in Chief-Constable Taylor's private room at midnight, when Deakin, worn with hunger and excitement, was brought from his cell "to make a clean breast of it." Let them appreciate the art with which Inspector Melville on that occasion told Deakin that he was "a bit of a socialist himself," (we naturally give preference to Deakin's account of this midnight inquisition) that he (Melville) looked upon Deakin as an enthusiast with no harm in him, and he thought that there were "some good items in the Socialist programme." Then let them imagine the poor young man sent back to his cell, after being led to suppose that Charles and Ditchfield had also made admissions,—to write a confession, which, after all, only proved that he and his comrades had been over-persuaded by a designing villain, who played on their generous enthusiasm to induce them to make a wild attempt at aiding an oppressed people abroad to defend themselves against a despotic government. An attempt which they themselves voluntarily afterwards abandoned.

But this confession also contained evidence against Coulon, which if

the police had been honest in the affair, would have been followed up. Instead of this, any attempt on the part of the prisoners' counsel to extract from Melville a statement as to his relations with Coulon was either disallowed by the Judge or objected to by the Attorney-General. For example when Mr. Thompson again asked Melville if he had paid Coulon anything for information in this case, Melville replied "I decline to say." Mr. Thompson pressed for an answer, but the Judge said he could not see what interest for the prisoners lay in such a question, and the Attorney-General objected to it on the ground that Melville's answering it would be detrimental to "the interests of the public service." We see here protection extended to the provoking agent, and the police countenanced in their use of him. Will Englishmen permit this?

But not only were the police and Coulon, who, by the bye, was subpoenaed we understand but never appeared somehow, protected from questions which might have produced evidence in the prisoners' favour, the judge also interrupted Mr. Willis, Q.C., in his speech for the defence, styling his generous and impassioned utterances "an inflammatory harangue." The words which elicited this epithet from Judge Hawkins were reprinted by Mr. Willis in a letter to the *Pall Mall Gazette*, in which, while deprecating the notion that brute force such as advocated by a few of the papers found in the possession of some of the prisoners, can effect and secure great necessary social changes, he yet pleaded that it was natural for some of the Anarchists "to think of brute force as the weapon of their warfare. They have been taught this by their masters. . . . Brute force is the weapon which the political rulers of the world, against whom these men contend, employ in order to further their most highly-prized projects, and to secure the maintenance and extension of their power. At this day the men who exercise supreme authority in Europe worship brute force, and are preparing for its employment on the most extended scale. They organise armies for the deliberate destruction of thousands of human beings, and spend their time and strength and the resources of nations in producing instruments of destruction, which can be employed with the most deadly precision." We should have had less ground for indignation at the cruel sentences passed upon our comrades if Judge Hawkins, instead of styling such remarks inflammatory, had expressed sympathy with Mr. Willis's sentiments, and proclaimed his desire to suppress brute force of every sort and in every quarter. Then this petty arbiter of men's destinies would at least have been logical.

But the best argument against law's brutal force as used against the prisoners was contained in the speeches of the prisoners themselves, which we briefly quote. When asked what they had to say why judgment should not be passed on them according to law, Charles spoke first and made what the daily papers call "important avowals." He repudiated the literature that had been so frequently quoted during the trial, and said it was not possible for Anarchists to hold such ideas; they could not agree with the burning of theatres and such like things. Socialists meant by revolution, a word that sounded terrible in most people's ears, a change in the basis of society, this he quoted from *Commonweal*. Speaking of his comrade Cailles, he declared him to be a genuine warm-hearted man, who had not initiated this thing. It was the best part of Cailles' nature that had got him into a police plot, and the same with the rest. The things they had been induced to aid in making they had been led to suppose were for use abroad, and when they had any doubt as to their destination they abandoned them and would not go any further. He fully recognised that the policy of explosions was an impossible one for Anarchists in England as in any similar country, and it was in no sense the policy of the Anarchist party here.

Bertola then made a long statement though an interpreter. He avowed himself an Anarchist, but not one working by violent methods. He explained his visit to Walsall on the natural grounds of going there to seek work, the air of London not agreeing with his wife. He had seen Inspector Melville at the station and had travelled by the same train from Walsall to Euston after his so-called mysterious visit. If there had been any wrong goings on he would have warned his comrades of this. It was Coulon who had ordered the bombs, and it was he who ought to be tried. He was at one with the police and it was certain that he had done it to get the accursed money, or they would not have been there. He then protested against the Attorney-General's defining Anarchy as disorder; it meant a state of society in which men might live together in harmony without laws. He had been taught in his youth to hate the Austrians as his foes, but arrived at the age of reason he had come to find that this was fudge. He recognized no boundary of nations, all men were brothers and war an absurdity. His party instead of standing up for the few, stood up for humanity itself, they bade workmen, instead of drinking in the beerhouses, to study society, which at present was based on hypocrisy, fraud and assassination, and taught the human race to hate each other. He stood there not as a prisoner, but as an accuser of bourgeois society, which had kept him in prison while his wife and child starved. "Long live anarchy; it is the future of humanity and concord."

Cailles also addressed the Court though an interpreter, saying that he was an Anarchist, but that was no reason why he should be mistaken for a criminal. He was not responsible for the documents found in his possession, anyone could obtain them. They had even been exposed in the club window, as the Superintendent of the Walsall police could say if he had any frankness about him. He did not aim at securing pity from the judge, he merely said he was not guilty of the charge. His thoughts and opinions were his own, and these no imprisonment could constrain. Deakin being asked if he had anything to say replied in the negative.

We have since heard from a lawyer who took part in the proceedings, that the system of spying has been dreadful throughout. Every remark made by the prisoners to their solicitor or *vice versa* in the court was eagerly picked up, if possible, by a band of attendant detectives. Almost every one interested in the case was "shadowed" at Stafford. Edward Carpenter, the well-known Anarchist poet and essayist, who has taken a prominent part in aiding the prisoners' defence, and whose Anarchism is above suspicion, was at first refused admission to the Court. Ditchfield's statement, such as it was, we are informed by the same authority, and this is corroborated by what came out at the trial, was extracted from him after eight hours' detention before arrest in the police station without food, and after an abundant supply of whisky and cigars. Chief Constable Taylor we hear has had an addition of £50 to his salary, and besides £50 to distribute amongst his subordinates at Walsall. What Melville has got history does not say, but the jurymen were rewarded, for Judge Hawkins has exempted them from serving on any other trial for six years. To all these gentlemen the Alleged Great Anarchist Conspiracy has brought honour (!) and rewards, not the least of these being, no doubt, the quiet conscience that succeeds well-doing, but to us it foreshadows the great struggle to come between might and right, and in our ears still rings the despairing cry of Bertola as he was hustled from the dock to the felon's cell: "Ten years and not guilty!"

A comrade who has visited Stafford since the trial writes: "I saw Bertola and Cailles. The former imagines that he will soon be released; the latter thinks that the prosecution has done much good. I did not undeceive them. Something *must* be done for them. Above all it should be made known how fine their behaviour has been, both in court and in prison, and the wickedness committed against them should be made public. Everybody, even those who disapprove of his acts, speaks well of Charles. He has sacrificed all his money to the cause, and his comrades in the prosecution say that he took the responsibility of everything upon himself. He deserves some reparation for the suspicions expressed against him. I think *Freedom* and other Anarchist papers should make known this young man's sincerity and enthusiasm."

ANARCHIST MORALITY.

By P. KROPOTKINE.

(Continued from previous number.)

VIII.

Thus far, our analysis has but set forth the simple principles of equality. We have revolted, and invited others to revolt, against those who assume the right to treat their fellows otherwise than they would be treated themselves; against those who, not themselves wishing to be deceived, exploited, prostituted or ill-used, yet behave thus to others. Lying, brutality and so forth are repulsive, we have said, not because they are disapproved by codes of morality,—a fig for codes—but because such conduct revolts the sense of equality in every one to whom equality is not an empty word; and above all does it revolt him who is a true Anarchist in his way of thinking and acting.

If nothing but this simple, natural, obvious principle were generally applied in life, a very lofty morality would be the result; a morality comprising all that moralists have taught.

The principle of equality sums up the teachings of moralists. But it also contains something more. This something more is respect for the individual. By proclaiming our morality of equality or Anarchism, we refuse to assume a right which moralists have always taken upon themselves to claim, that of mutilating the individual in the name of some ideal. We do not recognise this right at all, for ourselves or any one else.

We recognise the full and complete liberty of the individual; we desire for him plenitude of existence, the free development of all his faculties. We wish to impose nothing upon him; thus returning to the principle which Fourier placed in opposition to religious morality when he said: Leave men absolutely free; do not mutilate them, as religions have done enough and to spare. Do not fear even their passions; in a *free* society these are not dangerous.

Provided that you yourself do not abdicate your freedom; provided that you yourself do not allow others to enslave you; and provided that to the violent and anti-social passions of this or that person you oppose your equally vigorous social passions, then you have nothing to fear from liberty.*

We renounce the idea of mutilating the individual in the name of any ideal whatsoever. All we reserve to ourselves is the frank expression of our sympathies and antipathies towards what seems to us good or bad. Such a man deceives his friends. It is his bent, his character to do so. Very well, it is our character, our bent to despise liars. And as this is our character, let us be frank. Do not let us rush and press him to our bosom or cordially shake hands with him, as is sometimes done to-day. Let us vigorously oppose our active passion to his.

* Of all modern authors, the Norwegian Ibsen has best expressed these ideas in his dramas.

This is all we have the right to do, this is all the duty we have to perform to keep up the principle of equality in society. It is the principle of equality in practice.

But what of the murderer, the man who debauches children? The murderer who kills from sheer thirst for blood is excessively rare. He is a madman to be cured or avoided. As for the debauchee, let us first of all look to it that society does not pervert our children's feelings, then we shall have little to fear from rakes.

All this, it must be understood, is not *completely* applicable until the great sources of moral depravity—capitalism, religion, justice, government—shall have ceased to exist. But the greater part of it may be put in practice from this day forth. It is in practice already.

And yet, if societies knew only this principle of equality; if each man practised merely the equity of a trader, taking care all day long not to give others anything more than he was receiving from them, society would die of it. The very principle of equality itself would disappear from our relations; for, if it is to be maintained, something grander, more lovely, more vigorous than mere equity must perpetually find a place in life.

And this greater than justice is here.

Until now humanity has never been without large natures overflowing with tenderness, with intelligence, with will, and using their feeling, their intellect, their active force in the service of the human race without asking anything in return.

This fertility of mind, of feeling or of will takes all possible forms. It is in the passionate seeker after truth, who renounces all other pleasures to throw his energy into the search for what he believes true and right, contrary to the affirmations of the ignoramouses around him. It is in the inventor, who lives from day to day forgetting even his food, scarcely touching the bread with which perhaps some woman devoted to him feeds him like a child, whilst he follows out the intention he thinks destined to change the face of the world. It is in the ardent revolutionist, to whom the joys of art, of science, even of family life, seem bitter, so long as they cannot be shared by all, and who works, despite misery and persecution, for the regeneration of the world. It is in the youth, who, hearing of the atrocities of invasion, and taking literally the heroic legends of patriotism, inscribes himself in a volunteer corps, and marches bravely through snow and hunger until he falls beneath the bullets. It was in the Paris street arab, with his quick intelligence and bright choice of aversions and sympathies, who ran to the ramparts with his little brother, stood steady amid the rain of shells, and died murmuring: "Hurrah for the Commune!" It is in the man, who is revolted at the sight of a wrong, without waiting to ask what will be its result to himself, and when all backs are bent, stands up to unmask the iniquity, and brand the exploiter, the petty despot of a factory or great tyrant of an empire. Finally, it is in all those numberless acts of devotion, less striking and therefore unknown and almost always misprized, which may be continually observed, especially among women, if we will take the trouble to open our eyes and notice what lies at the very foundation of human life, and enables it to enfold itself one way or another, in spite of the exploitation and oppression it undergoes.

Such men and women as these, some in obscurity, some within a larger arena, create the progress of mankind. And mankind is aware of it. This is why it encompasses such lives with reverence, with myths. It adorns them, makes them the subject of its stories, songs, romances. It adores in them the courage, goodness, love and devotion which are lacking in most of us. It transmits their memory to the young. It recalls even those who have acted only in the narrow circle of home and friends, and revere their memory in family tradition.

Such men and women as these make true morality, the only morality worthy the name; all the rest is merely equality in relations. Without their courage, their devotion, humanity would remain besotted in the mire of petty calculations. It is such men and women as these who prepare the morality of the future, that which will come when our children have ceased to *reckon*, and grown up to the idea that the best use for all energy, courage, love, everything, is where the need of such a force is most strongly felt.

Such courage, such devotion has existed in every age. It is to be met with among sociable animals. It is to be found among men, even during the most degraded epochs.

And religions have always sought to appropriate it, to turn it into current coin for their own benefit. In fact, if religions are still alive, it is because—ignorance apart—they have always appealed to this very devotion and courage. And it is to this that revolutionists appeal, especially Socialists.

To explain it, moralists of various schools have fallen into errors, which we have previously pointed out. It is the young philosopher Guyau, an unconsciously Anarchist thinker, who has indicated the true origin of such courage and devotion, independent alike of all mystic force and all those commercial calculations so quaintly imagined by the English utilitarian school. Where Kantian, Positivist and Evolutionary philosophy have failed, Anarchist philosophy has found the way.

The origin of such qualities, says Guyau, is the feeling of one's own force. *It is overflowing life which seeks to spread.* "To feel within oneself that one is capable of acting, is at the same time to

become conscious of what it is one's duty to do."

The moral sentiment of duty, which each man has felt in his life, and which it has been attempted to explain by every sort of mysticism, "duty is nothing but a superabundance of life, which demands to be exercised, to give itself; at the same time, it is the consciousness of a power."

All accumulated force creates a pressure upon the obstacles placed before it. Power to act is duty to act. And all this moral "obligation," of which so much has been said or written, thus stripped of all mysticism, is reduced to to the conception: *the condition of the maintenance of life is its expansion.*

"The plant cannot prevent itself from flowering. Sometimes, to flower means to die. Never mind, the sap mounts all the same," concludes the young Anarchist philosopher.

It is the same with the human being, when he is full of force and energy. Force accumulates in him. He expands his life. He gives without calculation, otherwise he could not live. If he must die, like the flower when it blooms, never mind. The sap rises, if sap there be.

Be strong. Overflow with emotional and intellectual energy, and you will spread your intelligence, your love, your energy of action broadcast among others! This is what all moral teaching comes to, stripped of the hypocracies of oriental asceticism.

(To be continued.)

FREEDOM.

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NOTES.

LABOR DAY.

A mass meeting has been called by the London Trades Council in Hyde Park for the afternoon of Sunday, May 1st. Nominally, the object of the demonstration is the legal eight hours, but signs are not wanting that the real purpose of such gatherings, *i.e.*, the manifestation and development of solidarity among the workers, will be far better answered by this year's meeting than last. A more revolutionary spirit is abroad, and we doubt if a dozen of the speakers or so many of their audience will confine their aspirations to an eight hours' day, legal or otherwise. An evening contemporary doubts if there will be more Anarchists present than one in every five hundred. Even this is a concession to recent events; how long is it since we were told there were only two or three Anarchists in England? Any way, the Anarchist Communists propose to have two platforms, if not more, in the Park on May Day, and to take active part in the Labor Demonstrations which are being organised in Manchester, Glasgow, Bristol, Cardiff and many other provincial towns.

SPECIAL.

All comrades willing to help in selling *Freedom* in Hyde Park on May 1st, will find a supply in the Park close to the Freedom flag. Don't forget that now is a capital time for spreading our literature.

POLICE RAID UPON THE "COMMONWEAL."

Comrade Nicoll, editor of the "Commonweal," has been inquiring if Mr. Justice Hawkins, Mr. Home Secretary Matthews and other such persons are "fit to live," and indeed it is hardly astonishing that a humane man should express himself a little strongly when he recalls the amount of human suffering which they have taken upon themselves the responsibility of causing lately. Even Deeming is accredited with a shorter record of lives taken in cold blood than the respectable Mr. Matthews; and at least Deeming appears to have done his horrible work himself and not stained the hands of paid underlings with it. We do not deny that Matthews may believe he is doing public service by deciding on such acts as the judicial murder of those two poachers or the life-long imprisonment of Fanny Gane. No doubt he and Justice Hawkins and the rest of them are as much in earnest as a Spanish Inquisitor sending heretics to the stake. But unprejudiced folks who realise the ghastliness of the mistake these functionaries are making can hardly be blamed for using strong language about it. Strong language, however, is by no means unknown to Primrose Leaguers and

conservative editors in reference to the G.O.M. or the Irish M.P.'s; but we have not heard of any of these being prosecuted for "incitement to murder." Comrade Nicoll, however, has been marched off to gaol, and with him Comrade Mowbray, the former nominal publisher of the 'Weal, who did not approve of the article in question and left the paper in consequence. Nicoll has taken the whole responsibility of his words, like a brave and honest man, but denies that he intended them as an incitement to assassination. The police have raided the 'Weal office and appropriated some type etc., also Nicoll's papers, amongst them the evidence he was collecting as to the shameful proceedings of the police in getting up the Walsall plot. The whole affair, as the "Star" says, "is equal to Bismark at his worst," and its result has been to raise great public sympathy with Anarchism. In fact, it is the best possible continuation of the policy Hawkins began when he made the Walsall men into martyrs. The 'Weal has appeared just the same, all comrades rallying round with enthusiasm to help with type, "comping," "copy" etc. As we go to press, news reaches us that both Nicoll and Mowbray are committed for trial.

THE WORST PART OF IT.

A deep sadness has been added to the indignation caused by the police raid on the "Commonweal" by the great sympathy universally felt for Comrade Mowbray, who has for many years been well known as an earnest worker for the Socialist cause. He was arrested and torn away from his family of four little children an hour or two after the death of his wife, whom he had devotedly nursed through a long illness. On April 23, Mrs. Mowbray's remains were followed to the Manor Park cemetery by comrades from all the London Anarchist groups, with flags and music. Many Social Democrats were also present. Speeches were made at the grave by Touzeau Parris, Louise Michel, Agnes Henry, Hunter Watts, H. R. Taylor and others. Mrs. Besant and other friends are helping the motherless children. Mowbray was present, being out of prison on the bail of William Morris.

POLICE PLOTS IN SPAIN.

"It has now been demonstrated beyond doubt that the so-called plot to blow up the houses of parliament with dynamite was concocted by certain police officers anxious to obtain rewards for their zeal. They found ready dupes in Delboche and Ferreira, and planned the time and place for them to carry the bombs. Munoz, the supposed chief of the most terrible section of the Spanish Anarchists, the man who actually provided the bombs, proves to be an old hand at this sort of business. He joined the Anarchist club for the purposes of the plot only a few days before Delboche and Ferreira were arrested. For years past he has made an income by playing on the credulity of successive governors of Madrid, persuading them he was on the track of fearful conspiracies. Not long ago, finding his good faith doubted, he planted some printed revolutionary manifestoes in a lot of letters from supposed Republican committees, and some old guns, in the cellar of an innocent citizen, and then denounced him. Munoz was liberally rewarded, but the citizen finally succeeded in proving himself guiltless."—Central News telegram from Madrid, April 21.

THE POLICE IN FRANCE.

Up to April 23, the Paris police had arrested 143 Anarchists, that they might be out of the way for May 1st, seized 30,000 revolutionary placards and the "Père Peinard," and searched the "Révolte" office. The commissary who arrested Ravachol has been recommended for the Legion of Honor, and his understrappers for rewards, medals etc. It is a queer thing that a man has been travelling about from group to group in France for weeks and months, hawking dynamite under the noses of the police and never got arrested. Another queer thing is that of the 200 "bombs" seized by the police only 6 turn out, on examination in the Paris Municipal Laboratory, to be explosives at all, and these 6 are more of the nature of fireworks than engines of war. And a third queer thing is that Ravachol is to be tried, not for his alleged murders, but for the explosion in which no lives were lost. Rochford declared lately in the "Intransigent" that Andreux's tactics were to be repeated and a violent revolutionary paper started as a trap; whereupon the editor of a violent revolutionary paper just started ("Le Gueux") wrote off in a great hurry to Rochford: "Please, Sir, it isn't me." Last news as we go to press: the Paris police threaten to strike May 1st for higher pay. Of course they will get it. These are high old times for policemen and newspapers.

THE CHICAGO POLICE AND THE COMMUNE CELEBRATION.

The Chicago police have been making another feeble attempt to rouse the fears and open the purses of wealthy citizens. They issued a ukase worthy of His Majesty of Russia prohibiting red flags at a Commemoration held in Battery D hall, on March 18, and finding to their disappointment that it was obeyed, they marched into the meeting and stopped the sale of beer at the bar, for which permission had previously been granted. Excuse: they found speeches going on. (What else did they expect at a meeting?) Even this provoking no row, they broke the next Saturday night into the room of an Anarchist, named Harry Hildebrand, agent for the "Freiheit," and carried off his trunk. He was allowed to fetch it from the police station, but his list of local subscribers to "Freiheit" had disappeared. Presumably, opines the "Daily Press," the idea was to "find" bombs in the trunk if a disturbance could be made on March 18. "Some people assert," continues that paper, "that the only places where dynamite bombs can be found in Chicago to-day are within the precincts of certain police stations."

POLITICAL CONSIDERATIONS.

We wish that some ingenious person, better versed than we dare profess ourselves in the geography of the underground passages of current politics, would work out the connection between Walsall, the *Commonweal* raid, etc., and the coming general election. We do not suppose, of course, that Lord Salisbury or Mr. Balfour or Mr. Matthews sat down and wrote out a direction to the Scotland Yard authorities to get hold of some of the hot-heads of the revolutionary party, and try to draw them into a conspiracy, that the Conservative Government might have the opportunity of "saving the country." But we do think it probable that the zeal of the police was stimulated by the understanding that to "save the country" would be especially agreeable to their masters just now, and that the matter was worked up when it was, rather than earlier, as being a convenient season. Most assuredly last summer was not the first time the police have been offered a plot for sale. Furthermore, we are convinced that the same leaven of policy underlay the ferocity of the sentences and the general desire of the authorities to make the worst of the whole business. Was it political considerations which were responsible for the dastardly and wilfully misleading paragraph on the first page of *Justice* for April 16? We have not forgotten how certain political social democrats (not the S.D.F.) went out of their way to help the bourgeois press in casting mud upon the memory of the Chicago Anarchists just before the School Board elections of three and a half years ago.

INCITERS.

Mr. Matthews stated in the House of Commons that *agents provocateurs* were not permitted in the English police. Probably not ostensibly. No one supposes that your inciter comes down to Scotland Yard openly calling himself a provoking agent, offering in so many words to set about the manufacture of a conspiracy. But what when a man, known to the police as a revolutionist pretending zeal and devotion to the cause, comes and whispers that he knows of a hatching dynamite plot, can supply the clues if he has a little money and time and aid, and receiving said assistance, continues to take an active part in revolutionary propaganda, distinguishing himself by bloodthirsty public utterances, and associating as a comrade with the persons he is preparing to denounce? Can any honest man capable of putting two and two together, doubt for a moment that such a man is leading on his victims to bring themselves within the clutches of the law; in fact, inciting for the purpose of betraying them? If the police are permitted, as they certainly are, to use spies and informers, how is it possible to suppose that such unhappy wretches will not slip still deeper into the mire and do their best to incite the doings which they are paid to reveal? The Home Secretary's denial is a mere quibble. None are so blind as those who will not see.

THE MODERN ST. GEORGE ON THE WAR PATH.

Police plots and always police plots. Police plots in all the civilised countries in the world, all hatched on the same old lines, with all the same vile old machinery of spies, and informers, and *agents provocateurs*. Or, as we have the thing in England, in all its hideous perfection, let us use English words and say plainly, men who receive money from the police for inciting others to break the law, that the said police may gain rewards for "discovering" plots and other enormities. Are the St. Georges of the political secret detective service in collusion in England and Spain, France and Chicago, that they walk so closely in one another's steps? Possibly; but it is by no means needful to suppose so. If you take any ordinary mortal with a weak, undeveloped moral sense, and make him believe that he is only earning his living in an honest way by hunting down such of his fellow creatures as break the laws, or otherwise offend the Government, his employer; if he is given to understand that all means are justifiable in this pursuit, so long as as they don't make too much scandal; if he sees that his bread and butter depends on his zeal and obedience, and that the more unfortunates he hunts down successfully, the more chance he has of increased pay, advancements, honours, and rewards; if you put such a man in such conditions, then you have your modern St. George of the secret service, with all his miserable crew of hangers-on at his heels. Russia, or England, France, or Spain, it is all one; the system produces its moral cripples in any land where it obtains, and will do so till governments are no more. Every government, Constitutional or Absolute, Republican or Monarchic, seduces these poor wretches into its employment, and in proportion to its fears for its own safety, it increases their number and stimulates their zeal. Remember the disgraceful measures taken in England during the back-wash of the great French Revolution. Remember '39 and '48. The growing agitation of the present revolutionary period will bring us a fine crop of modern St. Georges in every country where there is a government to dread approaching doom. And after all, this miserable system of lies, trickery, and treachery, is quite useless. Plots and conspiracies are ancient history among the genuine terrorists of Western Europe, now that any capable and resolute man or woman can effectively wreak vengeance or spread terror if they choose, without involving anyone else in the responsibility, and in spite of all our shoddy modern St. Georges put together. The explosion in the Paris restaurant, news of which arrives as we go to press, is an instance in point.

WALSALL ANARCHISTS' DEFENCE FUND.

Received from Mrs. Cobden Sanderson £1, paid over to the Sheffield Committee; from K. P. 2s. 6d., paid to London Committee. We are

asked by Edward Carpenter, Hon. Treasurer of the Sheffield Defence Committee to publish the following balance-sheet:—

WALSALL ANARCHISTS' DEFENCE FUND.
SHEFFIELD COMMITTEE.

RECEIVED.	£	s.	d.	EXPENDED.	£	s.	d.
From Aberdeen Socialists ...	10	3		Food and depositions supplied to prisoners at Walsall and Stafford ...	2	13	6
" Leicester ...	2	12	6	To Charles—railway fares and other expenses (12-25 March) ...	2	0	0
" Glasgow Socialist League ...	5	1	0	Towards Charles' legal expenses, police court and assizes ...	21	10	0
" Bristol Socialists ...	1	10	0	Toward Wesley's defence ...	10	0	0
Per Freedom Group ...	2	2	6	" Deakin's ...	5	0	0
Collected in Sheffield ...	21	5	0				
" in Leeds, York, Chesterfield, &c. ...	7	4	0				
Deficit ...	18	3					
	£41	3	6		£41	3	6

A SCRAP OF TALK.

HARRY AND AN ANARCHIST.

HARRY. Well it beats me all together.

ANARCHIST. What does?

HARRY. This shilly-shallying of yours. You say you think the Walsall fellows have been in the wrong, though personally they are a good sort and all that.

ANARCHIST. I said, I was certain that, not only were they honest, well-meaning men, but that they were led simply by their strong social feeling into a trap cunningly prepared for them. They could not bear the thought of the sufferings of the people, and wanted to help to put an end to them. But I do think the way they chose an ill-judged one.

HARRY. And you think Ravachol's murder of a poor old man, and his trying to blow up a house full of innocent people horrible?

ANARCHIST. Yes, horrible.

HARRY. Well then, why, in the name of humanity and common sense, don't you wash your hands of such people? You have just been explaining to me that by calling yourself an Anarchist, you mean that you hold certain principles as to the relations human beings ought to have to one another so as to secure the fullest satisfaction for the nature of each. You say that to be an Anarchist Communist means to be convinced that no one ought on any pretence to set himself up, or let others set him up, to rule his neighbours. That everything ought to be done amongst men by mutual agreement and the direct action of those most concerned. And, moreover, that an agreement cannot be really mutual unless the parties to it are socially equals, so that the so-called freedom of contract between a man who has property and a man who has none is rubbish. You don't believe in private property, you say, because it makes men socially unequal and puts the poor at the mercy of the rich. And that therefore you want the working classes to refuse to work for wages any longer, but to agree among themselves to stop work altogether until the capitalists and landlords will agree to give up their claim to keep their wealth to themselves, and will consent to share and share alike with every one else in the use of it, and to do their share of work like honest men. You say, the working classes could bring about this change in a week, if they set their minds to it and acted altogether, and that it is a change of this sort you mean by the Social Revolution. Is that correct?

ANARCHIST. Yes, something like that.

HARRY. And you said that such principles and views had nothing whatever to do with murder and outrage. On the contrary, that the very root of Anarchism was a profound reverence for Man. A feeling that made it intolerable that any human being should be hurt or crippled in mind or body on any pretence whatever.

ANARCHIST. Yes, and I meant it.

HARRY. Then why don't you write to *Freedom* and denounce these murderers and would be murderers who call themselves Anarchists and make every one think that Anarchism means just brutal outrages and a general throwing about of dynamite bombs?

ANARCHIST. Do you remember the other day, when we were talking about Berry and capital punishment? We spoke of the number of people hanged, even since Mathews has been Home Secretary, who seem to have been in a moral fix, so that one can see how they came to commit murder without being at all cruel, hardened villains. You agreed with me that very often murderers, to say nothing of other criminals, have been more sinned against than sinning, and that one's horror of the deed they do ought not to check one's pity for the mental suffering or bodily distress which drove them to it. But when a man is driven to commit murder by social feeling goaded into madness by the realisation of other people's sufferings, one's pity for him is mixed with a sort of reverence. It is not that one has any less horror of the deed in itself, any less sympathy for all who may have suffered from it, but the man who has been led to outrage his own nature by hurting them has something greater in the intensity of the social feeling that has made him so desperate than we who keep our heads cool. How shall I, who have not the self-devotion of a Ravachol, dare to write and denounce him?

HARRY. But you believe him thoroughly in the wrong? You told me once that you were convinced that all bloodshed and cruelty does worse harm than the direct injury it may cause, because it stirs up and develops the brutal passions, not only of those wronged by it, but of all

who see and hear of it. And certainly no one can help noticing how one crime of this sort seems to breed another. It is like a contagious disease. But if you think this, and if, as you say, the realisation of Anarchist Communism depends on all men being willing to come freely to a fair, harmonious, mutual agreement, surely you must feel all crimes which tend to raise and keep up mutual hatred and distrust in social life a direct hindrance to the change you long for?

ANARCHIST. I believe that such conduct as Ravachol's would be utterly wrong for me, and on no account whatever would I directly or indirectly advise or incite anybody else to take upon himself the awful responsibility of such action. And I think it has the evil effect you say. But it is no use hiding from ourselves the fact that this sort of acts of personal violence have always taken place during the earlier phases of great social changes, great revolutions, like that in France, for instance. During the years before 1789, the peasants were continually protesting against the tyranny of the land-owners and authorities by deeds of violence, whilst the better part of the educated classes protested by speech and writing. When a great change is taking place in men's minds, and they are beginning to try to re-adjust their attitude towards one another in every way; when the old beliefs and old ties are broken up and the new are not yet formed and active; when a dim glimpse of possible relief makes men desperate under ills that seem more unbearable every day—then there are always individuals who feel that they must destroy somehow the fetters that are eating into their very flesh, and if they cannot reach the persons they think responsible for their own and other's sufferings, they will strike at any one they can reach, not caring if they kill themselves or any one else in the effort. And their action has at least this use in it. It rouses the indifferent people round and makes every thoughtful and feeling man and woman realise more fully the terrible necessity for the most strenuous efforts to better things. When human beings are being driven to such a pass by social conditions, no human creature who has a heart and head can sit still with folded hands and fleet away the time as in the golden age.

HARRY. Then such actions as Ravachol's are not the outcome of Anarchist opinions?

ANARCHIST. They are not the outcome of any opinions, but of human nature under a certain amount of pressure. They have taken place over and over again in the world before Anarchism as a reasoned conviction was ever heard of, and were always labelled as belonging to the advanced belief of the time, whatever it was; because the lookers-on and the actors themselves both felt vaguely that these acts of violent revolt were connected with the struggle for something better; in fact, a necessary outcome of the conflict of old and new social ideas. So they have been labelled Protestant, Republican, Jacobin, Socialist, and finally Anarchist. And in a certain sense they have been all these. Yet it would be extremely unfair to hold Protestants, Republicans, Socialists or Anarchists, who neither commit such acts nor advise others to commit them, responsible for the action of those who do. The doing of such actions is not a part of their creed, as murder is part of the religion of the Thugs of India. But besides this there is another plain fact, which no one who looks the present social crisis squarely in the face can avoid, however little it may please him. It is that the recent advance in the knowledge of explosives and the art of making them has virtually altered the balance of power in the world. Formerly, when matters between rival classes or individuals came to the arbitration of physical force, the supreme decision rested to a large extent (never entirely) with physical strength and numbers, wealth and discipline. Now, for the first time in the world's history, a poor and physically weak individual can, if he will, alone and unaided assert his claims in a manner so forcible as to strike terror into all around him, and set at naught the organisation of armies and police cohorts. And through such agencies as the Walsall prosecution the knowledge of this power is being spread broadcast amongst the people. When they are hard pressed, they will use it, not because of any theoretical conviction or because Anarchists have incited them to do so, but simply because the logic of events is forcing them into action, and every man so driven naturally picks up the most effectual weapon at his command.

HARRY. I never thought of all that; but it's quite true. Before the Walsall trial, I had no idea what a bomb was like, never thought about it in fact. Now I have got quite curious about such things and have picked up a pretty fair notion of how they're made. I should never have believed it was so cheap and easy a thing for any body to do. But Ned, that Social Democrat fellow down our way, always says that Anarchists preach propaganda by deed, and he told me yesterday that Ravachol had done nothing but carry out the Anarchist principle of individual initiative in revolutionary action.

ANARCHIST. That is as much as to say that because we believe that every man should be morally and otherwise free to act on his own initiative; should be free to do what he thinks right, without waiting for other folks to tell him, we are therefore responsible for everything he may do. Because we believe, for instance, that a well person ought to eat what he thinks fit, and not be spoon-fed with what other people think he ought to have, are we therefore recommending him to eat what disagrees with him? And if he does so, are we morally responsible for his mistake? So in the case of propaganda by deed. Deed means action, doing something. If murder is a deed, so is nursing cholera patients night and day, and scornfully refusing the government decoration offered as a reward for that, and so is the refusal of the men in a workshop to go on working if a mate is unjustly fined or discharged. Why is the murder rather than the other deeds of Anarchists to be taken as peculiarly distinctive of their belief?

HARRY. What do you really mean then by propaganda by deed?

ANARCHIST. We mean that every man worth the name, who realises

the evils of the present society, ought to protest against them by his acts as well as his words, whenever and in whatever way he has an opportunity, without waiting for any general uprising. You know there are some Social Democrats (not by any means all) who say: "An individual can do nothing against an evil social system, so let us revolutionists personally go on living like the partizans of things as they are, until some big political movement comes. The world is full of exploitation, treachery, thieving and domination, and we single handed can't purify it. So let us too get all we can out of others, giving as little as may be in return; let us lord it over any one we can and cringe to those more powerful than we; we are deceived and robbed, let us deceive and rob in return. When the great day comes, we will revenge ourselves and then be virtuous and humane ever after." But we Anarchists are convinced that human nature and human societies don't change suddenly, all in a lump, like that. We are sure, the great social change so many are now longing for and expecting will never come about unless it is prepared for in action as well as in word. You remember the line of grand old Walt Whitman—

"How beggarly appear arguments before a defiant deed."

And doesn't George Elliot say somewhere that the sight of a noble action "produces a sort of regenerating shudder through the frame, and makes one feel ready to begin a new life"? Those of us who are too weak to act nobly in spite of the pressure of circumstances can at least do our part by acting as bravely, humanely and honestly as we possibly can, protesting in any way open to us against the wrongs nearest to us. If we don't at least try to do this, no wordy propaganda of ours will be of much use.

HARRY. I see what you mean now. But you Anarchists are continually calling upon the people to revolt in the sense of direct revolutionary action.

ANARCHIST. Indeed we are. And all the more in consequence of every horrible deed our present vile social arrangements drive men to do. But to call on men to revolt is not to advise them to use cruel or treacherous means in doing so. If the workers only realised it, they have the power in their hands to make the great social change we all need, without degrading themselves by wallowing in the mire of politics or making hole and corner dynamite explosions, or going in for petty larceny and fraud. The whole of society is absolutely dependent for its daily bread upon their labor. When they choose, they can bring the propertied classes to reason, as the House of Commons brought King Charles, by cutting off the supplies. If in such a case the property owners find, as King Charles did, fools enough to come to blows on behalf of their privileges, so much the worse; but in such a case...

Here our correspondent, who had been walking along side, had to turn up another street, and so lost the rest of the two young men's conversation.

THE REIGN OF HUNGER.

IV.—CAUSES.

ANY one who is driven by the universal, gnawing hunger of mind and body to look earnestly into our present method of co-operating with one another to secure existence, will be at once struck with one main fact. He will see that the system recognises, accentuates and manufactures inequality on a gigantic scale.

By inequality we do not mean diversity of gifts and capacities between man and man. We do not mean those personal differences which make one man run, climb, swim, speak, write, sing, paint, do any sort of work or act in any particular way better than another; whether by better is meant with greater energy or higher capacity or more suitably to the circumstances. Given a fair field, most human beings have some special excellences and some special weaknesses which distinguish each from his neighbours. This is a natural fact which exists whether we like it or not. But, so far from being a cause of misery, the variety and friction it causes are main causes of progress. The more we are all of one fashion, like peas in a pod, the less we rub up and incite one another's faculties and the duller and more stagnant becomes our life. Stagnation means death; life implies the play of opposing and interacting forces.

No, the inequality we speak of is social inequality, resting on artificial distinctions, so that a man ranks not for what he is, but according to what he may have in the way of wealth or inherited or acquired privilege. In other words, the inequality we speak of is inequality of possessions, of opportunities, of such advantages and aids as Nature or past human effort has given to the existing generation. We speak of the widening and deepening of natural inequalities in environment, in circumstances, by an artificial social system, until they become glaring and monstrous. Whereas surely the rational object of all social co-operation is to counteract the injustices of chance and circumstance, and help each person to secure as fair an opportunity for self-development as possible, in spite of natural obstacles.

Is not this inequality in itself enough to account for the unsatisfactory working of our social system; entering, as it does, in one way or another into the life of every one of us?

A hasty glance at the ways in which we feel the pinch of hunger most, will show how tremendous a part inequality does play in the matter. To begin with; hundreds of thousands of human beings in England alone do not get even one hearty meal a day and, like Christ, have not where to lay their heads. Millions are continually underfed or ill-fed, and at the same time badly lodged and badly clothed. Is this because there is not enough wealth in England to supply the need.

of each for plenty of wholesome food, a sound roof over his head and a warm comfortable suit of clothing? Certainly there is quite enough for every one to have all this. The fault lies in the inequality with which the wealth is shared amongst Englishmen.

So much for the most elementary sense of the word hunger. But the complex nature of man needs many things besides food, clothes and lodging. In our first article we spoke of the hunger for knowledge in the widest sense, the knowledge to be gained not merely from reading books, but from the chance of seeing pictures and statues and hearing music, above all from travel and a wide acquaintance with the beauties of nature, and the varieties of men and manners. We spoke of the longing of the awakened intelligence for opportunities of training, of true education, to aid it in grasping and bringing into ordered relation the knowledge it may acquire. Who can tell of the countless numbers of human minds eagerly craving such scope for enlargement, yet condemned never to know it. Not because we are living in the dark ages. Not because the stored experience and observation of mankind is still small or unformulated or hidden away, or the difficulties of moving from place to place are almost insurmountable, as they once were. Not because there are not multitudes of able and willing teachers, of excellent books, splendid collections of works of art. No, simply because the opportunities for using these advantages are confined to a comparatively few. Because the method of arranging the work in our existing system is such as to allow the masses neither time nor energy for mental cultivation; another form of inequality.

The same sort of inequality shows itself in all the endless opportunities for physical and mental self-development and recreation—enjoyed by the few and denied to the many. A few can go in for athletics, riding, rowing, country rambles, light reading, and thousands of such health and pleasure giving enlargements of life, while the greater number are chained, not by nature, but by our social arrangements to a monotonous round of toil. Arrangements whose inequality cuts both ways. For the comparatively few who have nothing to do but to amuse themselves are bored to death by an occupation which can satisfy no man or woman worth the name. And the more vigorous among them, who devote themselves to some form of mental work, suffer keenly from the nervous overstrain of an unnatural specialisation of power, from which a fair share in the material work of life would have saved them. But the inequality of our social arrangements hinders them from undertaking it. Under the existing competitive system they would merely be taking the bread out of some workman's mouth, if they tried.

This hunger of starvation on the one side and of satiety on the other, is quite obviously the direct result of the unequal distribution of wealth and the opportunities the command of wealth gives. But possibly it may not be so clear until one begins to try and realise it, how deeply this canker of inequality eats into the inner life of each of us, vitiating the deepest springs of our being.

Two of the prime necessities of every human creature are the exercise of his creative faculties and love. If he is denied the free scope of his nature in either, he is miserable and there is no help for him in all the wealth of the Indies. He may smother himself in a sort of swinish luxury, or besot himself with monotonous mechanical toil, but as long as his natural vitality remains, he will be restless and unsatisfied. If some sort of beneficent providence could give and secure to each of us an equal share of every natural comfort, whilst denying us the possibility of any but automatic action on given lines at another's will, and of any close fellowship with our fellows, there is not one with a spark of manhood left in him, who would not shortly demand rather to be set free with the worst tools in a new country, or even turned adrift to begin again the heart sickening tramp after employment in one of our big towns.

Now the inequality in our method of social co-operation starves us in both these fundamental needs. If we put the means of production absolutely, to use and to abuse, into the hands of one set of people, and leave all the rest at their mercy, what can the result be? Will not those who have the land and capital bargain with the rest,—who must come to terms with them or lack everything,—to toil for them like machines, in return for a bare living? The best energy of the worker is used up in mere slavish grind, till the very word work becomes hateful to him and his natural creative impulse is worn out, and with it the keenest joy of life.

(To be continued.)

THE WORKHOUSE: LABOR'S RESTING-PLACE.

THIS is a subject the treatment of which may perhaps look somewhat overdrawn to the uninitiated, but those who have studied the economical questions of the day, know the chances are very great, that the worker will at the end of his days, find rest (1) within the walls of a workhouse, or some such charitable institution. Still there may be some who argue that this is not true; that if the toiler would but be a little more thrifty, he could lay something by, with which to live in comfort during his old age. This is a suggestion made by those individuals who generally live—by some means or other—upon the labor of the worker. It is a suggestion that has but a little weight with the intelligent worker, for no one knows so well as he does himself where the shoe pinches. Even under the best of circumstances, the worker will find it almost an impossibility to save enough money to keep himself comfortably in his old age, without either receiving help from

his children, or parish relief. Then what must we say of those, whose work is spasmodic and uncertain; and what of those who may be weeks or months out of work, who, finding starvation at the door, begin to sell their small stock of furniture—if they possess any—to buy a little food. Or the case may be different, their little furniture, a few sticks in many cases, may be taken for rent due, and themselves thrown out into the streets. This is of daily occurrence, and is so common to the people that it seldom raises any comment. In London alone, in 1888, the permanent army of unemployed averaged daily something like 20,000. What will be the end of these people? Either starvation, beggary, or the workhouse. And the same may be found in every town. We can find people who are willing to work, yet have not the opportunity to do so. Hundreds, and in large towns, thousands of people apply for work, where only one, two, or three have been advertised for. This shows that there are more people than there is work for. A state of things like this cannot last, and the sooner we see the end of it, the better for everyone concerned—the capitalist excepted! Even those who have constant work (and the number of them is very small), have so many unforeseen circumstances to contend with, that it is almost an impossibility for them to provide for old age, and keep clear of charity in all its forms. There may be continued sickness in the family; the father may not be strong enough to work continuously; and a thousand other probabilities, which prevent his retiring on his own savings *honestly earned*.

In a return lately obtained by Mr. Burt, it was estimated that here in civilized England, the land of the free, who "never shall be slaves," there are something like 1,300,000 persons, of all classes, who have reached the age of three score and five years, and that out of this number there are 245,687 who are receiving parish relief. So out of this class of aged people, counting every class, at least one in seven becomes a pauper, at or after that date. Oh ye gods and little fishes! What a glorious outlook. In the richest country in the world, in the land where wealth can be seen in abundance, where the rich continually grow richer, we have one in every seven of our aged men and women who are in receipt of cold, cruel charity. And how vast is the number of those who do not, from inmost feelings, apply for this pauper relief. (The word "pauper" itself is an insult to those to whom it is applied). How great is the number who prefer to go tramping through the streets—in fair and foul weather—with hungry bodies and pinched faces! To many of these people, starvation and hardship is preferable to begging or asking assistance from charity organisations. Those who are not utterly lost to all sense of feeling, shrink from help from these sources; places in which men and women are treated more like brutes than human beings, and whenever any help is given, it is doled out with such magnanimous condescension and loudness of tone, that many people seldom apply a second time. Those who do accept this charity are utterly lost, and have given up life's struggle in despair, or they do not understand why they have to beg while plenty is on every hand. This latter class is very large. The "indifferentists" are to blame for much of the present evils existing around us. If they could only be induced to take a greater interest in life's affairs and study *why* they are poor, circumstances would soon be changed, and the solution of the problem be nearer. Even this startling fact of their ultimate residence in the workhouse, when they become aged, seldom awakes them from their accustomed lethargy. It is heart-rending to see the astounding indifference of the workers of this and other countries. A few from the ranks of the workers have grasped the question of why the producers of plenty are poor, often starving, whilst producing food; often with ragged and shoddy clothes on their backs whilst in the act of manufacturing broadcloth and velvet; often having their homes sold up to pay rent which they owe to well-housed, sleek and grasping landlords. These few are the saviors of our future; these are our heroes, for they face persecution, hardships, ostracism, calumny, often *imprisonment and death!* All honor and glory to those men who wish to cultivate a desire for knowledge in the hearts and brains of the indifferentists. Each convert that is made is a step nearer the realisation of the brotherhood of man, and universal happiness. Each convert to Socialism means the earlier downfall of the present unjust and rotten society.

Take a walk in our parks, our museums; pass a night in a theatre or music-hall, and observe the smiling and happy faces of those who have not yet passed many years on the highway of life—no thought of the probable workhouse home ever troubles them. See that young couple contemplating marriage. How happy they look; how the wife that is to be blushes as her future husband unfolds to her his schemes for their welfare. Watch the contentedness of her expression. Their future is all brightness and sunshine. No thought of the workhouse troubles them; such an idea would be ridiculed by both of them if it should be suggested. They go happy on their way. But things change. They have been married many years, their comely looks are gone, and they are in the mill of poverty, and starvation stares them in the face. The man becomes one of those paupers who end their days in the workhouse, that "home" where you are treated like a prisoner; where old men over seventy are put to pick oakum, and in many instances, smoking is partially and in some cases strictly forbidden; where certain times only are allowed at which your relations may visit you, and where your food is doled out by ounces and half-ounces.

Does not such a prospect fill your heart with joy and gratitude, when considering how your last days on earth are to be spent, in spite of all the wealth your hands produced during your lifetime? Will it not ease your dying agony to think that you, who die penniless and a recipient of cold, cruel charity, have been making wealth for others, who

toil not neither do they spin, and that they enjoy it, and are respectable, whilst you are only a pauper, who will probably die in the workhouse, and the directions for your funeral be :

"Rattle his bones
Over the stones,
He's only a pauper
Whom nobody owns !"

A glorious prospect indeed, and one not improbable, and yet how few of our younger generation—and the middle-aged, too—realize the probability that they may end their days in the workhouse in spite of all the thriftiness and frugality on their part. Is the thought not galling? Why do not the people see to these ills in our present society, where the honest man but poor goes to the wall, while the rich thieves and rogues flourish and end their days in peace and comfort? Why do they stand idly by while they are robbed on every hand? Why do they allow the drones to rob them and their children without altering this state of things? The answer is: Indifferentism. But this will and must break down. The worker will be assailed from all sides by the few brave men and women who have made this thing a speciality. With tongue and pen, and with lives (if need be) will the gospel of Socialism be brought into prominence, and the workers will then understand how they have stood idly by whilst a few have been doing their work! Then will dawn a brighter day, when the workhouse and poverty will be a thing of the past, when each will work for all and all for each. Oh, that that day were not so distant when we shall see established the brotherhood of man. In the meantime, let us see that we do our work to bring about this grand future, let us not be weary, but ever preach the gospel of Socialism, for we know that by so doing we are hastening that glorious day when poverty shall be unknown.

G. E. CONRAD NAEWIGER.

THE PROPAGANDA. REPORTS.

LONDON

On Sunday, April 3, Touzeau Parris lectured at Phoenix Hall, Kentish Town, on the relation of Socialism to Anarchism, pointing out that Anarchist Communism is the synthesis of the individualistic and socialistic currents in the evolution of ideas. Interesting discussion. On Sunday, April 10, Morton spoke from the S.D.F. platform, on Clerkenwell Green, the audience seeming to take to the new idea of no government and no law-makers.

On Saturday, April 16th, at the Hall, 337 Strand, the first of a series of four lectures was begun by C. Morton upon Anarchist Communism *versus* State Socialism. The lecturer aimed to show the greater scope for physical and mental development that would exist under Anarchy as opposed to the limitations of the state. Amongst those who joined in discussion, were White, Headingly, Fawcett, Barwick, and Marsh; the last-named very neatly showing up the superficial arguments used by Headingly. It was interesting to notice the mad scramble on the part of the social democrats to show that their government is no government after all, but simply an institution for the manufacture of moral axioms. Unfortunately for them they seemed to forget the existence of their programme; White, too, the indefatigable, betrayed an affectionate and sudden interest in finality; as nobody seemed to know anything about it, he sat down rather disconcerted. On the whole the discussion was very profitable.

Sunday, April 17th, Morton spoke from the S.D.F. platform in Hyde Park; an interested audience patiently listened to the aim of the Anarchist propaganda. Comrades should make a point of holding meetings here every Sunday afternoon, there being a good opportunity of getting large audiences. In the evening, at Malden Road, Hobart failing to turn up, Morton, at the request of the Social Democrats present, opened a discussion upon Anarchist-Communism, dealing principally with the political side of the question. Davis, Linden, Hyde, Moore, and others, took part in the discussion; Comrade Hyde having to remind the social democrats that they possessed a rigid programme, the details of which would be forced as a condition of social life, upon an unwilling section of the community. There is a marked alteration in the treatment of the Anarchist position developing amongst the S.D.F. members of Kentish Town. It means, I venture to say, a move in our direction.

Saturday, April 23rd, at the Hall, 337 Strand, a large and attentive audience listened to our comrade, Kropotkin, upon the "Anarchist view of the revolution," the second of the series of four lectures. The lecturer took up the economical aspect of Anarchist-Communism, and clearly demonstrated the futility of such methods of remuneration as labour checks, and the impossibility and absurdity of gauging accurately the value of each person's labor. After a good many questions, Quelch, (S.D.F.) opened the discussion; said all the Social-Democrats wanted was the surplus value, now enjoyed by a class; did not condescend to explain what Social-Democrats were going to do with it when they got it, had no conception of a higher condition of society than Democratic-Socialism (Quelch's power of conception must be in a bad way). He might enlighten us as to what part Democracy plays in a society based upon true socialism, the extinction of Class. Democracy is class rule. Perhaps, its only a way Quelch has, he may not mean it. White, after giving vent to a brilliant economic idea (striking an average and then sharing out) subsided luminously. Somebody in the hall introduced that awful creature, the man who would not work under any circumstances, they did not know what the Anarchist would do with him, and the only constructive idea they had with regard to him, was to kick him till he did work; its only another step towards kicking those who disagree with you. The discussion was continued until a late hour, and all must have felt the value of such lectures. Several friends from Scotland yard favored us with their presence. No bombs found.

Sunday 24th, grand meeting in Hyde Park, large crowd of people, lots of attention from the police. Amongst the speakers were Harding, Cantwell, Morton, Parker, Miss Lupton, and several others. The people present seemed to enter into and understand the nature of the conflict in which the Anarchists are engaged. The meeting was continued till late in the afternoon; between twenty and thirty shillings were collected, and literature all sold out. The *Commonweal* fetched a good price, as much as sixpence being paid for a single number. *Freedom* and pamphlets sold out. Altogether a fine meeting and very encouraging. In the evening at Phoenix Hall, Kentish Town, Miss Hicks lectured on "Usury." There was nothing very much to disagree with in the lecture, except some reference made by the lecturer to National Socialism. The futility of nationalisation and its inevitable tendency towards bureaucracy was pointed out in the course of discussion by Hyde, Morton, and others. This was

the last of the indoor lectures and the Anarchist-Communists have made a decided advance in this quarter.

April 19 a meeting of protest against the brutal sentences passed upon the victims of the Walsall police plot was held in Hyde Park. Speakers, Nichol, Turner, Fox, Atterbury and others.

PROVINCES—

Edinburgh.—On 23rd of April Comrade T. H. Bell lectured to the local Fabian Society on the "Economic Problem." His subject was a bit too deep for the audience (why don't the Fabians go in for economics?) more especially for some gentlemen who had been attending another meeting and came in only in time for the last ten minutes. They knocked holes with the greatest ease in that part of the lecture which they had not heard. The Edinburgh Fabians are a peculiar people. They believe that the State should hold the means of production, that the State should organise labour, that the State should fix remuneration—but they say they are not State Socialists! Whereat Bell feels a little mixed. He is convinced, however, that with time and skilful treatment even Fabians might be brought round to common sense and anarchism.

Aberdeen.—In spite of cold and occasionally stormy weather we have held some splendid meetings on Castle Street on Sunday evenings during April. A great deal of sympathy has been manifested by the large crowds who listen to Comrade Duncan, towards the Walsall Anarchists. We have had an opportunity to propagate anarchy in the columns of a local capitalist paper, and took prompt advantage of it, the Editor having written an insulting leader on Anarchy and Anarchists, full of epithets like "villains, pestilent gang, wretched miscreants, idiotic crew," etc.; a letter replying to it from a comrade appeared next day. The discussion was carried on for some time when our opponent, an anonymous correspondent who championed the Editor, retired from the field thoroughly beaten. We are once more making arrangements to carry on an agitation in the country districts hereabout.

Manchester.—Sunday, April 10th., we held three good meetings; at Phillip's Park, at 11.30; New Cross at 8; large and attentive audiences. On April 17 we held a great demonstration in Stevenson Square, "to enunciate the principles of Anarchy, and to protest against the infamous sentences on the victims of the Walsall Police Plot." Comrade D. J. Nicol, Editor of *Commonweal*, John Bingham, of Sheffield, and our local speakers gave rattling addresses. Bingham especially made the atmosphere feel hot to the police present, as he denounced their miserable and cowardly methods and conduct. There were fully 3,000 persons present, 24s. being collected and over 18s. worth of literature sold. The local press gave a feeble report with its usual accompaniment of lying and misrepresentation and the *Manchester Examiner*, a Liberal Unionist paper, even hinted that John Most had got 18 months' imprisonment a few years ago for expressing opinions similar to those vaunted by "the young man Barton." Let the curs yelp; the shadow of the coming change already looms before them. Anarchy is in all men's mouths; it will soon be in their hearts and nerve them to incarnate that ideal in living reality.

Leicester.—Since our last report we have not been idle, though no out-door meetings have been held. A correspondence has been going on in "the press" between us, the Anarchists, and our friends the enemy—the well meaning but impossible Democrato-Fabianic-Christian Socialists. On 19th inst. a pleasant tea and entertainment, heartily enjoyed by comrades; after which, an informal conference on propaganda during summer. For arrangements come to for same see notice. Much jubilation here on sight of the *Commonweal* *redivivus*. Comrades of Leicester are bearing in mind the appeals of our Walsall comrades; also the necessity for contributing to family of Mowbray, for release of Nichol, and for the upholding of our *Commonweal*. Collections at our meetings will go, in great part, to these objects. *Vive la Revolution Sociale!* We have had considerable addition to our forces recently and anticipate a very vigorous campaign this Summer. On "Labour Day," May 1st, all the Socialists in Leicester unite in a Demonstration, as the Trades' Unionists have declined to recognise the day.

Yarmouth.—Since we have taken over the new premises,—which contain a large club room, refreshment bar, and a large shop for the display of Anarchist, Socialist and Secularist papers and literature—several new members have joined, most of whom take part in the discussion indoors, but cannot out-of-doors on account of their employers, or the boycott. On April 3rd, owing to inclement weather we were unable to hold our usual open-air meetings, so several of us went to the Unitarian Church to hear a sermon on "Socialism no Remedy," and of all the bosh we ever heard this was unequalled. Here is one of many foolish remarks:—"However any sensible class of people can agitate for a state of Equality, via the taking of all the wealth of this vast and mighty empire, and putting it into a heap to be equally divided amongst all the inhabitants is beyond my comprehension." Considering that at the opening of his sermon the preacher stated that he had been a student of Sociology for many years, we thought it was time for him to go to school again. At the commencement they prayed for the *Royal family*, and at the close for all persons to abide strictly by the God-given laws of this christian country. On the 10th, Comrades Brightwell and Headley went to Caister in the afternoon and distributed a large quantity of literature. In the evening there was a large meeting on the Hall Quay to protest against the inhuman sentence passed on our Comrades at Walsall by *Injustice* Hawkins, speakers, Saunders and Headley. April 17, opening of new club-room; good attendance. April 24th, a large and attentive meeting on the Hall Quay, to protest against the arrest of Comrades Mowbray and Nichol and the attempted suppression of the *Commonweal*; addressed by Headley, Comrade Baker taking the *Freedom*s and *Commonweal*s to sell. So the good cause goes marching on.—J. H.

Glasgow.—Comrades of the Socialist league regret the loss of Comrade Joe Burgoyne, who has been compelled to leave here for England in search of work. We are certain that in whatever town he settles Comrades there will receive a valuable acquisition to their numbers. Comrade McLaughlan is now left solely in charge of St. George's Cross. His powers of speech have undergone a rapid improvement. On April 10th he spoke for two hours, the audience listening with great attention. In conjunction with the Labor Army and S.D.F. we intend holding a May-day Demonstration on Glasgow Green at 3 o'clock. Our indoor lectures will finish up by the end of this month. We will also have to look out for a new meeting-place, as the Liberal Association are loosing their Rooms, compelling us to leave also. We are arranging to open a new out-door station at Govan Cross, where we expect to carry on a vigorous propaganda.

NOTICES.

PROVINCES—

Great Yarmouth.—New address: Socialist Society, Carmagnole House, 76, George Street. May 1, "Solidarity of Labor," various speakers. Sundays, Hale Quay, 11 a.m., 3 and 7 p.m., and Bradwell, 11.30 a.m. Saturdays, Church Plain, 3.30 p.m.

Leicester.—Open-air meetings every Sunday, beginning April 24. Russell Square, 10.45 a.m. Humberstone Gate, 8 p.m.

Aberdeen.—Sundays, 6.45 p.m., Castle Street. Tuesdays, Small Oddfellows' Hall, 8 p.m.