

Freedom

A JOURNAL OF ANARCHIST COMMUNISM

VOL. IX.—No. 94.3

MAY, 1895.

MONTHLY; ONE PENNY.

TO OUR READERS.

After three months' interval, *Freedom* re-enters the ranks of Anarchist journalism. It appears under new editorship and new management, brought out by a committee of workingmen. Two of our number have been for years connected with *Freedom*; two have been working on *The Commonwealth* for years. We are well known amongst comrades and practically acquainted with the Labor Movement as workmen know it—from the inside. We have the co-operation of the other members of the *Freedom* Group and count among our contributors many old friends of the paper, including P. Kropotkin and the former editor, C. M. Wilson. We hope, therefore, to carry on *Freedom* with success and shall do our utmost to improve it.

We propose to hold to the general policy maintained by *Freedom* for the last eight years. Our principles are those of Communist-Anarchism. As a practical policy for the immediate future, we advocate the voluntary association of the workers in Trade-unions and every sort of free federations to resist the tyranny of the capitalist and continually press towards a recognition of the right of workers to direct their own labor and enjoy its fruits. By a series of minor contests we look to see the trade societies prepare the way for a General Strike.

We also regard with sympathy all attempts at co-operation in production or distribution, which are based on equal freedom and advantage for each co-operator. We believe that all such voluntary associations are educative in their tendency, and good training for the future co-operative administration of industry and agriculture and the means of distribution by the workers engaged therein. But we are convinced that the present state of economic injustice and wrong cannot be ended by these or any schemes of betterment. We hold that the only effectual remedy will be a wide-spread revolutionary movement of the workers to take possession of land and the other instruments of production, with a determination to control and direct their own labor in future, and themselves dispose of its results.

We hope to bring *Freedom* into closer touch with the Labor Movement and to devote a large part of our space to a full and first-hand account of the more advanced sections of that movement, at home and abroad. There are several organs of Communist-Anarchism in English now, but not one which devotes itself more especially to giving a regular and connected report of the growth and spread of Communist and Anarchistic ideas and tendencies all over the world. It will be our aim to make *Freedom* more and more a newspaper of this sort.

Comrades and Fellow-workers, we appeal to you to help us. Send us criticisms and suggestions. Send us reports and notices about the propaganda work and the doings of comrades. Send us letters on any subjects likely to be generally interesting, or that you think want ventilating. Push the paper a bit and send us orders and subscribers, and pay cash for what you order. It will cost us £100 a year, at least, to keep *Freedom* going at its present size and we cannot hope to get more than half that in donations. The rest must be raised by sales and subscriptions. If we do not get the money in, we cannot get the paper out; for we have no capitalist support to fall back on. We intend, therefore, to stick to the useful business maxim: *Terms, strictly Cash*; and we appeal to all who care to keep *Freedom* alive to help us.

THE EDITORIAL COMMITTEE.

THE FIRST OF MAY.

Once again, the May Day demonstrations which will be held all over the civilised world will bring together millions of workers of all possible trades and all possible nationalities. Once more the feeling of International Solidarity which unites the workers across the political frontiers will be affirmed in the face of the ruling and exploiting classes who do their best at sowing national rivalry and hatred amongst the workers.

True that the grand demonstration has been split into two separate demonstrations; one on the First of May, the other on the first Sunday in May. True, that in the speeches which will be made on these two days all over Europe and America, we shall hear but little about the great contest between Capital and Labour which has called to life these Demonstrations, and we shall hear a great deal about electoral politics.

But if we pass over those stereotyped speeches and look into the real ideas which lie at the bottom of the whole movement, we shall see a quite different spirit animating the working masses in their endeavours to make the manifestation as imposing as possible.

This movement was born in 1886 in America, especially at Chicago; and its leading idea was then the idea of a general strike. On that day—it was hoped—a strike, nearly general, would be entered upon by the workers of the United States. The Knights of Labour, and many other labour organisations, encouraged by the success of the Pittsburgh strike, hoped to induce the great bulk of the American workers to leave their workshops and factories, and to strike for an eight hours' day.

The most intelligent of the workers fully understood that, if the strike took a great extent, this would have meant something more than a mere strike. The whole of the industrial and commercial activity on the surface of the continent would have been paralysed. No bakers to supply the rich with bread, no railways nor tramways running, no ships loaded or unloaded, no income derived from the work of the labour slaves; and millions of workmen would come together in the streets on the public places, and in the meetings to discuss their affairs, and impose their own conditions upon the exploiters.

Such was the leading idea of the movement. It would have meant a new departure in the great contest between Labour and its Exploiters; and whether it was successful or only partially successful, the labourers would have seen and measured their forces, and felt that, notwithstanding all influences to the contrary, there is a heart beating in common amongst the toiling masses.

This first attempt, in 1886, was an utter failure. Very few joined the strike, and the police, supported by assassins hired by the American capitalists—the Pinkerton men,—stifled the movement in its bud. The workers' meetings were violently dispersed by the police, and the opportunity of a bomb thrown in the midst of the police was seized upon by the capitalists for imprisoning and hanging seven Anarchists who had taken a lively part in preparing the First of May movement.

It was a defeat; but from that year, from the heroic death of the Anarchists—the officials of the American Labour Bureaus openly recognize this—dates the great Labour movement in America, which every year throws now into convulsion the whole of American industry and trade. From that year date also the May Day celebrations in Europe.

The general strike, on a given day, not having succeeded, the idea grew among the workers that a preparatory agitation was necessary. If the bulk of the workers hesitate to enter into a great labour war from fear of not being sufficiently supported by their brothers all over the world, let us at least make a *One Day's* general strike on the First of May. The Church imposes upon us its holidays. The middle classes have ordered us to keep bank holidays. Let the workers, too, have their holiday in contemplation of the date when men, free from the yoke of State and Capital, came together in the May fields to discuss and settle themselves their own affairs. And when the habit of holiday-making on May day shall become all but general, when even the indifferent ones will have taken the habit of this *One Day's* strike,—then all the labourers of the world will feel sufficiently united for proclaiming a universal strike.

The politicians boast of having taken this sting out of the movement by making of it a demonstration for a *legal* Eight Hours' Day. But have they really succeeded in their cunning scheme?

The Eight Hours' Day begins to lose in the eyes of the workers the exaggerated importance which was first attributed to it. It is no solution of the Social Question—not even of the Unemployed Problem. And the idea of a universal strike, which can give to the worker much more than a reduction of hours of labour, grows deeper and deeper rooted in the minds of the workers all over the world.

Its possibility has long been doubted. Now it has been demonstrated. The dockers' strike in London, the miners' strike in Belgium, and the railway strikes in America have given to the thinking workman the assurance that a great strike in several essential branches of industry is possible; and that such a strike would lead unavoidably to a general strike.

The last railway strike in America is the best example in point. When it broke out, the trades unions of old standing embodied but a small portion of the railway-workers of the States. But, all of a sudden, a common understanding in view of a general strike came into existence among railway workers, spreading its ramifications far and wide. After one successful attempt, the Pullman dispute was seized upon as a good case for measuring forces with the exploiters, and in a few hours, on simple telegrams being sent out, the whole of an immense railway-net covering two-thirds of the whole railway-net of the States, was brought to a standstill. The impetus of the young understanding carried forward the old-fashioned unions which were opposed to the

strike,—and the great Labour War began. One knows the deep and far-reaching effects of this gigantic strike. But “greater and more far-reaching struggles are still coming,” the Labour Bureaus report.

As to Europe, the idea of a general strike was at the bottom of the great International Workingmen's Association, and it has never died out since. A general strike would have broken out long since in Belgium were it not for the efforts of the politicians to prevent it.

And if we take into consideration the tenacity of the idea, its slow but sure progress—outside all channels of political, labour, and Socialist party propaganda—and its gradual penetration into the minds of the workers, we may be sure that a universal strike ripens in the minds of the labourers of the two continents.

No one can foresee the possible results of such a strike; but one thing is certain. If the two parties into which mankind is divided—the employers and the workers, the rich and the poor, the owners and the proletarians—must enter into a fierce contest, the workers have all the advantage in fighting the contest with all of them united in a general strike, than that part of them should remain to toil for the other side. The whole contest would stand at once on its proper ground—the economic basis, free from all side-issues of conflicts between political parties.

Not farther back than a few months since, during the railway strike in America, we were very near to seeing what a great strike can bring about. When the federal troops had been sent to Chicago against the workers, and in violation of law, the idea grew up—and the proposal was made by some Chicago citizens to the labour leaders—that all active men among the strikers should retire to some Western State, where the government is already of the “Populist” party—for instance, Oregon. There the strikers, supported by the population, should proclaim the nationalisation of land, organize industry for the commonwealth, arm themselves, and fight the federal troops if they were marched against the revolted State. The abolition of tyranny and misery—the Commune, in a word—proclaimed on a vast territory, instead of an isolated city, was the plan of a number of Americans.

The strikers and the workers to whom the proposal was made hesitated, from fear of not finding the necessary unity of action among the workers. A Communist Commune on a wide territory, and supported by the Populist farmers, certainly would have had a considerable chance of success. And the idea is sure to revive again in America.

The May Day demonstration is thus not an electoral parade of voters. It is not made to frighten the rulers and thus to impose reforms. It has a much deeper meaning. It prepares the minds of the workers to commence action all over the world. It prepares a unity of feeling for the day when the great contest comes—the contest out of which man must issue either again a slave for the next hundred years to the ruling and possessing classes, or a free human being, free to organize his life and his commonwealth on the basis of Equality and Freedom.

THE EVOLUTION OF ANARCHISM.

From the Introduction by N. to Michel Bakounine, *Euvres* (The Works of Bakounine). Stock, Paris, 1895.

William Godwin, in his *Political Justice*, published in London in 1793, was the first to carry to its logical conclusion a serious criticism of the principles of the State and of Authority. His book was the first purely Anarchist theoretical work.

The Anarchists of the first part of the present century arrived at Individualist-Anarchism in their revolt against the State as it then existed, and against that disguised but not less oppressive shape which it might be expected to assume in a society based on the authoritarian Communism of that period, as of the present day. They advocated the idea of a society in which each man was to work for himself, exchanging with others, at his own pleasure, the results of his labor, whether produced by himself alone or by an association formed for this special purpose and entered by him merely at the bidding of his own interest.

An Englishman, named Thompson, set forth these ideas in “An Inquiry into the principles of the Distribution of Wealth most conducive to Human Happiness,” London, 1824. Later on, Thompson altered his views for those of Owen; but Individualist Anarchism was accepted and more precisely expressed by the American exponents of the “Sovereignty of the Individual.” By this school the logical consequences of the idea have been worked out, from the days of Joseph Warren, Stephen Pearl Andrews, Lysander Spooner and their comrades down to the present time, when the doctrine finds its expression in the *Liberty* of Mr. Benjamin Tucker (Boston and New York) and in various other publications in the United States and in England.

In like manner Proudhon, in France, opposed his Mutualist Socialism, with its equal exchange between producers of the produce of their labor, to the Authoritarian Communism and other Socialistic theories of his time. His system was nothing new to Englishmen or Americans, but on the Continent he was a pioneer. He found numerous adherents outside France. In Spain, for instance, his ideas of Federation were widely influential; whilst in Germany, during the year immediately preceding the revolution of 1848, Socialists like M. Hess and Charles Grünne tried to amalgamate the economic conception of Proudhon with the extremest speculations of the Hegelian school. Their success was little to boast of; and yet it was in Germany that the classic of Individualist-Anarchism appeared, in 1844. “*Der Einzige und seine Eigentum*” (The Single Individual and his Property), by Max Stirner,

was the last great work and, as it were, the theoretical terminus of this international Individualist movement.

When, after the defeats of 1848 and the succeeding years of reaction, the labor movement resumed its progress, its character was no longer individualistic and experimental in the same sense as before. It was more Collective, if I may use the term, and it found its natural expression in the International Working Men's Association, founded in 1864. After 1848, Socialist theories were submitted to fresh examination.

Authoritarian or State Socialism, represented by Louis Blanc and afterwards by Karl Marx and Ferdinand Lassalle, was definitely rejected in the more advanced localities of France, Belgium and French-speaking Switzerland. Neither was the Mutualism of Proudhon received with greater favor—a ghost of it was but languidly defended by the Langlois and the Tolaines in France. Only amongst the Belgian Proudhonians and the young staff of *La Rive Gauche* (The Left) did it retain its energy and revolutionary spirit.

Long discussions in the newspapers, in congresses and in the Sections of the International finally gave birth to the idea of what was then called Revolutionary Collectivism, namely, Collectivist-Anarchism. Whilst accepting Proudhon's criticism of the State and of Authority, it was argued that the individualist system of production and distribution could be no safeguard against a relapse into the miseries of economic monopoly, which would inevitably bring about a restoration of the political power of the State. At the same time, much stress was laid upon the idea, which underlies all Socialism, that the gifts of Nature, and the produce of the intellectual and manual work of past generations, in so far as they serve as means of production or to satisfy a common need, ought not to be appropriated by individuals. The collective ownership of the soil, raw materials and the instruments of production, was therefore decided upon; whilst free choice as to the methods of toil was left to groups of producers and to communes consisting of federated groups. Yet the conviction that every man ought to receive the whole result of his own personal labor still remained predominant.

These views were spread by the Internationalists of Switzerland, France, Belgium, Italy and Spain, and on their behalf Michael Bakounine and his Juraian comrades in Switzerland, Varlin in France, César de Pape in Belgium, Cafiero in Italy, and many others fought many a pitched battle against every sort of foe, both in the bourgeois camp and in the International. Karl Marx himself showed, by his underground, disloyal machinations for the purpose of getting his own scheme accepted as the official doctrine of the whole International, how susceptible of abuse is authority, even when confided to an able and sincere man like Marx. By his attitude he powerfully aided in opening the eyes of a large number of the members of the International to the inherent defects of all Authoritarian organisation and disposed them towards Anarchism.

The struggle within the International between the Anarchists and the votaries of authority thus ended in favor of the former. If, after disastrous defeats and bitter persecutions, in France, Spain and Italy, the external organisation of the International was dislocated, though never completely destroyed, yet Collectivist-Anarchist ideas continued to be spread until a period of relative quietude succeeded to all this strife. The moment of peace was employed in a fresh examination of the basis of the theory. It was more completely developed and carried further in the direction of freedom. The like took place in the sphere of tactics, which does not here concern us.

It now appeared that any system which proposed to equitably distribute to every man the produce of his own labor must necessarily be imperfect, and, consequently, unjust; for all persons are not alike, and each applies to the same work a varying fraction of energy. Thus, each of the systems generally adopted was made, more or less, for the benefit of the majority which had thought well to adopt it. And from such schemes must inevitably result hard-and-fast regulations, laws, the State. Further, it appeared that it is impossible to draw a clear distinction between the produce and the instruments of labor. Such things as food and clothing, which for one man are the produce of his labor, are for another what coal and oil are to a machine, the indispensable means of getting it into working order, consequently instruments of production are as needful as any tool. By way of this reasoning and the recognition of these contradictions, Communist-Anarchism was reached; a system which acknowledged that free and spontaneous Communism in production and consumption is the only solid basis for society. A society organised according to this communistic principle provides for the daily needs of each of its members, and assures him every possibility of becoming a truly free man, free according to his own personal conception, in the way he likes best.

It was in 1876, as far as I know, that these ideas were for the first time publicly broached in the International. They had been already set forth in a little abstentionist pamphlet, published at Geneva, in 1876, by the Lyons exiles. The first federation of the International to accept the new views was the Italian, which adopted them at its congress, held near Florence, in October, 1876. Later, they were put forward in the Jura district and at Geneva, in newspapers and lectures, by C. Cafiero, P. Kropotkin, Elisée Reclus and others; then in *Le Révolté* at Geneva and afterwards at Paris; finally, they have given rise to a literature already of considerable extent.

Scattered far and wide over many countries, these new ideas were examined and sounded again and again. They are now predominant in almost every place where Anarchists are to be found. But it was many years before they were adopted by the old-fashioned Collectivists. Even in Spain, where the Anarchist International had so strongly taken root that, after seven years of underground and secret existence,

it revived with all its old energy, Collectivism still prevails. It has, however, been rendered more liberal in tone by discussion and criticism. Everywhere else, except among the few Individualists of America, England and Australia, and the recruits they have recently gained in France and Germany, Anarchist-Communism is adopted in principle. There are, of course, divergences in matters of detail and special questions, such as must occur in the growth of a living idea, which regards all dogmatism with horror. For example, Anarchist-Communism is very far from suffering from the recrudescence of Individualism. It can only profit thereby; for Communism is but the means for enabling every man to attain the highest individual development. As to the exact limits between Communism and Individualism, they cannot be fixed and invariable. On the contrary, they must vary in a thousand ways according to the special needs of each person: experience alone will resolve these endless questions. It therefore behoves Communists and Individualists alike, each in his own fashion, to hasten the advent of the time which will break the fetters that have hitherto trammelled all free experience.

THE KEYNOTE OF SUCCESS.

(From *The Firebrand*, Portland, Oregon, U.S.A.)

There was once a little town set in the midst of a chain of hills which circled about it, seeming to shut out the rest of the world. A rich merchant, a manufacturer, and a banker lived there and divided the official honors between them; the rest of the inhabitants were common people who worked for their bread—unless we except the lawyer, the doctor, and the preacher.

One fine day the manufacturer said: "I have so much stock on hand and the market is so dull, I believe I will shut down a few months. I can afford it; and in the meantime I'll take a trip to Europe." "All right," said the others; "we'll look after your interests." And so, in a few days, the factory whistle blew no more, and the workers who came to the gates found them closed indefinitely. About the same time, the mill across the river brought in some new machinery and displaced a hundred men. For several days nothing was heard from the idle workers. Then it began to be noticed that the men hung around corners in groups and looked gloomy and discontented. Later, rumours were afloat that many of the families were suffering for want of the necessities of life; the board houses, in which the laborers lived, began to take on a desolate appearance, and a gloom seemed to lurk in the very air. The men grew more savage-looking and, altogether, as the chill autumn winds crept on, the little town did not seem at all like its old cheery self. Some one spoke to the rich merchant about it, and suggested that something would have to be done or there might be trouble.

"Oh, I guess not," he answered carelessly. "I'll go down and give them a talk. I guess they'll all listen to reason." So one evening he walked down to the public square where the workers were all gathered, mounted the pine-box rostrum and "gave them a talk." He began by showing them that they were very unreasonable to be miserable and discontented, because the laws of political economy were such that stoppages of this kind were inevitable, and nobody was to blame. If they would only look at things from a broader standpoint—not personally and narrowly like ignorant men—they would cease to be gloomy and savage about it. Some one shouted out that there were hungry children in town and broad views wouldn't feed them.

"Hungry?—so soon?" asked the merchant. "You must have been dreadfully improvident. Why haven't you saved up against such a time as this? The keynote of the workman's success is economy. You have spent too much; you've lived too extravagantly. You must save your pennies; don't spend them for every little thing you happen to want." And he went on and delivered such an eloquent address on the virtues, uses, and blessings of economy that the workmen all became convinced that all that was the matter with anything was that they had not been economical enough. They resolved to set together and plan new methods of saving more rigidly than they ever had before. The speech was taken down in shorthand by the enterprising editor of the town paper and printed; it was widely copied by other papers and created quite a sensation and produced a great effect.

Then it came about that fifteen hundred working people got together and devised all sorts of economical measures. They found first they could do without music, pictures, books and carpets; people who had had a chance to collect such things brought them to the merchant and grocery man and took due-bills for them. They found they could do without fine-appearing clothes, and that coarse blanket cloth could be made to serve the mere purpose of covering the body, which was all they had a right to expect. Beef and white bread and butter they could do without. Coffee, beer, fruits, candy, cake, they had seldom seen, anyway, so they were not hard to forego. Life could be sustained on maize-bread and treacle, with a dish of boiled beans occasionally. All the little notions that had seemed to be so necessary a part of civilised life were found upon examination to be really unnecessary—Indians lived without them, and apparently thrived well.

Economy became the fashion in the little town, and the wave struck other towns, too. Pretty soon the merchant was told that trade was falling off at a wonderful rate. Nobody bought anything but the coarsest, cheapest cloth—no calicoes, dress goods, ribbons, laces,—all these things lay undisturbed upon his shelves. The groceryman complained that nothing was sold but maize-meal, treacle and beans. The butcher sold nothing; the editor could get no subscribers, and the

furniture-man put up his shutters and sat down disconsolately in a back room to brood. The coal-man alone was cheerful. The workers nominally owned their homes, but they would soon lose them on the mortgages, and for a while there was no rent to pay.

The winter passed, and in the spring, when it would be necessary to pay interest or rent, the people found it would be possible to live in tents among the hills, and in the few caves and hollow trees that could be found. And everybody moved. They carried all their household goods in their hands, and there was no cartage to pay. The merchant and the few men who were in business were appalled. They could sell nothing, and they found they would have to be exceedingly saving also or they could not pull through. The merchant had a great deal of money, but he was afraid to invest it, because nobody seemed to want anything that his capital could create. Consternation prevailed.

The manufacturer came back and thought he would start his works again; but when he saw that nobody would buy what was already made he thought, "What is the use?" and sat down to wonder what he would do. Presently the one railroad of the town was taken to another place, because nobody ever rode to or from there, or shipped or received anything. The telegraph, too, disappeared; and as nobody ever would buy a stamp or post a letter, the post-office was abolished.

After a while the merchant, the manufacturer and the banker died of inactivity and stupid wonder over it all. Nobody appeared out of doors; the houses began to tumble down, the streets grew up with weeds and grass, and all about the town a thick underbrush sprang up, like the famous wood about the Sleeping Beauty, which no one could penetrate.

Years afterward some very daring adventurers journeyed into the hills and thick wood that shrouded the mystery of the vanished town, and found a strange race of beings who lived like savages but seemed to have traces of white civilisation clinging to them. Scientists began to speculate about them and to write learned essays concerning them, but they shrank from notice and retreated farther into the woods. One old man alone was found who could talk, and he would say only this:—

"Primitive man is the most saving being on earth. Economy is the keynote of the workingman's success. Why not be savage? Away with civilisation! It thrives only on man's expenditures, not on his privations. Hail, barbarism!"

LIZZIE M. HOLMES.

CORRESPONDENCE.

Seeing an announcement to the effect that the annual meeting of the Finsbury Park Rescue and Preventive Society was to be held at Finsbury Park Congregational Chapel, and would be addressed by Mrs. Ormiston Chant and Fleming Williams of Empiric fame, I walked in, prompted partly by a desire to see and hear these persons who, with Pecksniffian virtue, wish to cover up the rottenness of our social system, and partly to ascertain what constituted the "preventive" portion of their program.

The secretary read a report stating that, in their "Rescue Home," they had sixteen girls, who were duly provided with religious consolation and instruction, they took in washing, they practised economy (saved their rags, bones, old pots, tins, bottles, and sold them) and made "respectable" life as cheerful and attractive as possible for their "fallen" sisters. She also gave a summary of two cases that had lately been "rescued": they had gone on the streets after getting the sack for nothing particular, and being unable to find employment.

Then Mrs. Chant spoke, and informed us that she and her conferees had seen and heard and read things that were too shocking to be seen, heard, or read by other people(!) Some people had suggested to her that, instead of trying to drive these shocking things into deeper darkness, her energies would be better employed in attacking the system which furnished victims to vice and power to the vicious; but she indignantly repudiated the idea that necessity induced these women to sell themselves, or that the margin provided by low wages enabled idle monopolists to buy objects to satisfy their lust. No! it was reading and viewing the works of Boccaccio, Rabelais, Zola and other so-called realists that corrupted frail humanity—with the exception of Mrs. Chant & Co. Therefore, they had devoted themselves to clothing the naked—pictures, and endeavouring to prevent the rest of frail humanity having access to the immorality and filth that she had so heroically waded through.

The next speaker was Fleming Williams, who admitted that exploitation under the wage system was largely responsible for prostitution, and that, probably, not more than 1 per cent of the girls entering these homes were permanently diverted from the streets; but he had nothing to propose in the way of prevention, except that ladies should be more humane to their servants (a very good proposition, I thought).

I came to the conclusion that these, like all other comfortable middle-class people, were utterly unable to realise the conditions, hopes, aspirations and afflictions of the working-class, out of whose discomfort their comfort is built up; and that the word "preventive," alluringly set forth in the title of their association, was a falsehood, a catchpenny, none of them having mentioned any steps taken to prevent prostitution; although probably half the respectable bourgeois who came there to patronise their "fallen" sisters had sold themselves, or been sold, not for an hour or a day, but for a lifetime.

T. CANTWELL.

"For what is Democracy but an expansion of the old-time tyranny of Monarch and Oligarch? It is, at best, the exaltation of numbers, the deification of the multiplication-table—an intellectual and moral absurdity. When among a hundred men one rules ninety-nine, that is Monarchy, or One-Man Government; when ten men rule ninety, that is Oligarchy or Ten Men Government; and when fifty-one men rule forty-nine, that is Democracy or Majority-of-Men Government. But *Justice* and *Right* are as independent alike of the fifty-one, the ten, or the one, as are the truths of mathematics or physics. *Truth* knows neither majority nor minority. It is not, therefore, in Democracy that the ultimate salvation of the people is to be sought."—J. MORRISON DAVIDSON in *Weekly Times & Echo*.

The tendencies of the times favour the idea of self-government, and leave the individual, for all code, to the rewards and penalties of his own constitution which work with more energy than we believe, whilst we depend on artificial restraints.—EMERSON.

Freedom

A JOURNAL OF ANARCHIST COMMUNISM.

Monthly, One Penny; post free, 1½d.; U.S.A., 3 Cents; France, 15 Centimes.

Annual Subscription, post free, 1s. 6d.; U.S.A., 36 Cents; France, 1fr. 80c.
Foreign subscriptions should be sent by International Money Order,
payable to C. M. Wilson.

Wholesale Price, 1s. 4d. per quire of 27, carriage free to all parts.

All communications, exchanges, &c., for "FREEDOM" to be addressed to
THE EDITOR, 7, LAMBS CONDUIT STREET, LONDON, W. C.

NOTES.

THE "ORDINARY" MAN.

Mr. Sidney Webb recently, lecturing on "Democracy and Trades-unionism," after pointing out the faults in their methods of organisation remarked that "the same problems met them in the government of a country. There was on the one hand the salaried civil servant who really carried on the work of the government, and there was the ordinary man who wanted to be governed and to say how he should be governed. The problem was to find some representative to come between the salaried civil servant and the ordinary man to tell the former what the latter wanted." We can offer a solution of this problem at once: Abolish the representative and the salaried civil servant and let the "ordinary man," since he knows what he wants, arrange his affairs with other "ordinary" men,—the most direct and cheapest way on record. But Mr. Webb says that the ordinary man cannot; for he says: "The middle-classes had done this very well. The working-classes had not succeeded so well, because directly a man left the loom or the forge he insensibly and unconsciously lost touch with those from whom he came." Quite so, Mr. Webb, and we are surprised at you enticing him away from his honest labor to become a tool of the middle-classes. But don't you see that government is a middle-class machine, pure and simple—or rather impure and complicated,—and it is because it is so beautifully adjusted to the maintenance of their interests that it is worse than useless in the hands of the workers. Why, they might as reasonably try to extinguish a fire with oil as expect to get food, clothing and shelter (the fundamental problem for the ordinary man) out of the government machine. True enough, the working-classes can not succeed that way; but they can another way: By destroying this machine or letting it rust, and by adopting the Anarchist method, that is to say: by organising themselves in the way best adapted to their needs. We do not advise them to leave the loom and the forge. Not a bit of it. We say: Stick to them and use them in your own interest; do not give up anything that has been useful in supplying your wants in the past, and could be more so in the future under free conditions. Do not heed what the "representative" and the "salaried civil servant" may promise you. Let them have a turn at being the unemployed;—bid them emigrate. The fact which you have to face is that the wealth which you are making you need for yourselves,—that you have a right to it, and that government exists to see that you do not get it and your master does. Put no trust, then, in Government and its hirelings, but remember that only the circumstances which arise in every-day life, and with which you are best acquainted, can guide you in managing your affairs.

In yourselves your safety must be sought,
And by your own right hands it must be wrought.

This is our solution of the problem, Mr. Webb. We are afraid that, for reply, you will only smile the Fabian smile and go on your way; but experience will prove—is proving that we are right.

PUNISHMENT A FAILURE.

Once again the moral is brought home to the bigots and fanatics who will pin their faith to prisons, scaffolds and the whole paraphernalia of punishment. On April 10th, at the Middlesex Sessions, seven old offenders were sentenced by the enlightened Mr. Littler to varying terms of imprisonment. In all these cases the prisoners had had but a few days liberty from their previous sentences before again falling victims to the pernicious influences of our cruelly unjust social system. In one case, the prisoner had only been at liberty a day when he was again arrested. We quite agree with the *Chronicle*, which says that "All of them point to the futility of a system that practically denies all hope of permanent freedom to the recidivist, while it fails to influence his character." Quite true! but would it not be better if, when these unfortunate fellow creatures are set free, they had the opportunity of breathing the pure air of a wholesome social system, instead of turning them adrift as we do to-day. In other words, not as the *Chronicle* says "to re-organise our penal system," but to re-organise our social system as speedily as possible. Penal systems will not then be needed.

ORDER WITHOUT AUTHORITY.

We can well remember when English Anarchists first held meetings without a chairman. It was prophesied by some that all sorts of disorders would follow on this revolutionary innovation, though, as might have been expected, nothing unusual happened. And, whilst we read frequently of disorderly meetings with a chairman presiding, we can point to meetings, held by Anarchists, which have been highly success-

ful without the aid of the "chair." We notice that, for a brief space, the House of Commons was lately without a Speaker; and the papers report that, under trying circumstances, "the House supplied its own control from within," and, except on one small occasion, effected the transition with perfect dignity and decorum." Considering the scenes that have occurred with a Speaker in full power, this is simply wonderful, and proves that even M. P.s can behave themselves when they "supply their own control from within." Well, let them learn a little more of Anarchism and they will find better ways of managing affairs than the old and stupid methods of a worn-out past.

PROGRESS AND STARVATION.

The Home Office has just issued a return which is about as sad and shameful a commentary on the capitalist system as could well be imagined. The fifty-one deaths, recorded as from starvation, in the County of London, in 1893, only give the key-note, as it were, of the misery and death that the terrible winter which is just past has inflicted on those who seem only born to suffer,—the workers of this happy land. Besides all this unrecorded misery,—suffering which cannot be recorded, can scarcely be imagined, but which we know has been endured,—yet we have this bitter, black, damning impeachment of the present system: Fifty-one recorded deaths from starvation in the year 1893;—and a beneficent Progressive Majority on the London County Council! The person who tries to excuse our administrative system for this state of things is one who gives up justice and humanity for the glory of red tape. As for us, we will have no excuses; for we know there are none to be given. Don't talk that humbug about pauperising people: If you do not believe in feeding the hungry, then throw up that Christianity which some of you so hypocritically profess. If you think it more important to potter with other people's morals (instead of minding your own) in the face of starvation, we say you are purblind and incapable fanatics. Don't simper out nonsense about these people being hard to find. You and your officials can find them easily enough, if they dare to sleep in forbidden places, or if they fall behind in their rent, or if they neglect to send their famished and shoeless children to your schools, or, sooner than all, if they are driven to outrage your beautiful laws of private property. Yes, in all these cases they can be found fast enough; so you need not lie to us on that score. Sickening enough it is to have to come to the final conclusion, viz.: that you will have your system of exploitation, you will have your "law and order," your useless "reforms"—even at the cost of fifty-one recorded deaths from starvation.

THE CRY OF THE CHILDREN.

The cry of the children is still to be heard often enough, although it passes apparently unheard by the majority of people, including those who are sobbing and sighing over vivisection and the slaughter of animals. Two poor little humans, it seems, have been done to death at Harlesden by their legal custodians—their parents. One wonders how these things can possibly come to pass, until one reflects that the rights of the parents over the children as we are told, are essential to the maintenance of family life, and that the family is the unit of society. If so, that is another reason why society must go. For the obvious fact is that there are some people who are not by any means criminal, who have children, but who have no more capacity for rearing or safeguarding their little ones than the fish which deposits its eggs without any thought or trouble for its future offspring. Family life indeed. What we need is a Fraternal life which will regard all children as needing care and solicitude from the community, and which will not permit the barbarous theory of parental rights (which includes, mind you, the rights of exploitation) to prevent it from securing for the children the best possible conditions for their development. Thousands of little ones are passing through slow suffering to death, who might be saved if this spirit was abroad.

RE-APPEARANCE OF "LA REVOLTE."

It is with great pleasure that we are able to announce the republication of "La Revolte," under the title of "Les Temps Nouveaux" ("The New Times"). The incidents of the suppression of "La Revolte," the imprisonment of its editor, Jean Grave, and other comrades, the trial of the "thirty," and the whole stupid and brutal business born of the craven fear of the bourgeois—all this must be fresh in the memory of our readers.

Now that our steadfast and indefatigable comrade, Jean Grave, is once more at liberty, the old activity is resumed, and with the aid of those comrades who have been side by side with him from the birth of "La Revolte"—Elysée Reclus and P. Kropotkin—with the help also of the well-known writers, Paul Adam, A. Hamon, Fortuné Henry, Théodore Jean, Bernard Lazare, O. Mirbeau, and others—"The New Times" starts indeed under happy auspices with "full sail," and it needs only the fresh breeze of an awakened spirit amongst the workers to carry it forward to the destination which we all hope is after all not so very far off.

The first number will appear on May 4th, and every Saturday following. Single numbers, one penny; three months (for England), 1s. 6d.; six months, 3s.; twelve months, 6s. All communications should be addressed—J. Grave, 140, Rue Mouffetard, Paris.

Another event of importance will be the revival of "Pere Peinard," under the title of "La Sociale," edited still by comrade Pouget. The French comrades, we understand, are especially pleased with the happy choice of "La Sociale" for a title, which for them has a significance unknown to us.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

As at meetings and lectures we have always endeavoured to encourage the asking of questions, so it seems to us that with the readers of a paper mutual advantage may result from following the same plan. We shall, therefore, devote a portion of our space each month to the insertion of all questions sincerely put, and we shall endeavour to the best of our ability to answer these as they are received.

RUSSIA'S DESPAIR.—Bitter indeed must be the disappointment of the Russian people at the doings of their new Czar. If it is possible to speak of going from bad to worse in Russian affairs, that is, we should imagine, how things are going there at the present time. And to that section of the Russian people who have some regard for human freedom and progress, what must the future appear like? Either simply black despair, or a secret struggle more bitter than before. We have the utmost sympathy with the noble and generous natures that will rise again as they have before to help the cause of freedom. But what a price to pay for the little good they will obtain if they aim at establishing a constitutional government! A revolution which would put all within the reach of freedom and happiness, a social revolution, in fact, would not cost them more in suffering than to effect a mere political change which some of them desire. Again the lesson stands out clearly for those who have eyes to see, change your government, and it is still a government. Change your Czar, and he is still a Czar, and worse.

OVER THE WATER.

During the last few months, in fact, during the time *Freedom* has not been issued, the situation in France has undergone a somewhat unexpected turn, which has culminated in an amnesty for so-called political offences and for any condemnation provoked by speeches or writings. The reason of that change may be considered from two points of view: there are the apparent or political reasons, and there are the real and profound motives.

By the English daily papers the readers of *Freedom* may have heard from the first one: The President, Casimir Perier, felt that he was hated by the people, that through jealousy some of the ministers were hostile to him, he was too immensely rich to consent to be bothered and checked in his pleasant life in order to keep a poor salary of about £5000 a year; then came the death of his bosom friend Burdeau (who held a similar position to the English speaker), and the election in his place of his enemy, Brisson; then came the election as deputy of Gerault Richard who had been condemned for libelling Casimir; then came the inquiry in the railway convention, the deputies could not help it as it was a question of two million pounds sterling more or less in the yearly budget, and that inquiry meant the impeachment of Raynal the other bosom friend of Casimir.—That was too much; Casimir resigned.

But it must not be supposed that another man instead of Casimir would have fulfilled much better the task imposed on him by the terrified ruling classes. They had chosen as their chief a representative man, one of the richest men in France, the Chairman of the Anzin Company, and it was intended to eradicate not only Anarchism but Socialism by the same blow. The name of that capitalist was in itself a declaration of war; but the wave of reaction which followed the explosions and the assassination of Carnot was not sufficiently deep rooted to push along the crushing of free ideas. The bulk of the people understood the reason (I do not say approved) of the outrages, and considered that their authors had paid the price for them. Public opinion became decidedly more and more opposed to any tampering with the liberties of speech and of writing, and to the use of the *lois scelerates* of last year. In fact the amnesty of three months ago was laying in germ in the acquittal of the thirty *malfaiteurs* by the Parisian jury six months previously.

By his personal defects Casimir Perier has hastened the crisis; but any other conservative ruler would have experienced the same failure. Public opinion was so strong that though the new President, Faure, had been elected by the royalists and conservatives against the so-called radical Brisson, he was nevertheless bound to try a different line of government to Casimir. The amnesty has been voted, and at present the system of a little more liberty is applied. In political circles all is smooth; Panama is forgotten, and nobody speaks any more of the impeachment of Raynal. Even Rochefort seems somewhat at a loss to find subjects for his fighting articles.

But from the economic point of view no improvement has taken place, or can take place, without the complete overthrow of the capitalist system.

The amnesty has released Grave from prison, it has allowed many French Anarchists living in England and Belgium to return to France. Pouget and two other comrades, who had been condemned, also returned, and after a trial *pro forma* were acquitted. *Les Temps Nouveaux* and *La Sociale* will appear in May, and the propaganda will reassume its previous form.

Nevertheless, the special laws against the Anarchists are still existing, and we have heard lately of a comrade who, being in custody for some trifle near Lyons, has been condemned, with closed doors, to two years imprisonment for having been noticed making propaganda to his fellow prisoners.

It is not to be denied that now more than ever the name Anarchist is considered as of an insulting character by the mass of the people, but the development of Anarchist ideas is nevertheless going ahead at a great pace. In fact, in spite of the endeavours of the government, it has never stopped. For a time it has only assumed another form.

Every one who takes the trouble of reflecting upon the events, who understands the constitution of man, and who is not led by ambitious motives, becomes an Anarchist.

We may look with confidence upon the approaching events.

France has declared war against Madagascar. It would be absurd to ask what right has France to take such a step. It suffices to say that these rights are of about the same kind and value as those of Germany in the Cameroons; or those of Italy in Abyssinia; or those of Japan in Corea; or those of England in Burma, Mashonaland and Chitral; or those of France again in Tonquin, Soudan and Siam:—the right of the strong against the weak.

According to the modern notion of colonial expansion, the surface of the earth is to be divided between eight or ten powers; and each of them goes ahead as fast as the other ones will allow, in order to bring into their sphere of influence, protectorate, or direct possession, the few countries still considered as independent.

The consequences of that division of the soil are very interesting to study from an Anarchist point of view; but that is not my point for the moment.

The new regulation adopted by the French Government during the expedition against Madagascar is that no civilian is allowed to accompany the soldiers as reporter. Some officers are agreed upon as correspondents by the minister and the papers; and if some paper should happen to insert a report which has not the approval of the commander-in-chief, the military authority would soon proceed to an inquiry and the writer be expelled or punished. (An American has already been condemned to twenty years imprisonment by a French military court, and nobody knows why.)

Two facts must be borne in mind in order to understand such a decision:—First, that a large portion of French literature has acquired a great freedom of thought and expression, and is not very particular about patriotism. English people may have incidentally read in telegrams from General Low that "some villages have been burnt;" but I have not heard that any paper dealt with the matter in the same manner that many well-known French writers have done during the campaign in Dahomey. Anarchy has sufficiently permeated the Press to make the Government fear its criticism in extra-territorial wars.

Another thing is, that France does not undertake this expedition so much in the interest of commercialism as to sustain and foster the spirit of jingoism in

the people, and the lust of war in the soldiers. These ideas, or rather lack of ideas, are the best bulwarks of the State against Anarchy.

That is why the soldier does not want with him any unprejudiced civilian to show to the world the savage part of his business. It may answer the purpose for a while; but sooner or later the truth will be known, and it will not be a gain to the Government to have kept secret the slaughter of the uncivilised natives by the civilised foreigners.

French scholars would be interested to read in the *Revue Clanche* of April 15th an article (*Vers Madagascar*) by Paul Adam, and in the *Société Nouvelle* for March and for April an article on Anarchy, by Jacques Mesnil.

The omnibus men struck work in Paris on Monday April 22nd. The first strike, four years ago, had lasted for two days, and ended by the complete defeat of the Company; the entire population being then in sympathy with the strikers and working with them to cut the reins and traces of cars conducted by blacklegs and to unyoke the horses, which were left rambling about the streets.

This year the well-to-do people had withdrawn their sympathy from the omnibus men. The police and the Government have acted much more systematically and energetically in favor of the Company than the first time: protecting every blackleg by three policemen, and arresting the officials of the 'busmen's syndicate for alleged incitements to violence.

The strike collapsed after three days, the Company having promised to give way on some secondary points.

The men, having won a little less than a trifle, are not satisfied; and the capitalistic order has not won a single partizan by that skirmish.

The municipalisation of 'buses and trams is, of course, a question which comes once more to the front; but the Company is too strongly represented on elected bodies and in parliamentary circles to have anything to fear for years to come.

AN ANARCHIST VIEW OF THE Legal Eight-Hour Day.

All intelligent workpeople feel the wrong of the present long hours of work, and strive for their reduction.

All Socialists are agreed that the shortening of the working hours of each worker for an employer is the only scientific way of bettering his position under the present capitalist domination of industry.

They see clearly that the mere sectional protective Trade-unionism of the past is only possible with the skilled workers, and that the advantages gained by them have been gained often at the expense of the workers who remained unorganised, rather than at the expense of the capitalist exploiter; that the struggle of the future should be that of the workpeople, as a class, against the idle exploiting class.

This is not always understood by the workers, but it is easily seen on examination. Thus, when the hand-sewn bootmakers of London gained an increase of wage, some years ago, the masters immediately raised the price of boots, in some cases more even than the increase of wage, thereby making the purchaser pay the increase to the worker, and not interfering with the profit of the master except to increase it.

It is also easy to understand that, if all the workers should organise and wring an increase of wage, the price of commodities would be increased sooner or later by the capitalist owner, or machinery introduced in proportion to that increase, and thus the workers would pay back in increased price for goods, or increase of production, the advantage gained, and leave the profits of the masters as large or larger than before.

It is clear, even if all the workers were members of Trade-unions, that if they keep their members when out of work they are but organising for themselves a large scheme of outdoor relief, undoubtedly better than the capitalist government scheme, but which with the increased rent and price of commodities would make the average wage little better than the present; while if there are no unemployed benefits attached to the union the members are absolutely unable to keep up their subscriptions when out of work,—lapse their membership,—ask "What is the good of the Union?"—and, unfortunately, often become the tools of the capitalist and traitors to their fellow workers by becoming blacklegs.

If they should be advised to throw themselves upon the rates, these would be increased to keep them; and, as is always ultimately the case, the workers would have to pay them, by the capitalist further increasing the price of commodities to make a larger profit wherewith to pay the rate-collector.

While, therefore, the workers as a whole cannot largely increase their wage, neither can it be very much reduced, as that would mean they could not work as well as they do now, since they only get sufficient at present, on the average, to keep them in a condition to perform the amount of work demanded by their exploiters.

If longer hours are worked, wages do not rise in consequence in the long run. It means larger profits, quicker accumulation of capital on the part of the capitalist, and worse degradation of the worker. On the other hand, shorter hours do not mean less wages, but only less exploitation of the worker by the capitalist, should the conditions of industry remain unchanged.

Thus, the attempt to shorten the hours of labor is only the effort on the part of the workers to make the demand for labor equal to the supply. This the capitalists do not want; for they know that, should the workers succeed in this and the conditions of industry remain the same, their income—the result of their exploitation—would not be as large as at present. This is why they always resist as strongly as possible any reduction in the hours of work, and why they introduce piece-work as much as possible, hoping thereby to intensify labor by the workers striving to do the utmost their strength and skill will permit,—in hopes of increasing their wage, but in reality competing one with the other,—showing their masters the largest amount of labor it is possible for them to do, and thus giving the capitalist the wished-for

opportunity of reducing the wage for the amount of work done.

Should, however, a reduction of the hours of labor take place, what is the outcome? The capitalist immediately looks about him for the chance of making his exploitation of, his profit on, his income out of his workpeople as large as it was before the lessened hours. There are two ways open to him: First, the introduction of more machinery; secondly, the intensification of labor; the second, in fact, generally follows the first. While labor is cheap it is not necessary for the capitalist to invest his capital in machinery, for the simple reason that it pays him better to employ hand labor. But let the worker secure a price for his labor that does not leave as large a margin of profit to the capitalist, and he will immediately introduce machinery; because it will return a larger profit than continuing to employ hand labor at the advanced wage.

With the introduction of machinery generally comes a system of driving work. The machinery is driven by steam power at high pressure, and the worker is compelled to keep pace with the machine. No possible chance of rest, as when working by hand; but right on, from start to finish, as hard as it is possible to go. Well, this would be the result should the workers be able to secure a reduction of their hours of labor; and the possible temporary absorption of the unemployed would only last till the capitalist had been able to adapt himself to the new conditions. Not only that, but many small capitalists would, in all probability, be unable to stand the outlay necessary for the adaptation and would be crushed out completely by the richer and more powerful ones, and become competitors among the workers, thus helping to create a new unemployed.

So far we have dealt with the reduction of the hours of labor generally: now let us look a little closer at the *legal* side of the question and make our position plain. The legal folk themselves, of course, do not pretend that there is anything particular about eight hours. They know it is far too long for most workpeople, even when engaged in healthy employment, and that it is at least double as long as should be worked in the coal mines, gas works, sewers, chemical works and the numerous unhealthy occupations; and it is only because it is so near the hours being worked at present, and makes a reasonable division of the twenty-four without offering any serious difficulties to the capitalist, that they have adopted it.

But even they are not agreed as to how they shall act, either to get it or to put it into operation. None of them have shown, or have attempted to show, how it is possible for an act of parliament to *operate successfully* in securing the eight hour limit for *all* workpeople. That it would be easy to make it a punishable offence for any employer to employ a worker more than eight hours out of any one twenty-four we fully believe.

But before a law is passed, even through the House of Commons, it is necessary to have the majority ready to back it by their votes; and when that has been accomplished there is the still more reactionary House of Lords to be converted before it is put upon the statute book, and any efforts to operate it are possible.

And does there seem the slightest prospect of anything of the sort being seriously attempted, even, in the House of Commons? We think not! If ever the history of the struggle of the miners, of the M. P.s of the Miner's Federation, should be written, it would be an eye opener to the workpeople. The thousands of pounds spent in promoting the Miner's Eight Hours Bill, the political bargaining and false promising so as to secure their support for the Government, only to find themselves bested and disappointed, ought to entirely shatter the pre-conceived notions of the workers as to the possibility of securing any substantial benefit by parliamentary action. For what has been the outcome here? Compromise of even this palliative! There is now talk of trying for a limitation of the hours of those under eighteen years of age. This is nothing but the surrender of the first principle of the original Bill, which sought to regulate the labour of adults.

Even where Parliament has placed restrictions upon the hours of labour, how does it proceed to enforce the "law" when it is *AGAINST* the exploitation of the workpeople. If it is in support of Property, or even the pleasures and sport of the well-to-do sharpers and blackmailers of industry, we know well how eagle-eyed and vigilant the officers of the law can be: every one wishes to bring the defaulter to task, especially since every such a one is sure to be poor and helpless. But when it is only a question of the health and well-being or perhaps the life of the property producer, those who make pleasure and sport for the well-to-do possible, when it is a question of protection for the worker, and the defaulter probably a rich and powerful person, how do they act?

One illustration will show. Early in the eighties a strong agitation sprang up in London among the shop-assistants against the shamefully long hours, frequently over eighty per week, which they had to work. They clamoured for a reduction to not more than ten hours a day, and philanthropists and politicians of all parties took part in the agitation, and asked for an Act of Parliament accordingly. By 1885 the agitation had reached a climax, and some of the assistants talked of organising a Trade Union for the purpose of getting it themselves unless something was done. Then Sir John Lubbock introduced his "Shop Hours Regulation Act," backed by men of all parties. After being referred to committee, where the evidence taken proved all that had been said as to the shocking overwork of the assistants, and being amended so that it only limited the labour of young persons under eighteen to seventy-four hours per week, it was passed.

But, while that was bad enough, as showing the spirit of the politician towards labour, and should be remembered by those of us who are taking part in the struggle to-day, it was nothing compared to the way the Act, miserable as it was, was left without any machinery to put it into operation.

The assistants had no organisation, and from 1886 to 1892 it practically remained a dead letter upon the statute books. In 1892 it was amended, and made permissive for the County Councils to enforce it; but up to the present little effort has been made to see that it is carried out, and the hours of the assistants, even those under eighteen, remain almost as bad as ever. In some of the States of America efforts have been made to get a legal eight hour day,

but it has been declared unconstitutional by the Supreme Court, and is strictly limited to Government employees. And where the workpeople have reduced to eight hours a day or less their working day, how have they accomplished it: those engaged in the building trade in the London district, the gas workers, the bookbinders, and others? Has it been by legal enactment? By no means! They had to struggle, to organise, to sacrifice, to fight. And they have won the eight hour day while the labour politician talked about it. Others could also win it if they were as determined. "Ah!" says the politically inclined worker, "they have got it, but will they keep it." Yes, just so long as they are really determined to; and if there is no really effective demand on the part of the workers for a shorter working day no law would be of any avail, as we have seen in so many cases. For even the most rabid legalist would hardly have the hardihood to ask for a law of limitation against the wishes of the workers themselves. In Australia legislation has mostly followed, not anticipated, the struggles of the workers; and where it has not, it has been a failure. It must not be forgotten that nowhere has a universal eight hour day been seriously considered by a Legislature, since the workers as a whole have not evinced anything like sufficient interest to make it worth their while; and if they did, it would only be when the workpeople had got a long way ahead of such a palliative that there would be the slightest chance of its being adopted.

J. TURNER.

(To be Continued.)

PROPERTY IS GOVERNMENT.

Can it be said too often:—"Property is Government?" It is the modern measure and means of domination, and it is nothing else at all. It ceases to exist directly the human will decrees its annihilation; the moment a private individual is sick of it in his own case, he is rid of it. The moment collective opinion shall be averse to it, it will vanish from the planet. The word "property" slips glibly enough from many a pen; yet I declare that it fits nothing real within the range of my intelligence, and nothing desirable in the range of my emotions. Objects may be partly made by me, or handed to me; they may, next, be welcome (because useful) to me; or they may be in my way, because useless to me. In the latter case, the wisest thing to do is to send or carry them across the street to the neighbour whose requirement they exactly fit. The objects may, by the custom or the law prevailing around me, be called my "property," in which case the neighbour, unless he be a "thief," will take no direct steps to removing them from my custody, but will, if I choose, meekly permit me to fine him of time, trouble, or goods (as represented by money), before considering himself their fit custodian. Yet the things are still only the things; and have no natural point of attachment with either my neighbour or me, until one of us puts them to their appropriate use.

Popular concession, fixed with force-law, may never have been questioned by citizens born under the law; but no amount of human concession, or human force, can make *real* a relation which is naturally non-existent; or will avail to keep up the solemn pretence of it when the general discomfort and distress arising from such pretence, causes the force-law to be chafed against, and thus annuls the ancient concession on which law originally took its stand.

At the present hour, the bulk of humanity has not begun to recognise the property idea as *in itself* debateable. All the talk is of a change of title to property-owning; and this even among many who dream of abolishing Government. And all the while Property and Government are as inseparable as Substance and Shadow; and as long as you keep either one of them, you will have to put up with the vagaries of the other.

Meanwhile of those whose minds are active concerning the Property "question," one set regards it as a necessary element of orderly progress that may safely be left to evolve through future phases as a dominant institution; while another set regards it as the chief, and constant, and necessary foe of order and of progress; the bulwark and the *raison d'être* of force-law; the promoter of militarism; the cause of human antagonisms, great and small; the root of all evil, and of all the frightful waste involved in the arming and defending of man against man.

The question then arises: Which of these two sets of thinkers is in advance of the other? Which see deepest into the springs of human action? Which displays most intellectual perspicacity and moral (that is, healthily social) momentum? Which most accurately interprets Nature and History? And which, if at once able (by help of revolution) to put theory into practice throughout a whole community, would do most to dissipate existing evil tendencies in surrounding citizens, and to invigorate and foster in them useful and beneficent tendencies?

The thing to bear firmly in mind is that property, however acquired, *must* maintain itself by governmental force. And this is in itself a tell-tale fact. We do not need to force upon one another that which Nature has instituted as useful to all.

L. S. BEVINGTON.

THE GOVERNMENT, THE ANARCHISTS, & THE MARXISTS.

Last year, it will be remembered, the S.D.F. for the first time resolved to hold a meeting in Hyde Park to celebrate Labor Day on the First of May. We Anarchists had, as usual, begun to make our arrangements for holding a demonstration; but, hearing that the S.D.F. were at last going to adopt the resolution of the Workers' Congress, of May, 1889, we resolved to hold out the hand of fellowship and ask them to join with us in making a united demonstration. They

delayed answering our invitation till within a week of May 1st; we suspended our arrangements pending the receipt of their reply, and were thus much inconvenienced in completing them.

The Commissioners of Works refused us a permit (never previously refused to us or to any other demonstrators) to take vans for platforms into the Park; while the police organised a mob of "corner boys" and "narks," assisted by constables in plain clothes, to break up our meetings and attack the speakers, which process of law and order was successfully carried out under the leadership of Sergeant Walsh.

This year, the S.D.F. and I.L.P. issued an invitation to all associations of workers to send delegates to take part in organising the First of May Demonstration, in response to which several workmen's clubs and societies, including the Communist Club at Grafton Hall and the groups affiliated with the London A.C.A., sent delegates to join the organising committee. When we got there we found that a resolution was to be proposed committing those taking part in the meeting to political action of a meaner sort than ever before, when they had asked for an eight hour law, asking for universal suffrage as a step towards eight hours. Gilles, one of the delegates from Grafton Hall, proposed the omission of that portion of the resolution referring to political action, or its embodiment in a separate resolution. Mrs. Aveling said that this was an insidious move on the part of some people who had no business to be there, and were not Socialists at all. Dr. Aveling said that the German workers were going to ask for universal suffrage, the Belgian ditto, the Austrian, who held the biggest demonstrations, ditto, therefore the English were going to do the same. He also informed us that he had received instructions to exclude from the next International Workers' Congress all delegates who were not in favor of political action!!! On comrade Turner rising to speak for the L.A.C.A., Kent of the S.D.F. moved the closure; but, after about ten minutes wrangling, it was decided to let Turner speak first. He desired that the reference to universal suffrage and the legal eight hours be struck out of the resolution, as then Socialists of all kinds could speak to and support it. The idea of labor day was to show the solidarity of labor, but the resolution as it stood made it impossible for many to join in; and as last year two resolutions were proposed, the first one declaring for the Solidarity of Labor and Socialism, and the second referring to legal and political reforms, why go back on that now and lump them in one, and so prevent the solidarity professed to be wished for? The First of May was Labor Day, not Democratic Day.

The motion proposed by Mrs. Aveling: "That we proceed to the next business," was then carried by 58 to 7; after which Turner, much to the indignation of Gibson, who is becoming a regular party hack under the tuition of the Avelings, inquired of the chairman whether now would be the time to ascertain whether the committee were inclined to accommodate us with a separate platform.

The Chairman said that that would come under some other head of the business agenda; so when they were about to proceed to the nomination of speakers for platforms, Cantwell proposed that the London Anarchists have a separate platform. Then there was another wrangle as to whether we should be heard; and, after Gibson and the two Avelings had bitterly opposed this, a majority of five decided that we should. Then by 38 to 21 it was decided that we should not have a separate platform; so we came away without any clear perception of what was meant by the invitation to all workers to show the solidarity of labor.

The Commissioners of Works have again refused to allow us to have a platform in Hyde Park this First of May, although they have given the permit to several other bodies for the same date; so we expect the police will be organising another brutal attack on us the same as last year, but this sort of thing cannot always be done with impunity.

THE STATE & ITS EMPLOYEES

When we test the efficacy of machinery, we observe very closely the way it behaves in performing the task to which we have adapted it. We want to be as sure as possible not only that it works satisfactorily at the first attempt, but that it will continue to do so for some reasonable length of time onward. Not infrequently we insist that as a test we must submit it to a severer strain than it is likely to endure in the ordinary course of events. But suppose we found that our machine after all our trouble, instead of performing just the work we wanted done, acted in quite a contrary manner, and neutralised all our efforts to attain a certain end, then what should we think of people who advised us still to continue using the machine? Well, undoubtedly the State is a machine of this description, and the Social Democrats are the ones who say: "This machine has answered the purpose of the ruling classes well enough in keeping you, the workers, in economic slavery; now take hold of this thing yourselves, send us in to pull the levers and oil the wheels, and the great battle of emancipation will be won." We regret to say that either they are very illogical people who talk like this, or else they are working for their own personal interests in wanting to "pull the levers"; for they forget to point out to the workers that it is precisely because the machine *has* served the ruling classes that it will *not* serve the workers. It has been an excellent mechanism, we readily admit, in *preventing* the accomplishment of anything likely to benefit the poor wage-slave, and yet it has possessed the high merit (from the capitalist point of view) of appearing to make great progress whilst actually standing still. Having said so much, let us take notice of some passing events which will help to point the truth of the above statement.

Here is a brief outline of what is taking place in France, which we extract from the letter of the Paris correspondent of the *Weekly Dispatch*:

There is a strike amongst the match workers in France, and no wonder, for their sufferings must long ago have passed human endurance. Those who remain for any length of time in the factories become sooner or later the victims of phossy jaw, or matchmakers' necrosis, "the most awesome physical ill to which the industrial serf is liable. One of these persons, a man named Bellau, has neither teeth nor gums." We are told also "there is no such thing as an old worker in the match factories," and "the babe unborn is generally poisoned by the phosphorised blood of the mother."

Where the responsibility rests for all this shall be shown in the correspondent's own words. "The match industry is a State monopoly. It was for twenty years farmed to a company, from which it was withdrawn owing to attacks of the blackmailing Press. The company was bad enough, but it was in its good behaviour, and therefore conducted its business with some regard for the health of those it employed. The State is a far worse taskmaster. It has to afford pickings to place hunters and jobbers, and to furnish a certain sum annually to the Budget. There is, therefore, no sort of care shown for the men and women who are employed to manipulate the white phosphorus."

So the poor strikers thought they would appeal to the good president of the French Republic, just as children in distress might appeal to their father. The good president said, however, that "he could not interfere between a department of the State and its servants." How the human heart becomes petrified in the breasts of the men who direct and uphold the State machine! No slum-dweller would be excused for such heartless indifference to terrible suffering, and in the case of a person who is a high official in the State, the responsibility is a hundred times increased. But the *Dispatch* correspondent gives some very pertinent reflections, which we will quote:—

"Professors of political economy refuse to give their sympathy to the victims of modern industrialism. They say, 'Who forces them to undertake murderous tasks? Nobody puts a pistol to their head and says, 'Work in a sugar-refinery, or in a match-factory amid the fumes of white phosphorus, or die.' But there is as great a compulsion of another kind on the human units who go to work in these deadly places. They are ignorant, thoughtless, and generally starving. The law not less than the climate obliges them to sleep at night in houses, and therefore to pay rent So the match factory is the last resource of the unemployed. Does not all this amount to as strong compulsion as that of the highwayman's pistol?'"

To those who do not think so, we can only say, "Try it, and see."

This is what happens in France. Is it any better here in "merrie England"? Do we need to call attention to the starvation wages in the G.P.O. and the government dockyards? Have our State Socialist friends observed how Tom Mann has had to call Mr. Campbell Bannerman's attention to the fact that the government, like any cheap Jack, has deliberately acted false to its wage-slaves in Woolwich Arsenal over the question of the eight hours' day? Again, would any private firm be excused for the horrible series of explosions that have occurred at the cordite factory at Waltham, and which even as we write adds another to its list of periodical human sacrifices? We know of course that the State Socialists don't mean their State to be like the one which we groan under to-day. But neither did the Republicans mean their State to be like Napoleon's. Yet what have we just seen in France? and what do we see in the United States? All the old evils are there, some of them intensified; so that it becomes impossible to escape from the logical conclusion to which the Anarchists have arrived. The evil is and must ever be in the thing itself—in the idea that under any system whatever some men can govern others—can have any authority whatsoever over others without abusing or destroying human liberty and justice. So we must continue always and everywhere to say to the workers, "Place no faith in this machine, the State. It was never made for you, and if you attempt to use it it will crush you under its wheels like the Car of Juggernaut. Therefore, instead of being led by the nose by those who have their own selfish and ambitious motives in advising you to act the farce of the ballot-box, how much better to keep your mind open to the truth, to compare the principles of Anarchism with the events of everyday life. Then you will not need to be told in which direction lie your true interests. Your own good sense, if you think for yourself, will point you out the path."

NATURE, ART & OFFICIALISM.

At the present moment a section, and a very intelligent section too, of the public mind is in a state of indignation about the official treatment of Epping Forest in particular, and of our public PARKS and OPEN SPACES in general. Many times before have the lovers of Nature had to raise their voices in protest against the callous and positively brutal mutilation of some of our most charming rustic resorts. But recently it was the New Forest, now it is Epping Forest; one cannot guess what rural spot, dear to the heart of the worn-out toiler, it may be to-morrow.

One can only conclude from all this that the official mind, not content with exercising itself for our benefit domestically and economically (always for a trifling consideration of so much per annum), is seriously setting Dame Nature to rights, and by putting her into an approved Nineteenth Century costume hopes to impress the public

mind with the necessity of not being too familiar with natural objects.

Absurd as this may sound it has in reality much truth in it; and for those who need a practical illustration of the fact we will point to Hampstead Heath. Here the spirit of the County Council has been busy, and it is slowly, but surely, transforming this lovely resort into a state of things dear to the official eye.

We have noticed time and again how these changes are being insidiously imposed, and we have thought "'Appy Ampstead" will soon be a thing of the past. A writer to the *Daily Chronicle* bears out this fact, and we will quote from his letter. Concerning Epping Forest, Hampstead Heath, and Burnham Beeches, he says: "I affirm most emphatically that the action of the bodies in charge of these spaces has been uniformly injurious and injudicious. When will they learn that their draining, levelling, clearing, trimming and pruning and planting, are, to all lovers of the country and its natural charms, abominations but few degrees better than the operations of the builder?"

"A bit of woodland marsh, with its rushes and bush growth, the haunt of the hovering dragon-fly, the fallen tree with moss and fungus grown in its decay, the mysterious gloom of some almost impenetrable wood,—these are the delights of all those men and women for whom it was worthwhile to preserve anything." And he adds: "The official mind is incapable of understanding this."

The "official mind," we notice, besides the ordinary vices to which it is addicted is rapidly developing the vices of Puritanism. We feel sure there is a method in all this madness, and it will become more apparent as the County Council and other bodies get more control of the recreation and amusements of the people. The class of people who are doing this work would have the people moulded to their conception of a model life. They are sending their spies to watch over our indoor amusements, and presently this system will be adopted in our open spaces. They are determined there shall be no more cakes and ale where they have a casting vote. The people shall take their pleasures in the way that the puritan hypocrite delights in. Love-making in the open air, far from the prying eyes of keepers, shall be viewed with deep suspicion. Notice-boards will rise up like ghosts on all hands, warning us of the fate which awaits us in case of "trespass." We confess we should like to see one notice rise up in the minds of the workers: "BEWARE OF THE COUNTY COUNCIL!"

THE PROPAGANDA. REPORTS.

LONDON.

Regents Park.—Propaganda in this Park has not been very active as yet; but no doubt matters will brighten later on. Meetings have been held by Cantwell, Young and Turner, and we expect things will resume their usual interest shortly.

THE COMMUNE MEETING AT MILTON HALL.

It is too late in this issue of *Freedom* to give a detailed report of the 18th March last, but it is worthwhile noting that the meeting was a crowded one and very enthusiastic. All the speeches were well received, and this applies especially to those of the Anarchists. Our friends of the North London Progressive Society must have noticed the deeper interest shown in the lectures on Anarchist and Socialist questions by their audiences, than has been noticeable in lectures on other subjects. We hope this fact will lead to the inauguration of an interesting series for the next season.

NORTH LONDON PROGRESSIVE SOCIETY.

On Sunday, March 24th, at Milton Hall, John Turner opened an interesting discussion on the question "Will parliamentary action benefit the workers?" Turner gave an excellent address, pointing out with clearness and force how futile were the attempts of Parliament to ameliorate the lot of the workers. What parliamentary action always *did* succeed in doing, however, was to break up the solidarity of all genuine working-class movements; and to expect a workingman to go and do good healthy work in the (to him) poisonous atmosphere of the House of Commons would be like trying to cure a sufferer from diptheria by holding him over a drain. A good discussion followed: the dominant idea of opponents being that all our troubles arose from the "apathy of the workers" in not using their votes. Turner, in replying, very eloquently denounced this view and showed convincingly that, not the apathy of the workers, but the apathy of the Progressives on the County Council to the genuine interests of the working classes had brought about their own discomfiture. He concluded by indignantly rebuking the unmanly remark of one opponent, who said that the workers were no more capable of managing their own affairs than a waggon load of monkeys.

On Sunday March 31st G. B. Shaw lectured; subject "Great men: are they real?" It was a very amusing and, in a certain sense, instructive lecture, but "Great shams: are they real?" would have been a more appropriate, if less logical, title; for Mr. Shaw confined his examples almost exclusively to emperors, princes and politicians; surely, notwithstanding all the conventional absurdities with which we are trammelled, it is not too much to say that emperors and princes at all events have by this time been pretty well assessed at their true value by such audiences as Mr. Shaw is likely to address. His criticism of the hero-worship of the "Grand Old Man," however, was a great treat: such destructive treatment of the "eminent politician" is most excellent. Some discussion followed, one speaker remarking that he inferred from the lecture that Mr. Shaw considered it necessary to humbug in order to govern. Mr. Shaw, in reply, admitted that he did; but, as usual, threw the blame for this on to the shoulders of the governed, and not the governors. Mr. Shaw following in the Fabian rut this false and superficial view of things was to be expected.

As this lecture brought the series to a close the chairman announced that the North London Progressive Society intended to continue with open-air meetings in Regents Park for the summer months, and in the autumn take up their work once more in Milton Hall. We congratulate the members of this Society on the good work they have done, and are glad to know that its initiation was largely due to Anarchist comrades and sympathisers.

South-east London Propagandist Group.—A new group, composed of comrades from almost every district in South London, was the outcome of a meeting held at a Bermondsey comrade's house, on Wednesday, April 17th. Arrangements were made for the systematic propaganda of Anarchist principles in South

London by any and every means; by a systematic house-to-house distribution of literature, bill-posting, open-air meetings, etc. A start was made in the open-air propaganda in Southwark Park on Sunday morning, April 21st, when a very successful meeting was addressed by March, Banham and Carter; Banham replying very effectively to some opposition from Social-Democrats, who seemed irritated at the fact we had been the means of them losing their audience. Literature sold fairly well. We intend keeping these meetings up. At Deptford Broadway we have held good meetings every Sunday evening, at which the speakers have been comrades Leggatt (who has helped considerably), Young, Kitz and our energetic young comrade Banham. On Sunday, April 7th, comrades March and Carter held a very good meeting at Silvertown. We are now arranging for a lecture at the People's League, Peckham, by Kropotkin; further announcement in due course. Friends in South London wishing to join the new group are requested to turn up at the open-air meetings, when full particulars as to group meetings, etc., will be given by the comrades in attendance. W. H.

Canning Town.—Comrades, it is just twelve months since the Canning Town Group was formed by Revolutionary Socialists, who left that political organisation commonly known as the Social-Democratic Federation. We were told that we only left because we wanted to shirk our responsibility; and, considering that we have not missed holding our weekly meeting at Beckton-road for one Sunday, no matter how the weather has been, I think we have shirked it very well.

During the summer, besides active propaganda at Canning Town, we assisted at Victoria Park, Stratford, East India Dock Gates and at the National Bomb Factory, otherwise known as Woolwich Arsenal. This summer we intend eclipsing last year's work; we are going to open up the surrounding districts with the Gospel of Discontent.

Our numerous meetings have been well attended, our collections reached ten and twelve shillings several times besides selling between seven and eight shillings worth of literature. We have given away several quires of papers and pamphlets week after week; we also helped the Mennier Defence Fund and the Cantwell and Quinn Defence Fund, as well as assisting other groups that needed it. Our commemoration of the legal murder of our Chicago comrades was a great success, bearing out the prophecy our comrade Spies made on the scaffold: "There will come a time when our silence will be more powerful than the voices you strangle to-day." On the 18th of March we celebrated the anniversary of the Paris Commune, being the first time these events were commemorated in this district, showing that the spirit of Internationalism has reached here at last. During the summer we have had very little opposition, and what we have had has been very easily answered. One opponent, W. G. Pearson, opposed for ten minutes and then ran away, not stopping to hear the reply; and this is the individual who, at the S. D. F. Conference in 1892, said that as the I. L. P. was a child of the S. D. F. either they should join the I. L. P. and go in for political action, or else adopt the same policy they did once before and preach Revolutionary Socialism pure and simple. Fancy a man who spoke like that abusing, as he does, the Anarchist-Communists who are preaching Revolutionary Socialism. But the most illiterate man we have come across was Andrews, who said he was politically free though he did not have a vote; as Turner well remarked: he wanted educating himself before he came to educate others. Well, there was another Social-Democrat, R. Rossetti, who gave a lecture for the S. D. F., the title of the lecture being "Is Anarchism possible under the present state of society?" thus showing how much he knew of the social question.

On April 14th we had a friendly debate between W. Thorne of the S. D. F. and W. Banham on the wage question and, as it was a friendly debate we hope to see some good come out of it. Sunday April 21st one of our comrades went to Barking, disposed of a large amount of literature and offered opposition to H. W. Hobart on his political salvo for the present system; but he did not seem to like it.

I think we are a very active group for one year old; next year we expect to see a good result from the labor of the past. We are much indebted to comrade Leggatt for the help he gave us last winter—never missing a Sunday, walking three miles from Stratford every time,—his recommendation to the people to pay no rent being well acted on; for we have assisted more than one to evade the landlord. R. P.

LONDON.

Open-air meetings, addressed by Anarchist speakers, are held on Sundays, at Hyde Park, Regents Park, Victoria Park, and Hoxton Church, at 11 a.m.; Hyde Park at 3.30 p.m.; Hyde Park and corner of Wood Green-road, Tottenham at 7 p.m.

Deptford.—Open-air meetings are held on Deptford Broadway: Sundays, at 11.30 a.m. and at 8 p.m.; Thursdays, at 8 p.m.

Canning Town Anarchist Group.—Open-air meetings every Sunday, 11.30 a.m., at Beckton-road.

"FREEDOM" PUBLICATION FUND: H. G., £1.; C. M. Wilson, £2-8-7.

FREEDOM PAMPHLETS.

No. 1.—The Wage System. By Peter Kropotkin. 1d.

No. 2.—The Commune of Paris. By Peter Kropotkin. 1d.

No. 3.—A Talk about Anarchist-Communism between Two Workers. By E. Malatesta. 1d.

No. 4.—Anarchist Communism: Its Basis and Principles. By Peter Kropotkin. 1d.

No. 5.—Anarchy. By E. Malatesta. 1d.

No. 6.—Anarchist Morality. By Peter Kropotkin. 1d.

No. 7.—Expropriation. By Peter Kropotkin.

No. 8.—Anarchism and Outrage. By C. M. Wilson. One halfpenny.