

Freedom

A JOURNAL OF ANARCHIST COMMUNISM

Vol. XIV.—No. 145.

JANUARY—FEBRUARY, 1900.

MONTHLY; ONE PENNY.

1899.

THE INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS OF 1900 at Paris.

Poor indeed, is the harvest that the friends of progress in England will gather from the work of the past year. And this result is not to be accounted for simply by the fact that trade has been good and the workers indifferent and apathetic, though many will preach in this vein and try to excuse their own neglect of the people's cause by sneering at the masses as "mostly fools." Fools there are, enough and to spare; but we count those the greatest who, in their self-satisfied superiority, have withdrawn themselves from the revolutionary movement, discarded revolutionary ideas and have either worked on reactionary lines or have thought it just as well to let things take their course. Ignoring the dark plots, which the capitalists have been weaving for the past seven or eight years, they find themselves in the midst of a criminal war unspeakable in its initiation and its aims, and, after that, face to face with conscription.

However, we must not forget that 1899 has given us the Dreyfus case with all the conclusions that can be drawn from it, and, although this fact may not save us from conscription here in England, it is well that the people should have seen how militarism can be used as the instrument of the vilest reactionaries, how it adopts the methods of the blackest rascality to achieve its ends. For us, at least, the brightest page in the history of the past year is the work done by our Anarchist friends in France, not in the cause of Dreyfus alone, but in the cause of truth and justice.

In Spain the unrest has found no vent and has given no sign of taking a definitive shape. Italy also remains quiet but we know that the Italian people are growing more and more discontented under their burdens of taxation and look only for a revolution to bring them relief.

Our German comrades carry on an effective propaganda under difficulties of which we in England have no conception. In the face of the bitterest persecution, confiscation and imprisonment they have struggled on during the past year, and they may rest assured that some at least of the more advanced minds in the Socialist movement will gradually assimilate Anarchist ideas.

The movement in the United States goes quietly on, making at least as much proportionate progress as other Socialist and labor movements. That brave little paper, *Free Society*, is doing splendid work, and by its issue of pamphlets is greatly increasing its utility in educating the American workers. We have had the great satisfaction and pleasure of welcoming here one of the staunchest workers in that group—Mary Isaak.

We cannot close this brief survey of the year without referring to the impetus given to the movement in London by the visit of our brave and energetic friend Emma Goldman. To have come here at such times as those we are passing through now, to have drawn large audiences to her lectures, to have aroused some of the most interesting discussions that have been heard for many a year and to have replied most effectively thereto, gives some idea of what she has accomplished. But when it is remembered that all this has been done while the English public has been in a "patriotic" frenzy, the English climate has been in its worst humor and herself in poor health, we shall better estimate the courage and endurance necessary to have succeeded in the work.

Finally, we have for ourselves to face the year which is before us undeterred by any failures and disappointments in the past.

The coming year will probably be a most eventful one, and it is for us to see that no opportunity is lost of pushing our ideas to the front. The combat will be a hard one, no doubt, we being so few; but does not history prove that the battles for freedom have mostly been fought by the few?

"Of the three hundred grant but three
To form a new Thermopylæ."

So sang Byron, who fought so nobly for Greece. This also must be our cry through the storm of reaction that is raging to-day.

The time has arrived when it is necessary, in accordance with the decisions of the Congresses of Trades' Unions and Labour Exchanges held at Rennes in September 1898, to prepare the four Congresses which this year will assemble at Paris the workers of all countries. We have no need to impress upon you the importance of these Congresses; not only should they contribute to the progress of those aspirations towards a better economic state which agitate the wage-slaves of all conditions, but also they should elevate the discussion of these questions to the high level of the scientific lessons which result from the exhibition of the works of this century.

It must not be forgotten, indeed, that in order to supplant capitalism, it is necessary that we should be continually armed against the ever new resources at its disposition.

For example: does it put into exploitation a hitherto unknown machine? We should be in a position to know at once the economic effect of that machine and be able to take steps to counteract the evil influence which it tends to exercise in the hands of its possessor upon the conditions of our existence.

It is with that intention, we are sure, that the workers will come to Paris next year, and when they have realized the improvements as yet unknown to them which have been brought about in the industry or the agriculture of this or that country, when they have had a general view over the economic state of the world, at the dawn of the XXth century, they will be in a position to solve the the questions and take such resolutions as are called for by the urgent need of ameliorating their life.

We invite therefore the labour organisations of all countries to inform us of the questions which they desire to see placed on the Agenda paper of the two international Congresses:

I.—International Trades Union Congress, comprising all organisations, without distinction of form: Trades' Unions, Syndicates, Labour Federations, Cartells and Labour Exchanges.

PROPOSITIONS OF THE FEDERAL COUNCIL:

1. The general strike: its practical organisation, its probability and its consequences;
2. Creation of an International Secretariat of Labor.
3. Hours of labour; wages; unemployed and the means of dealing with them; female and child labor.
4. The international application of the methods for intervening with effect in the great struggles between capital and labor (English engineers' strike; Danish lock-out, etc.).
5. Co-operation for production and for consumption.
6. Comparative report of labour tribunals.
7. Reports and communications upon the results obtained in relation to questions treated in previous congresses, the boycott, trade union labels, weekly day of rest, etc.

II. Congress of Labor Exchanges, Cartells, Trades Councils, local or divisional Federations of different Trade Unions not occupied in the same industries.

PROPOSITIONS OF THE FEDERAL COUNCIL OF THE FRENCH LABOR EXCHANGES:

1. The various methods of finding employment. Should labor organisations, in finding employment, seek, accept or refuse the assistance of municipal, county or provincial authorities?
2. Technical education (theoretical and practical): its result, from the triple point of view of raising wages, of increasing the technical value and the social importance of the workmen who have benefited by it. Reports upon libraries and museums founded by trades unions; efforts made to complete technical instruction by general education.
3. Assistance of the unemployed; journey money, reciprocity of journey money between the workmen of all countries who have fulfilled their trade union obligations.
4. Co-operation; reforms to be made in co-operative societies founded by labor organisations or under their auspices; replacing of co-operation for production for co-operative workshops depending upon co-operative distributing societies, application in these workshops of the system of work known as a *chips* (commandite égalitaire) in use among compositors; suppression of all difference of treatment between members and assistants.
5. Reports on the propaganda amongst peasants and amongst seafarers (sailors, fishermen, and portworkmen or dockers).
6. Is there need to found an international Federation, represented by a statistical Bureau, which will occupy itself with the development of labor organisations?

So far as concerns the Eleventh National (French) Trade Union Congress (the Fifth of the Confederation) and the Eighth Congress of Labor Exchanges, only French organisations are invited to prepare the Agenda paper. They should send us their propositions along with those relating to the International Congress, and that as soon as possible.

GERMAN SOCIAL DEMOCRACY & E. BERNSTEIN.

Bernstein's particular standpoint was already explained in a letter addressed by him to last year's Congress, held at Stuttgart (October 1898); but the discussion assumed no great proportions. An article by F. Domela Nieuwenhuis on this Congress in *L'Humanité Nouvelle* (Paris, April 10, 1899) is well worth reading. Early in 1899 Bernstein published his book, and since that time a brisk discussion has been going on, by articles and pamphlets; the hardest opposition came from Polish and Russian Social Democrats, "Parvus," Miss Luxemburg, Plekhanov. Meanwhile, the principal "father of the church" of Marxism, Karl Kautsky, was hard at work until a few weeks before the Hanover Congress, when he published an elaborate refutation of Bernstein (*Bernstein and the Social Democratic Program*, in German, Stuttgart, VIII., 195 pp.) Kautsky follows Bernstein step by step, and demolishes to his satisfaction almost every assertion of Bernstein, word by word.

He deals minutely with Bernstein's repudiation of the dogma of the concentration of capital, and he—and Bebel at the Congress—quotes many statistics in favor of the old dogma. I confess for myself that this question, so far as *actual proof by statistics* is concerned, remains open to me. Statistics are unsatisfactory proof in many serious questions: we are often too prone to accept those favorable to our hypothesis without the fullest critical examination and closest inspection, reasoning away the importance only of those which contradict our argument. This criticism and weighing of statistics is done with great skill by Kautsky and Bebel; but might, no doubt, be overturned by a still closer examination on the part of Bernstein. For the distance between statistics and real life is enormous, and permits ever so many possibilities of plausible explanation. The result is often, as in this case, satisfactory only to the investigator himself.

The importance of this question for the prospect of revolution seems to me to be overrated. To say that if the number of capitalists increases the revolution will never come, seems to me as absurd as to expect the automatic downfall of the present system by the extinction of individual capitalists as a consequence of the concentration of capital. What really matters is not the number of capitalists, but that of persons—comprising the vast numbers of overseers, foremen, managers, etc.—whose interests, be it only in appearance even, are divided from those of the workers. I believe that as long as one single capitalist exists he will try, by the offer of a superior remuneration, to divide his workers into two classes and to profit by their discord. So a struggle will have to be gone through in any case, be the number of actual possessors of wealth large or small. Capitalism is as ripe for destruction today as it ever was and ever will be, if only the workers themselves felt disposed to attack it seriously.

The possibility of this serious attack depends on the spread of ideas and on the revolutionary spirit. This begins to be recognised, and Bernstein's criticism of the *Materialist Conception of History* (following upon that of W. Tcherkesov) is a symptom of the growing lack of confidence in purely economic development as a motive power of revolution. Such criticism is, by the way, already met with in some of the writings of Michael Bakounine, who, whilst accepting Marx's theory to a large extent, yet says, speaking for instance of religions: "I think that all religions were but the posterior sanction of facts already accomplished. Once established as systems by human conscience and as official institutions of society religions become, undoubtedly, themselves the cause of new facts and of new political and social relations which, in the course of their further development, in the end modify and often even destroy the original religion or transform it into another religion which—whilst being apparently the negation of the preceding one—is in reality, at least in this negative way, nearly always its product" (1868). And again, writing in 1872: "He (Marx) does not take into consideration the other elements of history, such as the evident reaction of political, legal and religious institutions upon the economic situation,"... (fully printed in *La Société Nouvelle*, July 1894, pp. 24-5; s. *Life of Bakounine*, note 2421).

Kautsky's book, then, and Bebel's six hour speech were the most serious weapons used to defend the old Marxist position. Bebel strained every nerve that Marxism might die game, and may often have scored against Bernstein, which does not imply, however, that he was right if viewed from a broader, libertarian standpoint.

He affirmed the progressive evolution of the party as shown by the rejection of long cherished dogmas in the course of time, such as: the iron law of wages, labor the source of all wealth, all other parties form a compact mass of reactionists, and the demand for State-supported co-operative associations. What Bernstein put forward had been said by bourgeois and also by Socialist writers for many years. Marx himself, he maintains, was aware of the numerical growth of capitalists side by side with the concentration witnessed in actual industrial production; "with the accumulation of capital the number of capitalists more or less increases," are Marx's words (*Capital*, vol. I.). Incidentally, Bebel mentions the growing necessity for intensive cultivation in agriculture (*Protokoll*, p. 104). The theory of increasing misery does not, according to Marx, exclude the growth of rebellious spirit, of combinations and organisation among the workers by which economic concessions are forced from the bourgeoisie. Bebel agrees with Bernstein that the class struggle proceeds in milder forms (a rather optimistic view in the presence of massacres of strikers, immense lockouts, exceptional laws, etc.), but maintains that class contrasts become sharper and are more acutely felt. He considers

the working classes to be fully prepared to take over productive industry themselves, and rejects Bernstein's deprecatory and discouraging remarks to the contrary. "A fighting party, he said, wants to win and for this it requires enthusiasm, the spirit of sacrifice and of fight; these are taken away if artificial stress is laid on difficulties on all hands, if we are constantly told: 'be cautious; do behave nicely; be good children in order not to frighten the dear middle classes,' etc. This sounds right enough, and Bebel, being in good strain, sweeps away the "ethical" arguments against expropriation, ending with words: "so we stand by expropriation; this we won't give up" (storms of applause).

But, as usual, he instantly turns round and proceeds: "We need not use force."... "It is not the revolutionists who bring about revolutions, but this is always done by the reactionists" (great applause), etc. This double-faced talking is the essence of German Social Democratic propaganda, and Bebel emphasises this in saying later on: "I repeat that we are essentially a revolutionary party. This does not mean that we should reject reforms when we can get them. This is proved by our program: *not in vain this program contains a principal and a practical part*" (Hear, hear!), *Prot.* p. 125. And Dr. David (Bernstein's champion) said shortly after: "By what means do we try to stir up the masses at election time? Quite instinctively, without renouncing Socialist principles, we are led to insist mainly on practical, familiar, palpable advantages." This speaker considers the shortening of the hours of labor as "expropriation" because it deprives the capitalist of the right to make use of his machinery for profit after certain hours; upon which Mrs. Zetkin ironically declared the muzzling of dogs to be Socialism also in the Davidian sense, because it reduced the rights of property. I mention these examples to show the continuous juggling with words, the misuse of "revolution," "expropriation," etc., for quite indifferent or reactionary measures. The *principal* and the *practical* part of the program, excluding each other to every friend of logic, present ample opportunities for such tricks.

Bebel proposed a lengthy resolution, declaring that no change in principles or tactics was necessary, expressing platonic sympathy with Co-operation and *admitting the principle of temporary alliances with bourgeois parties for electioneering purposes* to obtain an extension of political rights and social reforms.

A long debate followed. Dr. David, of Mayence, stood up for Bernstein; Liebknecht was hardest against him, and many others brought their little bundle of wood to enlarge the heretic's stake. But there was, after all, little spirit in these attacks; most seemed impelled by an uneasy conscience to explain painfully that things were not quite so bad with them (in the matter of retrograde tactics) as Bernstein had depicted, and cheered each other up in this way.

This went on in a dull way until the real masters of the party, the cynics Vollmar and Auer, two Bavarians, considered that their turn had come. Vollmar is the chief of the Bavarian Socialists, the recent allies of the Clerical party, and Auer is the quasi permanent secretary of the Berlin executive of the party, a man who is of decisive influence in so many of the personal and financial questions that affect the hundreds of editors, printers, party officials, etc., all over the north of Germany. Where Auer's power ends, that of Vollmar, the southern leader begins; and *vice versa*. These two men are unscrupulous politicians who care not two straws for principles nor the idols mentioned by tradition or prestige. When Auer, dragging in private conversations, ridiculed Bebel's prophecies, Bebel retaliated by revealing the dreadful fact that Auer had called Marx and Engels "popes" in private conversation also, and in his speech at the Congress Auer spoke of the (Marxist) "fathers of the church." He also said: "I cannot get on with the dialectical method and the way all these things are described; black there becomes white and white becomes black, and in a higher sphere a grey mixture results from them which leaves you in blank amazement."... "I am no Marxist," he had said before, "in the sense in which the Marxist fathers of the church have developed that thing up till now, those fathers of the church to which Bernstein belonged for all these years." "But," he said, later on, "this is what I am: I am an enthusiastic adherent of the doctrines of Marx and Engels as far as my intellect could grasp them."

Vollmar sneered at the customary attacks against the reactionary wing of the party: himself, Auer, Schippel, W. Heine, Bernstein. "The stake was already prepared; but the matches would not catch fire, and force was lacking to throw them on the stake." "Year by year I am placed on the proscribed list; but up till now this has been good for my health. I am not at all complaining." Thus spoke the man who, last year, said that the Paris workers of the time of the Commune would have done better by going to sleep than by proclaiming the Commune of Paris! He concluded by scarcely veiled threats against the sticklers for dogmas, those who insist on adherence to principles (*Protokoll*, p. 216).

These two men behaved at the congress like Brennus did at Rome: *Vae victis!* Auer, who sports rough language, said that he had written to Bernstein: "Dear Ned, you are an ass; for such things [as are expressed in Bernstein's book] are not said but done," (p. 208) meaning: be as reactionary as you like in practice, only keep up appearances in public utterances.

And he played out the trump up his sleeve when he concluded his speech with an extract from a letter of Bernstein's—using more polite language in return—saying: "Dear friend Auer, with the usual necessary grain of salt I shall vote for Bebel's resolution."

Under these circumstances Bebel's resolution, intended to smash up Bernstein for ever, was voted by 205 against 34 on the third clause, admitting *alliances* with bourgeois parties, and by 216 against 21 (vote on the entire test). The minority opposing the third clause mainly hailed from Berlin and surrounding districts.

So the affair ended, to use a German expression, like the *Hornberger Schiessen*, or, to use a parallel, like the French Socialist Congress held at Paris in December, 1899, to decide on Millerand's participation in a French Ministry. One resolution, voted by some 800 against 600, repudiated the participation of Socialists in bourgeois Ministries; and another resolution, voted by the great majority of the Congress, admitted this participation under *exceptional* circumstances, which will, of course, always exist in the minds of Ministerial candidates! So "the principle" was reaffirmed by a platonic resolution; at the same time, the actual conduct of the offenders against "the principle," Bernstein and Millerand, remains unchallenged.

What is the meaning of such votes—with which the accused himself heartily concurred, as Bernstein did and Millerand might have done? Confining myself in my further remarks to the German case, my opinion—based, not on a knowledge of what may have occurred behind the scenes, but on a general observation of the party for some years past—is about as follows:

"Bernsteinism," in the sense of paltry reform work, electioneering alliances and the horror of revolutionary action, is practised all along in the German movement since its origin. Liebknecht and others insulted nearly every revolutionist; Bebel advocated a Russian war; Schippel voted for the new guns; Vollmar would have the Paris Communards sent to sleep and helped the Clerical party into power in Bavaria, by an electoral alliance, etc. *The more all this is done, however, the less people like it talked about*; and so Bernstein—after praising the revolutionary energy of the party for 25 years and being very popular—became the most hated man in the party when he finally said: We are all doing reformers' work; let us, then, give up revolutionary language and call ourselves what we indeed are: *a party of Democratic reformers*. The poor man did not know that in Social Democratic politics, as in modern society, the more a thing is true the less it must be mentioned! So he blurted out the open secret, hitherto revealed only by Anarchists, with delightful naïveté.

Once said it could not be unsaid; some were quick to make the best of it, and others will follow. I mean that, with the best personal intention, no doubt, he inevitably became the *apologist of reactionary Socialism* which has all along existed and prompted his own action. He furnished a textbook to the reactionists in his party, who, henceforward, need no longer be ashamed (on public occasions) of their acts, but can with a bold front refer their critics, the old idealists, to Bernstein. There is little power for good and considerable power for evil in his book; for the party is by its composition, constitution and principles unable to carry out to any extent the more sensible *economic* propositions of Bernstein (Co-operation, etc.) but it may sink far deeper in the mud of *politics, Imperialism, etc.*, proposed by Bernstein. It cost him nothing to accept the uncolored and quite formal resolution, evidently the only one which this Congress would have accepted without the danger of a split, the dread of many, coming much nearer. For it is no longer *dared* to proclaim independent political action or to reject bourgeois alliances.

The same renunciation of independent political action was the outcome of the Paris Congress, the largest and most representative of all sections of Parliamentary Socialists held in France (Dec. 1899).

This, then, means the failure of *independent political action* by the State Socialist parties of France and Germany. And the step they take in consequence of this is not a step forward out of the dirt of politics, but a step backward right into the bourgeois camp—electioneering alliances in Germany, participation in Galliffet's Ministry in France.

This shows that these parties, *as such*, have no fresh spirit in them, are rotten and doomed.

Marxism, the principal embodiment of these tactics, falls to pieces everywhere, and the withered forms of its last believers—Liebknecht, Bebel, Kautsky and a few others—look almost pathetic as the sun sets on them and their time is over. The rest, the bulk of the party, the labor politicians become bourgeois politicians again. This decay is inevitable and fatal; and Bernstein, the apologist of Social Democratic degeneration, is the merest episode in this evolution.

A hopeful sign is that economic movements, trade unionism and co-operation, here and there free themselves from their connection with Socialist politics, a connection which on the continent is closer even than here. But much remains to be done.

Our own conviction of Anarchism can but be strengthened by these spectacles, and our field of action becomes larger as many cannot but be disillusioned in the end by this evolution backward. Our old criticism of Social Democratic principles and tactics is fully justified by these events. We wish only that our propaganda would receive so much direct support as it is indirectly supported by this series of facts and by so many other facts we see when looking around as the outcome of authority—the root of all misery! N.

Dec. 9, 1899.

"Free Society." An Exponent of Anarchist-Communism, 236 Clinton Pk., San Francisco, Cal. U.S.A.
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SOME NORTHERN NOTES.

Propaganda continues to be slack everywhere in the north of England, unless indeed, we except Leeds. The only work to be heard of lately from Manchester has been a lecture by P. J. Kelly to the South Salford S. D. F. on Anarchism and Organisation. Barton has been having good crowds to hear him in Sheffield, and although on one occasion they were very rowdy in consequence of his anti-Jingo utterances, he has succeeded in creating a good impression.

The Leeds group have been keeping the meetings up very regularly and although suffering from that common complaint—lack of speakers—have maintained the interest of the crowd. On October 1, they held a mass demonstration against War which turned out to be the most successful and orderly meeting held in this part of the country on that matter. This is certainly a plume in the group's hat. The Liberal meetings, held all over the place and at great expense, have been without exception most miserable fiascos; but our meeting, with the Anarchist as opposed to Capitalist and Imperialist spirit put plainly, enthused the workers, for there was a concrete exposition of a social state based upon their interests, compared with a condition of things based upon their misery and degradation. Liberal hypocrisy might be howled down, and Tory bluntness cheered for on the spur of the moment, but in their calm and dispassionate mood they *knew* that we were right. Out of a crowd of about 2,000 folk only 16 voted against the resolution. This meeting has done us a lot of good in the town and since our meetings have been well attended and enthusiastic. The group's annual ball was held on Nov. 19, and was a success in more senses than one. Profit was made which will provide the sinews for a good winter's work.

Thornhill Lees, a manufacturing and colliery village near Dewsbury, noted for its colliery explosions and for the notorious "Oliver" conspiracy under the despicable Castlereagh regime, was invaded for the first time by Anarchism on Sunday the 13th October. MacQueen spoke on Communism and Anarchism. The ideas were exceptionally well received and some very intelligent discussion elicited. The chairman, who was a Yankee, gave some interesting information about Emma Goldman, whose fame has thus travelled before her.

Councillor Fred Brocklehurst has been lecturing to the Moss side (Manchester) Socialist Society upon "Individualism". He confined his remarks mainly to a criticism of Individualist and Communist Anarchism. It certainly is a sign of the times when these form important enough subjects for politicians to talk about and I suppose we have to be grateful. But, unfortunately, Brocklehurst has been drawing upon his imagination largely. Who told him, for instance, that Kropotkin has said that "we would have to progress through Social Democracy to Anarchism"?

Hull at one time was the centre of a pretty vigorous propaganda, both in English and German. Unfortunately owing to some local bother, Club Liberty got broken up and the comrades since have had no place to meet and consequently have got scattered all over the place. Many of them are seafarers, and that makes it much worse. However, a few of the comrades have been met and talked to at the instance of the Leeds Group, and a meeting was arranged for Nov. 29 to see what can be done in the way of starting some English propaganda again. Seeing that there are some fifty comrades there it should not be a difficult task.

W. M.

In durance and endurance.

Untwining my Lady's tresses
In the depth of my prison cell,
I sigh for her sweet caresses—
And hear but her funeral knell!
Her locks are but limp and tangled,
And dead as the corpses' skein;
But, though by the ruffian mangled,
We will bind them up again!

I long for the light to glisten
Once more in her glorious eyes;
I long for mine ears to listen
To those lisps of love we prize;
I long for my lips to harvest
That honey which cures all pain;
Though today in this dungeon thou starvest,
We shall sip at that fount again!

O fools, with your stone-built bottle!
O clowns, with your clanking chain!
Do ye think that thought ye can throttle?
Do ye deem that truth is slain?
Do ye dream fair Freedom falters,
With her dauntless deathless brain?
Ye may tighten ten million halts,
She will leap to life again!

LOTHROP WITHINGTON.

Milbank Penitentiary, July, 1890.

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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 MANAGER, 127 Ossulston Street, N. W.

The Editors are not necessarily in agreement with signed articles.

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NOTES.

STATISTICS UP TO DATE.

We think there is a great field open for the statisticians if they would only avail themselves of it. They have told us how long the poor live, or rather how young they die; how pauperism increases, and so on. But we want to know something more than that: we want to know what the poor man pays for his food, his clothes, his house in proportion to what the rich man pays.

This is not so easy to compute as it may appear. Take, for instance, the poor man's loaf. He may pay a halfpenny or even a penny less per quarter than the rich man; but how much have we got to deduct for adulteration in estimating the physiological value of the bread. And so with all foodstuffs supplied the poor; the loss in adulteration is enormous, and is still further increased by the short weight given.

Again, if we could learn the utility to the rich man of his good cloth, and the wear the poor man gets out of the shoddy clothes of the slop shops, we should probably have another interesting comparison.

But it is when we come to the question of rent that our indignation would rise highest at the astonishing results. In Cats Meat Square a little girl dies of consumption. The parents are so poor that the family of six live in one room, and at the inquest we are told these conditions brought about the child's death. And no wonder; for the room they occupied measured ten feet square! And for this they paid 4/6 per week rent. And what air did they breathe, what sunlight did they get for their money. If some kind person who is in a position to do so will give us the cubic dimensions and the annual rental of a Hyde Park mansion, we shall be able to make a calculation that will point a very startling moral, and will perhaps help to explain why at the present moment so many poor people are shouting: "Rule Britannia!"

"OFF TO THE FRONT."

Far be it from us to decry the manifestation of the voluntary spirit which in times of national peril may prove the greatest, nay, the only resource, as happened in France in 1793 when, as Carlyle says, Sansculottism kept Europe at bay. But, really, the nauseating nonsense enacted over the departure of the yeomanry and volunteers for the front(?) is approaching the grotesque.

Men who were sincere and were fighting in a good cause would not need the fulsome adulation of the yellow press and free seats at the music halls to cheer them on their way. How different to the stern sincerity and simplicity with which the "young Garibaldians" left these shores to fight for the freedom of Italy!

The fact is, these thoughtless fellows are infected with the vulgar patriotism of the Jingo press, and fight for no principle, no ideal. Perhaps they hope without much risk to get a little excitement out of this brigands' war.

The whole business is a piece of middle class humbug and, as such, is more closely allied to Barnum's show than anything else.

THE LONDON COUNTY COUNCIL AS LANDLORD.

Some evictions have just taken place in Somers Town in which the L.C.C. came out in its true colors as a landlord, and in which we note, by the way, that Lady Henry Somerset, the good philanthropist, the good Christian, the good everything, had some responsibility.

In the pouring rain this morning heartbreaking eviction scenes were witnessed in Somers Town. The premises from which the tenants were forcibly ejected are known as York Buildings, Churchway. Seven families, who between them mustered thirty children, were turned into the street in the rain by a broker acting for the L.C.C.

When the *Star Man* visited the scene the children were huddled together sheltering from the rain in the outhouses which the broker left open. Their parents were supposed to be looking for lodgings, and the little ones some of them infants in arms, were crying with cold and hunger. It was a pitiful sight, and no one seemed to worry about them among the busy passers-by in Euston-rd. Their parents had received numerous eviction notices, and had paid no rent for the last twelve months.

A little while ago Lord Rosebery was sighing for a tyrant who would put things in order and then have his head off, ignoring the fact that tyrants reverse the case by putting things in disorder and then cutting the heads off other people who protest. Well, are we not fast developing this tyrant in the County Council? Only this is a hydra-headed tyrant and, if heads are to fall, amongst them will be that of John Burns and other worthy "labor leaders," who have got on the Council to fight the cause of the disinherited! And the excuse will be that the scene enacted above was done in the "public interest." After this we can afford to ignore the pharisaism and hypocrisy of the Christian, Lady Somerset, who is not ashamed to take slum rents—when she can get them.

VICTIMS OF "PEACE."

Whilst the war in South Africa is claiming its full share of victims, the economic war (which we shall always have with us while we have capitalism) does not fail to supply instances of its barbaric cruelty, just as avoidable under sane conditions as the bloody battles in the Transvaal.

Albert Chalfont found life too hard with a wife and three children and 19/10 to keep them with. Some say he had more; but, more or less, it was not enough with that insatiable shark, the landlord, claiming seven shillings of it for two rooms. Driven to despair by his hopeless position—for he was an employee of the Battersea Vestry, and we expect all who work for them leave hope behind—he killed first the baby, at the mother's request, then his wife and himself. Of course, the political economist, blind to the true moral of the case, will tell us: "Ah! but he married at eighteen, the young fool! so what can you expect?" Why, that a man has as much right to live if he marries at eighteen as if he marries at eighty—perhaps more; and that in any case 19/10 a week (the vital point in the whole question) won't go any further at one age than it will at the other. And if you want to carry the question of responsibility still further, what about the Church or the State (whichever it may have been) that in consideration of a certain payment "legally" made them man and wife without caring one brass button what their future was to be? So it goes on where "everything is for the best in the best of all possible worlds."

THINKING AND OBEYING!

"Captain, what do you think," I asked,

"Of the part your soldiers play?"

The captain answered: "I do not think—I do not think—I obey."

"Do you think you should shoot a patriot down

And help a tyrant slay?"

The captain answered, "I do not think—I do not think—I obey."

"Do you think that your conscience was meant to die

And your brains to rot away?"

The captain answered, "I do not think—I do not think—I obey."

"Then if this is your soldier's code," I cried,

"You're a mean, unmanly crew,

And with all your feathers and gilt and braid
I am more of a man than you.

"For whatever my lot on earth may be,

And whether I swim or sink,

I can say with pride, 'I do not obey—

I do not obey—I think!'"

ERNEST H. CROSBY, in *The Conservator*.

The above poem has been quoted in more than one of the American radical journals. It was inspired by the American campaign against the Filipinos; but it could well be read by those who have gone to be starved, poisoned and slaughtered in South Africa for the benefit of Rhodes, Beit, Eckstein, Albu and Co. A leaflet, entitled *The Workers and the War*, has been issued by the Discussion Group, dealing with the war from the workers' point of view; samples are sent with *FREEDOM* this month, and may be obtained from this office at 6 a 1d., 12 for 1½d., 1s. per 100 or 8/6 per 1,000, post free.

The Social Democrat of January is responsible for the statement that sweating exists in the *Freedom* office. It is perhaps barely worth while asking the editor to contradict this lie as Social Democrats are not, as a rule, given to telling the truth about Anarchists or Anarchism; but in case the excuse is made that they have been misled, we must remind them that the least they can do is to make sure that the sources of their information are clean and honest.

We have received from Messrs. Swan, Sonnenschein & Co. Herbert Burrows' essay on Zola, which we shall notice in our next issue.

Our readers will by this time be aware of the publication in two volumes of Kropotkin's *Autobiography of a Revolutionist*, a work of absorbing interest to the majority of readers, Anarchist or not. Some excellent and exceedingly sympathetic reviews have already appeared in the English press.

GOVERNMENT AND MORALITY.

On December 16 the Government made another raid on the University Press at Watford. They seized 486 copies of "The Psychology of Sex" by Havelock Ellis, 35 copies of Jeffrey Mortimer's "Chapters on Human Love," and 7 copies of "The Old and The New Ideal" by our friend Ruedebusch. From some obscure and forgotten pigeon-hole they produced an ancient fossil entitled "Government Medical Referee for London," who, we understand, repudiates the doctrine of evolution and disputed with Bradlaugh the consequent disappearance of his god. This wiseacre, Dr. Lionel Beale by name, pronounced the books "unnecessary" from a medical standpoint and "obscene" from a moral standpoint. The monstrous hypocrisy which could take an oath on *The Bible* to that effect needs no further comment.

T. C.

RESPONSIBILITY AND SOLIDARITY in the labor struggle:

THEIR PRESENT LIMITS AND THEIR POSSIBLE EXTENSION.

(The substance of a paper read on December 5, 1899, before the Freedom Discussion Group, London by M. Nettlau.)

The following remarks, based on an article published by me in *Freedom*, November 1897, must not be understood as wishing to replace direct Anarchist propaganda by a "remedy or a "hobby," they simply raise a general subject which has been, as far as I know and am told, neglected up till now: the possibility of some new form and combination in the labor struggle; and I am anxious for Anarchist criticism, which, apart from the general possibility has to examine whether the means suggested are on the road to freedom or the contrary; consequently, whether they merit the support of Anarchists or not.

Progress in the labor movement seems to me to be desperately slow after all. The ideas that to us appear so clear, self-evident and acceptable, often meet with such an amount of prejudice and ignorance that it may be doubtful whether great masses will ever consciously and seriously accept them unless they see before them real changes, or at least object lessons on the largest scale. And even where such object lessons already exist to a certain degree, when the economic solidarity of labor is demonstrated not by the propaganda of free ideas but by direct material advantages, however small they are—as in the case of trade unionism and co-operation—the real bulk of the masses does not get in proper touch with them in spite of a century's agitation and propaganda.

Whether this pessimistic view is justified or not, the usefulness of finding new means, if possible, of strengthening the position of labor will not be contested; and many permanent or passing means of action have been suggested, and even tried, during late years: such as the *general strike*, the *military strike*, the *international miners' strike*, the march of unemployed or strikers toward the capital (in America and recently in France), the *Sabotage* (slow and spoiled work, "go canny," advocated in France), etc. Efforts are also made to use organized labor or the working classes as producers and consumers for direct economic action, viz., a combination of Trade Unionism and Co-operation, co-operative colonies, the labor exchange (the American expression for the direct exchange of the products of labour) etc. And it is in this connection that I venture to suggest some other means still. The position of Anarchists towards it, can only be the same as towards the other means just mentioned, namely practical help when possible, but no deviation from the propaganda of our full and ultimate aims of free men in a free society.

What is wanted, besides the direct intellectual propaganda of Anarchist ideas and real revolutionary action which is independent of all preliminary discussion, seems to be that large and increasing masses of the people should be brought to understand and embrace the principle of *human dignity and freedom* and of *solidarity* and try to live up to these principles. It is further necessary that the inseparable connection of both principles be recognised; for the first principle alone, if superficially interpreted, may lead to individualist self-seeking, reckless advance on the shoulder of our fellows, whilst solidarity without personal dignity and freedom is just what we see around us today and what hurts us at every moment—the solidarity of the compact majority with the worst features of the present system: competition, patriotism, religion, political parties, etc. Consequently, a full and conscious combination of the feelings of freedom and solidarity is necessary, and people advanced thus far will be more inclined to accept our ideas, nay, more able to understand

them than many strata of the population today. So I think I may be right in fixing this as a criterion, a touchstone of possible means of action; and means of action which do not come up to it ought to be improved upon.

Before entering on my subject proper, I must state my opinions on two subjects about which I am, I believe, a heretic from current economic creeds and, in any case, from the usual arguments in agitation. My further conclusions will be based upon these two preliminary points.

One of them deals with what is called *the public*, and my belief is that this factor is too little taken into consideration in labor struggles. The workers of a trade are organized and fight hard for the betterment of their economic positions; the employers of labor do the same and may be forced, by successful strikes or by the power of a strong trade union, to make concessions to labor. But the consumers of the products of that trade are, as a rule, not organized at all, do nothing to get their interest efficiently served and at the smallest possible cost; and hence it is only natural that the capitalists endeavour to, and succeed, in getting almost the full price of their concessions to labor back from the buying public. Labor, so far as I know, takes no interest in this, the final settlement of the struggle. So prices go up or the quality of the product becomes inferior; and the public pays the cost of the concessions wrung by labor from capital, as the weakest party necessarily must.

Now, who are the public? All consumers, of course; but for the present purpose I may divide them into two sections: those with *large incomes* whom the fluctuations of prices do not seriously affect (and they may be left out of consideration here), and the immense mass of *lesser and small incomes* whom the slightest alteration in prices inconveniences or really hurts, deprives and drags further down. Considerable numbers of these may cheerfully bear the new burden, the outcome of a successful strike of their fellow workers, either as convinced Socialists and Anarchists or from the instinctive feeling of solidarity and love of fair play that makes them the basis of our hopes for a brighter future; but I feel that I should delude myself if I shut my eyes to the fact that the great mass, not touched by progressive ideas and noble sentiments (if they were, how could they bear with the present system?), feel no increase of sympathy for organized labor in such cases, and remain dull, indifferent, if not prejudiced and hostile, as before. I imagine, for instance, that if during a miners' strike the husband, say a laborer, sympathises with the strikers and even willingly subscribes a few pence towards their funds, the wife—who has to make both ends meet as before on the same wages, with coal at famine prices—will be far from sharing his sympathy in many cases and will not fail to bring this fact home to him, and so the feelings of both will neutralise each other at the best.

Strikes of this kind, then, leave things unchanged economically and morally, even if the strikers be victorious. For the economic concessions are shifted by the capitalist on the shoulders of the buying public, and are most bitterly felt by the mass of the workers the poorer they are; and the moral elevation and enthusiasm of the strikers and their sympathisers are balanced by the depression and dumb hostility of the masses remaining—who must really pay the bill.

It would, therefore, be useful if means were found by which *the public* (the mass of the workers) could be interested in a material, and not only in a sentimental way, as well as the strikers themselves. Once interested seriously their help may be enormous: as, besides sympathy and subscriptions, they can wield that most powerful weapon—the *boycott*.

This is the first of my two preliminary points.

The second heretical opinion of mine concerns *the responsibility of the workers for the work they do*. This responsibility is not recognised at present to any extent. It is customary to consider a man an honest workman if he works for wages—*never mind what he does*. There is hardly any occupation which is shunned and execrated in an effective way, to make people seriously ashamed of it, however mean and infamous it may be. Apart from the drastic example of tenders for the hangman's post, when we sometimes read that persons of all occupations come forward, workers and middle class,—is it not the height of the ambition of many to be a policeman, and are not policemen as well as soldiers fed to a large extent by foolish women of the people, poor slaveys and cooks? Soldiers, who in this country enlist voluntarily, know that their usual occupation will not be to defend "their country" which nobody attacks; but to repress one after the other rebellions of poor, badly armed natives, and to do this as mercilessly as possible so that each rebellion be crushed in the beginning and may not spread. Young fellows, then, are not ashamed to enlist for this continuous police and hangman's work, nor are the masses of the people ashamed to be friends with soldiers. Again, there is never a scarcity of brokers' men, rent and tax collectors, land agents and their crowbarren in Ireland, etc. So-called public opinion, which talks so much of humanity and civilisation, seems to overlook these fiends in our midst; and, if it takes notice of them, it is to commiserate them as it is *not their fault*.

I go further and say: whilst these scum of mankind enjoy little popularity after all with most people, *nefarious trades and occupations* are carried on by much larger bodies of men to whom no one seems to take an objection. I mean the vast mass of workers who do the manual work in producing *the inferior houses, inferior clothing, inferior food* and so forth, which degrade the lives, drag down the minds and ruin the bodies of their own fellow workers. Who built the

slums, and—which is worse—who keeps them in a state that permits their continuous exploitation, by patching them up again and again with sham repairs? Who produces the shoddy clothes, the abominable food and drink which the poor alone buy? Who, finally, palms them off on the public, the poor—after others have made them look bright outside, if this trouble is taken at all—by any amount of persuasion, plainly spoken by false pretences and lies? All this is done (though inspired by the capitalists, no doubt, who alone profit by it) by large branches of the hard working, respected and well organised building, textile and mercantile trades. This is repulsive and revolting to me, and I see no excuse for it if no effort is ever made to recognise and to admit the fact at all, much less to do away with it.

At the bottom lays the old, indifferent saying: "I must do it; I cannot afford to pick my work. If I do not do it, somebody else will. I do not profit by it; I would myself prefer to do really useful work. But I am not responsible for it: the responsibility rests on the employer who orders me to do as I do."

My opinion is that as long as this shirking, mercenary excuse is recognised and generally accepted, things must continue as at present and a brighter future will never come. Capitalists, according to this view, will always be able to hire one half of the workers to repress the other half. They will, moreover, continue to keep the bulk of the workers in mental and physical degradation, weakened, void of energy, ignoring even most of the endless joys of life, through their dull, depressing surroundings, the poorness of the food which builds up their bodies and brains. And the practical, manual work of doing this is done by the workers themselves—who suffer from it personally as well as the rest. Direct murder, say by soldiers who shoot strikers, and this indirect murder by producing with their own toil the horrible surroundings, food, etc., which wreck their fellow workers—both actions are equally detrimental in their consequences and must be recognised as such before an improvement is to be thought of.

This is what I call the responsibility of the workers for what they do. And I further say that the absence of this feeling of responsibility degrades these workers themselves, as well as their victims. No one will deny that policemen and soldiers are degraded and brutalised by their continuous exercise of professional man-hunting, treachery and murder on sight. I do not hesitate to say that the same happens to workers who exercise crafts and trades based on deceit. Take, for example, the plumber who continually makes people believe that he repairs the pipes and drains, yet never does such a thing, or the shop-assistant who spends the day in making people buy, not what they want, but what the shopowner wants to get rid of first because it brings the largest profit, or because it won't keep any longer. I do not think that the character of these men—honest, hard-working and personally kind though they may be at the beginning—improves in the long run and it is more likely to become callous and indifferent than free and enthusiastic. In the same way, the multitude of producers of inferior and indifferent goods cannot possibly take an interest in their work. But no man can live without such an interest in his work or his faculties will be stunned, his intellect will shrink and he will, in the end, become unable to grasp even the ideas of freedom and revolt, much less to act on them. Compare these men with those depicted by William Morris in the *Revival of Handicraft, News from Nowhere*, etc., and it becomes clear what I mean.

So everybody is bound to be a victim of this, as the perpetrators of unsocial acts never fail to be victims thereof themselves. All workmen execrate spies and informers; most of them execrate black-legs: unless this feeling is extended to all who do unsocial work, work that is injurious to their fellow men, I cannot see hope in the future.

This is the second preliminary point, and I have at last arrived at the main subject, which will be dealt with more briefly as the ground has been cleared by these remarks.

(To be concluded.)

THE INTERNATIONAL, ITS PRECURSORS, AND ANARCHISM.

IX.

Fourier and the "école socialiste."

Contemporary with Robert Owen and Saint Simon, Charles Fourier looked upon the social problem in quite a different way to these two thinkers. He was neither an atheistic materialist and practical reformer like Owen who arrived at free communism through the analysis of surplus value and the conditions under which modern production is carried on, nor yet a Christian preaching, like Saint Simon, universal co-operation and collectivism governed by scientists. In his researches he took for foundation three principles quite personal to himself, admirably conceived and in our day justified and demonstrated by inductive science. These principles may be formulated as follows:

1. Man is guided in his life not by this or that written "law" whether of divine right, Roman or metaphysical origin; but, in reality, by the needs of his organism, by his physical or in other words physiological tendencies.
2. Labor, like activity of the organism, is necessary to the life and development of every organic being; therefore, when once production is organised on a rational and social basis, labor will become attractive.

3. Social production and the making labor attractive can only be realised in communes (phalansteries) based more or less on equality and absolutely autonomous.

It is true that with Fourier these principles, like the rest of his system, are expressed in a terminology sometimes bizarre; but if these expressions are translated into ordinary language one must recognise that this great friend of humanity accurately stated three truths. Folks of bad faith, including the "scientific" charlatans of Engels' school, laughed a good deal at Fourier, especially at his opinion that all the passions of an individual should have completely free development and exercise. "What," cried the defenders of existing social iniquities, "give liberty to every evil passion, even to violence? Then we are going to return to the primitive state of savagery."

These gentry pretend to understand Fourier as advocating the right of enjoyment in favor of social and individual vices.

"By this term *passions*," we read in V. Considerant's, "Fourier meant exclusively the tendencies which constitute them beings, or the springs inherent in their very nature forming their claim to the title of living creatures. Thus human passions are the natural and primitive forces to which the free and spontaneous activity of the human being is due. . . . The passions of beings are therefore nothing but the law of universal order of the universal life." In other words, Fourier was the first who recognised the truth that modern physiology, psychology and pedagogy demand for the normal development of the human organism, of human intelligence and morality: the complete satisfaction of organic needs, liberty for the manifestation of sentiments, free and complete development of the aptitudes and inclinations of each pupil. These truths no longer arouse antagonism today, except from the Church and despotism, authority and the barracks, and also—strange thing!—from the Social Democrats, who fancy that Socialism consists of the old stupidities of the *Communist Manifesto* with its "State monopolies," its "Labor army," its "Discipline" and other lovely barrack arrangements.

His generalisation on man's organic need of activity and work, is not less remarkable. We now know that the living organism needs for its development, for the assimilation of fresh foodstuffs, for the circulation of the blood, for normal respiration and even for intellectual energy a certain amount of muscular activity. Rational work is hygienic, and is recommended by medical men to the richest and most privileged classes.

The languishing Queen of Sweden was recommended by her doctor to work every day at arranging her apartments.

The English aristocrats and bourgeoisie—the most robust and energetic of all—compel their young folks to exercise themselves every day in various sports that are most fatiguing.

But if, instead of sport, humanity organised useful productive work in such a manner that robust young folk, trained in brain and hand, could change their occupations according to their taste or according to a spontaneous and free agreement with their comrades: then, certainly, work would become attractive, and generous youth, always singing and loving, would cover the surface of our globe with flowers and would create abundance for all. And when Fourier endeavoured to describe the wellbeing that humanity would be able to realise in autonomous communes (the phalanstery), he did not act as an inspired dreamer, but as in truth a great humanitarian philosopher who arrived half a century ago at the generalisations of modern physiology, hygiene and pedagogy.

In order to realise a social order based on these principles, Fourier proposed the autonomous organisation of the phalanstery. What is the phalanstery? An edifice of a splendour and arrangement the most complete, situated amidst vast grounds (9 square miles) and inhabited by 400 families or 1,800 persons, forming a comradely community which guaranteed to its members the enjoyment of the most complete wellbeing and individual liberty. I shall not enter into details of this system. It is enough to remark that Fourier rejected absolutely the conventional morality, marriage family of our present capitalist society and that he carefully thought out all means of securing individual liberty and the rights of minorities. With this aim in view he proposed that one part of the surplus production of the phalanstery should be put at the disposition of each member—including the children—for strictly personal wants. This personal capital ensured to each member of the community the necessary means for leaving it and joining another or setting up separately.

Such was in a few words the Socialist system of Fourier and his "*école socialiste*." Everyone recognises that by his wide views, by his constant care to secure wellbeing and liberty for the individual and autonomy for the community in a voluntary federation, Fourier showed himself as one of the noblest and most profound of the Socialist reformers. His ideas on the part played by the organic needs and inclinations in individual and social life, his formula of attractive labour added to those of Robert Owen on the formation of human character constitute the most valuable conquests of Socialist ethics.

IX.

The Democratic and Socialist movement 1830—1848.

"The Democratic Party distinguishes itself from the other parties by the conviction that the political struggle must serve to arrive at the social transformation."—Ledru Rollin, *Adresses of 1841*.

The Socialist systems and programmes that I have just briefly sketched aroused on the Continent, especially amongst the students at the higher schools, a Democratic movement tinged with Socialism but in general revolutionary and Republican. The ideas of Saint Simon and Fourier spread through France, Italy, Germany, and even into Russia. English Socialism—to which we owe on the one side all our practical methods of class struggle and proletarian organisation; and, on the other,

definite expositions of surplus value; of labor legislation as merely a palliative; on the rôle of the people as those who alone can solve the social question, etc.—this Socialism was completely unknown on the Continent, and even to Socialist writers like Proudhon and Louis Blanc it remained a "terra incognita." However, Proudhon discovered afresh the possibilities of mutual credit and the People's Bank, otherwise known as "The Equitable Labour Exchange" when organized by Robert Owen at Birmingham as long ago as 1833.

But, if the practical side of the labor movement was ignored on the Continent, the general ideas of human solidarity, of emancipation, of individual and national enfranchisement, of international brotherhood, spread amongst the progressive middle class. This enlightened bourgeoisie, especially in France, felt outraged and oppressed under the regime of the Restoration and the Holy Alliance of despots. The least political opposition, every liberal manifestation, was suppressed with a ferocity as cowardly as that shown by the Italian government in our day. Paul Louis Courier has left us some edifying pictures in his pamphlet.

But, as has happened through the whole course of history, the efforts of despots united to those of priests and uniformed brutes have not succeeded in arresting intellectual and social development. The new spirit manifested itself everywhere: in letters, in art, in science.

This was the period of Romanticism in literature and of movements of renaissance amongst oppressed nations: Greece, Italy, Poland, Hungary, by turns fought for liberty and enfranchisement, or prepared for revolution. These three elements: Socialism, romanticism and nationalism gave so special and, let us say frankly, so sympathetic an impress to the Republican Democrats and revolutionists of the period (Blanqui, Garibaldi, Kossuth, Bakunin) that hundreds of other men, remarkable in science and literature, in art and politics arose from this movement.

Today we may think the work of the poets and writers of this period vague and too declamatory; nevertheless romanticism gave vigorous push to the revolutionary movement at the commencement of this century. In singing free scope for the passions, happiness and idealism, these poets and novelists pleaded the cause of liberty and happiness for all, including the humblest, the disinherited, the whole people. Beranger, Hugo, George Sand, Eugene Sue, without speaking of the poets and novelists of England, Germany, Italy and even Russia and Poland, were all animated by a noble and humanitarian faith. To love the humble and oppressed, to be eager for popular wellbeing, to imitate the freshness and simplicity of popular poetry, to curse tyrants (Hugo, Barbier, Heine) to glorify popular virtue and creative work, above all to sing revolt, enfranchisement and solidarity: these are the sentiments that dominate amongst the poets and musicians as amongst the writers and political orators.

The incomparable melodies of Chopin are drawn from the people's songs; the masterpieces of Rossini, of Meyerbeer, of Bellini and of Wagner—the child of this movement—are a glorious hymn to liberty and enfranchisement. Music had not yet been prostituted by the Bonapartist cancan or the bestiality of the modern bourgeoisie. Science, too, was penetrated by the idea of popular wellbeing; and the works of Michelet (*Le Peuple, Histoire de la Revolution*) and of Lamennais (*Paroles d'un croyant*) are fine witnesses to this Democratic tendency. To show how far the generation of 1839—48 pushed its popular sympathies I quote the following passage from the addresses of Ledru Rollin the mouthpiece of the Democracy of that day.

"The people is the 'Ecce Homo' of modern times; but rest assured that its resurrection is near. It also will descend from its cross in order to demand an account of their deeds from those who have so long despised it." All these poetic, literary and political declamations, you will say, changed nothing in the economic and social conditions of the people. That I know perfectly well; and, if I linger on this, it is solely in order to render more comprehensible the success of Louis Blanc's propaganda—that true founder of Social Democracy—of whom Engels, in his history of Socialism, has not said one word: as though Louis Blanc had never existed and the Revolution of 1848 had no place in the history of our century.

Without knowing the general state of public opinion at this period it is difficult to understand why Paris during this time became the centre where one met reformers, originators of all kinds of humanitarian ideas, and initiators in the revolutionary movement. Neither would one be able to understand why the youth of the schools, polytechnics and universities fought in the ranks of the people. Without doubt the political and social proposals that the great majority meant under the watchword of Reform were vague enough. Perhaps many of those who strove for reform joined the reaction after the days of June. But, before the Revolution of February 24, Socialists of different schools, Radical Republicans, moderate reformers, everyone, urged "reform" for the people sincerely and defended popular rights and interests. For at this period scientists and poets mixed with the populace and amongst revolutionists.

A Flaubert isolating himself from the world's life, a Taine, the Goncourts cut very strange figures and resembled pathological cases by the side of Hugo, G. Sand and others. The educated brainworkers of that day quite understood that science and art divorced from human life remained sterile and atrophied. It was not an accident that Henri Martin, faithful to the traditions of other days, was the first to salute the International and maintained with joy "that indifference, that chilliness of death," had not yet overcome or frozen the popular spirit."

Indeed, indifferentism has not frozen the heart of the people. On the contrary, the heart of the people gives vigour and authority to its most inconsequent defenders, such as Rochefort for example, who, ignorant

and perverse, could defy for a whole year the efforts of honest thinkers.

As for us, revolutionary Socialists, noble or bourgeois by birth, we know what moral and intellectual force is drawn from the people. It is for this that hundreds of my Russian friends defy with so much courage every kind of persecution; it is for this that we prefer workmen's meetings to the splendidly morbid assemblies of society. The action the most moral is that of making known and defending the interests and rights of the producer.

What place is more invigorating than amongst the workers? What heart beats more generously than that of one who fights for the social emancipation of the people?

All these old axiomatic truths have been forgotten by the thinkers of the Second Empire and the Third Republic; it is only during these latter days that the most honest amongst them have begun to discover that it is amongst the people and revolutionists that morality, vigour and generosity have been maintained intact. It seems that during recent times the youth of the schools and thoughtful men have grasped this again and are returning to the tradition of other days. They begin to join in the attack of the Socialists against the monstrosities of the political and social order of the Third Republic. We welcome most sincerely their first efforts, and in particular the admirable "Reply to M. Monod" by Maurice Vernes, who, coming away from a meeting, where Socialist and Anarchist orators spoke, wrote to his academic friends:

"Is there anything more beautiful, is there anything more noble, is there anything more touching than this language?"

Yes, there is something more sublime than this language: it is action with the people for their economic, intellectual and social emancipation!

This is what the educated youth of 1830—48 knew and practised. Blanqui and Barbès are examples of it.

W. TCHERKESOV

THE RICH AND THE POOR.

(A Dialogue.)

The bench clattered as the huge fist of Jack Thompson descended upon it. He was a stalwart workman of about five and thirty, with rather an inviting countenance which was improved by a pair of soft brown eyes.

It was the hour of respite which the master allows the workmen for dinner. Jack and his mates were all seated around in the workshop, discussing as workmen are wont to do the different topics which are of interest to their class.

Although a workman he was a man of no mean intellectual power; the knowledge he had gained by years of individual thought and study he utilised in defending the interests of his own class, and exposing the shallowness and hypocrisy of society.

"Do you mean to say, that the rich are justly entitled to the wealth they monopolise?" asked Jack looking straight at his opponent Bob Lingfield, a small featured but pleasant looking man, who had the appearance of one afflicted with premature old age, brought on by years of toil and poverty.

"Yes, certainly I do," he answered. "Well I never heard a more ridiculous sentiment emanate from a workman's lips," said Jack, "but I will answer your argument and prove that it is a misconception."

"The workers only are entitled to the wealth, for the simple reason that they produce it. Who, for instance, made the roads, railways, the cities and towns, in fact everything which is necessary for human sustenance? No one but the worker. That being so, is not the worker justly entitled to the wealth he produces?"

"Yes," answered Bob. "We get our wages, don't we, with which we purchase necessities?"

"Wages, forsooth!" cried Jack with vehemence, "That's a fact; but it proves that we workmen are robbed of the greater portion of what we produce by cunning and crafty devices."

"With our wages we can purchase only just sufficient to maintain life, and that in a very poor fashion, whilst we are unable to prepare for the 'bad times' produced by depression of trade, etc."

"Then you mean to say that the value of our labor is greater than what we actually receive?" inquired Bob.

"Certainly I do. These so-called superior personages, who never did a day's work in their lives, must of necessity live on what they can thieve by artful devices from the worker; it must be clear to anyone that if a man does no useful labor, he lives by stealing," said Jack.

"Yes; well, so far I am beginning to catch a glimpse of what you mean," answered Bob. "But I can't help thinking that some of the well-to-do work pretty hard at times; for instance, our governor is in the office pretty late some evenings."

"That may be so," answered Jack, "in some instances; but their labor is utterly useless, for they are active merely to protect their own interests, to keep us at our toil and to see that their profits are as large as possible. Don't you see their labor is quite unproductive? They may claim to be distributors of wealth; but their position in this case is a very poor one, for it is the worker who distributes goods: the shopman, docker, seaman, railway worker, etc. So that, as you must see, the work which is attributed to these parasites in no way enriches the community; quite the opposite. This profitmongering and gambling is the means whereby the wealth is falling into the hands of the few, who use it to keep us in bondage."

"Yes, that seems all very well; but I think we must have these superior minds to conduct the business of a community, or else we should starve," said Bob.

"Great Scott!" muttered Jack, "*superior minds*, indeed! you mean to infer, then, that to act the part of an employer requires mental powers above the average? What a delusion! Why, a large portion of the employing class have no practical knowledge of the industry they superintend. What it really amounts to is: that to become a master requires craft, cunning and selfishness. And these people carry on production merely for the sake of profit; and it only requires normal capacities to do that."

"Well, I can't make you out. Everything I say—well, there, it is no use my talking; I don't understand these matters," said Bob.

"Don't be discouraged," said Jack, "keep on, I want to get you to think for yourself, to place truth with error and compare the two. Don't be deluded by fossilised notions which were driven into your head when you went to school. Has it not occurred to you that these parasites, whom you claim so much for, are when compared with the workers rewarded out of all proportion by an unjust economic system?"

"Yes," answered Bob, "it seems to me now that the system of reward is unjust; but my pathway is still strewn with obstacles: What of the professional class—authors, doctors and men of science generally, do you consider them useful beings?"

"Oh, yes?" said Jack. "But they are privileged; for their position enables them to steer clear of manual labor; and, their reward being far greater than the worker's, of course they are a burden on the community, and while in some cases the results of their mental energy are useless, in other cases humanity is enriched thereby."

"Ah, I see, it is merely a man's productivity that makes him a useful member of the community: he performs some function which assists in the wellbeing of the community at large," said Bob.

"Yes," answered Jack, his face beaming with delight, "that is so; and what enables these parasites to live on the worker is that, by the many hours he labors and also by the aid of machinery, etc., his productive power has increased far above his immediate needs; by force and fraud the major portion of what he produced is taken from him, leaving him a victim to poverty."

"Well," asked Tom Reed, "don't you think machinery is useful?"

"Oh yes," replied Jack, "when it is employed for the benefit of all; but instead of making our lot lighter it has intensified our slavery. The worker is no longer a craftsman, but in many cases merely an attendant on a machine; our productive powers have increased so prodigiously by its aid, that the markets are overstocked and then the worker is thrown out of employment, and he has not the means to purchase the goods he has produced. These machines have in many cases made the poor poorer and the rich richer, these have produced many of the immense fortunes we hear of. No doubt, the introduction of machinery created a new industry which employs thousands, and cheap goods are produced by its aid; but I think when we consider that the skill of the worker is reduced to a minimum by its use, his wages depreciated, and that he is thrown out of employment, we can come to no other conclusion than that the worker pays very dearly for cheap goods. Cheap goods, indeed! people do not realise the misery they create."

"Yes," said Tom Reed, "These things are all very well; but we live in a free country and can always find a fresh master."

"Free country," replied Jack, "you cannot have any idea of what freedom is, you are like a man who has always been bound hand and foot and yet imagines he's free. How can you be free when your will-power is dominated by the privileged! When you have to accept what they offer you for your labor or face starvation, you are forced to serve that monster Mammon—Hark! that's the factory bell. Back to your slavery! Ah! lads, fight for freedom."

REPORTS.

EMMA GOLDMAN IN DUNDEE.

All last summer the Dundee comrades followed with deep interest the progress of the indefatigable Emma in her tour through the States, by means of the reports in "*Free Society*"; and when it was announced that she intended to visit Britain we made up our minds that, blow high, blow low, we should have her through to Dundee. The movement has languished here of late years. The only help we got was from comrade J. Blair Smith, of Glasgow, who came twice last year to lecture in Cutlers' Hall, where the freethinkers and Socialists hold their weekly meetings during the winter season. The "Cutler's" is rather small, however, and when we had succeeded in arranging for comrade Goldman's visit, a larger place was engaged—the "Plumber's".

The engagement was for Jan. 21. Two meetings were advertised, and it was at one time feared that the afternoon lecture would have to be declared off, owing to a sudden disagreeable change in the weather—a very common thing here; but sufficient of an audience turned up to decide the lecturer to proceed. The hall was little more than half full. The "powers that be" were represented by two detectives, who came in trying not to look ashamed. To mark our appreciation of this compliment, I presented each with a copy of *Free Society*.

The lecturer prefaced her discourse with a witty joke on God, the church gods and the weather, which at once placed her on good terms with the audience. The address was very well received; the applause was frequent, but the lecturer avoided, with rare good taste, those affected pauses by which some speakers invite applause.

The lecture was splendid, but the debate was grand. No opponent, once answered, attempted a rejoinder. Comrade Goldman literally swept the field.

After the meeting, three of the comrades—Townes, Fraser, and the present writer—accompanied the lecturer to her hotel and had tea with her, passing a very pleasant hour and a half. The weather cleared in the interval; and when we returned to the hall, the people were crowding in. It was packed by 6.30, and they kept coming in for some time after.

The subject chosen for the second meeting was: "The Aim of Humanity"; and our comrade acquitted herself in the same splendid manner as before, both in the lecture and in the debate which followed. The principal opponent, this time, was a Quaker who comes often to our meetings—as a lamb to the slaughter; and on this occasion it was slaughter.

The comrade had brought a large quantity of literature with her, and a good deal of it was sold at both meetings.

All who came in contact with comrade Goldman were very much impressed with her and the visit is looked upon as an event of importance. It will give the cause "a boost" here as we say in the States.

L. J. Mc. C.

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Printed and Published by J. TURNER, 127 Ossulston Street, London, N. W.