

Freedom

A JOURNAL OF ANARCHIST COMMUNISM.

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WAR.

We live in a transitory period, and need not wonder that upon war, as upon everything else, the wildest chaos prevails in current opinions. On the one side, Jingoism, especially in this country, boldly raises its head, not only amongst the rich, but also amongst the workers. Workers join the volunteer movement with enthusiasm for the glory of "old England," and all over the country passionate talk goes on for or against the filibuster Jameson, the German Emperor or the President of the United States. And this revival of Jingoism takes place precisely at a time when the anti-military current among the thinking portion of all nations had suddenly shown such great development and had found expression in such works as those of Tolstoi, in such pictures as Vereschagin's, in such powerful anti-military literature as has lately grown up in France, and in a rapidly generalised hatred of military service and war altogether.

Hatred of war and a sincere desire to put an end to all wars on the one side, and the most absurd Jingoism on the other side—such is the state of mind in Europe.

Let us say at once that, while we work with all our forces towards the advent of conditions which would render war impossible, we do not share in the sentimental hopes of those who talk of universal peace at the present time.

Peace? But what sort of peace, what sort of truce can be established between the oppressor and the oppressed, the exploiter and the exploited, the ruler and the ruled? So long as the capitalist continues to monopolise by force the soil and the mine, the machine and the means of communication, so long as he has the aid of law, prison, army and State in continuance of the misery of the great number for his own enrichment, no truce is possible. Truce would mean submission. And a man who has recognised that his ruler and oppressor is no superior to him, but is his equal, that man will revolt and compel the other, by force if the other resists, to recognize his equality. To talk of peace and universal pardon, so long as man rules man and shoots him down the moment he refuses to obey, is simply to befool men into slavery.

Take the crudest, the simplest form of oppression—the one we see in Turkey. Here is a population of a couple of millions of Armenians. They work hard on the soil; they are peasants as hardworking as the Scotch crofter. With their neighbours, the Turkish peasants, they are on excellent terms. But for a thousand years they groan under the yoke of the Turkish government—a gang of Arnaut, Greek, Bulgarian, Armenian and Turkish adventurers—the friends of the English bondholders and Beaconsfieldians. For a thousand years they have opposed to their oppressors their patience and a religion of love—Christianity; and up till now their wives are violated by the said gang of robbers, their daughters are kidnapped for the harems, and their sons and fathers are killed whenever they dare to oppose resistance.

At last, they have revolted. They have seen so many tears shed in their favor by clergymen and politicians at the meetings in London and Moscow, that they began to hope for support. The result was that 30,000 of them—men, wives and children—were massacred in the towns, another 30,000 were killed as they fled towards the Russian frontier, and scores of thousands have to perish from famine now that the men have been killed. What must they do?

Pray, as the clergymen advise them to do? But they have prayed for a thousand years. Convince? but for a thousand years they have endeavoured to convince. Submit? but they have submitted over and over again. To fight, to revolt, is the only thing left to do, and so they do it! And what goes on in Armenia in the most brutal form, goes on everywhere, under the milder but, perhaps, even more unbearable forms of modern tyranny.

If there were a drop of heroic blood left in the middle-classes of Europe, a Garibaldi would have long since landed, red flag in hand, in Armenia. But no! The admiration of the modern man is for those who arm the Bechuana police and the adventurers of the London Conservative Clubs—not for Liberty's sake—*humbug!*—but for seizing gold mines which might raise by so many hundred pounds the South African shares of the West End millionaires. The modern Garibaldian is the English clerk who shoots down the unarmed Matabele, "like dogs," and takes their cattle "which will be divided among all of us," or goes to fish military crosses and promotion with the Ashantis. And when a flying squadron is armed in a hurry, and volunteers are mobilised, it is to conquer the territory on the Orinoco, given up in 1841 by Lord Aberdeen, when gold mines on it were a mere myth, but which is claimed now, as a dear property, as soon as gold is discovered on it.

In the popular imagination, war has lived until now endowed with an almost divine character. It was an ordeal, a god's judgement, in

which the victory was supposed to belong to the one who was strongest morally, even though physically he might be the weakest. But, thanks to the modern bourgeois, it has been divested of those divine attributes; instead of the torn red flannel shirt of Garibaldi or the rags of the errant knight, we see the West End tailor make up the modern gold-mines' conquerors! They open the eyes, even of the blindest, to the modern meaning of war. In fact, the fool only does not understand now that all these rivalries between Germany and England, England and the States, Germany and Russia, or Russia and England, are not rivalries of nations endeavouring to find a full expression for their respective creative genius, but mere rivalries between the money-grabbers; rivalries for markets, rivalries for slaves, rivalries for the enrichment of the few! There is even no fiction left by which the workers' interests could be identified with those of these land-grabbers and slave-hunters of the same country.

On every point the interests of the two classes are opposed to each other. The British worker's interest is to conquer the land—not on the Orinoco, but of these isles,—to cultivate it intensely, to find in it a living for hundreds of thousands of inhabitants per square mile. While *their* interest is to reduce the labourer to sheer misery, and to compel him to till in Canada or in the Argentine, or to dig gold in Pretoria; to make fortunes by lending money for Canadian and Argentine railways; to swindle the home consumer with imported wheat, eggs, butter and the like. A country turned into pleasure parks and living on money-lending,—that is their ideal.

The worker's interest is to live surrounded by well-to-do fellow-workers and to exchange coal, cottons and luxuries with them. While *their* ideal is to keep the worker in misery, to export all they can, to create artificial dearth at home, to spend public money in ironclads and to refuse the worker's children education; to conquer gold mines for the dukes, and artificially to maintain misery at home in order to make money with this misery abroad. What can they have in common? The worker's fatherland is the country he lives in; but the capitalist's mother-country is the international Exchange.

Not only that: To the modern capitalist the revival of the warlike feeling of the country is the best means of diverting the worker's combative spirit, lately aroused, into new channels abroad. This is why the party now in power in this country has worked in such masterly fashion for the last two years to revive the military spirit and Jingoism everywhere—in its reviews, illustrated papers, speeches and songs. It saw the wave coming: it foresaw the approach of the revolution, and in the touching union between church, publichouse, landlordism, catholicism and all obscurantisms which we saw lately, the plan of diverting the English workers from home affairs to foreign hatreds has certainly played not the last part.

But let us not be befooled as we have been so many times before. And if the spirit of fight has been lately roused among the workers of this country—and we gladly admit it has—let it be directed against the two secular enemies, Capital and State, instead of forging new arms and new power for the two. By all means let us make a conquest—the conquest of the riches of this country for the English nation.

SERGIUS KRAVTCHINSKY—STEPNIAK.

"To the Great Patriot and Author from his sorrowing countrymen," ran the inscription of the first wreath placed on the breast of the dead hero of the Russian Revolutionary movement.

And truly he was great—Stepniak the modest, the simple, the loveable, whom many of our readers will have seen on Socialist platforms in Hyde Park and elsewhere. His acts, his writings, his noble career as a revolutionist proved him to be a man of quite exceptional force and ability.

Born in 1853, Stepniak's youth corresponded with that period of profound evolution in the moral life of a section of Russian society which is known in Europe by the name of Nihilism—a title of contempt thrown at those holders of new ideas by Tourgueneff, who at a period of political despondence (1861-1869) drew together the political reactionaries in Russia, and organised in his villa in Germany fêtes for the diplomatists. Tourgueneff was not the only one who attacked them: the generation of "fathers" were entirely against the youths; even the famous author and revolutionist, Herzen, used some expressions of dissent in speaking of the movement.

What, then, was preached, or rather what was endeavoured to be realised by the acts, by the entire life, private and public, of the "youth," that so scandalised the artists and the thinkers of the generation of "fathers"?

(Concluded on page 3.)

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NOTES.

"WHAT A FALLING-OFF WAS THERE!"

Patriotic Social Democracy is having a fine old time of it just now. We are not quite sure which is the Patriotism and which is the Social Democracy; but there they are, nicely blended, and giving the lie in broad day to International Socialism.

One feels inclined to recall W. S. Gilbert's parody of the Jingo spirit:

For he might have been a Rooshan,
A Frenchman or a Prooshan,
But he was a—Social Democrat.

We suggest it would not be a bad idea for the government to christen their next 15,000-ton battleship *Social Democracy*. Then the S. D. F. would favor an increased taxation in return for the bushels of votes they would hope to capture.

So down with the red flag and up with the Union Jack. And, suffering fellow-workers, you who have been taught by Social Democrats to expect better times in the future, you who have been told that Socialism knows no frontiers, that the world is your country and all nations your brothers, you who have been told that your real enemy is the man who enslaves you politically and economically—forget all this and remember at the next general election to vote for Social Democracy and an Imperialist policy, and your reward will be exceeding great.

FEMININE PHARISEES.

The Poplar Board of Guardians have been considering a curious example of petty cruelty inflicted by "virtuous ladies" on a so-called "fallen sister."

It seems that some members of the Ladies' Visiting Committee (all of them dames of the highest virtue, we may be sure) took upon themselves to lecture one of the patients in the lying-in ward on the crime of having been confined under such circumstances. The doctor reported that the poor girl had been thoroughly upset and made ill by their scandalous treatment of her, which we can quite believe.

The fact is, there is a great deal too much of this worrying of patients in hospitals by old maids and others who hang round the clergyman or the priest and do the dirty work of those reactionaries. We can conceive of nothing meaner than the conduct of these despicable Paul Prys who try to take advantage of sickness and suffering to force their crochets down the throats of others.

One is reminded of Hood's lines:—

Alas for the rarity
Of Christian charity!

And as to the above instance it can only be said that "man's inhumanity to man" is only equalled by the inhumanity of some "respectable" women towards their unfortunate sisters.

A USE FOR ANTHROPOMETRY.

Now that the Right Honorable Cecil Rhodes has drawn public attention upon himself we notice the Press are bringing his portrait before the world. Not a bad idea either; for a study of his physiognomy will give you a very fair notion of the type to which he belongs. Indeed, we venture to suggest that M. Bertillon's system should be applied to him as it should have been to the Balfours and others. Not that we wish to be vindictive; but it would be of great interest and value for future generations to know the kind of men who came to the top towards the end of this era of capitalism. We can only say, take them for all in all, we don't want to look upon their likes again.

ENGLISH ATROCITIES.

When are we to have a society for the prevention of cruelty to men and women. Not, we fear, till the Revolution. We have all read of the terrible sufferings and premature death to which workers in white lead factories are subject. The law was going to put a check on dangerous trades somehow, somewhere, someday; but while we have not read of a single suppression of one of these infamies, we, on the contrary, can often read of new forms of torture, called work, which bring death to the worker and profit to the master. Here is an instance: It seems that it "pays" some person or persons to employ others in the manufacture of "sheep-dip," which is compounded of caustic soda, sulphur and arsenic. It is quite impossible, with every precaution, to

prevent the deadly powder from penetrating the skin and clogging the eyes, the result being that constant employment brings death in from four to five years, so the doctors say. These and similar atrocities are being perpetrated, not by Kurds or the barbarous Turk, but in progressive London by people who probably go in their top hats and kid gloves to Christian churches and thank God they are not Mahomedans. At the same time, they denounce as fools and fanatics, those who proclaim that society could be better organised than it is to-day. We hope the workers will see by these facts that it is a matter of life and death to them that this vile system should end.

CHIVALRY AND BARBARISM.

We have read of the Jameson raid and we know what sort of stuff Rhodes and the Chartered Gang are made of. If there is such a thing as scum in human society, surely these are the scummiest of the scum. Such as they are, however, they are products of our civilisation and commercialism—the spawn of a social system gone astray into the deepest mire of corruption.

It is like a breath of pure air to turn from these gentry and their doings to read of the generous and humane conduct displayed by the Abyssinians. These uncivilised but honest and good-hearted beings, themselves the victims of the white man's greed and cruelty, have displayed towards the Italians a chivalric conduct which should put "civilised" nations to shame. We read: "They allowed Colonel Galliano and his force, which had been defending the fort of Makaleh and which had been reduced to great straits by want of water, to march out with all the honors of war, and even provided transport for it and its wounded to rejoin General Baratieri's headquarters. "Nobler conduct," says the *Chronicle*, "is not recorded anywhere towards invaders, and we may even doubt whether it would be imitated in European warfare." We more than doubt it; we are convinced it would not. European governments are not more magnanimous than of yore: they are more cowardly. Every year as progress and new ideas are sapping their foundations they are becoming more "diplomatic" more cunning and depraved. In one sense this is not for us to deplore, it is the sign of their approaching end.

WHERE THERE'S A WILL THERE'S A WAY.

The eleventh annual report of the Footpaths Preservation Society is of some interest from an Anarchist point of view, in so far as it proves distinctly that the efforts of the people to maintain the few common rights they have left by a voluntary association, in which individual initiative has also free play, produces the most encouraging results.

One point in particular is most instructive as well as amusing. This Society does not adopt the insane policy of appealing to the law; its motto is: Where you see a footpath, walk along it, and if the land-grabber chooses to bring an action, let him. It will cost him from £300 to £600 for each action, so he will probably think twice.

The initiative of the worker has a chance to display itself in this question, and we are glad to find he is not slow in asserting it. Dick Nunn, blacksmith, of Coggeshall, broke down a hedge placed across a path and, when summoned, fought his own case "and came off with flying colors." A Bucks laborer getting his legs wet in traversing a field of wheat, went home for his sickle and cut the path clear of wheat. The magistrate, remarking that "a path is a path," decided in his favor. All this is excellent; but what would be the result if all were to do as some foolish people have done—leave the Society because they think the Parish Councils will take the matter in hand? That would turn out a dismal business.

But we are quite sure the English worker will keep a sharp eye on the public footpath for many years to come; and as this Society has resisted 214 cases of encroachment during the past twelvemonths, there seems to be plenty of opportunity for him to keep himself active in this truly Anarchist and manly way of maintaining his rights.

OUR EXCHANGES.

We have received a number of new Anarchist journals, among which we are glad to notice the appearance of *La Unión Obrera*, a monthly journal of Anarchist Communism, at Barcelona (Lista de Correos, San Martin de Provencals), Spain. We also received, with great pleasure, No. 1 of the *Proletaren*, a Scandinavian journal of Anarchist Communism, fortnightly, they have a debating club in connection therewith, and J. Moller, Saxogade 61, 5, Kobenhavn, V., Denmark, will receive communications and exchanges. Another new Spanish journal, *La Luz*, is produced, like most of the South American Anarchist journals, by voluntary subscription, monthly, at Casilla de Correo 305, Montevideo. From Paris we have received *L'Action*, edited by Bernard Lazare at 24 Rue Chauchat, making the fifth Anarchist weekly with a circulation exceeding 10,000 (we hear that Sebastien Faure's paper has reached 100,000) issued there. *Die Freie Gesellschaft* is a Hebrew magazine of 32 pages, issued monthly; they complain that although they have sent exchange copies to the Anarchist press they have not received any in return,—address Harris Mindlin, 202 East Broadway, New York.

WHAT MAN CAN GET FROM THE LAND.

On Monday, February 24, a lecture will be delivered at the Working Lads' Institute, Whitechapel Road (near Aldgate Station), by P. Kropotkin; subject, "What man can obtain from the land," illustrated by oxy-hydrogen limelight. Doors open at 8, commence at 8.30.

Admission 3d. and 6d. A few reserved seats at 1/-

This lecture will be for the benefit of the *Workers' Friend and Freedom*, so we hope for a good attendance.

Stepniak—(Concluded).

Shocked by the misery, the ignorance and the helplessness of the Russian people, and seeking the causes of their awful social condition, the youth of the nobility and of the middle classes cried with one voice, and with truth: "The cause of all this is that we live the life of parasites at the cost of the people; this and the oppression and rapacity of the State. The taxes and imposts of the State, which exhausts the people, must be diminished; we must live by our own labor, share our goods with the poor and begin a simple, honest and fraternal life. But above all," said they, "we must live amongst the people, work with them, bring to them the light of science and the gospel of emancipation and of social solidarity."

Faithful to its convictions, forming a unique chapter in history, this youth gave to Russia hundreds of the best men and women, admirable for their courage, generosity, and devotion—sacrificing fortune, social position, liberty and even life itself. Perovskaia, Bardina, Figner, Zassoulitch, the sisters Soubbatin, Armfeld and many more women whose names history will know; men, too, like Myshkin, Ossinsky, Jeliaboff, Veimar and many others; all these won the admiration of the unfortunate peasantry, of wounded soldiers and even of their persecutors. It is not astonishing, then, that this heroic youth should have won the admiration of the honest and enlightened amongst the generation of "fathers."

Count Leo Tolstoi preaches to-day the same social morality. Tourgueneff became their ardent admirer, and it has been said that on his deathbed he exclaimed, "The Russian Terrorists are splendid fellows!"

Stepniak was the most perfect incarnation of this social evolution; the most heroic initiator and champion of this sublime struggle. For it was he, the young legendary propagandist, who was one of the first to appear in the factories and the villages, preaching social regeneration by distributing popular leaflets written by himself. And, again, when Russian despotism filled the prisons with the propagandists, it was again he, Stepniak, who took the initiative in organising those wonderful escapes from the Russian prisons. The escape of Kropotkin remains one of the most remarkable for the courage and address displayed in accomplishing it.

When the oppressors decided to exterminate all idea of humanity and commenced to inflict those unheard-of atrocities against all who read the Russian publications imported from abroad, again it was Stepniak, and friends as courageous as himself, who organised the free printing press at St. Petersburg, and it was he who issued the famous journal *Zemlia i Volia* (Land and Liberty).

Scores of detectives were commissioned to seek out these audacious rebels; Petersburg, Moscow and other towns were declared in a state of siege. Stepniak and his comrades continued their work.

Then enraged despotism inaugurated the wholesale deportations of the enlightened youth to Siberia without trial. The police, the mouchards, the gendarmes became the absolute masters of the honor, the liberty and even the life of each subject of the Czar. Social and intellectual life was crushed. Instruction, talent, the least feeling of conscience or duty in the citizen had become a crime; the most moderate of men began to grow uneasy about the future of the country under such a rule, proving to a well-informed generation that public opinion was affected. It was felt necessary to arrest this affirmation of the reaction, led and organised by the chief of the third section, by General Mezentzeff.

But how end this persecution? Who might possess the audacity to hurl defiance in the face of despotism? Well, this daring soul was again forthcoming; again the brave and courageous Stepniak. In his paper, *Land and Liberty*, he threw down the gage of battle: "If you do not cease your tortures and your executions, if you do not cease your bloody dragonnades you will force us, the apostles of solidarity, to whom human life is sacred, to take arms to protect the innocent and save the future of our country."

Far from ceasing, deportations and even executions were increasing. Russian society understood that the time for reasoning and for petitions was passed, that the supreme moment for action had arrived. For, cost what it may, these governmental atrocities must be stopped: the innocent must be saved. Public opinion, though terrorised and oppressed, endorsed the act of justice.* And the act was for the best.

In full daylight, in the centre of St. Petersburg, accompanied by his *aide de camp*, closely followed by his civil guard, this Russian *duc d'Alba* saw a young man approach him with a proud and determined air. Mezentzeff started; his *aide de camp* endeavoured to protect him, the guard ran to assist. . . . it was too late. The oppressor, more powerful than the Czar himself, expiated his crimes and cruelties. Oppressed society stood once more with head erect. The sublime young man has become the national hero. W. TCHERKESOV.

1895.—(Concluded)

It has become during the last ten years the prey of the gold-hunter and the merchant—worthy successors of the slave-dealer and the native cannibal despot. Yet, notwithstanding the unscrupulous use of all means to extort profits from this continent, the profits for capitalism are not so very great after all, if we except the South African diamond and gold-mining industry—giving rise to any number of mushroom millionaires. And even they, in fleeing the European dividend-hunters, by bringing about financial crises in Europe like the crisis of last autumn, do contribute to undermine capitalism by making it unsafe and a matter of blindfold speculation and chance. So

* The best proof that public opinion approved the act can be found in the acquittal by the jury of Mlle. Zassoulitch, who wounded another of the persecutors—General Trepoff.

Africa will in the end turn out a failure for capitalism though it will probably continue to absorb many emigrants until modern States like those of Australia, created under similar conditions forty years ago, are built up also there (in the British South), and with them the labor question will grow and face them as it faces the Australian capitalists of to-day.

A more important extension of capitalism may take place in Eastern Asia by the partial opening of China to foreign capitalism as a result of the late war with Japan. One of the chief principles of international morals among great States is: if one State steals something, all the others must steal something too; and so, after the Japanese treaty of peace with China, the European powers flock together like birds of prey over the carcass of China to take a part of it too, with an eagerness for booty which may yet lead to long squabbles among several of them, if not to great wars. Russia wants a piece off the north; France an extension from the south; Germany got some concessions of territory on the coast, etc.

Still, the joy of capitalists over this expected extension of their system is not a little mingled with the dread of achieving in the end just the reverse, namely, bringing the dangerous competition of Chinese and Japanese capitalism down upon their own countries. Japan, which first adopted the chief blessing of our European "civilisation," modern tools of murder of the most perfected type, guns, battleships, etc., is now introducing European and American machinery for domestic production on a large scale, which may soon grow to production for foreign trade; and with these products of modern machinery worked at coolies' wages in China and Japan, no country, save India perhaps, might be able to compete eventually. Thus, at the price of a few years of prosperity, capitalism is bound to be disappointed also in the far east.

The same rôle, though on a small scale, which China plays in the east, Turkey is forced to play in the west of Asia; also here, by the creation of semi-independent States, capitalism will for some time gain new fields, until, being locally established everywhere, its old form—that of the world's trade—will become superfluous and be shut out also there.

It happens that almost all problems of history should be rolled up in the year 1895. The South American continent, though exploited and misruled if ever a portion of the globe was, still remains an immense territory that is not yet brought under the acute and intensive sway of modern capitalism as developed in British and North American countries. The so-called Monroe doctrine means practically that the United States claim for themselves the monopoly of introducing intensive exploitation in the two American continents, to the exclusion of outside competition. The "spirited foreign policy" overstrained a little another of the fundamental rules of political morals: that big States may with impunity coerce and crush smaller ones; this has in the Venezuelan affair, where American capital invested in gold mines is concerned, led to a conflict with the supposed American monopoly.

If the acute form given to this question is not an election trick, playing out patriotism as the last refuge of American Democrats, it may some day show free America as the conscious or unconscious agent of Russian despotism. For if England was seriously engaged over this matter Russia would have a free hand in Asia, and—with its European agent, Republican France, and its satellites, a number of small European States and nationalities—in Europe too; and a period of Russian despotism dominating Europe and Asia, allied with American money-rule over the western continents would crush our hopes of the quick progress of freedom for a long time.

We will now consider the interior events in the various countries. A noteworthy event was the crushing of Liberalism between the millstones of Reaction and State Socialism. I do not consider these two tendencies as quite identical; for many workmen may loathe reaction, crave for freedom, and yet, under the influence of their belief in authority, expect to get it by means of State power! But, as obstacles thrown in the way of freedom and real progress, both are identical and their ordinary coincidence is not a matter of chance. This happened at the general elections in Germany, Belgium, partially in France and at this year's communal elections in Belgium; again, the Italian elections resulted in a large majority for Crispi, together with an increase of the Socialist vote; and a striking example near at home is the last general election with an immense Tory majority and, partly owing to the absence of the second ballot, no victories but a large aggregate of Socialist votes,—preceded a few months by the London County Council elections with similar results.

I think that if the Socialist labor movement were really to some extent born by the spirit of freedom (which to our regret is not the case), the result of elections would be (if free-minded people would vote at all) that many would vote for the Socialist candidates, while the more indifferent, half-hearted, yet interested masses in their rear would vote for the parties and candidates who, in words and promises, came nearest to State Socialists—advanced Radicals and the like. This is not the case;—they vote Conservative if they do not vote Socialist. This shows that no idea of freedom touched them in all the years of Socialist agitation; that Socialism as they conceive it is a matter of State support, and not a matter of the emancipation of mankind. This is shown also in trade union congresses, like the Cardiff Congress with its vote against the immigration of alien workers—an insult to the international solidarity of labor, the keynote of so many declamations but of so few practical actions. Some years ago, Lafargue, the old member of the International, laid a bill before the French parliament, proposing the taxation of foreign workers in France, and other instances of a growing narrowness in views could be given here. The mass of work left to Anarchists to do is continually extending; one after the other of the fundamental notions of Socialism is thrown over by the political leaders or narrow-minded trade-unionists (caring but for their own trade) who predominate in the labor movement of to-day;—and we did not even mention yet the particularly infamous work of priests and parsons invading this movement.

In France we have the curious spectacle to-day of a ministry upheld on most occasions by the Socialist votes in the Chamber (about 50 votes). This ministry, the head of which bears the well-merited name Bourgeois, achieves the trick of being supported in semi-progressive measures by the Socialist votes against the reactionists, and in reactionary measures by the reactionary votes against the Socialists. It illustrates wonderfully the docility and amenability of Socialist politicians to be the fifth wheel in the State carriage.

Whilst the political Socialists of the *Petite République* and the Guesdists (Marxists), an army of leaders only, are entirely engaged at this play of supporting this double-faced ministry, we believe that the French workers are, if not lending an open ear to Anarchists, much more interested in the so-called Allemanist movement of communalist Socialists,—Socialists of a more federalist and communalist type, advocating the general strike and the economic struggle before all; but, at the same time, electioneering and sitting

in parliament, etc., as the others do! However, those of them who are consequent thinkers and not ambitious may strengthen our own ranks someday.

On the German Socialist party this paper has but recently spoken at length (see No. 99). Since then the persecutions of Socialists at the instigation of William II. are increasing; so that almost every remark made by a Socialist may be construed into the offence of lèse majesté; for, by the sentence on Liebknecht at Breslau (four months), it was established by the court that, even if the remarks (which he had made) were not in themselves an offence, he ought to have thought that somebody MIGHT INTERPRET them in the sense of an offence and, hence, ought not to have made them at all. After this, everything is possible; the Council and other administrative bodies of the Socialist party were dissolved and their papers seized. Insults on this party by the chancellor and ministers are daily events, lackeys of their master as they are. The consequence is the cessation of polemics inside the party on the agrarian and other questions; persecutions have once more cemented it together.

In the east of Europe little change can be noted. Reaction parades unbroken in Russia and Austria, Italy and Spain. Russia bears up with her new autocrat, an impudent and malignant young despot; Austria is blessed with the governor of Galicia, called "the man with the iron hand," as prime minister to transplant Galician ways (polnische Wirthschaft) into Austria; the Social Democrats, as they have done since time immemorial, are waiting for the suffrage bill which shall bring their leaders into parliament. In Italy Crispi, the bank thief, who in 1894 dealt out 4,000 years' imprisonment to the rebels and poor of Sicily and Massa Carrara, still rules, impudent as ever; and Spain, where the financial corruption of the Madrid municipality has lately been shown up, is busy trying to suppress the Cuban insurrection; Martinez Campos, the Monk of the Spanish Republic and the torturer of our Spanish comrades, is of course entrusted with this congenial work. A small touch of rose-colour in this gloomy picture is the rejection of the bill for centralising and strengthening militarism in Switzerland by the popular vote (referendum); but "one swallow does not make a summer," as a German proverb says.

We are not discouraged by the result of our survey of the year 1895; for we see that authority, where it is triumphant, takes such hideous forms—even where it wishes to captivate the people, like the Bourgeois ministry with Socialist support, which upholds the infamous anti-Anarchist laws,—that it will win no new adherents. The old forces are brought forward, one year more, another year less, sometimes with new faces and titles yet not concealing their shabbiness and decay; that is all.

The conviction of the greatness of the work before us strengthens our efforts, and with good conscience and hopes we enter the year 1896.

Long live Anarchy!

X.Y.Z.

CORRESPONDENCE.

DEAR COMRADES,

The Carmaux Strike, as a strike, is, as all the world knows, at an end. Réséguier, the employer, has succeeded in securing the services of the men he required, and has rejected 380, to whom he objects and who are still unemployed.

On the other hand, he has not succeeded in crushing their Union, which was his object in forcing the strike, while it (the strike) has been the means of calling forth an enthusiastic manifestation of solidarity on the part of all the Socialists of France. That in itself is a gain in the development of Socialism, but that is not all. Where the politicians have failed, the non-political revolutionary Socialists have come not merely, as we trust, to the rescue of the Carmaux glass-blowers, but to effect a far grander, because more far-reaching purpose.

The French trade unions are composed of real Revolutionary Socialists and they would not support a mere co-operative glassworks. They are opposed to political influence and dictation, and they have learned the futility, for Socialist ends, of merely co-operative concerns. They have, however, set themselves the arduous task of erecting a Workingmen's Glassworks, which is to belong to the whole body of French Socialist workmen, under the direction of a committee of 45 members of various unions, and the profits of which are to go to the benefit of the Socialist propaganda on purely economic lines.

Never yet has such a Communist effort, on so large a scale, been attempted in the Socialist movement. Such an example, too, when once successfully carried out, will certainly be followed, and will strike a death-blow at all political Socialism.

There are two methods adopted for collecting the necessary capital: by the sale of tickets at 2d. each (which give the right to all who buy them to attend all meetings and entertainments free, which may be held on behalf of the factory), and by lottery subscriptions of articles to be drawn for on 30th June next at Paris, or of money towards such articles.

The tickets at 2d. are sent post free in packets of 50. Could not our propagandists speak and collect in their meetings towards buying the tickets and give entertainments to which the said tickets would give admission? In short, could not our English comrades immediately start a movement of assistance and, at the same time, of propaganda? I trust they will do so, and do it speedily.

Fraternally yours,

A. HENRY.

DEAR COMRADES,

The starting of a Propaganda Fund, mentioned in last month's *Freedom*, is a step, and a good step in my opinion, in the right direction.

For my part, I should like to offer a few suggestions. First, that a committee be formed of one or more comrades from each of our three journals—*Freedom*, *Liberty* and *The Torch*,—these being most interested in the production of propagandist literature, who shall see to it that all monies forwarded be acknowledged in the three journals; the object of the fund to be the providing of literature for free distribution. There are hundreds of comrades throughout London and the Provinces who are, owing to various reasons, unable to take an active part in the propaganda, but who would be only too willing to help the movement by the distribution of literature among their workmates, at public meetings, etc., and who are totally unable to pay the cost and carriage of this literature themselves. A certain Christian Evidence paper, published in London, has in operation a somewhat similar scheme, by means of which its owners provide anyone willing to undertake the distribution of their literature with a parcel of leaflets, pamphlets and papers, to the value of 10s.

I think that if our Propaganda Fund was administered in this way (and not for sending lecturers to the Provinces, as I think the Provincial groups and not the London groups ought to see to that, and, besides, we certainly cannot spare any of the few London speakers that we have) comrades would find the necessary funds very quickly. I would suggest that the three papers start a joint Propaganda Fund for this purpose; that, when sufficient funds are in hand, parcels of 5s. worth of leaflets, pamphlets and the current issue of the various journals be sent to those comrades throughout the country who are willing to distribute same, and in the order in which they are received; receivers of a parcel to pay

carriage themselves. The pamphlets and journals, I would suggest, should be stamped "Gratis," so as not to be used to make profit with.

This would make our papers known among people who have never heard of them before, and would be the means of sowing the seeds which our various journals would afterwards reap in a good circulation. We must not forget that the success of such papers as the *Irish World*, and other advanced papers both in Ireland and America, was brought about by a systematic free distribution in the outset of their careers.

The result of such a scheme would certainly be nothing but good to the propaganda; for, in my opinion, more converts are made by our literature, especially by our pamphlets, than by our lecturers. I would suggest, further, that collection sheets be printed for this object, and that one or more comrades in each district throughout London and the Provinces be provided with one. There are hundreds of comrades and sympathisers who, for the asking, will certainly contribute to such an object. I, for one, will undertake to look after South London comrades, and know plenty who will contribute regularly every week. No doubt there are numbers of other comrades ready to do the same; above all, we want as many as possible weekly contributors, no matter if the amount be but a penny.

I trust you will think this over and, if you agree with it, endeavour to get the committee in working order so that no time may be lost.—W. HART.

THE PROPAGANDA.

REPORTS.

INTERNATIONAL SOCIALIST WORKERS & TRADE UNION CONGRESS, Anarchist Committee.

The correspondence initiated by the above Committee is now evoking a response from the provincial and foreign Anarchists, but space will not permit of any details this month.

In order to raise funds for printing and hall-hiring expenses a concert will be given on Wednesday, February 19, at Grafton Rooms, Grafton Street, Tottenham Court Road. A gigantic program is being prepared, and this concert is going to be the event of the season. Tickets, 3d. each, can be obtained from the secretary J. Tochetti, Carmagnole House, Hammersmith; the treasurer W. Wess, 42 Cressy Houses, Cressy Street, Stepney; or the assistant-secretary T. Reece, 2 Mabledon Place, Euston Road, W.C.

A mass meeting will be held at the Imperial Assembly Rooms, Redman's Row, Jubilee Street, Mile End, on Monday, March 2, for the purpose of protesting against the exclusion of Anarchists and non-political Socialists from the International Congress. A great indoor demonstration, with the same object, will be held early in April.

The first list of contributions and balance sheet to date will be presented next month.

T. REECE, assistant secretary.

Aberdeen.—Although the Aberdeen Group has not sent any report of their propaganda for some time, they have not been inactive, nor has their work been attended by lack of success. In truth, the movement in this far northern town never was more energetic and never was more successful. Anarchism is not only maintaining its ground, but is rapidly making substantial headway.

All the summer largely attended meetings were held in Castle Street regularly every Sunday night, at which comrades G. Fraser, H. H. Duncan and E. Shepherd spoke and were well received, opposition seldom being given. At the election time, the Right Hon. J. Bryce, M.P. for South Aberdeen, came to address his constituents; the group seized the opportunity to interview the Right Hon. gentleman enant the case of our Walsall comrades. A prolonged debate on Anarchism and outrages took place between Mr. Bryce and the Rev. Alexander Webster and other members of the deputation, which was fully reported in the papers and created quite a sensation in the town. Mr. Bryce promised to bring the matter before the Home Secretary, and we left his presence satisfied that he would do nothing of the kind, but that we had done a first class day's work for the Cause.

In October we gave up our open-air meetings in Castle Street as usual and went in for lectures in the Oddfellows' Hall, which have been sustained up till the present time without any outside aid whatever. Lectures have been delivered by comrades Archibald (a new and valuable acquisition to the movement), Duncan, Shepherd and the Rev. Alexander Webster, whilst comrades Duncan and Shepherd have debated with Mr. Harkis of the Secular Society. The last Sunday of each month we devote to a concert, which is without exception extraordinarily well attended; our hall, capable of holding 450 persons, generally being packed. Aberdeen is considered to be populated by the most religiously inclined people in the country, yet it is a strange fact that in no other town in the whole kingdom is there such an affair as a regular series of secular Sunday evening concerts, given by Socialists, Secularists or Anarchists, publicly advertised and largely attended. The following, I think, should tempt comrades in the English towns which are not so dosed with religious cant as Aberdeen to go in for at least an occasional concert.

On Sunday, Jan. 26th, we gave a Burns' Concert; we confidently expected large audience, but we were astounded to find that our hall was packed, crammed in every nook; every available form, table and chair being occupied, seats were borrowed from the other rooms, but all we could get were miserably insufficient for the numbers who stood in the passages, etc.; the doors at last had to be closed and great numbers we turned away unable to gain admission; the hall-keeper had never in his experience seen such a number of people in the hall. A first class program of songs by the choir, trios, solos and recitations was gone through to the evident satisfaction of the audience whose quiet attention stamped them as an intelligent body indeed who had come not only to be amused but to express sympathy with our movement. We have to thank Messrs. R. Taylor and J. Taylor for their excellent recitations, and Mr. Greig, comrades Duncan, G. and A. Fraser and Mrs. Shepherd for their admirable rendering of Burns' songs. Our choir, although only two months in training, made a really creditable appearance. Other groups may not be so blessed as we by a profusion of singers and elocutionists, yet in view of the fact that, although Aberdeen is so highly charged with religious cant, enormous crowds come to hear an Anarchist Sunday Concert, surely by an effort other groups could manage to present a passable program which would be sure to draw in the less religious towns, and would benefit the movement by bringing a greater number of people in touch with our ideas, as well as bringing a welcome addition to the finances of the groups.

Anarchism has found congenial soil in the North of Scotland; it has taken deep root, and will continue to grow more powerful and influential as every year goes by.

EGLAN SHEPHERD.

NOTICES

DEPTFORD ANARCHIST GROUP—Lectures every Sunday at 8, in Smith's Coffee Tavern, Deptford Bridge, near Broadway; admission free; discussion invited. Comrades are requested to turn up on the Broadway on Sundays at 6.30 to witness the behaviour of a Christian preacher and a hireling crew who come to demonstrate their brotherly love of us.

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