

Freedom

A JOURNAL OF ANARCHIST COMMUNISM.

VOL. IX.—No. 96.

AUGUST, 1895.

MONTHLY; ONE PENNY.

ANARCHY.

[A lecture delivered by Elysée Reclus at South Place Institute on Monday, July 29th, 1895.]

You know that we, the Anarchists, are considered as a set of most desperate and wicked men; and recently, perusing by mere chance an English review which had already published some of my scientific papers, I found, to my surprise, that I was spoken of by name as belonging to a "gang of ruffians." Now, this is indeed a very bad introduction to you; still I hope you will not condemn me at once. If you have read and heard the attacks, you are bound by fair play to hear also the defence, and even a counter-attack.

Our name explains perfectly what our aim is—at least our negative aim. We wish to do away with government because every organisation from the outside prevents the free working of spontaneous organisation. Government, under all its various shapes, is but another name for a body of people having got the power to enforce their will, which they call and make *Law*; and this will, this *Law*, represents not the society's interest, but their own. If mankind's ideal is the happiness of all, government cannot and will not ever fulfil it, because its first concern is for its own members. Subjects come always after the ruler; and even were they sensuously pleased as a herd of well-fed swine, they will never enjoy that true happiness which exists between friends and equals. A drudging servant never enjoys life nobly and manfully side by side with his master, never a slave with a free man; never a poor fellow picking up in the mud his morsel of bread with the rich, who does not care for bread, because dainties are better for him.

Our ideal of society is quite different from the actual state of things, quite different from the imagined Utopias of most ancient and modern writers. High people, who have enjoyed the privileges of birth, wealth, and education are always prone to believe themselves to be a chosen tribe; and even when they feel kindly towards the lowborn poor, they want them to be led by strings, like children, and taught good morals by their betters. And who are their betters? The aristocracy, of course—those who enjoy already the advantages of a pleasant life, and who by their very position are induced to maintain inequality in their own favor.

The society we imagine, and whose evolution we are studying in the present chaotic crowd of conflicting units, is a society in which work is going on, not by the behest of a whole hierarchy of chiefs and sub-chiefs, but by the comprehension of common interests and the natural working of mutual aid and sympathy; in which order is kept, not by the strong arm of law, by prisons, cat-o'-nine-tails, hanging-ropes, guillotines, and wholesale blowings-up, but by a universal education, by respect of everyone for himself and for others; in which happiness will be ensured, not by intermittent and disdainful charities, but by real and substantial welfare, and by the common enjoyment of riches due to the common work.

In fact, the change we propose in society is precisely the change which is going on in the family itself, where the old idea of a ruling master, having the right, and even the duty, to chastise with the rod wife and children, is gradually abandoned, and where love, mutual respect, and permanent kindness are considered the only natural ties between all. And everywhere the same evolution is going on in social morals. People feel that a new departure must be taken in the methods of social activity. Even in workshops and great manufactories, the best way of going on smoothly for employers and employed is to have, in spite of the difference in wages, a link of mutual respect. You all remember the saying of the chief engineer of the Forth Bridge at the opening of that most stupendous work of the age: "If all we fellow-workers had not labored together in the glorious undertaking with the same mind and the same heart, it never would have been achieved. Every nail is necessary to the whole; everyone of us has been necessary to this splendid end!" Such were the words of the illustrious constructor; he felt that enthusiasm for the achievement of a great work had been throughout the chief motor, although, generally and quite naturally, hatred and envy are bred by the difference of social standing and salaries. That enthusiasm for high aims is to take the place of continual compulsion.

Of course, we know that the change in society brought about by the substitution of inner natural organisation for the outer artificial organisation of caprice, force, and law, will be a change of capital importance, and, in consequence, accompanied by numerous and formidable events. Every general evolution brings in its wake corresponding revolutions. It must be so, and we cannot alter the course of history; but this we know, that howsoever great may be the dangers following

the change from governance to spontaneous grouping, these dangers can never compare with the actual evils which result from the exercise of personal authority and the extortions of law.

Why is it that from five to ten millions of men die every year in Europe before the natural term of life? It is because government—and under that name I comprehend all those who command by birth, law, or power of riches—refuses bread to many, and gives it sparingly to the majority of men. Why is it that six millions of men are rotting, morally and sometimes physically, in barracks, sharpening their big knives to butcher other people, and especially those of their own countries? It is because governments know no other way of solving their private disputes or of enforcing peace among the starving poor.

Why is it that land belongs especially to those who don't till the ground, houses to those who have not built them, and merchandise of every kind to those who had no part in its production? Because government is composed precisely of those who oblige others to work in their stead. It has been well said that work is the production of riches, and, by an astonishing logic of history, those riches go to the non-laborer.

The actual political life of France gives you a very good example of the very nature of government, and of its necessary gravitation towards barbarism and inhumanity. There is near the town of Montluçon an old Catholic gentleman, who seems to be of a very conservative turn of mind, but who nevertheless is very goodhearted and kind. This feeling man (de Montaignac by name) is better known under the nickname of "L'Homme du Pain" (the "Bread-Man"), because he has taken in its real sense the prayer in the gospel, "Give us our daily bread." He wants, first of all, the exchequer to deliver to each French man, woman, and child the necessary funds to ensure daily food in its simplest form. "Thus," says he, and very truly, "thus man would be lifted above the worst of despair, that of seeing his family exposed to starvation; and being free from all cares on that side, he would feel himself more of a man, and, knowing his inalienable right to life, he would face any man with more courage and spirit. Especially when meeting an employer he would not cringe like a slave or creep like a dog, and would expect to be treated as a man. The result would be a general rise of wages and a fairer execution of contract on the part of the capitalist. Of course, such a state of things does not fulfil our ideal—far from it; but although a makeshift only, it is still considered as an abominable concession to the starving people by all political economists. Sure of his morsel of bread, the employed would fancy himself to be, they say, on an equal footing with the employer, and the latter would not be able any more to dictate starvation terms. Thus it is that the old "Homme du Pain" is poohpoohed and laughed at as a crank. So is also a certain Barrucand, a writer of some talent, who gives lectures in Paris and pens articles on the same subject. Certainly of bread there is enough for all, but people must at present conquer it by subservience to the detainers of money. The stupid and abominable theory on the subject of "supply and demand" is that which was put in practice during the siege of Paris. Provision of food there was in abundance, and people claimed that it should be equally distributed to all, as all were in the same danger and liable to be mowed down by the same cannon-shot. But such a shocking violation of laws was not allowed to prevail. Professors of the Institute demonstrated, with great flourishing of would-be scientific words, that the matter ought to be left to the natural functions of trade, which would let the rich survive and eliminate the poor. And in reality, during three months of winter, 66,000 persons were eliminated by bronchitis alone; and the word "bronchitis" had the same meaning as "starvation." Government, as it is wont to do, put then all the weight of its influence on the side of those who could afford to buy throughout comfortable dinners.

Of course, you say, but this was a bad, foolish government; a good government would have acted otherwise. Only there is no such thing as a "good government." An organ-grinder cannot grind anything but very poor music out of his barrel. Thus a master, however well-intentioned he may be, is obliged, when trying to fulfil his aims, to use all the indispensable machinery of government, soldiers, policeman and hangman, preachers and magistrates, bankers and bailiffs, and the immense number of functionaries whose natural ambition is simply to get on in life and to draw their money. Let us take as examples the emperors of the Antonine dynasty. By an extraordinary combination of circumstances those men, brought up by the Stoic philosophers, had been true to their education, and, wonderful to say, had resisted the invasion of folly which makes the heads of princes giddy. They discarded flattery, and saw perfectly through the false hearts of courtiers. As the collection of their maxims sufficiently show, they remained pure, simple, unambitious, considering themselves as simple

organs of the immense Roman body; the recital of their actions gives the proof that they always tried to do good. But were these excellent intentions of any avail to prevent or retard the decline and fall of Roman civilisation? Not in the least. Under Maecus Aurelius, as under the other Cæsars, the control of the governmental machine went on in the same way. The Roman citizens did not rise to their former dignity of men; deprived of real freedom, they worked less and less; provinces were crushed for treasure as they had been before; the barbarians kept waiting on the frontiers, or even overstepped them. and the good Marcus Aurelius left after him as his natural heir one of the most ignominious monsters that have ever lived. Thus ended what may be called in history the best-intentioned government that ever existed.

Therefore it is that we do not care about any change of government, because we know that a so-called change is no change at all. You Englishmen have already made many experiments on the subject, and are just now undergoing a new experiment. Of course, many men will benefit by it: land squires and parish rectors, game and bar-keepers; but in the main, do you there will be a great difference from the former state of things, and do you blame those who did not care to vote? In France they made a much bolder experiment—in appearance at least; but most of you know the proverb which settles the matter: "Il ne valait pas la peine assurément de changer de gouvernement." It was useless, assuredly, to change our governing body. Taxes are all the same, only higher; injustice and bad morals continue to rule. With Tories, as well as with Liberals and Republicans, there will be always on one side money-mongers, and on the other poor breadless devils. Always a bad example will be given by those who pretend to educate the people. As Richard Burton, who was in his way a kind of Anarchist, used to repeat the Persian saying: "Fish always rots head first."

(To be continued)

A LESSON TO SOCIALISTS.

Disaster has overtaken the Liberals; their majority has disappeared; their administration has been condemned by the merciless vote of the electors. The different sections of the party are occupied in picking holes in each other; but for us their dissensions have little interest. What we care to do is to make clear to ourselves the causes which have contributed to the fall of this progressive and reforming government.

How comes it that what legalist Socialists call "the national opinion" should reject a government whose measures were such as the Home Rule Bill, Eight Hours Bill, Parish Councils Act, Factory and Workshops Bill, and many projects of a kindred nature, to say nothing of the "Democratic Budget" of 1894? And for whose benefit? For the benefit of a coalition of the upholders of the divine and hereditary legislative rights of the House of Lords, of coercion in Ireland, the hoodwinking of the people by clerical instruction, and their degradation by the enlarged privileges of capitalism and exploitation!

Certainly, from our point of view, all these Liberal measures were but superficial palliatives. As Anarchists and Communists, it is not what is generally called "Home Rule" that we desire, but the complete self-government of every Irishman in an equal and Communistic society. It is no eight hours of slavish labor that we desire for the toiler, but the right of each to work at his own pleasure and for himself, his family, his friends, his neighbors; for a free, united, and Communistic mankind. From our point of view, the Liberal measures were means whereby the people might have been turned out of the direct road towards social and economic freedom. But it must, in justice, be recognised that the Liberal government was putting in practice what the Social Democrats of all Europe are preaching to the people as "Socialistic reforms." More than that: the English Liberals, with their Home Rule and federalist ideas, are in advance of the representatives of "Scientific Socialism," who declare themselves for an absolutely centralised State (Liebknecht and the "Communist Manifesto" of 1848)—for a State where the minority will be forced to submit or to leave their country; where the worker will have less liberty of choice in his work than in our days of capitalist exploitation (Kautsky, "Erfurt programme"); where rebels will be deprived of daily bread (Bebel); where, in a word, the minority will be treated as they were at the Zurich Congress of 1893. Yes, the English Liberals have gone ahead of the Social Democrats.

And yet this Liberal government has experienced an overwhelming defeat at the elections. Are the people disgusted with it, or are there other causes for its condemnation?

It seems as if the successors and former colleagues of Mr. Gladstone have threatened too many vested interests at once, too many stupid prejudices of jingoism, landlordism, clericalism, too many ancient rights, to the degradation and exploitation of the masses, as enjoyed by brewers, spirit distillers, and publicans. They did not realise that they were not strong enough to resist a coalition of privilege-mongers and monopolists, of clericalism and ignorance. An all-powerful coalition indeed! since it is the landlords, capitalists and plutocrats, the clergy of all denominations, and the church by law established, who are in possession, the masters of the nation. Such a coalition could be resisted only by the people united in a general strike, by an armed revolutionary movement. To go forth against it with voting papers while it is supreme is as silly as the faith of legalist Socialists in their parliamentary majority declaring for a collectivist "social liquidation."

Let the partisans of legalism and parliamentary action ponder the fate of the Liberal party. Perhaps they will at length perceive that, in a conflict of interests, triumph lies with those in possession, and that the first acts of social emancipation must be to dispossess the possessors, and to destroy and abolish the State organisation, which protects the privileges of the exploiters and puts at their disposal all these formidable means of hoodwinking, degrading, and exploiting the people. The Liberals, now so disgracefully beaten, had not only a majority, but the reins of government in their hands. Amongst them were men of great political capacity, great administrative experience, men of European popularity. But scarcely had they touched, or shown a disposition to touch vested interests and privileges, than they were thrown to the ground. Is it likely that at some future time—perhaps half a century hence—a Social Democratic majority, and its vote for a social liquidation, will fare better than the Liberal government of to-day? To believe that it will is to be very simple-minded.

As long as the rich and the exploiters of labor are left in absolute possession of their wealth, as long as the people are taught that legal methods and electoral agitation can do everything, and that the economic struggle is useless, the autonomous organisation of social production and consumption is an idle dream; as long, in fact, as the Communist-Anarchist's idea, with its conception of the revolutionary initiative of groups and self-governing federations of producers, is denounced as "unscientific" and dangerous; as long as this is the case, we may predict, without exaggeration, that the measures of the future Social-Democratic Labor Party, and other such legislators, must inevitably meet with as striking a defeat as those of the Liberals. The people can only force the rich, the rulers, to yield to demands when it actually revolts. It was not Marat and Robespierre who made revolutionary changes by their decrees; it was the direct action of the revolted country places which, as the Abbé Gregoire puts it, had each its own Marats and Robespierres.

And in the coming social struggle it will be the same. It will not be the fine talkers of the Social Democratic Federation, the Fabian Society, the Independent Labor Party, who will decree Communism or Collectivism, but the people themselves, who will organise upon their own initiative self-governing, producing, and consuming associations—i.e., true Anarchist-Communism.

But, to arrive at this, English workmen must stick to their old tactics of economic warfare, their self-organising societies of workers, bravely conducted strikes, bold revolts like those of the earlier part of this century. Electoral parades may be left to the admirers of law and order, government and bureaucracy—whatever they call themselves.

English workers, the German Social Democracy is held up for your admiration. But do you know that in Germany the workmen labor 13, 14, and 16 hours a day for from 2s. to 4s.? Why are they behind you and behind the French? Because, instead of struggling for themselves, they vote, and vote only; because they submit to a stupid and centralised discipline; because the initiative of individuals and of groups has been trodden out; because the idea of social revolution is presented to them as an easy affair of rules and laws, to be managed for them by men acting as their special providence, and not by them for themselves. And it is this belated country, the land of huge armies and military discipline and parliamentary votes resultless to the worker, that is set before you as an ideal!

No, let us keep to our own line, the economic struggle; let us try to get ready as soon as possible for a general strike; let us do our utmost to make that strike a triumph, and we shall have no need of electoral contests; for a victorious general strike is the beginning of a social revolution.

SHOULD DECORATIVE WORK BE A DRUDGERY.

To-day I was talking with a contributor of this journal about needle-work, and she said: "What you are saying is pure Anarchism." Now, I am nothing of a politician, so I do not know what is Anarchism; I thought I had been talking pure economic common sense. However, we agreed that I should write down the substance of what I had been saying, and send it to the editor of *Freedom* to see whether he would think it anarchical enough to insert.

The produce of hand labor may be roughly divided into three classes—1, Articles of necessity or convenience; 2, works of real art; 3, decoration. Art work proper requires genius, and genius alone can settle the conditions under which it should be produced. But with the first and third classes all have something to do personally and practically.

The production of the first class necessarily involves a certain amount of drudgery—that is to say, of work done to a fixed pattern and with no scope for personal fancies. How crops can best be grown, food made, houses or ships rendered weather-proof, has to be settled by experience, and the individual worker must submit to rules; but the function of decoration, its sole use, is to refresh the eye, to relieve daily life from monotony. Why, then, make it monotonous to the worker? Decoration which is amusing and pleasant to do is much more restful and pleasant to look at than that which is produced under conditions of weariness and worry to the worker.

It is fair that everyone should do his or her share of the necessary drudgery; should do something towards providing the necessary food, clothing, shelter, or cleansing for mankind. But everyone should also do something to add to the beauty of the world; and that part of the work ought surely to be so arranged as not to impose more drudgery,

but to be a recreation from the monotony of the real work. Clothes, to fit comfortably and wear well, must be designed by some experienced person, and the worker must follow the set pattern. But why is this necessary condition of the mere convenient clothing carried over into the decoration? For instance, there is a particular kind of feather-stitching, which is a pleasant and restful exercise of the wrist after plain needlework, and a constant play of the worker's fancy. It would be natural, one would think, that a woman who has made a set of night-dresses or baby-gowns should amuse herself by finishing them off with this quaint and pretty decoration. But no; some feather-pattern is usually chosen which is as monotonous as the sewing of the seams. As monotonous? No, much more so; no work done for use ever is as monotonous and wearisome as work becomes when it is meant to be decorative, and is prevented from being truly so by useless routine. Decoration performs its true function only when every bit of it conveys to the gazers something of the individual play of fancy of the actual worker; yet nearly all employers of decorative labor seem bent on preventing its doing so, on trampling out the individuality of the worker.

Mr. Ruskin sent the stone carvers who made the pillars for the Oxford Museum out into the fields, and each one chose the plant he thought he would best like to carve on the pillar entrusted to him. The colonnade so produced is far more interesting to look at than one in which all the capitals are alike; yet somehow the ordinary builder prefers to have his columns all alike. Why so? There is some jealousy, some fear, some feeling, I know not what, which tends to arrest all play of fancy in the individual worker. We hear of braiders going mad of the monotony of their patterns; of women sitting eight hours a day, working in one stitch and one shade of silk, to produce (on some article which, so far as use is concerned, could have been made in a loom) an effect which would have been much more ornamental had the stitch and shade been varied. What is the meaning of all this waste of eyesight and brain-and-nerve-power? *Why is not the production of decoration made a recreation for the workers?* That is the question I want to raise. My friend says that raising it is "pure Anarchism." Well, then, will Anarchists help to ventilate it. It is to be discussed in the autumn at a literary society. If the readers of *Freedom* are interested, perhaps some report of the discussion may be sent to the journal.

MARY EVEREST BOOLE.

SOCIAL REORGANISATION.

II. PRODUCTION FREELY ORGANISED.

In asking ourselves the question, "Why not organise production on a free basis?" we are not ignoring the fact that the overwhelming majority of people regard it as Utopian, and will tell us we prefer to dwell in the clouds instead of on terra firma. We must then inquire *Why* is it Utopian? and how comes it that freedom, which is so much needed on this earth, is always supposed to be in the clouds? Why, of course, simply because priests and politicians, parents and school-masters, the Press and all the privileged persons who object to any ideas of change, are continually dinning into our ears that man will do nothing good, nothing sensible, nothing even for his own rational self-interest, unless he is directed and compelled.

For example, if we ask seriously why we cannot organise without masters, officials, and all the compulsory methods adopted to-day, the capitalistic State will answer, "because to do so you would have to interfere with the divine rights of property which we are here to protect. And even if property was held in common, you would all be at sixes and sevens without the control of the State."

And the Democrats would answer us: "Although a very fine idea in itself, the people are incapable of carrying it out. If left to themselves, without 'leaders' and without some controlling power to direct them, all would end in a mere scramble, in which the weakest would go to the wall."

As to the first objection, we may say at once that for the mass of mankind there is no question of freedom either in producing or consuming, in education or recreation, in anything whatever (except starving), whilst property is held on its present basis. But we may ask, in passing, Is not the "present basis" getting rather shaky? Are there many amongst us who have seriously studied the tendencies of social forces in the past and present who would like to vouch for the "present basis" being in existence, say, a generation from now?

No matter for that. Sooner or later ("sooner," we believe) the change will come, and when it does come let us make the most of it. To do so, however, it is necessary to get rid of all fallacies which the present system tends to imprint on men's minds.

At such a time no one would dream of invoking "divine aid" to help us over our difficulties: that form of superstition at any rate is dead and done with. There are, however, people who will raise the cry for a "provisional government;" indeed we fear the Democrats will do so themselves if their experience in politics does not force them by the mere logic of events to accept Anarchist principles. They will try to form this Revolutionary government, and to throw upon it the impossible task of reorganising industry, and, by attempting to resort to the ways and means of State officialism, in order that a few ambitious persons may cut a figure and lift themselves into salaried positions where they could complacently do a little government on their own account, would succeed either in throwing us into the arms of a dictatorship, or in rendering the full fruition of the Revolution a thing to be attained only by a long and bloody struggle.

This is no extravagant forecast of what would be attempted if the workers were not sufficiently enlightened to resist it, as the development of events around us to-day clearly proves. Of course no government, provisional or otherwise, could succeed in the tremendous task of controlling and directing the industry of a nation. To do so society would have to be literally honeycombed with the most odious forms of officialism—detectives, police, etc. The tyranny of the master would be replaced by the far worse tyranny of the State.

Now, it is very evident that civilised nations, oppressed as they still are, would never submit to this unheard-of condition of slavery, since we all feel that, besides the need for decent food and shelter, there is also just as deep a need for more personal freedom. So that, if it were possible for government to feed and clothe us, it would still, in its curtailment of personal liberty, leave half our nature unsatisfied. But in the free organisation which the Anarchist-Communist proposes there will not only be food and clothing for all, but at the same time freedom for all.

Now, we maintain that here in the Anarchist principle, and not in that of the State Socialist, we have the most practical means of meeting the difficulties which confront us, and for this reason. If we wish to see others doing their best to accomplish any object, if we wish to see them heart and soul in their work, we may encourage them in any manner we choose, but we never dream of coercing them. We know from experience that coercion never did us any good—quite the contrary; and, moreover, we also know that if we wish to sow discord amongst men, the best way to do it is to begin to "boss" them.

Now, in the great work of social reorganisation, what can be accomplished without free and honest efforts, without the hearty goodwill of an enthusiastic people? And would you expect to get all this necessary fervor and energy by charlatanry, by force, by dictation, or any other methods best known to governments?

"But what about blunders? Is it not awful to think of the mistakes that would be made?" Well, undoubtedly mistakes would be made, but they would not be awful to contemplate; on the contrary, they would be rather encouraging, since it would prove that the people had been free to make them, and to profit by the experience of so doing. For let us never forget that mistakes made by the people under such conditions cannot be passed over; they must be felt, investigated, and rectified by the sheer necessity of life's daily existence. On the other hand, the mistakes of governments (and their name is legion) are perpetuated through years of suffering. And who would attempt to estimate the cost to humanity in their never-ending struggles to combat these mistakes, and to have them—well, not abolished, but simply mitigated?

We see no reason, then, to fear the mistakes of a free people; and we are perfectly convinced that from a freely-organised society, and from it alone, will spring that equality and fraternity which we are striving for, and along with it that progress and development which liberty alone makes it possible to attain.

Of course, the practical Britisher will exclaim, in answer to all this, "But let us hear your plans—give us some details"; and this inevitable remark will prove how he has failed to grasp the universal application of the principle of freedom for which we are contending. Of course, if we were the heads of some governmental department, we should (after an immense expenditure of time and money) be prepared with elaborate plans for the carrying on of agriculture, for the building and draining of villages and communes, and so on; all of which would look very pretty—on paper. But as we are *not* heads of government departments, and as we *don't* believe in elaborate plans on paper, with tools in hand and on equal terms with our fellows, we propose to make our plans as the actual conditions demand, and meet the difficulties of detail face to face.

Suppose for example, we, being on the spot and knowing the actual condition of things, suggest a certain method of drainage which to us seems good; someone else arrives with another scheme, which also seems good. What's to be done? It is evident we should talk the subject over, hear pros and cons. and try to decide on adopting one of the two methods. But suppose even this fails? Then freedom says, Try both methods; there is most likely something good in each; therefore let experience decide for us, and not cranky government officials.

Does this sound a very extravagant suggestion? Then let us refer to the present drainage system of London. No doubt it had some advantages, but was it the best? It has been proved that, notwithstanding the millions it has cost, it was not by any means the best. For one thing, it ignored the all-important question of the economic value of sewage; it polluted our finest river till it became not much better than a huge cesspool. How much more intelligent to have two systems side by side, or even three, for the matter of that. But this is not the ways of governments; only liberty can give us these unparalleled advantages. Are we not immeasurably better for having freedom of thought? Then why not freedom of action? And since social life is impossible without organisation of some kind, why not free organisation? It includes all paths to progress and advancement; it stultifies no individual, but encourages the better side of our human nature. It follows, as a logical necessity from the preceding evolution of thought, that the next step must be freedom of action for the individual. And when this right has been conquered, what a glorious harvest we shall be sure to reap; or why have the best and greatest of humanity given their lives for Freedom?

Mortgagee farmers in Washington State have organised to resist eviction. Considering that the great majority of farms in the United States are under mortgage this should not be difficult.

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.

Notice to Subscribers.—If there is a blue mark against this notice your subscription is due, and must be sent before next month if you wish to go on receiving the paper.

Back Numbers.—Vol. I., October 1886 to September 1887 (No. 2 sold out), price 2s. Vol. II., October 1887 to September 1888 (Nos. 16, 17, 18, 19 sold out), price 1s. 6d. Vol. III., October 1888 to December 1889, price 1s. 6d. Vol. IV., January to December 1890, price 1s. Vol. V., January to December 1891, price 1s. Carriage: single volumes, 2d., five volumes, 6d., throughout the United Kingdom.

NOTES.

ANARCHY AND THE PRESS.

We elsewhere give a report of comrade Reclus' lecture, but we think it may interest our readers to know how the press behaved over the matter, so we give a brief summary of what came under our notice.

An excellent account of Reclus' career appeared in the *Echo* of Friday July 26th, after which that paper lapsed into a dead silence so far as our meeting was concerned, giving no announcement and no report—as if it had exhausted its moral courage at one gasp and been pulled up sharp.

The *Star* and *Morning Leader* gave brief but fair reports.

The *Pall Mall Gazette* made ridicule of the whole thing, and, consequently must not be taken seriously, its object evidently being to write up a silly laughable account specially to amuse the "gentlemen" who read that journal. Poor fellows! some of them must want amusing; and they might get into worse mischief than laughing at Anarchists.

The *Daily Graphic* gave a fair report; and the report in the *Manchester Guardian*, though condensed, was most intelligible and correct.

The *Daily Chronicle*, caring nothing for Anarchy, knowing nothing of Anarchy, hating Anarchy with all the hatred of its bitter Puritan spirit, gave not one word of notice or comment. Yet the English Anarchist movement is a deep, living, growing, earnest movement which will do great work in the future.

The *Weekly Times & Echo* deserves our thanks as it certainly has our appreciation for its report of the lecture—the fairest and clearest it has been our good fortune to read.

Last, but not least, comes the *Globe* which, having no report or announcement to make, gives us a piece of its temper which we quote in full for our readers to reflect upon:—

"Doubtless there is much to be said for the safety-valve theory in politics; but it may be carried too far. Surely it is a public scandal that the notorious Anarchist, Elisée Reclus, should be permitted to lecture on Anarchy in London, as he did last night. Reclus is all the more dangerous because he is an eminent man of science, and, as the best known of the scientific Anarchists, he is more responsible than any of them for the acts of the men who translate theory into action."—*Globe*, July 30th, 1895.

We suppose the *Globe*, intoxicated with the reactionary majority of 1892, hopes to begin at once the suppression of free speech. As to Reclus' responsibility for the men who translate Anarchist theories into action, we should all be glad to share that responsibility, since the men who translate these theories must be men who love Justice and Truth, and who respect the liberty and happiness of others. Let the *Globe* do likewise.

"TO KILL, OR NOT TO KILL."

The British Medical Association has just been holding a Congress; of which fact we ought, no doubt, to be very glad. But, after reading an address delivered by an individual named Sir William MacCormac, one is almost led to imagine it is the Congress of an Association for the Wholesale Destruction of Human Life.

This said MacCormac waxed eloquent over the grand work done by the Lee-Metford rifle, especially in combination with cordite powder. "In Waziristan and Chitral our troops had used them very successfully. The volleys were almost smokeless and noiseless, and wrought great havoc in the enemy's ranks." "In the next great war, he felt assured the small-arm fire would be more destructive to human life, and the number, as well as the severity, of the injuries would be largely increased."

Delightful reading, is it not? And this is from the report of the *Daily Chronicle* which would not condescend to announce Reclus' lecture on Anarchy.

The report informs us that these remarks were listened to by a distinguished audience. What a blessing "distinguished people" are so few.

DAN CHATTERTON.

So brave old Dan Chatterton is dead, and we offer our tribute of sorrow and respect to one who was courageous, consistent, and honest to a degree. His well-known figure will be sadly missed, for he had

no enemies—not even amongst the police. His 75 years of poverty and struggle endured mostly in the gutters of London streets, fighting in his own way the battle against social injustice, is a piece of heroism which will carry his name down to future generations.

THE FLOWING TIDE OF REACTION.

A vote is a blind token; and it is only when votes are taken *en masse* that any general tendency is discernible. There is, however, no mistaking the reaction which has carried the Conservatives into power.

During the last few years so many interests have been menaced, and so many revolutionary activities have been prevalent that besides the landlord, the churchman and the brewer, the big capitalist and the middle-classes generally have thrown in their lot with the reaction so as to secure a little "strong government" to check the progress of revolutionary ideas and save their sordid souls from the possibility of viewing the shocking spectacle of a free and happy condition for the people. For we must remember that even the stupid (and cunning) people of wealth and privilege begin to have some serious doubts as to the longevity of the capitalist system: so their one idea has been to stave off all attempts at change since there is no knowing where it may end. The Radicals and the Democrats we leave to their own reflections. Be it ours simply to continue to the best of our ability to spread the principles of Anarchist Communism. We have Truth and Justice on our side, and with this consolation we can surely face any amount of "strong government."

THE BLESSINGS OF MONOPOLY.

There is one thing which the "flowing tide of reaction" does not seem to have done, and that is to have kept up the water supply in the East End.

But, really, this is too serious a subject to joke about; for, after all, the shocking condition of things in the domain of the East London Water Company might result in bringing death to our own doors. The poor have always to suffer; but it sometimes happens that the disease which affects them will spread to the palaces of their wealthy exploiters. Something of this kind may happen presently, for it seems that the East London Water Monopolists are doing their best to prepare the ground for typhus and cholera.

We wish these greedy wretches, who, it seems, will kill for the sake of their dividends, could be dragged to the homes of the poor, and there see the sufferings of little children who are dying so that their incomes may not be diminished. Such a sight might—we are not sure that it would—soften even the hard heart of Monopoly. But Monopoly takes care to keep its distance, and does not wish to be troubled with the ghosts of its own bad deeds.

So the unhappy workers with their crowded dwellings, poor food, and bad air, must suffer all the evils which the need of water can alone produce.

O wretched wage-slave, with your "advantages of civilization"! O happy, happy savage, with your pure mountain streams!

THE COST OF VOTING.

According to "official returns" it cost the noble Briton a round sum of one million to launch the Liberal Government of 1892 into power, and we may be sure it has not cost less to man the "Ship of State" (a fine allegory which is always appreciated) with the present crew. But the "official return" of one million gives no idea of the real cost of an election, to estimate which we should have to scrutinise unmercifully the private expenditure of big brewers, church dignitaries and Primrose Dames. Still the fact remains that "officially" it costs over four shillings per head to induce the free-born Briton to "do his duty" at the poll.

This is the financial cost; but what about the MORAL cost? We will not attempt to estimate the latter, but we can imagine how enormous it must be by the stormy temper and bitter abuse which is rampant amongst the "elected" and would-be "elect" after the battle.

As an instance of which we may quote from a modest little speech by Mr. John Burns M.P., who, after informing us in his well-known retiring and unassuming manner that "he had done more for sport than any other man in the metropolis," went on to remark that "in his own case he had against him beer, bible, bribery and blackguardism," but that, "thanks to the good sense of 5,010 electors, they had knocked the stuffing out of all of them." After which outburst of elevating rhetoric he compares the I.L.P. to Judas Iscariot, remarking that "somebody would soon be asking about the thirty pieces of silver." Other equally complimentary remarks follow which we need not quote. But in the midst of all this mutual recrimination and bad feeling on the part of those who are to "govern" us, we say we do not care for your official return of the financial cost of your precious elections: We ask again, "who will estimate the MORAL cost to the community?"

POLITICAL PRISONERS IN ITALY.

M. Santoro, an Italian political refugee whom the French Government have refused to hand over to the Italian Government, has been throwing a strong light on the doings of Crispi—whom he dubs the Stambullof of Italy. He gives us a picture of the penitentiary settlement at Porto Ercole, and he states that at this place "unfortunate political prisoners have been kept for seven months in cells without light or air, and in which there was a foot of water." It was suggested to M. Santoro that only Anarchists received this treatment; as much as to say that if this were so nothing more need be said. But it seems others besides the unfortunate Anarchists have received this treatment: Crispi regarding as Anarchists all who hindered his policy; so possibly for this reason some little noise will be made over the doings of this ruthless enemy of the Italian revolutionary movement. Revelations will result, and we shall have another instance of men reduced to a lower level than barbarians by the delirium of political power. Campos, Crispi, Perier, Stambullof and the rest, how fast are they driving the nails into the coffins of the unspeakable governments of which they hold, or have held the reins.

RECENT ANARCHIST LITERATURE.

We intend to give a rapid enumeration of the most important products of international Anarchist literature,—books, pamphlets, and periodicals,—which have come under our notice during this year.

It will be seen that in spite of all the persecutions and exceptional laws of 1894 this literature is rising more vigorous and energetic than ever—with the exception of a few countries like Italy and Germany.

In France *La Révolte* and *Le Père Peinard* are well replaced by *Les Temps Nouveaux* and *La Sociale*, being indeed the same papers with the

same editors—comrades Grave and Pouget. Provincial papers have not yet been started nor has the publication of pamphlets yet been resumed. But several books were published, notably *La Douleur Universelle* (Universal Suffering) by Sebastien Faure, a striking indictment of Authority which is at the root of all misery; a popular edition of Grave's *Société Mourante et l'Anarchie* (London, 16mo), and a new book by comrade Grave, *La Société Future* (The Coming Society), has just been published; A. Hamon's *Psychologie de l'Anarchiste-Socialiste*, is an investigation of the reasons why men become Anarchists, based on the personal accounts by various comrades of their mental development. Zo d'Axa, of the late *Endehors*, described his prison life, wanderings and exile in *Le Grand Trimard* (The Great Tramp), Brussels, and prepares a new volume *Demolissons* (Let us Destroy); P. Paillette re-edited his *Tablettes d'un Léopard*, a collection of Anarchist poetry, etc. Anarchist ideas come to the front in the more literary reviews such as *L'Oeuvre Sociale* of Marseilles (now of Paris), *La Revue Blanche* and *L'Enclos*; let us also mention *L'Éducation Intégrale* of P. Robin, *Sur le Trimard* (On Tramp), and the *Bulletin des Harmoniens*, all of Paris.

In Belgium *Le Plébien* is published at Ensival and a series of pamphlets are published at Brussels, beginning with *Aux Anarchistes qui s'Ignorent* by Charles Albert and continued by *L'Anarchie dans l'Évolution Socialiste* by Kropotkine. *La Société Nouvelle*, a monthly review of Brussels, contains more elaborated articles on Anarchist subjects.

A Flemish paper is *De Fakkel* (The Torch) of Ghent; in Sappemeer, Netherlands, appears now, after a short interruption, *De Anarchist*, started in 1890. There are a number of Dutch papers like F. Domela Nieuwenhuis' *Recht Voor Allen*, of Amsterdam, *De Arbeider*, etc., which, though not Anarchist papers, are averse to parliamentary Socialism and might be compared with the *Commonweal* in its earlier phases, about the year 1890. Domela Nieuwenhuis not long ago exposed the evils of the parliamentary current in *Le Socialisme en Danger* (Brussels), of which an English translation appeared in *Liberty* (London, 1895). The chief Anarchist pamphlets are already translated into Dutch; the most recent publication is a translation of Grave's *Société Mourante* (Rotterdam, part 1).

In Spain *El Corsario* of La Coruña which survived all the persecutions of 1893 and 1894 is suspended for the present, but *La Idea Libre* of Madrid, started in 1894, is regularly published as well as other papers more towards the South of Spain, which are, as a rule, shorter lived. So *L'Idea Nueva* of Gracia was soon suppressed; now *L'Eco del Rebelde* of Zaragoza and *El Porvenir Social* of Barcelona appear. Of recent pamphlets we mention *El Estado* by Anselmo Lorenzo, and new editions of *An Appeal to the Young* and *A Talk Between Workingmen* published by the *Idea Libre* of E. Alvarez. Many more Spanish pamphlets are published in New York and Buenos Ayres (for which see below); and light begins to be thrown on the judicial murders, tortures, and other crimes perpetrated against the Anarchists of Xeres, Barcelona, etc., killed in 1892-94; we refer to the pamphlets *Los Sucesos de Jerez* and *El Proceso de un Gran Crimen*, the latter by Juan Montseny, the author of a pamphlet on Pallas. A Dutch pamphlet *Something on the Revolutionary Movement and the Propaganda by Deed in Spain*, is also instructive on those bloodwritten parts of the history of our movement.

In Portugal *A Propaganda Anarchista*, started in February 1894, is the chief organ; we do not know whether the review *Os Barbaros* of Coimbra, and the *Grito de Revolta* of Porto are still published. Recent pamphlets are *The Governmental Utopia*, translated from the *Révolution*, and *The Sense in which we are Anarchists*, translated from Bakounine's *God and the State*; also a series of pamphlets, *Novo Mundo* of Lisbon, and a short review of the historical development of Anarchism in Portugal by Goncalves Vialna (2 parts, Porto).

We next reach Italy where, since the suppression of *Il Pensiero* of Chieti, in September 1894, no Anarchist paper could be published. Still the letters of the prisoners at Porto Ercole find their way to the press. A collection of the best known Italian Anarchist songs (*Canti Anarchici*) is being published in London, to be followed by other pamphlets.

Going further east, we mention two new Bulgarian pamphlets, translations of Kropotkine's *Wage-System* and *The Place of Anarchism in Socialist Evolution*; and arriving in Asia Minor we meet quite a number of Armenian translations of our best pamphlets including Kropotkine's *Spirit of Revolt*, *Political Rights*, *Revolutionary Minorities*, *Disorganisation of States*, *Anarchy*; Reclus' *To My Brother-Peasant*, Malatesta's *Talk between Workingmen*, Sophia Bardina's speech at her trial, etc.; also an Armenian paper *Hamäink* (The Commune) which recently ceased publication.

Turning towards the German and Austrian countries the *Sozialist* of Berlin, suppressed in January 1895, will be restarted this month. In Austria *Die Zukunft*, of 1892, is still carried on, as well as the Bohemian paper *Volné Listy*.

Switzerland is without an Anarchist organ at present, as well as the Scandinavian countries so far as we are aware.

Of England, with *The Torch*, *The Anarchist*, *Liberty* and *Freedom*, we need not speak here; unfortunately the English press in the United States is less vital: the second series of *Solidarity* is stopped, and we can only point to the *Firebrand* of Portland, Oregon, and the *Altrurian* of Columbus Junction, Iowa. Of Individualist Anarchist papers there are *Liberty* of New York, and *Lucifer, the Light-Bearer* of Topeka, Kansas.

The international press of the United States is stronger; the German *Freiheit*, the oldest uninterrupted organ, of 1879, *Der Anarchist*, *Der Arme Teufel*, and the *Freie Wacht* of Philadelphia; the Bohemian *Delnické Listy* and *Volné Listy* of New York, and *Duch Volnosti* (Spirit

of Freedom) of Chicago; the Spanish *Despertar* of New York and *Esclavo* of Tampa, Florida; the French miners' organ *L'Ami des Ouvriers* of Hastings, Pa. An Italian paper *La Questione Sociale* has just begun to be published in Paterson, New Jersey.

We abstain from mentioning the various pamphlets, mostly translations, published in the United States and go further south. In Cuba owing to the present insurrection all papers are likely to be suspended; until recently papers like *El Trabajo* of Puerto Principe and a serial publication *El Archivo Social* of Habana were issued.

In Brazil *L'Avenir*, an Italian paper of San Paulo, continued for some time, but is now suppressed. We have no recent news of our comrades in the La Cecilia colony, Giovanni Rossi and friends; the last-named's account of the colony, first published at Leghorn, in 1893, was translated in a number of papers (an English translation appeared in *Solidarity* of New York, and a German translation in the Berlin *Sozialist*, etc.).

In Montevideo, Uruguay, *El Derecho a la Vida* is published since September 1893; in Buenos Ayres *El Perseguido* (since May 18, 1890) is still continued; other papers are *La Verdad* of Rosario, *El Oprimido* of Lujan (edited by comrade Dr. J. Creaghe) and *El Obrero Panadero*, the baker's organ of Buenos Ayres. Quite a number of pamphlets are published in the Argentine Republic: one on Ravachol, another *Como nos Diezman* (How we are Decimated: an analysis of social misery), translations of G. Etievant's *Declarations*, Mary Mozzoni's *To the Daughters of the People*, Reclus' Appeal to the Peasants, etc. A full Spanish translation of Grave's *Société Mourante* appeared in book form (Buenos Ayres) and a monthly review *La Questione Sociale* (Buenos Ayres, Italian and Spanish) is full of translations and international news.

We do not know whether an Anarchist paper is published now in Chile (though in 1893 *El Oprimido* was published in Santiago) nor whether comrade Andrews continues his various Australian publications (*Anarchy*, *The Revolt*) nor whether *La Protesta Unica*, the new Italian paper of Tunis, is yet published, and so we conclude this rapid and, we are sure, very incomplete list.

The history of Anarchism is still a rather neglected field as the everyday propaganda absorbs most energies. Still it has been considerably enriched lately by the publication of a large volume of the correspondence of Bakounine, published by the late M. Dragomanov, in a German translation (Stuttgart, 1895); the Russian original edition is in course of preparation; the same subject is further illustrated by the memoirs of Z. C. Arbure (Temnitza si Exil) and of Debogorio Mokrievich (Vospominaniya); some unedited, but purely theoretical, writings of Bakounine have also been published (Paris, Brussels). And, finally, we mention the Supplement of *Les Temps Nouveaux* (Révolte) an inexhaustible source of anti-authoritarian gleanings from general literature.

This bare enumeration of publications ought to be supplemented by lists of modern works in all domains of science and social life which, whilst in no way connected with Anarchist propaganda, are imbued with a free, anti-authoritarian spirit, which, indeed, pervades all true science. There is a growing number of such books and publications, but to point them out requires special knowledge and we suggest that one comrade undertakes to trace and describe this current in e.g. history, another in philosophy, in natural history, etc., etc., until we have a full account of the steady progress of our ideas in all spheres of mental activity.

X.

CORRESPONDENCE.

DEAR FRIEND—Please find P.O. for 1/6 enclosed as my annual subscription to *Freedom*. The July number just to hand is particularly good, and if "Communism deprives no one of the power to appropriate the produce of his own labor to his own use" ("Let us reason together," by J. Turner), then we Mutualists agree with you. But what else would this consist in but a number of small proprietors of the produce of their own labor?

To talk of such a condition of things as "belonging to a bygone condition of industry" seems to me absurd. Will friend Turner kindly say when in the history of the world every man obtained and only obtained the produce of his own labor?

Yours for Freedom
G. O. WARREN.

Is it not rather a loose use of language to talk of those workers who might secure the result of their labor as "proprietors." As well speak of the navy going to work in the morning with a shilling in his pocket for his day's food, and his pickaxe and shovel on his shoulder as a "capitalist."

It is when a person legally holds property in the means of production with power to enforce a tax for the use of same, and so is in a position to live on the fruits of other people's labor, that he becomes a "proprietor." The appropriation of products for use or consumption may make one a temporary possessor but not a "proprietor"; the form of possession must be: the means of production as against the user, before that term can be properly applied.

It is wrong to imply that I said such a condition of things obtained in "a bygone condition of industry." What I did say was, that MUTUALISM was a kind of converse COMMUNISM tainted with the interests and prejudices of a bygone condition of industry. But Mutualism or Communism have, either of them, yet to be established. It has always appeared to me that Mutualism viewed the economic outlook from the yeoman farmer—peasant proprietor—individually independent craftsman—small shopkeeping point of view. This class is rapidly becoming a kind of "rudimentary organ" in economic evolution. Farming on a large scale, the Factory System with its subdivision of labor, the Universal Store, are rapidly destroying the former mode of industry, and continue daily to do so. The small middle class is being crushed by modern industrial development and a large class of propertyless wageworkers created. The small middle class often oppose the big landlord and banking class in order to defend their own position. It is from a conservative point of view—often really reactionary—that their opposition comes. As the progress of industry supersedes and replaces them by capitalist associations they are compelled to abandon their previous position in order to take up that of the wageworker.

Mutualism apparently desires a kind of co-operative society, the ideas of which are based upon the disappearing interests of this small middle class.

I do not know of any period of the world's history "when every man obtained and *only* obtained the produce of his own labor," neither do I think it will ever be possible *absolutely*. It can only be secured him *approximately*, and this Communism makes *possible* by depriving anyone of the power to economically subject or exploit another's labor.

What the many and varied subsequent effects upon social conditions would be it is difficult to say, and is the subject of much speculation even among Communists themselves; but these speculations must not be confounded with the economic first principles of Communism, as is so frequently done by those whom one would most expect to know better.

J. TURNER.

ANARCHISM & MUTUAL BANKING.

I suppose I ought to feel flattened—I mean flattered—at receiving the attention, in a column article of editorial type, of opposition to my short letter on the money monopoly, contained in the June *Freedom*; and the courteous proposal of J. Turner last month to "let us reason together," finds in me a ready respondent. But when he asks me, in his indirect manner, to examine the theory of Communism, I have to reply: I was a Communist before I became an Anarchist, and a State-Socialist before I became a Communist, and there is nothing in the theory of Communism with which I am unacquainted. That is why I am utterly astounded when I see J. Turner defending (?) Communism in the way he does. The following passage is most remarkable for Communism, or rather for the absence of it. "Communism deprives no one of the power to appropriate the produce of his labor to his own use;.....It desires to make common to all members of society the whole of that species of property which plunders labor. Personal property is not thereby converted into common property; the property idea itself has not been destroyed, only the social character of property is entirely changed, its class interests are gone for good." In the words of the poet:—

"Do I sleep, do I dream?
Do I wander and doubt?
Are things what they seem?
Or is visions about?"

"Give me your hand on it comrade Turner, only for goodness' sake don't call that Communism! Whatever will 'L. S. B.' say? When I read on page 85 of 'The Chicago Martyrs' that A. R. Parsons (whose memory I revere) said that "individualism" is "Anarchy, pure and simple,"—and on page 82, that: "The only sacred right of property is the natural right of the workingman to the product,"—and that W. C. Owen in *Solidarity*, February 15, 1895, says that "industrial freedom" "does not necessarily imply Communism or Socialism"—well, to put it mildly, I feel "all broke up!" The most thorough-going Individualist-Anarchist (Hang it, there it is again!) only stipulates for *personal* property; that is: property in the product resulting from personal energies or its equivalent in exchange. Up to now there's no fight, but this kind of Communism makes me blush for its exponents! J. Turner's definition of Individualism is the common or garden one, viz: "the right to appropriate the result of other people's labor, &c." True, it indicates the policy of that band of monopolists and plunderers known as: "The Liberty and Property Defence League," but Individualism in its true sense is no such apology for the Brotherhood of Thieves. Consistent Individualism is the doctrine of "The Sovereignty of the Individual, to be exercised at his own cost." First expounded by Josiah Warren and Stephen Pearl Andrews, this doctrine, corresponding to the Anarchy of Proudhon has been demonstrated for years by Benj. R. Tucker, as the principle of Equal Liberty. But I have another joke in store for "ultra" and "unbalanced" Communists. Not only do some of them look with a favorable eye upon property in the product, but even a measure of values is referred to. And by whom do you think? Kropotkin!!!—He says: "He (the farmer) is exploited by the tradesman, who makes him pay half-a-crown for a spade which, *measured by the labor spent on it*, is not worth more than sixpence." Expropriation, page 8. And again: "The workmen being unable to purchase with their wages the riches they are producing, industry must search for markets elsewhere." Anarchist Communism, page 17. Here Kropotkin strikes the keynote of the labor problem. What a pity it is that he did not follow up the strain. He might have continued thus: From the above remarks it is evident that if the workmen *were* able to purchase with their wages the riches they are producing, industry would have no need to search for markets elsewhere: supply and demand would be automatically balanced. This brings us round again to Mutual Banking, which, despite J. Turner's declaration, I venture the opinion that he still fails to see the importance of, and because he puts forward the old be-whiskered objection that Mutual Banking would not benefit those who have no property to offer as security. This objection is about forty five years old, and was originally raised (and answered) by the author of "Mutual Banking," Colonel William B. Greene himself. His answer would occupy too much space here, so I will reply as follows: Suppose a Mutual Bank to be established with a membership of five thousand, and to issue money to the extent of twenty-five thousand pounds. This would mean a demand for twenty-five thousand pounds worth, or thereabouts, of labor, for either the money is spent in articles for consumption, or in production, and in each case furnishes a demand for labor, absorbing unemployed laborers to that extent; creates a currency free of interest, which would cause a general decrease in prices and consequently increased wages, until all the unemployed were absorbed, when wages would go up to their natural limit, and represent the entire product of the

laborer. Thus would Mutual Banking perform its perfect work, solving the labor problem, and giving to all men the opportunity to throw off the economic fetters and look forward hopefully to a higher life in which government and exploitation would be really and truly shadows of the past.

WILLIAM J. ROBINS.

REJOINDER.

Friend Robins asks me to give him my hand on my definition of Communism (implying that he agrees with the idea conveyed). Most heartily! He says, "Don't call it Communism" though. All right! "a rose by any other name" etc. But why not? It is the only Communism I ever knew of, and is the Socialism I and other members of the old Socialist League worked for ten years or more ago. Can we then "co-operatively carry on the campaign for the abolition of all governments," to quote his first letter, each holding this *idea* in common? If so, let us get to work at once with propaganda both by pen and tongue against those forces which hold this species of property for the benefit of a few against the rest, and cease mocking the misery of the growing mass of propertyless workpeople by building fantastic castles-in-the-air of the Mutual Bank type. There is something too ludicrous in this blow hot, blow cold title of "Anarchism and Mutual Banking."

What will L. S. B. say? Don't know;—probably that it is just what has been contended for: that Communism only changes the form of property, and that the property *idea* itself has yet to be discussed, even by Anarchists, in the same way that the authority idea has been; with which I should agree.

I didn't see the first joke, and fail to see "another" for "ultras," but do see one for "unbalanced Communists" (somehow I fancy it recoils), and do not wonder at the blushes of mixed Mutualism, if there is any modesty left, since some, though acquainted with the whole theory of Communism, seem to only just have caught a glimmer of its *meaning* at last.

All that is claimed for Mutual Banking through "a currency free of interest" was claimed for Free Trade with "a commerce free of taxes." But it didn't come off, because the social character of property was not first changed. The propertyless laborer had no control over commerce and gained no comparative benefit to those who did. The propertyless laborer would have no control over currency, and would be left. The cheap phrases about "free money," as well as buncombe about banking, have a meaning only when compared with the restricted banking arrangements of the *property-owners of to-day*, but have no meaning whatever in reference to a Communist form of industry now almost sufficiently evolved under capitalist control, and therefore ready to be transformed, or even in reference to the labor movement against the exploiting conditions the idle parasitic class are able to impose so long as governments are able to uphold them.

The day has gone by for paltry palliatives, Social-Democratic or Mutualistic; the time has arrived for a clear and distinct exposition of first principles.

Now then! Can we co-operate? If so, here's an Anarchist grip and greeting in the fight for freedom.

J. TURNER.

MORE SORDIDNESS.

L. S. B. apparently does not care to give us a very definite reply about those potatoes. It is true, no doubt, that even honest amateur meddlers are liable to mistake, but most of us, nevertheless, have been in the habit of denouncing pretty freely just now the men who with different excuses take possession of the potatoes other men have grown. I am sorry that she should have such a bad opinion of A, who toils and moils—the silly fool—at producing potatoes to buy other things which he might have got by more direct means, apparently on B's good old plan of simply taking them wherever they are to be got. However as she is just as hard on B, and calls him an "aggressive upsetter," I suppose A and I will have to content ourselves, on the principle of the pious pugilist who prayed: "If you can't see your way to help me, O Lord, I won't mind so long as you don't help the other chap. It may be that L. S. B. is correct in thinking that it is not of much use asking *how* we could run equal garden-owning or potato-selling without policemen; but I think it is very important that we should not deny, as she seemed to do, the feasibility of a society wherein people could do such things or any other thing non-aggressive without the help of any system of coercion.

Even if L. S. B.'s theories as to the absence of any "real" relation between the producer and his product are granted, I cannot see that we need put off the abolition of capitalist thieving and governmental bullying till these theories are being generally accepted by the people. As so many of her fellow Anarchists either reject these theories or are doubtful about them, it is not likely that they can readily be made very clear to the people, whereas the thieving and the bullying can certainly be made clear enough to anybody with eyes in his head and a willingness to use them.

I should be very pleased to see "Communism once merrily afoot," even from the "sordid" point of view, as it would be the *cheapest* plan, and if for no other reason than that I believe we shall get there by-and-by; but the business of the meantime to my mind, the business which imperatively demands immediate attention, is not the introduction of any ideal system of Communism, but the abolition of the present system of exploitation. The former is desirable, the latter is *essential*; and there is no reason why they should take place simultaneously. One thing at a time is good enough for most of us.

The overthrow or dissolution of governmentalism with its dependent capitalism might take place very soon, and be a comparatively speedy process; but Communism in practice as well as theory is something that I am afraid we would have to *grow* into, and we might need some time to do it in. Of course, even without the monopolist and his policeman we could hardly have a very pleasant society without a certain amount of neighbourly and Communistic spirit; but that spirit, I maintain, could exist and develop well enough without any great alteration in our individualistic arrangements of distribution.

In practice, even the theoretical Communists of the present day find individualistic arrangements to be the most convenient. Anyhow, they don't adopt Communistic arrangements amongst themselves, though no law prohibits that. That fact is not wholly explained by saying that such arrangements will be more practicable when there is plenty for all. Any arrangements would be practicable enough if everybody could have everything he wanted without taking any trouble at all. It is not a mere question of "what we are going to do with the lazy man." Even in our Anarchist Groups (wherein, of course, he is altogether unknown) we find individualistic arrangements the most practicable between group and group.

Those sordid groups which run our papers want 1/4 a quire for them, and so far as any definite arrangements are concerned, the other groups pay not according to their accounts. Even with the typically Communistic spirit of the family, we find individualistic arrangements existing and even developing. We no longer eat all from the same dish, each wants a separate plate; most of us like to have a separate bed; and I suppose that even L. S. B., who thinks wanting to dispose of your own private potatoes so sordid, will not accuse some of us of misanthropy because we each like a private room. The fact is that such individualistic arrangements often enable us to enjoy greater freedom, because they enable us to assume a fuller responsibility in our own affairs; whereas with communistic arrangements we have other people to consider before

doing anything, and must refrain from doing many things lest they should disapprove, grumble or object.

The ideal economic arrangement, to my mind, nevertheless, would be a Communism between all the units of human society as spontaneous, ungrudging, and harmonious as that which exists now between the cells of the human body; but we are a long way from that yet, I fancy, and nothing can be more unpleasant than Communistic arrangements where each is doubtful or suspicious of the other. I am afraid it will take a long time to get rid of that jealous watchfulness which must have resulted from so many centuries of plundering and oppression. We can hardly expect that people, though they gave up trying to take advantage of each other, should rush with fullest confidence at once into each other's arms. It is easy to show that if the tadpole is to attain its highest development it must take to breathing air; but it does not follow that it is ready to be lifted out of the water all at once. Is not our line of progress not rather likely to be: first, from the present system of exploitation to something like fair play for everybody—the merely negative stage marked by the cessation of robbery; and then onwards with the growth of mutual confidence to the higher and positive Communism?

L. S. B.'s smart illustration of the stile is not quite in accordance with the facts. The crowd at the stile is not kept back by the delay in stepping over it, but by the fact that the monopolist is sitting on the top of it exacting toll before he allows anyone to pass. I quite admit the possibility of getting into the field by pulling down the hedge; but if the people outside are hungry and in a great hurry to get at the food in the field, why the quickest, simplest, and most sensible plan would be to let the hedge alone in the meantime and pull down the sifter. The hedge can be pulled down later on: in fact, as the sifter will give up attending to it when he sees it has ceased to serve him, there will soon be holes enough in it without anybody bothering much to do anything.

As to the "woman's person" question, the tautology in the phrase might be admitted without any admission that the point affects the main issue between us. L. S. B. declared, "The thing to bear firmly in mind is that property, however acquired, must maintain itself by governmental force.,, I sought to show that if in an Anarchist society people in general regarded as aggressive the act of taking a bag of potatoes against the will of the man who had grown them, that act would be just as effectually prevented as any other act generally considered aggressive; the taking, for instance, of a lock of hair against the will of the woman on whose head it had grown. It might be that these acts were considered aggressive for different reasons; but that does not touch the main question. Taking property to mean the generally acknowledged claim of the producer to decide as to the disposal of his product so long as he did not use it aggressively, I sought to show that property would be as secure or rather more secure in an Anarchist society than in the present one. If I did that, well and good!—tautology notwithstanding.

T. H. BELL.

WOMAN & CHRISTIANITY.

Christianity, basing its claim to regulate the relation of the sexes in accordance with the views of some long dead and forgotten Jews, on the imaginary sanction of an assumed deity, has always insisted on the sacredness of the marriage tie, and asserted that any union between persons of opposite sex formed outside its pale, and without the blessing of any of its representatives, is a thing noxious and evil. Not satisfied with this, it has always taught that the sexual instinct, the gratification of the sexual appetite, is something to be ashamed of, and that that person is the best who, even at the expense of his health, flies in the face of nature, overcomes the temptations of the flesh, and mortifies it.

Of course, it is one thing to lay down such a theory, and quite another to enforce it. One sex—the one that not only in all the social politics of historic antiquity, but right through the Christian era, has usurped all power; made all laws, gave to all customs their binding force, and, solely on account of its superior physical strength and greater ruthlessness, imposed its will on the other, ignored it altogether. To man it remained a pious opinion, to which lip-service was due, but which in practice was treated with contempt. Man's animal nature was too strong and aggressive to be mortified and mutilated at the bidding of the Church. He felt instinctively that his health required the gratification of his animal passion, and did not see why he should lead an unnatural and unhealthy life in striving after an ideal, the beauty of which he did not see, and the desirability of which was to him more than doubtful.

Woman's case was very different; her position under all the different religious systems of paganism had been one of practical slavery. Christianity did not improve it: I know full well that it is one of the loudest boasts of the people, who try to confuse the intellect of their listeners Sunday after Sunday in their Little Bethels, that it has raised woman out of the mire into which paganism had placed her to an equality with man; but anyone who reads history with an impartial mind, without preconceived notions—nay, anyone who looks around him and notices the actual position that woman occupies to-day—knows how vain and empty is the boast. True, in pagan countries woman was a slave, her body at the disposal of her master, whether it was her father or her husband; she had no will, no separate existence of her own. But who can assert that her position in Christian countries, under Christian laws, was much better? Woman, until the last few years, had no rights of her own; she could not hold property; if she committed a crime and it was shown that her husband instigated it, she was considered too much of a chattel to be responsible for her actions. When she married, she ceased to have individuality of her own; she became part and parcel of her lord. Whatever can be said about the treatment pagans meted out to women, they at least did not teach her that her body was an unclean thing, that sexual intercourse was something to be ashamed of, that it was better to waste her life away under unnatural conditions than to do what the instincts of her nature drove her to. Pericles was not ashamed to let the people of Athens know that he found not only happiness but inspiration and wise counsel in the arms of Aspasia. Phryne's beauty, exposed to the eyes of her judges, made them understand the fascination she exercised over the best minds of Greece; and the assembled multitude of perhaps

the most intellectual commonwealth the world has ever known thought it only right that her statue should stand amongst those of the gods in the groves of Delphi.

Christianity, not being able to force man to arrange his life in accordance with the views which appealed to the mind of Paul of Tarsus, laid its hand heavily on woman. It was the first to invent the monstrous doctrine that chastity, a condition of the body, was the one virtue of womankind; that it was her duty to submit to the embraces of man when the church had given its blessing to the union, but an unforgivable sin to do it without. Nothing has degraded woman more; nothing caused greater misery in the world. For Christians to talk about Christianity having elevated woman, while it denied her the right of exercising her own judgment where her affections were concerned, and made it a sin for her to give herself to a man if she should have happened to have contracted another union before, is simply ridiculous. Nothing has—nothing can elevate woman from the position of degradation and dependence which she occupies to-day, and has always occupied in historic times, but the acknowledgment of the fact that she is a responsible being, and must be allowed to shape her life in all its relations as she likes without being subjected to any interference either from an individual or from society. What woman wants is not only political independence, not only economic independence, good as they may be, but above all, and above everything, sexual independence. If the vote were given to her to-morrow, if all the obstacles which fetter her and make it difficult for her to earn her livelihood in competition with man were removed, woman would still remain a slave if she did not enjoy the right to give and transfer her affections as she likes. I claim that it is the inalienable right of every human being to do so; that freedom and happiness are not possible as long as society can say under what circumstances people shall or shall not be allowed to love. It is absurd to assert, as the morality-mongers of to-day do, that one and the same action is right and justifiable when done in accordance with certain formalities, but wrong and unjustifiable when done without them. If the action is not wrong, it cannot become so because it is done in the exercise of one's individual sovereignty, without asking the permission of people whose concern it is not.

To the people to whom such views appear likely to upset all morality I can only say that, far from doing so, their observance alone can make morality a reality, and not the farce it is to-day. If it is admitted that it is wrong for people to mate who do not feel affection for each other, it must be equally wrong for people who have ceased to love to continue to live together. Love is not an act of volition: it comes unasked, and it goes unbidden. Surely, considering what marriage means, if there were any truth at all in the professions of Christian moralists, they should be the first to advise women and men—the fire of whose love has turned to dead ashes—to separate and to seek fresh happiness in new companionship. The friends of our youth are not those of our manhood, our interests and desires grow and change with us; why, therefore, expect a constancy in the most inconstant of all our emotions? In every case where people continue to love each other through life, a tie is unnecessary, and might quite as well be dispensed with; in all other cases the consciousness of its existence acts as a curse, making all respect impossible and degrading the people it keeps together. Better by far to break the connection. If the pursuit of happiness is, as is generally admitted, the highest ideal that man can strive for, all that which makes this pursuit difficult or impossible is immoral in the real meaning of this much-abused term; everything which makes it easy is moral in the highest sense. Nothing can be more destructive to happiness than the enforced companionship of people who have ceased to desire it, and therefore the sooner such people part the better both for them and for mankind.

And the children! some one is sure to exclaim; what will become of them if people are allowed to mate and separate as they list, without anyone being able to say them nay? Who will feed, clothe, and educate them? This objection is usually considered a crushing one. To me, to any Anarchist whose Anarchism is a reality and not a make-believe, it seems one easily answered. I reply that, as under a properly regulated system of society all things will be held and enjoyed in common, so the care of the children of one generation will be the common duty and pleasure of the grown-up people of the whole community. The child of one will be the child of all. It cannot be denied that if the feeling of love for their offspring, and indifference, if not dislike, for that of others, people entertain, is analysed, it will be found to be but a manifestation of the property instinct, and, like the feelings of patriotism and religious fervor, with which it has a common course, it is by no means an ennobling one; but, like all the manifestations of the property instinct in their various shapes, in the highest degree selfish and subversive of the happiness of the human race.

The monstrous fallacy, which has contributed more than anything else to the degradation of woman and to the unhappiness of man, has been preached for such a long time by Christian moralists that, by dint of its constant and unceasing repetition, they have succeeded in clouding the never too strong intellect of the majority to so great an extent that anyone who dares to come forward for the purpose of advocating sounder and more natural views on the relations of the sexes is looked upon as an enemy of mankind.

But the power of superstition is waning; its reign is drawing to a close. It is yet night, but behind the clouds which still darken the sky of human intelligence can be discerned the first rays of the sun, whose rising will brighten a world where superstition and ignorance have been vanquished, where reason has triumphed, and where man will have learned to lead a life of perfect freedom in accordance with

