

Freedom

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Homestead & its Lesson.

A PHILANTHROPIC, democratic millionaire, an ideal "Captain of Industry," the highest development of the industrial type according to Carlyle and Comte: such is Andrew Carnegie. Who should be a better "trustee" of capital than a man who advocates with word and purse the spread of knowledge, and himself writes books in praise of government by, for and of the people? Or articles explaining that he conceives it best that wealth should be piled up in the hands of a few individuals, rather than shared equally amongst its producers, because these gifted monopolists are most likely to spend their hoards for the general benefit of the community? And he has acted up to this belief, for as his millions have increased his men's wages have decreased, and he has founded more and more public libraries. While the Homestead affair has been going on he has been opening and subsidising a library at Glasgow. What a consolation for the widows and orphans of Homestead!

About trades unions also Mr. Carnegie's views are truly edifying. Lately, writing in the "Forum," he approved of unions as a means of improving relations between Labor and Capital, and as embodying "the unwritten law of the best workmen: Thou shalt not take another man's job." Surely if the capitalist system is to work well anywhere it should be under the auspices of such an enlightened and philanthropic capitalist. Let us briefly run over recent facts as given by the daily capitalist press.

This shining light of capitalism was until three years ago the leading member of a firm, now Company, of Steel and Iron Masters, who employ at their various works upward of 20,000 men. His millions appear to have been amassed partly by bleeding the consumer, by means of the high steel tariff which he has succeeded in causing to be maintained by the United States; partly by bleeding the worker, by a persistent crusade against wages. The Homestead affair is only the last campaign in a warfare waged for years against organised labor; notably the Amalgamated Iron and Steel Workers' Union, to which all the Homestead men belong. One by one, says the "New York World," Mr. Carnegie's mills have been filled with foreign, unorganised, i.e., cheap laborers. One by one he has attacked the organised bodies whose members worked his various steel plants. At the Works at Braddock the conflict was specially long and bitter, and when Carnegie triumphed he bestowed a library on the town; much as a mediaeval freebooter occasionally built a church, we suppose.

At Homestead Steel Mills, in Pennsylvania, a few miles from Pittsburgh, the operatives were, however, still Americans and unionists, gaining, the 800 laborers 7d. an hour, many of the skilled men £3 or £4 a week. These wages were one third lower than in competing works, but Messrs. Carnegie resolved, last June, to reduce them.

All work at Carnegie's is piece work, so much per ton produced. Some new machinery has been introduced to increase the rate of production. The company, wishing to reap the whole profit, announced a reduction of from 12 to 40 per cent. in piece rates. Again, "reckless competition" amongst American steel producers having forced down prices, the company wished their workmen to bear the loss, therefore announced a reduction in the sliding scale minimum from 25 to 22 dol. At a conference, on June 23, the men offered to accept a 24 dol. basis. Frick, chairman of Carnegie's, refused and declined to recognise the union in any way. On July 1st all men refusing to submit to the reduction were locked out and an attempt made to substitute scab labor.

The company had been preparing for the struggle beforehand, after the fashion, says the "St. James's Gazette," of some bold, bad baron of the middle ages fortifying his castle against rebellious townsfolk. In May they had set up a stockade round the works, three miles in length, defended with electrical wires and hydrants supplied with boiling water. The interior fortifications included a bridge 40 ft. high, arc search lights and apparatus for photographing assailants with a view to future legal identification. Barracks were erected near the river for the scabs. A steel launch and some barges were armed with swivel guns and howitzers. To convoy the blacklegs and man the fortifications, Frick sent for 300 armed Pinkertons.

July 6, arrival of Pinkertons in barges; whole population of Homestead turns out to prevent their landing. Pinkertons fire. Pitched battle; workmen fight with revolvers or anything they can get for 16 hours; 11 workmen killed and 18 wounded; 7 Pinkertons killed and 30 wounded. Pinkertons surrender; crowd, whom they had come to deprive of home and work, make for them on their way to prison in opera house; more wounded. Stockade demolished. 400 more Pinkertons to come in armour plated cars, but think better of it. Sheriff summons 600 citizens to restore law and order, only 23 turn up. Work-

men arm themselves with captured Pinkertons' rifles and dynamite July 11, Pennsylvanian National Guard marched to Homestead; they sympathise with strikers.

Interlude in Idalo. Some blacklegs fire on Idalo unionist-miners; fight; 9 killed, 6 wounded; miners blow up foundry where scabs were to work; scabs knock under; 12 shot by miners who cry "You take the bread out of our mouths." Miners blow up two bridges and cut telegraph wires to check advance of Federal troops. Governor telegraphs: If anyone tries to blow up anything, shoot him. Finally, troops appear and armed miners take to mountains.

Next scene at Homestead: July 15—22, Pittsburgh Carnegie men strike for sympathy, "10,000 armed strikers about"; Congressional committee to investigate. Frick own in evidence that he hired Pinkertons and supplied them with fire arms more than a week before lock-out. Carnegie's foremen refuse to work with non-unionists. Warrants against strikers, but "no one will identify." Counter informations against Carnegie, Frick &c. for "arson and murder." Carnegie tries to start working, but next to no hands turn up. July 22, Frick declares he will never again employ a union man and begins evicting strikers.

July 23, Frick shot by Bergman, a Russian Jewish Anarchist from New York. Militia-man Jams shouts "Hurrah for the assassin" and is hung up by his thumbs for half an hour, with the commanding officer's approval.

July 27, Carnegie states to the "Scotsman's" correspondent that he has "implicit confidence in those managing the concern," and for the second time cables "sympathy and confidence" to the wounded Frick.

A pretty state of affairs between our model capitalist and his workmen! And a still prettier state of things between the workers, brought about by him and such as he, in the effort to reduce wages to bare subsistence.

The truth is that all the fine talk of philanthropy, democracy and a fair common understanding between capitalists and workers breaks down, and must break down, when a crisis comes, because it is founded on a lie. The lie that when a man is paid by another man for his work at the competition rate of wages, they are quits, on a footing of equal justice with one another, and that the employer, having paid the wages, has an absolute claim to the disposal of all the wage-receiver has produced. If he devotes part of it to public works, he is supposed to have satisfied the claims of even ideal justice and humanity.

Now there is a certain plain spoken proverb about robbing Peter to pay Paul, which Mr. Carnegie, and all who defend the system of which he is an ornament, have utterly forgotten. It will be a very good thing if all the people—employers and wage-workers and apologisers for the present system—who are now bamboozled by the current misty logic and fine sentiment as to public benefactors, the advantages to the community of rich individuals and classes and so forth, will take the lesson of Homestead to heart. Whatever gorgeous fruit and blossoms the system of inequality may put forth here and there, they are mere parasites growing on a rotten stem. Injustice, maintained by armed violence and cruel oppression, is underneath. All the free libraries and art galleries, parks and wash-houses in the world will not make up what he loses to the worker who is forced to labor long hours every day, at mechanical work which does not interest him; who has neither freedom to direct his own brain and hands nor a voice in the disposal of what he produces; and who, in return for this slavish toil, has merely the price of a poor and monotonous subsistence. Such a man is daily and systematically robbed. Even if the full equivalent of what he produces were given back to him and his class, in libraries &c. (which it is not), he would be robbed still. What can make up to the man whose work (that main joy of life) is made a curse and a degradation to him? Yet this is what the most philanthropic of our "captains of industry" is doing for the human beings of whose necessities he takes advantage to make them a part of his machinery. Or rather, this is what the system of "captains of industry" results in.

Society at large owes a debt of gratitude to the American rebels, who by their manly courage have directed the full light of publicity upon some of the worst abuses of the capitalist system, till even the newspapers begin openly to question the justice of its fundamental principles. The Homestead men will too probably be defeated, but not before they have done signal service to the cause of Socialism; a service which would never have been done if they adopted a policy of passive resistance and starved peacefully.

They have done a great service, but we wish they had done still more.

Workmen! It is next door to useless to strike for more wages or shorter hours, unless you make such strikes a stepping stone to obtaining the control of land and capital, the means of production. The man who has a joint ownership in these is a free worker, the man who hasn't is a slave.

REIGN OF HUNGER.

V.—REMEDIES. (*Continued.*)

WE HAVE said that we believe the main cause of the universal hunger of to-day is the unnecessary, artificially maintained inequality in our way of co-operating for existence. We have pointed out that monopoly, exploitation, domination, those three great cruel diseases of the human mind, lie at the root of this artificial social inequality. We have declared that the one all-absorbing question of to-day is how to rid our social life of these plagues. We have emphatically stated our conviction that a deep-seated, wide-spread social change like this, involving a far-reaching change of mental attitude, can only spring directly from the masses. An attempt to bring about such a change by the machinery of government must be not only fruitless but foolish and dangerous. For to divert men's energies into the channel of any sort of governing is to stimulate and foster the tendency to domination, and we have seen that to get rid of the tendency to dominate is a principal part of the very change we wish to bring about. Now, with all these considerations present to our minds, what does it seem most practical to do?"

In the first place, as we said at the end of our last article, we must do our best to rouse every one we can reach to look his position squarely in the face and try to see for himself the causes of his dissatisfaction. And, of course, we shall try to lead him to see them as we believe they really are. But this is by no means enough. When things are wrong, it is a great matter to see clearly that they ARE wrong and a still greater to grasp clearly how they are wrong. But these are only first steps; what we want above all is to understand how to put things right. To do this we must have some idea in our minds of what the right is. In the matter of our social life we must realise not only that its inequality makes it bad; not only that this inequality has been brought about by the mental diseases of monopoly, exploitation and domination; but we must also realise positively what equality in the co-operation for existence means.

I do not mean that we should each and all set about concocting a utopia; set about planning out in detail how this and that ought to be managed by our successors, the dwellers in the free and equal society of the future. Not at all. When the poets create their lovely visions of what human society might be, let us be grateful for the mental refreshment and the mental stimulus, for the suggestions they give us. But for every "practical man" to set about making a number of hard and fast arrangements for a non-existent future society would be about as wise a proceeding as that of the worthy German who, when he made up his mind to marry, laid in a stock of twelve cots for his expected family! Furthermore this utopia-making would be a real danger when the moment for practical action comes, for everybody would be so busy trying to force his preconceived idea of the right social arrangements on everyone else that no one would have a moment to spare for a wise and unprejudiced consideration of the actual course of events. No one's mind would be free and flexible enough to use available conditions to the best purpose.

What we do mean is that every one of us, having made real to his own mind the main causes of our present suffering and conceived that they CAN be removed, has next to try to make real to his own mind what human relations would be if these causes of suffering WERE removed. He puts himself in the mental position of a man in free and equal relations with those around him. As far as his own will and desire are concerned, he throws off inequality. Being a member of a society in which inequality, founded on monopoly, exploitation and domination, is the order of the day, he cannot rid his outward life of these evils by his sole individual effort; but he can—and if he is sincere he does—cease to consent to them in his heart. And having thus ceased to consent to them as a necessary part of human existence, his whole way of thinking, speaking, acting is inevitably changed by his change of mental attitude. Instinctively he thinks of and treats every man and woman, with whom he comes in contact, on their own merits as a human being, as creatures of like nature and claims with himself, not as tools to be used by him. If he is a wage-worker, he looks on not only his own mates but his employer and the employer's unstrappers merely as MEN, fellow beings of his own species, neither to be cringed to as if they were gods nor hated as if they were fiends. If he is in any position of privilege, he looks on the men and women whom the accidents of an unjust social system have put in a false position of arbitrary "inferiority," as human beings just like himself, entitled, just as he is, merely because they are human beings, to the respect and consideration of their fellows. Whatever the niche in which he finds himself in life, he will make his personal relations to those around him, gentle and simple, as much those of a man among fellow men as he is able to make them. And trying thus, in spite of the overwhelming difficulties, to express his honest feeling towards his fellows, he comes, partly through his success, partly through his failures, to have a very real sense of what equality in social co-operation would mean.

Take the every-day experience of a skilled workman for instance. Amongst his shop-mates his sense of equality is fairly well satisfied. He feels that they are men of very different sorts of disposition,—some gifted in one way, some in another; one witty, another full of earnestness; one a smart, ready talker, another a thoughtful reader, who knows twice as much, yet can scarcely get out his best ideas; one clever and handy, and another only able to do the most mechanical jobs, yet perhaps a jolly good fellow, keeping all the shop in good spirits; one hard and keen but honest to the last farthing, another good-natured and generous but always forgetting to pay his debts; and so on, through an endless variety of character and capacity. But all these differences

do not wound in the least our workman's desire for equal human relations. He may like or dislike this shop-mate and that, care to associate with him or not, but in either case he feels him to be simply a human being like himself; any difference of level there may be is the real and natural one of moral or intellectual development. Amongst shopmates, or any other set of men with no artificial barrier between them, a sort of common feeling quickly comes to exist, so that they continually give and take help without hesitation, hardly thinking of it, exchanging tools, lending a hand here or there just as a matter of course, in a way they would never think of asking of a "social superior." And it continually happens that they are ready to aid one another in distress in a spirit of the freest generosity. Amongst his mates also, a workman often finds good comrades with whom he can fully exchange ideas and enjoys a real sense of companionship. And now again he finds a friend, a man who gives him the sympathetic fellowship of love. Amongst his social equals, even in spite of all the hardening and dividing influences of the surrounding inequality, he finds some room for the expansion of his best feelings, a certain sense of mutual service and support, simply on the ground of a common standing as men and brothers, and surely he feels that this is one of the very best things in his life.

But fancy such a man, with a longing in his heart for real equality in human relations, face to face with the out-o'-works, the odd-job men, the unluckiest of the unskilled. He feels that they are men and brothers just as much as his shop-mates. Honestly he desires from the bottom of his soul to treat them so. He does behave to them with the personal consideration and respect he believes the due of every human being from his fellow men, but the more honest and deep his feeling in the matter, the more bitterly conscious he is of the terrible difference between the man with decent clothes on his back, enough bread in his mouth and a sound roof over his head, and the man who lacks all this. In spite of all his genuine longing for it, he cannot hide from himself that here can be no true equality. He and this other man are co-operating for existence on no equal terms, and the sense of it causes an artificial distance and restraint between them, even if the unfortunate one is so good-hearted that he feels no malice or envy against the other.

On the other hand, the workman with the strongest sense of his dignity as a man requires much greatness of mind, much of the highest moral courage to bear himself simply as a man and a brother towards those fellow men of his who, by the abominable injustice of our social arrangements, hold his livelihood, and the livelihood of his wife and children, in their hands. It is almost impossible hard for him to look at them straightly and simply as they really are—human beings much of a muchness with himself, entitled to the same respect and consideration as himself, no more and no less. When he gets over his delusion that they are superior, he naturally goes to the opposite extreme and imagines them a sort of monsters, without the ordinary human feelings at all. Whereas they are simply men in a false position, who, if their conditions were altered, he would find to be of like passions with himself. Such a man as we are supposing therefore, would again find his desire for equality defeated in relation to his employers and any members of their class he might encounter. Even if the employers are favorable specimens of their kind, the power they have over him gives him a continual sense of aloofness from them and restraint with them. He has none of that give and take of thought, feeling and mutual aid with them that he has with his mates, the sense of human fellowship is faint if not altogether absent. And with other members of the privileged classes he feels a like sense of distance, more or less, because in too many of them the elaborations, not only of their way of living but of behaving and thinking, have made a sort of mask over their more elementary human characteristics, and a plain man feels all the time in their society that, though in all that is most essentially human he is as well-developed a being as they, yet they are all the while so conscious of his deficiencies in their artificial paraphernalia of living and thinking and acting that this consciousness becomes a barrier, hindering all free give and take in the intercourse between him and them.*

By thus sifting and thinking over his own experience of life, any man, whatever social position he happens to find himself in, can come at a pretty fair idea of what equality in social relations really means. In his personal dealings with his neighbours he is on more or less of a social equality with some and very much less of an equality with others. He can observe and feel for himself that with his equals his social relations are wider, fuller, more satisfying; amongst them he feels freest and most himself. Generally speaking, if he cares for the society of his social inferiors, it is that he may help them. If he associates with his social superiors, it is that he may get some special advantage; employment or knowledge for instance. The people he is at ease, at home with, the people from whom he gets the best human fellowship are those who are most his equals. In his own practical every-day life any one of us can see the advantages of equality where it exists and the painful effect of its absence where it is imperfect. If we connect this observation from our own experience with our thoughts about the bigger social life, we shall form a tolerably definite idea of the sort of way in which a general co-operation on equal terms amongst all the members of a society would work. We shall come thus to realise the PRINCIPLE of equal co-operation and what the effective working out of that principle admits of and requires.

Looking at the question in this way, we see that social equality is not

*It is interesting to notice how this want of social sympathy melts away among those who have a genuine sense of human equality and are earnestly co-operating to bring it about. Though the outward inequalities remain between them, the change of mental attitude is enough to give rise to a feeling of equal fellowship.

something mechanical, not a system to be imposed on society by a governing body or even a series of laws passed by the majority. Unless the principle of it exists in the hearts and minds of the masses, it can only be maintained by the most absolute tyranny, and, even then, more in appearance than reality. For social equality is not merely a like distribution of goods to each member of the community or an even distribution of opportunities. It is, at bottom, the relation in which the human beings in a society stand to one another: a relation inclining them to keep up evenness of opportunities for each and all.

On the one hand, this relation implies the absence of artificial barriers and differences; such barriers as are raised by the possession of all things actually needful by some and not by others; the possession of great wealth and means for elaboration of life by some and not by others; the possession of control over the means of production by some and not by others; the possession of leisure and opportunities of culture by some and not by others; the possession of governmental authority by some over others. All such artificially constructed barriers as these are obviously destructive of social equality and their absence is essential to its existence in a perfect form. But this is only the negative part of the matter.

On the other hand, the relation of equality requires certain positive qualities and capacities in human beings who would enter into, maintain and perfect it. And in proportion as they possess these qualities and capacities in themselves in a fuller and higher degree will the social equality they are able to institute become more real and complete.

It is obvious that it is our gregariousness, our social instinct, which makes us keep together and co-operate for existence at all. But if we are to co-operate on terms of equality, this sense of oneness, with our kind must be developed into a sympathy which will enable each of us to put himself mentally in the place of his fellows. We must be able to understand in imagination what in our conduct may be taking his chances away from another human being; and we must be so much in sympathy with him as to be ourselves hurt by what is thus hurting him. We all know that such sympathy already exists. If it did not, we should not be living even in the imperfectly socialised society of to-day. But we often almost forget its presence in our sense of how cruelly it is starved and crushed out between class and class, between the individuals who are driven into unscrupulous competition with one another in the scramble for wealth or living. Still we can see that where this sympathy is strongest it is a force making for such equality as may be possible, and also we see that it is amongst those who are most on an equality that sympathy can most freely grow, unless in cases where they are temporarily driven into some desperate rivalry. The growth and spreading of this sympathy is one of the greatest factors in the evolution of social equality.

Sympathetic feeling is much, but it is not all. A man must be intelligently convinced that he will, in the long run, obtain the fullest satisfaction for his own nature in every direction by co-operating with others on terms of equality, or he will not persistently endeavour to keep up that relation. It may give him pain, it does give all of us pain, more or less, to hurt others; but that pain will not be enough to keep him from snatching at some immediate pleasure or satisfaction that takes his fancy, if he really believes that by losing it he will have forfeited a part of the joy of living. After all, each of us has only just his one life, and there are many moments when the urgent desire for something or other seems to swallow up all other sensations. At such moments as these, it is our intelligent grasp of life as a whole which saves us from making a fool of ourselves by sacrificing the big permanent good for some trifling passing fancy. It is only when we have intelligence to realise the advantages in the long run of social equality for ourselves, as being by our essential nature members of a society, and, having realised these advantages, to keep fast hold of the root idea of them and resist all momentary temptations to act in such a way as to bring about inequality, it is only when we are able to do this that equality will be firmly established amongst us.

Ready sympathy, an intelligent mental grip of the idea, these are essential to the full development of social equality; but are they enough? Amongst the civilised men of this century individuality has reached a pitch which it has never attained before. Personality becomes more and more self-conscious. The ancient sociological idea expressed by Tennyson, "The individual dwindles and the race is more and more," is the utter reverse of truth. The most advanced scientific thought of our day tends continually to the recognition of the actual truth of that instinctive sense of each one of us that he—his self-conscious personality—is for himself the centre of the universe, the only logical centre of that sum of related impressions, which is all we can hope to know of the not-ourselves.

Who has not stood, as it were, in wondering reverence before the marvellous consciousness of the working of his own mind? Is there one of us who has not thrilled throughout his whole nature before the glorious spectacle of what greater minds have accomplished? Is there one of us who has not stood in infinite humility, infinite pride, before their triumphs of thought, triumphs of love, of courage, or their magnificent failures more moving still? Is there one of us who has not realised the exquisite bitterness of knowing that in every gutter child, in every rough, in every man and woman ground down into a slave there is this same glorious power, wasted, ruined, lost; this marvellous human mind, the divinest thing we know?

We can never hope for a complete and stable social equality whilst this sense of the sacredness of human personality is discouraged and perverted. Without a deep-seated reverence for himself as a human being and for each of his fellows as a human being, a man will be always either pressing upon another's personality or letting his own be

squeezed. And then farewell to equality. Either the squeezed man's opportunities are taken from him, or to resist the pressure he tries to protect himself by monopolising what he thinks he may need, and keeping himself to himself. There is perpetual irritation between those who have a strong sense of personal dignity and those wanting in it. The one trying to erect barriers against their familiar and inconsiderate neighbours, and these latter resenting what they consider stand-offishness, and converting reserve into hostility by further encroachments. One of the strongest arguments against common ownership of goods is the dread of the individual lest, if he cannot keep his earnings and possessions by some legal or other formal right, he will have no bar against the pressure of others on his personality, his own individual ways of thinking, feeling and acting. Every well developed human being desires such respectful consideration; we all shrink from the people who do not give it, who "take advantage." They may be very sympathising, very kind, but we are never at our ease with them. We try instructively to put some artificial barriers between us and them. It is a fatal hindrance to a true sense of co-operative equality. On the other hand, if a man has a strong sense of reverence for human personality, he may be wanting in sympathy, in active kindness, but he will never willingly encroach on a fellow man or exploit him in any way. It would always be possible to co-operate on equal terms with him.

Therefore the growth and recognition of such a reverence for man as man seems to us of prime importance. A reverence which will lead each to protect himself, not merely instinctively, but from a reasoned sense of right, from every attempt on the part of others to lay rude hands on his individuality of thought, feeling, action. A reverence which will lead him to shrink from doing violence to another man's nature and personality as from sacrilege. The more this reverence becomes a conscious part of our moral sense, the larger will be our freedom, the greater our capacity for co-operating on terms of equality.

There is yet another thing which social equality demands of those who would establish and maintain it: trustworthiness, reliability. Unless a man is capable to some extent of steadfast sincerity it is impossible to co-operate with him at all. In proportion as you feel you can trust him, and he feels he can trust you, does it become possible to transact business to the best purpose in association with him. This is self-evident to everyone in his daily experience. We all know the good well-meaning person whom it is utterly impracticable to do serious work with, because one can never be sure that he will really do what he has undertaken. And, unfortunately, we all know the would-be smart fellow who sees no use in sincerity, and, to gain an object he thinks desirable, will have no hesitation in going back on any undertaking or deceiving any one who is fool enough to put their faith in him. We all know too that, when it comes to serious work of any sort in association with such a person, we are continually hindered and frustrated by our want of trust in him. His untrustworthiness makes it utterly impossible to put one's best energies into whatever is to be done. One's attention is always partially occupied with guarding against him. It is easy to see how social equality must always be hindered by untrustworthiness amongst those who might otherwise wish to co-operate on equal terms. They might feel kindly to one another, be theoretically convinced of the desirability of social equality, and even feel some respect for each other's individuality, and yet, if they had no trust in each other, inequality would surely exist among them.

Co-operating for existence is a desperately serious business. Men feel that their lives and all they hold dear depend on their success in it. And if by treating your fellow man as your equal and trying to come to a harmonious understanding with him about the common work on which life depends, you find you can't be sure that the share of this work he has undertaken will really be effectually done, no social sympathy or intellectual convictions or reverence for individuality will hinder most of us from taking up another attitude. Food and clothes must be got somehow, and if we find that our associates are so untrustworthy that, in consequence of their shiftiness and shirking, the work of providing the necessities of life does not get done, most of us will assuredly either try to drive our unreliable associates to do their part, or else try to prevent them from sharing in the produce they have taken such an inefficient share in raising. And in such a state of mutual feeling how long shall we be without laws, government, police, monopoly and exploitation?

We see therefore that, though we are living in the midst of social inequality, we are, when we come to think about it, perfectly well able from our own experience of life to form a fair general idea of what social equality means, both negatively and positively. To gain and keep it certain external barriers existing between men to-day, such as the monopoly of wealth, governmental authority and the rest, must be taken away and certain faculties that men have in their own nature must be developed. And a very little further reflection will show us that these two sorts of changes must, of absolute necessity, go on together, side by side. For how are the outward re-arrangements to be made but by the active energy of human beings who are driven by their own natures to feel the need of such action? It is only when the healthy forces of sympathy, reverence for human personality, steadfast sincerity of nature and an intelligence sufficient to grasp and realise a general idea, are actively at work in the minds of men, counteracting the diseased tendencies to dominate, exploit and monopolise, that such a great social change as we are treating of can possibly take place.

Practically, then, the next step to take, after folks have woken up to the needlessness of the social inequality under which they groan, is to rouse them to realise what social equality actually means and involves.

(To be continued.)

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In September *Freedom* will begin a serial translation of Kropotkin's new book "THE CONQUEST OF BREAD," now in its third French edition.

NOTES.

JUSTICE OR REVENGE?

Last month there were three noteworthy Anarchist trials in France, one in Germany and one in Belgium. The collective sentences pronounced on the 22 Anarchists found guilty amount to 216 years and 11 months! This is exclusive of the sentences in the Roman trial of the May 1891 "Rioters," which dragged on until July 4, when Cipriani got 20 months' solitary confinement and 38 others from 25 to 8 months' prison.

"NO ANARCHISTS IN GERMANY."

So declared Liebknecht in his Rixdorf speech, on July 6; but somehow it happened that, on July 4, five German Anarchists had been sentenced at Leipzig, for high treason and spreading Anarchist views among soldiers, especially by means of "Die Autonomie." Also there were Anarchists enough, on July 20, in Berlin, to join the Independent Socialists in a very lively meeting of protest against said speech and the unfair tone adopted towards Anarchism in "Vorwärts." Liebknecht, it seems, opines that M. Constans "let loose Ravachol to terrify French Society!"

SWEENEY AGAIN DISTINGUISHES HIMSELF.

Mr. Sweeney, "shorthand" writer of Scotland Yard and Hyde Park fame, has been paying a good deal of attention to Comrad Seifert lately. He used to stand opposite Seifert's workshop for hours, and as our comrade could not bear to see him waste his time, he one evening offered the loafing detective a piece of bread, asking him if that was what he wanted. To which Sweeney replied by taking Seifert into custody. After a night in the police station, Seifert was brought up at Bow Street before magistrate Vaughan. Such a charge was too much even for him; he "was perfectly astounded," and ordered our comrade to be set at liberty at once. After this Sweeney will be known to outsiders as "Prize Idiot of the Force." But no doubt his zeal will be duly rewarded by his masters, for of such is the kingdom of put-up jobs!

RAVACHOL.

Not this side of the revolution, perhaps not again in history shall we see the like of Ravachol.

Every one now knows the main incidents of his life, how he suffered from the curse of wage-slavery, how starvation drove him to revolt, and how the pride, one might almost say the greatness of character in the man, forced him to acts which we shudder to think of, but which we cannot condemn and have no right to condemn, when we know that he fought single-handed against a society, that employed every resource of artifice and force to crush him. A volume might be written to show what a nature of his power and consistency might have accomplished under conditions of fraternal equality. From the time when he first became acquainted with Anarchist theories to the instant of his execution, one can see clearly the grim logic with which he argued out every act of his

life, literally taking society at its word, and throwing himself without hesitation into the deepest abyss of crime and misery rather than beg or cringe for the means of subsistence to which he knew he had a right, being, as he was, willing and able to work.

His speech to the jury at Montbrison must have brought home some startling facts to the bourgeois, have given them one of the most inexorable lessons in logic they have ever received. After having explained the conditions of life which society forces upon the starving worker, he continued: "That is why I have committed the acts with which I am reproached, and which are but the logical consequence of the barbarous state of society that only augments the number of its victims by the rigor of its laws." And again referring to the taking of human life, he said: "In the same way, you, gentlemen of the jury, without doubt, are going to condemn me to death, because you believe it to be a necessity."

He fought society with its own weapons and threw the responsibility of his crimes on the shoulders of those who maintain the present system. And when at last he stood face to face with the guillotine, he behaved with the same heroic consistency which had animated him throughout.

He disdained to ask for mercy, being, as he said, perfectly prepared for the revenge society would take upon him.

The terror-stricken cowards who were afraid to have him executed in Paris, the wretched officials of the republican government and the class who support them, these worthies no doubt read with high glee the news that his head had fallen. But, whatever his faults may have been, he stands out in gigantic relief against that soulless mass, the comfortable bourgeoisie, who fight their struggle for existence by proxy. For them the acts of a Ravachol mean nothing but an attack upon their privileges. For us it is far otherwise. Even admitting all that can be urged against him, and we cannot help recoiling from the deeds with which he was charged, we yet can recognise a grand individuality tortured into crime by the degrading conditions of society that after all leave none of us untainted.

The governing classes have no conception of Justice or we might remind them of a famous saying of a man whom they profess to worship:—"Let him who is without sin amongst you cast the first stone."

Speaking of Ravachol's death "La Révolte" says: "In him was summed up the awakening of a class: 'I found work humiliating under existing conditions; I rebelled.' Brutally doubtless; all war, all rebellion is brutal, and that of the outcast more so than others. Without pity for human life; where could he learn such pity? Individually, for all revolt begins by being individual."

"In him was summed up the revolt of the INDIVIDUAL, the social PARIAH, rather than of the worker bending over his work, who only makes war upon those who directly exploit him. Ravachol took up arms against the whole of society, and by his whole character proved himself equal to the revolt he inaugurated. If for a moment he had blenched from himself, if he had been untrue to his own character in one single word during the last two months of his life, every one would have turned against him: nothing would have been left but the horror of a man of ninety strangled for his money. But such an one as he was, Ravachol remains: the rebel outcast, summing up the vague rage of the exploited, and as such he will go down to posterity: the murderer, the dynamiter for whom his lawyer wept bitterly, who forced sympathy from the enemies who came in contact with him."

"So completely has he summed up in himself the type of the rebel outcast that henceforth every caricature of this type will run the risk of becoming simply odious, and everything which thus debases it will be disapproved by rebels themselves."

"And just by this very fact has Ravachol prepared the way for a higher type of rebel: for him who shall transmit his rebellious spirit to those around him and make what to-day is a mere class war into a collective revolt of men, not only as exploited workers, but as human beings claiming by a common effort the full exercise of their human faculties."

THE PET VOTER.

AN INCIDENT OF THE RECENT ELECTIONS.

His votes were failing fast; his foes began to wink:

I heard his voice; it said: "Think, gentle voter, think!"

And, looking up the street, before me I espied

A well appointed man with a voter at his side.

"Why don't you vote," he said, "as other voters do?"

It would be nice for me and very good for you.

I'll black your Sunday boots, and you shall be my king,

And when you change your mind, I'll do the other thing.

"At school and college bred, but to learning disinclined,
I've only studied hard to keep an open mind.

I'm something of a shot, I've well connected friends,

And I labor twice a year at drawing dividends.

"Whilst you are working hard, I'll legislate for you:

For if I don't get in, I've not much else to do.

I'll keep the Empire safe beneath my sheltering wing.

Or, if you'd rather not, I'll do the other thing.

"What is it you would seek? What is wanting to your heart?"

I'll pass a law at once, if you but play your part.

I'll pass ten thousand laws, if you to vote agree:

It would be good for you and very nice for me.

"Vote, gentle voter, vote! Have you forgot the day

I took your horny hand, and swore my soul away?

Vote, gentle voter, vote! You are my lord, my king!"

—The gentle voter turned and did the other thing.

SOME OBJECTIONS TO ANARCHIST COMMUNISM.

A REPLY TO THE "REFEREE."

THE "Referee" for July 24, in some notes on Anarchist Communism, says: "*Freedom* is a little paper worth knowing on account of its transparent honesty and the zeal and ability with which it advocates the aims of Anarchist Communism," and a journal "which puts its case with considerable literary skill and undeniable earnestness," is interesting "as revealing the state of mind which is favorable to the reception of Anarchist ideas"; many Anarchists being "men of education and refinement." The weak point of the Anarchist theory is, in the "Referee's" opinion, that "all men are not endowed in an equal degree with intelligence, honesty and consideration for others. If they were, then Anarchy would be the most delightful thing in the world." The writer then goes on to make several objections to Anarchist Communism which he calls upon us to meet in our next issue.

We cannot refuse a challenge thrown out in a spirit of so much courteous appreciation; more especially as the "Referee's" objections are much the same that Anarchists encounter from many inquirers imperfectly acquainted with their views, and to reply to them may therefore be generally useful.

Briefly, these objections are:—

An Anarchist society is an untried experiment, at least amongst civilised men and on a large scale: "every community in the world now practising law must have begun with Anarchy and found it a failure": in face of these facts Anarchists make the very rash assumption that if government, law and private property were abolished all men would suddenly develop all the virtues which would enable them to live harmoniously: or if they do not believe this, what mode of settling disputes would they have in place of law courts and police? There are differences of opinion amongst Anarchists at present which would be fatal to the harmony of a community, e.g., in July *Freedom* one writer is advocating a free and equal co-operation of workers "because any compulsory organisation has no lasting strength," whilst another, in a poem, speaks of the Walsall men as martyrs "sacrificed to law," for having bombs in their possession. Is not a bomb essentially the same sort of method of settling differences of opinion as the policeman's truncheon and one as little in accord with the voluntary principle as the other?

We propose here to deal with the question of the settlement of differences and disputes, as it is on this the "Referee" lays special stress, reserving the other points raised for our next issue.

First, however, let us clear up a matter of fact. The Walsall men were not found in possession of bombs. Some odds and ends of the means for making the outsidings of bombs were found amongst the things of some of them, and, both from the evidence before the court and all other facts within our knowledge, we believe that our comrades had been led by self-interested persons, who played upon their enthusiastic sympathy with the oppressed, to contemplate the idea of getting castings made for explosives to be used by the workers in a foreign country, in a case of an attack by troops upon a street demonstration. But becoming suspicious of the good faith of those who had suggested the idea, they gave it up. Meanwhile the police, BEING AWARE ALL ALONG OF THE WHOLE AFFAIR, pounced upon them. When men in such a case get ten years' imprisonment, others besides Anarchists may well look upon them as victims of legal injustice. But to speak of them as "sacrificed to law" is not to affirm that differences of opinion should be settled by bombs. In fact the writer of the poem does not enter upon this matter at all, and we may safely say that no Anarchist holds such a view.

To turn to the general question. Certainly the Anarchists of to-day do not form a startling exception to every other party that ever existed by being mentally as uniform as peas in a pod. Like State Socialists, Democrats, Radicals, Conservatives, Christians, Freethinkers and who not, Anarchists hold certain principles in common, but differ, according to individual character and circumstances, in the thoroughness with which they grasp the full significance of those principles, as well as in endless minor details of method and application. This goes without saying. Further, we have no expectation whatever that differences of opinion are likely to cease to exist between human beings. If they did progress would cease with them. The friction they cause is essential to development, though sometimes it be painful and sometimes apparently destructive of useful opportunities of common action.

Differences of opinion are inevitable now and in any future we are able to foresee. How are they to be met? About this Anarchists hold a principle in common. If the experience of the ages has taught anything, it is the folly of attempting to coerce a man's convictions. If a man is honestly convinced that some belief or course of conduct is right for him and I am as heartily convinced that it is wrong for me, and neither of us can convince the other by argument or persuasion, then there is nothing for it but for us to forfeit the mutual benefit of one another's co-operation and, incurring whatever loss the separation may inflict on us, to go different ways in life. It may be a great misfortune, some most important piece of social work may be rendered impossible by it. But whatever the sacrifice of immediate expediency, an Anarchist would realise that the wider expediency is always in favor of refraining from the attempt to force acquiescence in our views upon our fellows, however fully we be convinced that we have right reason on our side. An attitude which, of course, involves a determination that no man shall force us to acquiesce with him.

For instance, convinced as we are of the evil of government, law and the monopoly of property, we would compel no man to be free of them who honestly chooses to live under their sway. What we claim is to be free of them ourselves and to be free to do our best to persuade others of their evils. When Anarchists come to blows with some upholders of existing institutions, it is always because, either they themselves,

or some of their fellow men whose cause they have espoused are being violently forced in some way to submit to some social arrangement or some authority which they are convinced is wrong and unjust.

This leads us to another point raised by the "Referee":

How would an Anarchist Communist society deal with disputes, acts of aggression, of violence amongst its members? Or do Anarchists suppose there would be no such acts?

We do suppose that a society which has rid itself of recognised and organised authority and monopoly, will have put an end to some of the most fatal sources of strife and contention; that an absence of poverty, on the one hand, and of the race for wealth and power on the other, will bring with it an absence of some of the worst temptations to unsocial action; that plenty of work of varied sorts for every one and the severe discouragement of idleness which we see obtaining amongst communities of workers, who themselves enjoy the produce of their labor, will further tend to prevent the diversion of energy into useless and mischievous channels; that in an association of well-to-do equals it will be possible to detect and combat the first signs of moral aberration in a way too often hopeless among ourselves. We believe this, because we see that the more any existing society, or section of society, realises these conditions, the less the crime there.

Also we believe that the general Anarchist principle of respecting each man's freedom of conviction and action will tend to prevent many needless disputes.

Still, as far as experience can guide, no human society may hope to be wholly free from disputes and attempts at aggression, any more than from bodily disease. Let us therefore suppose a dispute takes place in an Anarchist Communist society, say an industrial village such as that sketched by Kropotkin in the "*Nineteenth Century*" for October 1888.

Having no police to appeal to, the disputants would probably first try private arbitration. If this failed, they might apply to the general local assembly to decide between them. A persistently quarrelsome or aggressive member of such a community would certainly be boycotted or possibly expelled the commune. Crimes would be treated on the same principle as symptoms of physical disease; the criminal's friends, or, in gravest cases, the commune collectively, arranging that he should be put under such treatment as his form of aberration seemed most to demand. Probably doctors or families who could give the patient change of scene, work and invigorating companionship, would take charge of such afflicted individuals as they do now of lunatics.

As to the revival of a police system, no Anarchist society can exist till those composing it are firmly convinced that police systems are an evil; they would therefore be as little likely to revive what they have fought against and overcome as the English of to-day to allow absolute monarchy or the Star Chamber to be instituted among them.

(To be concluded.)

A SWISS COMMUNE.

TINKLE, tinkle, the air is full of the tinkling of bells. As it comes floating through my dreams I fancy vaguely that marriage chimes are ringing through the length and breadth of some broad English valley; then that all the dinner bells in London have broken loose and are clanging so vigorously that I can hear their distant clamour as if it were fairy bells here on the Swiss mountains. Nearer, nearer, nearer it comes. It is right under the window, and suddenly I start wide awake and throw back the green shutters.

Four o'clock on a lovely June morning. The valley below wrapped in the dim misty twilight; the bare rocks of the opposite mountain bathed in a flood of golden sunshine; the distant snow peaks glittering like spires of flame. And up out of the pine forests, through the long meadow grass, along the winding mountain paths, up and up and up come processions of cows. Gravely walking single file, each little party of two or four or six following like dogs in the footsteps of their owner, a heifer or two, a goat, a pig straggling by the side. A child or youth with a switch bringing up the rear. Round the neck of each cow or goat a collar and bell. In an hour or two, 180 cows and about 100 goats were collected in herds round three dairies on the grass slopes more than 6000 feet above sea level, and put into the charge of three or four cow-herds and a goat-herd to be driven to the upper pastures. Meanwhile the little rough wooden cottages, which before had been lying empty, showed signs of habitation. Smoke rose from the roofs, children played round the doors; evidently a part of the population had migrated from the valley with the cows.

That morning I met a peasant acquaintance, who could speak French as well as the German dialect of the country side, a thoughtful, gentle hearted woman, whose husband was a member of the next commune along the Rhone valley, Fiesch, Canton Valais.

"Why are all the beasts and so many people come up here to-day?" I asked her.

"It is the Tuesday after St. John's Day. We always bring the cattle to the upper pastures at this time."

"But why all on one morning?"

"It would not be fair otherwise. You see all this upland grazing ground belongs to the commune, so everybody's cows are turned out there at the same time."

"So all these upper slopes are common land. May any one turn out his cattle there?"

"All the members of the commune can turn out so many cattle each free. Other people pay the commune."

"And how about the milk and cheese?"

"You see those three dairies? Well, all the cows are brought there to be milked twice a day, and the milk is made at once into cheeses."

"And how are the cheeses divided when winter comes and the cows are driven by the snow into the valley again?"

"I will tell you how we manage in our commune. Every commune has its own ways. One day, when the cows first come up, we measure the milk given by each and the amount is entered in the dairy register. We take that as a measure for the summer, except in case of illness or something exceptional, and in the autumn the cheese is all weighed and shared among the different families according to the amount of milk their cows are put down as yielding per day. The waste milk sent down to the village is divided every day on the same principle?"

"Are there not disputes?"

"Oh no, we choose someone we trust to measure, and besides generally a member of each family is present to see that no mistakes are made. I have never heard of any quarrelling in my life."

"And the men who milk and herd the cattle?"

"They are paid by the commune. This is how we do at Fiesch. Here at Ried some families have mountain dairies themselves, and come up to do their own milking and cheesemaking."

"What do you do with all the cheese?"

"We keep some for winter food. We use it for soup as well as with bread. The rest we sell to buy coffee and other things we can't raise or make ourselves. But that is not much; we make nearly everything we need ourselves."

"Really. Clothes, meat, bread, fuel, do you provide yourselves with all this?"

"Yes. The poorest of us. All that pine forest you see below belongs to the commune. Any member can take all the fire wood he needs free. If he wants to cut down trees for building he must pay the commune for that. And any one who is not a member of the commune must pay for fire wood. We have a forester to look after the woods, plant new trees, and see to the sale of timber ready to fell."

"In Châtelard they told me that each member of that commune might cut down and use or sell so many trees in so many years, but he must replace the trees he felled by young ones."

"I told you that different communes have different ways, but all have the forest land in common, as far as I know, and no member of a commune is without fuel for winter. You know we burn all wood."

"Then you know nothing of one great misery of poor people in England. But how about food and clothes?"

"Besides the common lands every family among us has a bit of land and a house or part of a house of its own."

"You have no rent to pay?"

"Rent? What is that?"

"You are very happy not to know. It is so much a week or a year taken by the owner of a house or a piece of land from those who use it."

"Ah, I have heard of that in the towns. There is nothing like that among us. If any one wants a house or bit of land he buys it. If there is no house to be had the commune will always let him have land and he buys timber and builds as he can afford. Well, on our patches of land we grow hay for the cows in winter and vegetables, particularly potatoes, for ourselves, and many of us grow corn too. Every one has at least one or two cows; most of us four or five, so we have plenty of milk. We drink skim and sour milk a great deal."

"In England in the country poor people can't even buy skim milk very often. The farmers send all the milk to London or make butter and cheese, and feed their pigs with the waste."

"That must be dreadful. I don't know what our children would do without the milk. They are drinking it all day long. Then we have a heifer or bullock to kill now and again. We smoke-dry the extra meat and eat it between killing times. The dairy refuse is enough to keep a pig or two, and we always have a fitch of bacon going. Most people have a goat and sheep or two. We use their milk and meat, but especially their wool."

"I have often seen the women spinning with a distaff whilst they were minding the cows or children; but how do you manage about the weaving and dyeing?"

"Many families have their own loom. No, not in the house; that would be a nuisance with all the dust and noise it makes. In a shed to itself. Those who have not a loom pay those who have to do their weaving. We weave our own linen too very often. It is good strong cloth we turn out; stuff that keeps out the winter cold and stands the wear of rough work in all weathers. The black and white wool makes a very nice material undyed, but there is a dyer in every village, as a rule, who does our blue and black things for us. Our things look shabby outside perhaps from being out in sun and rain, but there is no one who is not warmly clad and comfortable. And on fête days you should see how smart we are."

"Do you really mean that there is no one in your commune who is in need of food, clothing or shelter?"

"Ah, I know what you are thinking of. I have been in France and seen how miserable human beings can be in those awful towns or in the country places where there is no common land, and everyone's bit of land is mortgaged, or he has no land at all and must work for wages. How frightful it must be to feel that you have no place in all the world where you have a right to be, no homestead, no land, no commune to help you; not even the right to work for your own living except some one else takes you on as his servant and gives you wages. It must drive one to despair. Thank God, we have not such a dog's life. Amongst us folks are well off."

"Some amongst you must be very poor. Suppose a family meet with

misfortunes, have ill luck with their cattle, or illness, or ne'er-do-well sons who go off and leave the old parents in the lurch; or a widow may be left with young children. Then the family land would be sold, bit by bit, until the family were left destitute."

"But we should never allow that. Do you suppose we are images of stone and have no hearts to help each other? Certainly some families are much poorer than others and have a difficulty in making both ends meet, but they are not destitute. The neighbours will always give help with the farm work or the nursing or the needful food and clothes. Any one who has more than he needs would think shame to refuse to share it with a neighbour. I was ill nearly all last winter. Do you think I ever was left a night alone or wanted for anything or my children either. Besides, if a family were hard pushed so as to have to sell their last bit of land, the commune would interfere and help them out either with land or labor or a loan."

"Still it must sometimes happen that people are too old or too weak to work and no temporary help will pull them through."

"Yes, we have a house for these."

"A work-house in fact."

"Don't know what you mean by work-house. It is a home."

"We have in England big houses for people who have nothing and can't support themselves. They sleep in dormitories, are dressed all alike, fed as poorly and cheaply as possible, and made to work hard if they are not too old or too ill. All they have is taken from them for their maintenance, they are only allowed to go out on certain days between certain hours, are kept under strict rules, in fact treated as if they were a sort of cross between prisoners and naughty children."

"You treat the poor who have had misfortunes like that. How horrible!" and the good woman's eyes filled with tears. "No, indeed, our communal home is not like that, not in one single thing. We give the unfortunate ones of our best. They live better than we. They are free. They go and come, do a little work as they can and those who can't earn anything come and ask the neighbours for what they need. If any are too ill or infirm to come out and ask we look after them."

"Who? Is there an official matron or master?"

"No, anybody, the neighbours. Oh the poor never want. They are well looked after. The commune have a special fund for the poor. When someone dies, if he has no children, he leaves his property to the commune for the poor, or the richer folk will leave a legacy. Our commune has a considerable fund for helping those who are in need, whether they are members of the commune or not."

"Everybody is not a member then?"

"No, there are some families, new comers, who don't care to pay the entrance fee and become members. If they are in trouble they are helped out of the poor fund."

"Does it not sometimes happen that people are in trouble through their own fault?"

"Oh that's quite another case. If a strong man won't work, if he drinks and idles we don't help him at all. He may just do as he can. If a man won't work he can't eat."

"Is not that rather hard lines for the wife and children?"

"You don't understand. Of course if a lazy man is the father of a family we don't let his wife and children suffer."

"But how can you help it?"

"We give them a man."

"What does that mean?"

"Why, all the kin of the idler or drunkard meet in the commune house, where the registers of family properties are kept. They look thoroughly into the circumstances of the property and carefully note what it consists of and then they forbid the bad man to touch a stick of it in future. If his wife will let him, he may stay in the house and eat with the rest, but he may not sell any of the land or touch any of the goods, and the kin give his family a man to do his work. This man has a share of the produce to reward him of course."

"You simply send idlers and drunkards to Jericho then. And what if they reform?"

"So much the better. If they work steadily they are reinstalled."

"The Russians have communes something like yours, and amongst them the whole commune is collectively responsible for the taxes; is it so with you?"

"No, we each pay state taxes according to what we have, and a small tax to the commune too. But our taxes are very little and military service is not hard like in France. Every man among us learns soldiering, and is liable to be called out; but they only go for a little while; the young fellows at first have two months in the year, but the elder men have only a fortnight. After 40 they are not called out at all."

"What does the commune do with its money? You spoke of its selling wood, and taking entrance fees from new members and a tax from old ones."

"Yes, our commune is very well off. They invest the money generally?"

"And what is done with the interest?"

"Anything that we want. For instance we have good free schools and a public library. Everyone can read and write well, and in the winter we read a great deal. We have a band and plenty of music. Then of course there is the church and the communal house to keep up, besides the forests, and, as I told you, there are families to be helped sometimes."

"After all who or what is the commune? I mean how does it act collectively?"

"Communes are groups of families owning land and other property in common. In our commune there are about 80 families. All our business is arranged at public meetings, to which all the men over 20

may go and where all may give an opinion. Matters are decided by written votes, one man one vote. The majority decides. There is a President elected by the commune and three others to aid him, but on all important business he must consult the commune. Anyone who has a proposal to make can call a meeting to discuss it. You see, we are all working people, and among us everyone is equal."

"But some are richer than others?"

"Not so much so as to make them different. A man's influence is according to his character. You see, the commune interferes to prevent any honest, hardworking family from ruin or destitution, and on the other hand no family is very anxious to have more land and cattle than they can manage to look after. So that, on the whole, there is no one very rich or very poor."

"I am afraid the happy state of things you tell of won't last if you get big capitalist hotel-keepers. They will eat up your communes."

"Yes, they are doing it in some places and getting the land all into their hands."

"The hotels are the great industry of Switzerland. Your communes should build and manage the hotels for themselves."

But my friend shook her head.

PROPERTY.

IN the volume entitled *Property: Its Origin and Development*, lately added to the Contemporary Science Series, Professor Letourneau has collected a vast mass of facts concerning the right, we may add the wrong, of property, which he terms the great social mainspring... the giant whom primitive races imagined as crouching beneath volcanoes and causing earthquakes by every movement.

Letourneau further says: "No great political revolution but is correlated with some modification of the right of property; no metamorphosis of this right which does not bring with it a political transformation.

Now such being the case, and property being the very point at which the two schools of Anarchism diverge to-day, it is naturally a subject of intense interest to all and every of us. The desire to appropriate is, as Letourneau says, a powerful instinct springing from the very bowels of humanity but, like all other instincts, it is subject to the laws of evolution and capable of being ennobled and idealised. The moral contradiction which is only too apparent between the advance of civilisations and the growth of the right of property diminishes when we cease to regard the present state of individualism as final, and recognise that aspirations towards private property in past ages have only been the natural struggles of the individual will against the cramping tendencies of a primitive communism, which made no allowance for natural development. The instinct of appropriation whether for private or collective use is closely connected with that of self-preservation, and is perfectly natural to both man and the more highly developed of the other animals. But it is clearly distinct from that much later growth, the legal right of property, which as Letourneau points out is an arbitrary monopoly by no means always based on either use or personal exertion.

When man became a tool-user and weapon-bearer, all that he fashioned with his own hands came to be regarded as belonging to him. The tools and weapons he used in his life-time were even considered as being parts of his person, so much so that, after death, relatives and friends broke, killed as it were his personal belongings and burned or buried them with the dead man in order that they might pass with him to the other world, whither they imagined him to have gone. But the spoils of the chase so necessary to the existence of man in early times and the other means of subsistence procured from either land or water, were at first never monopolised. It took many centuries of civilisation to suggest to the soul of man the notion of appropriating more than he could possibly use for the sake of the power it would give him over his fellows. Communism was tried and found for long enough to be best for the protection of the individual as well as for the community to which he belonged. Thus it might have continued upon earth unto this day if the struggle for existence had always been between man and the forces of nature only. But when man began to war against man and tribe to contend against tribe, might became right, and prepared the way for the evil of monopoly. For though at first we find that the spoils of war were equally divided among the warriors and that even the women, children and sick or decrepit men were not forgotten in the sharing, yet a feeling could not fail to grow that the strong man, who had done most towards the conquest of the booty, had the most right to the best or largest portion of it. This would be readily granted from the generous impulse which brave deeds awake in all human breasts, but naturally too, there were some men of weaker bodies but more active minds, who would be stimulated by this preference to strive and obtain by cunning what they could not get by force: an idea to be threshed-out when some Anarchist writes a book concerning the origin and development of law and religion.

Besides distinguishing between the natural instinct towards appropriation and the legal right of property, Letourneau also shows us the practicability and value of communism and at the same time lets us see its defects, from which the communes of the future, profiting by the lesson of the past, will undoubtedly be free.

The collective system of property is found in its completest form among ants and bees. Among these the individual is completely

absorbed and private property not even imagined, but this is true only of the more highly developed of the species, there are still ants and bees as there are human beings, who have not attained to this high degree of civilisation. The humblest of the human races, the Vedda, Bushmans and Fuegians, who are probably specimens of the primitive condition through which all the races of mankind have passed, have only very vague notions concerning property, but they all possess a certain feeling of solidarity, without which "no ulterior social progress would be possible."

Letourneau traces for us the slow painful struggle of humanity from the horde without organisation through the various forms of tribal life, up to the social systems of to-day, and with it the systems of property, which varied with the development of mankind.

The first part of the book, deals with the coloured races, and among these the most interesting for us are certainly the Javanese, whose village (*desa*) life is contrasted with that of Equatorial Africa thus: "Nothing can be more dissimilar than the social state of Equatorial Africa and Central Java at the present day. In Africa we see savagery in all its horrors... The struggle for riches is unsoftened in method or purpose by any other consideration whatever... In the very midst of these small savage societies the individual is alone, forsaken; chiefs trade in their subjects, husbands in their wives, fathers in their children, and sometimes children in their fathers. In the Javanese *desa*, on the contrary, most members of the community are bound to one another by strict solidarity; individual selfishness must give way to the general interests of the association. The weak are not oppressed, not even forsaken, and the main anxiety of the community is to protect the women and children. Moreover, the *desa*, in great part escapes a criticism deserved more or less by all communal systems. Individual initiative is not paralysed there; on the contrary it is stimulated... Will it be alleged that the difference in the social condition of the African and Javanese cultivators (they admit of comparison because they have attained the same degree of agricultural development) springs from deep-seated differences of organisation, of race?... Communism must at first have been established in both countries, but in Africa it has died out, whilst in Java, where agricultural associations have managed to exist, notwithstanding the despotism of the chiefs, it has been kept up... In the long run social condition creates morality, determines the formation of moral or immoral, noble or ignoble instincts. It is therefore unavoidable that the selfish African system should degrade the character of the race which submits to it, and revive in man the ferocious egoism of the wild beast. Whereas the organisation of the Javanese *desa* cannot do otherwise than foster humane and sociable tendencies in people who have long lived under it...."

According to all explorers the duration of African villages is very brief. The Javanese *desa*, on the contrary, is not only persistent, but prolific and its colonies quickly change barren wilds etc. into a fertile thickly-populated country-side. The speaking contrast between these two examples seems to prove that the too hasty institution of private property produces disastrous effects and that common property is greatly superior. The latter civilises men and creates more of them; the former destroys the population and fetters all mental and social progress."

For the State-Socialists, as Herbert Spencer has already told them, the study of ancient Peruvian Communism will be profitable. In considering its sociological import Letourneau says that the advantages of it were huge and obvious. "In a society like that of Peru no one is wretched, no one is forsaken. The ruling providence has foreseen and regulated everything. The mere fact of being born in this or that social caste fixes the individual's destiny... If he is plebeian the state offers him an assured maintenance from the first year of his life and at the same time imposes some industrial or agricultural handiwork upon him. He is never out of employment or short of victuals. To a moderate extent the state-providence will claim his muscles for work of public utility providing for his subsistence the while... Moreover he will be officially, administratively married at the age determined by law. In a society thus ordered there will be no question about Malthusianism..."

Idleness is unknown; it is a crime; the state does not tolerate it... But the omnipotent state is a reasonable being; it proportions the work to the strength of each, and when infirmity or old age overtakes the broken-down or worn-out worker its arms are extended to support him and supply his needs... These are the advantages and they are great.

Let us now glance at the drawbacks. All spring from one cause, the radical vice of this type of society, i. e., the abolition of all individual initiative. In their well-intentioned but short-sighted prudence the founders of the Empire once for all regulated the action of the social machine. They did not admit or consent that things could be done better or even otherwise. Consequently progress without being absolutely impossible was greatly hindered. Usually it is the result of thousands of individual attempts, often unreasonable and unfruitful, but all ceaselessly battering the portals of the unknown, and not seldom forcing them.

The human mind has little time for such ventures in a society which continually claims the brightest activity of its members for some pre-determined function... To the Europeans of to day, at least to the more developed amongst them, a tyrannically benevolent system like that of Peru would certainly seem insufferable... Of the narrow and rigid communism of Peru it is well to recognise the tremendous advantage of providing for the primordial want of the community, its need of subsistence. If man is both angel and beast, for the wings of the angel to be unfolded it is absolutely necessary that the beast shall be secured from the clutches of hunger."

* *Property: Its Origin and Development*, by Charles Letourneau. Contemporary Science Series. Crown 8vo. cloth 3/6. London, Walter Scott, Ltd. 24, Warwick Lane, Paternoster Row, 1892.

These extracts will show the spirit in which Professor Letourneau approached his task, but for all that, he does barely more than state facts which he allows to speak for themselves. In the second part of his work, dealing with the so-called superior races, the history of property in its twofold aspect, as a blessing or as a curse to nations, is even more clearly sketched, as it is taken from institutions examples of which are still extant, or from those whose records have been carefully kept. The pictures of Tuareg and Kabyle life have many points superior to the one drawn of our present state of society. Among the Tuareg woman enjoys a position not yet accorded her by the most advanced European or American societies, that of "all the benefits and none of the burdens." Indeed, as Letourneau lets us see the societies that approached the highest point of civilisation and refinement were those wherein the woman was allowed as much freedom of action as were the men, or treated with tenderness and respect, and not merely regarded as legal property.

Of ancient Greece and Rome, Letourneau briefly but graphically sketches the glories and decay. The downfall of both powers he attributes not so much to the inroads of barbarian as to the enormous extension of the monopoly of private property, which in both cases ate out the heart of the nation, by making its workers abject slaves, and creating a huge idle class, that, like the amazon ants, lost the power of doing anything useful and finally, even of fighting in self defence.

In summing up the past and future of property in the last chapter Letourneau says and we agree with him, that if European civilisation is to endure and progress, it will have to reform the institution of property. But we do not share his timorous feeling concerning the handling of this institution. Time is indeed necessary for the growth of new ideas, but once the human mind is made up as to the abominableness of an evil why should we delay its abolition? As is pointed out, England, when urged to action by the revolutionary attitude of the Irish peasants backed by universal sympathy "not long since, at a single stroke, made an enormous reduction in the rents of Irish landlords." Given the impressionability of the human mind no limit can be set upon the flexibility of human institutions.

We heartily recommend the study of "Property" to comrades who wish to get a general idea of the evolution of property and many useful hints for dealing with the subject. N. F. D.

THE PROPAGANDA. REPORTS.

LONDON—

London.—Meetings and lively discussions have been held on Sundays in Hyde and Regent's Parks. Saturday, July 30th, a large meeting was held at the Berner Street Club to protest against the brutal treatment of Carnegie's workmen. C. C. Davis, during the past two months, has been pushing the doctrine of Anarchist-Commission in the neighbourhood of Willesden. The State Socialists have been lecturing on Fortune Green, opposite a public-house called, "The Case is Altered." May 27th, Mr. Baum lectured on County Councils, which he said would work purely in the interests of the workers. Davis asked the lecturer whether he thought the emancipation of labour could really be brought about by the municipalisation of the instruments of production, and also if he really believed any reform could be obtained by simply appealing to any legislative assembly of any Government whatsoever? To both questions Baum replied in the affirmative, having a great faith in the ballot-box, which would eventually (after a few thousand years, may be) place all power in the hands of the workers, who would then be able to manage all their own affairs as they liked. June 12th, Comrade Davis tackled Bernard Shaw at the same place. Shaw lectured on "Municipal London," and he also declared the ballot-box to be the cure for all earthly ills. In fact, during election time the Fabian lecturers reminded us of nothing so much as vendors of quack medicines, with their "Vote! Vote!! Vote!!! It will cure poverty, heal discontent, beautify our lives, and take the duty off currants." June 26th, Fred Henderson took up the burden of their song. On this occasion Davis got on the platform after the lecture and pointed out to the audience that the folk in Birmingham, Manchester, Sheffield and Huddersfield have been trying large doses of Municipalisation, but without any perceptible good effects. The workers were certainly working less hours in those places, but their wages had gone down proportionately—3s. 6d. per day being the average wage. He then gave an eloquent exposition of Anarchy, to which one among the audience objected on the ground that it might turn him into an angel; that Anarchists wanted men and women to be too perfect. Davis concluded by quoting some original lines in praise of Liberty, which were received with much applause.

PROVINCES—

Aberdeen.—Blest with good weather, the propaganda has gone on during July unchecked. The attacks of Comrade Duncan on the ballot during the time of the election soon brought upon us much questioning, and some interruption from members of the local Labour Party. The sympathy of the crowd was with us, however, and one interrupter narrowly escaped being ducked in a horse-trough near the meeting. The questioning is kept up by one or two "Labor" men, and we have accordingly some lively meetings. Comrade Shepherd has also started open-air speaking. Our sale of literature is still good, Comrades A. Fraser and Collin being perfect demons at extracting the coppers from the pockets of the close-fisted Aberdonians. Our meetings are getting bigger every week, and it seems that we are gaining strength and support, just as the Social Democrats are failing through making laughing-stocks of themselves. The peculiar pliability of their intellect leads them to condemn a thing one day and support it the next; to call a man a "traitor to the cause of labour," then to call those who hiss the "traitor's" name traitors also. Everything looks hopeful in Aberdeen. Not only are our crowds large, but they are steady and attentive, and many of the discussions at the close of the meetings show that there is an intelligent interest being taken in our propaganda. Some of the regular attendants at these meetings were making our most extreme comrades blush with shame at their own moderation. If things go elsewhere as they are going here the oldest of us will live to see the downfall of oppression and poverty, and the inauguration of the Era of Liberty and Plenty.

Leicester.—We are glad to be able to report that the cause is rapidly spreading in Leicester. All our meetings are large and enthusiastic, and we meet with very little opposition. The people here seem to take to our principles directly they are properly explained. On the other hand, the State Socialists are often unable to get a meeting at all. Leicester folk don't seem to be able to swallow democracy, they recoil from it as they would from any hideous reptile. During the month we have had Harry Samuels, of the "Commonweal group," Rook, of Birmingham, and our old friend, Charlie Mowbray, to visit us. Our local speakers made good progress this last month; in fact, we were able to conduct three meetings without any outside aid whatever. Despite the fact that we are paying great attention to the town, we are not forgetting the country around. Several meetings have been held at Ansty, a village not far from Leicester, where our doctrines were received with enthusiasm by the workers, but with black looks by the small employers of labour, of whom there are a large number here. Indeed, we have made ourselves so felt in this village that at our last meeting, when Clara Warner, G. Stanley, and W. MacQueen spoke, one of the aforesaid "bosses" challenged us to a debate. Of course, we gladly accepted, and arrangements are being made to engage the local schoolroom. Amongst other good things we have to report that we are "playing up" our friends the Democrats, several of whom are now avowed Anarchists. On Monday, August 8th, we open a discussion on "Trade Unionism from our Point of View." To conclude, if we go on at the rate we are now, we shall soon be able to report Leicester as the most thorough-going Anarchist town in England.

Great Yarmouth.—Splendid meetings have been held on the Hall Quay during the past month, every Sunday evening. Opposition and plenty of questions show an interest in our cause. A Comrade of the S.D.F., London, is staying with us for the summer, and will speak for us every Sunday, assisted by Saunders and Headley. Comrade Netlow is also staying with us for a week or two; Mr. and Mrs. and Nelly and Gertrude Selen have also visited us during the month. A. G. Barker and C. Davies will be with us during the next month. Altogether, things are slowly but surely moving towards Freedom.

Bristol.—Our anti-election campaign has been an especial success. We held about 30 meetings, and had large audiences. The advice given was abstention. Some members of the B.S.S., now that the election is over, are anxious to throw themselves into a Labour Party, but a few others are opposed to this, and wish to carry on a purely educational propaganda.

Glasgow.—The movement speeds on surprisingly here. The "General Election Fiasco" has been successful in opening the eyes of a great many workers to the swindling and trickery of professional politicians and self-styled leaders of the people. We have not neglected the opportunity to enforce on the workers the necessity of putting that trust and confidence in themselves which they so bountifully bestow on their rulers. But we Revolutionary Socialists and Anarchists are unable to prevent the Parliamentary turn the movement has, for the time, taken here. The three Labour men who contested divisions in Glasgow, drew to their support all Socialists who had the slightest leaning towards Parliamentary effort. In justice to the Labour Party here it is but fair to say that Cunningham Graham, their nominee, behaved more like a revolutionary Socialist than a man who was merely anxious to re-enter what he calls "the gasometer at Westminster." In spite of the scarcity of open-air speakers, we have held more meetings this summer than for some years previous. Good meetings have been held every week at Govan, Parkhead, and St. George's Cross. Glasier and Anderson addressed a large meeting of miners at Hamilton on July 1st. Our ideas were well received, and never have we had an audience more attentive. We received earnest invitations to return as soon as possible. We are glad to state that our Comrade Joe Burgoyne has come back to Glasgow, and expects to be in harness soon.

Liverpool.—We have been enjoying a lively time here during the past month consequent on an attempt to thrust upon the Society a program and manifesto entirely Social Democratic and political in its character. This some half-dozen of us strongly objected to, and through determined opposition caused the discussion to be prolonged over 4 weeks, and compelled the other side to completely alter their tactics. Now the whole affair is settled, it having been decided, by a unanimous vote, to dissolve the Society. Though seemingly a calamity, this was the only possible plan to adopt, for it was too apparent from the first meeting that, should the adoption of the manifesto be carried by ever so large a majority, the trouble, instead of being ended, would only just be commencing, and continual disputing and disturbance must have completely upset any work that might have been taken in hand; so the State Socialist Party, who formed the bulk of our members, were for once above their creed, and would not descend to enforcing by rule of majority a program so obnoxious to the other comrades. They instead showed their good sense by preferring to compromise matters, with the above result.

The Law and Order Party have gone over to the local Fabian Society which has recently been established, and left us who remain to reform the old Society upon its original basis, viz., Freedom of Membership to all Socialists of every shade of opinion, the only credentials demanded being a belief in the elementary principles of Socialism. Although a circular is being sent to all the old members inviting them to join us, we do not expect many of them will accept the invitation, as they are too strongly permeated with State Socialism, and will therefore find the atmosphere of a Fabian Society more congenial. Still, there are enough of us to make a fair beginning, and we have no doubt that before long the old machine will be in good working order, and strong enough to do useful work in the shape of organising lectures and meetings during the coming winter.

Hull.—The Hull and District International Socialistic Association has been formed solely for propagandist work. The members meet every Tuesday evening at 9 p.m. for the enrolment of members and other business. All persons who agree with the principles are eligible as members without regard to country or colour. Open-air propaganda every Sunday morning at 11, on Drypool Green.

Officers:—J. Woodford, chairman; M. Musson, treasurer; Henry Hilbert, financial secretary; J. Sketchley, corresponding secretary, to whom all communications must be sent, addressed, 52, Salthouse Lane.

NOTICES.

Aberdeen.—Sundays, Links, Southside of Broad Hill, 3 p.m.; Castle Street, 6.45 p.m.

Great Yarmouth.—Sunday August 7th, meetings to show sympathy with the Homestead Ironworkers. Sunday August 14th, meetings to protest against the continued imprisonment of our Walsall Comrades and Nicoll. Collections for little Victor Nicoll. All meetings on the Hall Quay, Great Yarmouth, at 11 a.m. and at 7 p.m.

A NEW PAMPHLET will shortly be issued by J. Sketchley, of 52, Salthouse Lane, Hull (late of Birmingham), entitled "The Crimes of Governments." 22 pp., in wrapper. Price 2d. Special terms to Groups or Societies.