

Freedom

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1906.

THE year 1906 began with signs of a revolution in Russia which might have involved the adjoining countries of Germany and Austria too, and of the French Eight Hours' movement of the First of May which might have led to a general strike in France, Italy, Spain, and the adjoining Western countries. Both movements have failed thus far, but have not been defeated; the road is opened, we may say, and sooner or later revolutionary action will ensue on one or the other of these well-defined battle grounds of the coming struggle. All points our way; the fiasco of parliamentary action is complete. Parliaments, be they young and enthusiastic, like the late Russian Duma, or old and in full working order, with large Socialist Labour parties like the French Chamber and the House of Commons,—their incapacity to deal with the problems of to-day, which in one way or the other are all of a social character, becomes more evident every day. Our present laws are all based on the dogma of the rightful perpetuation of capitalist exploitation; the working classes, whether convinced Socialists or not, are everywhere consciously or unconsciously determined to reject the claims of capitalist exploitation. Lawmakers of the utmost timidity try to bring some of their new laws up to the level of this new feeling of their rights which pervades the working classes, but they are powerless: laws can only sanction an existing state of things, never create a new order; hence legislative assemblies must to the last remain the tools of existing capitalism, just like priests of all shades must remain the prophets of phantom deities, and can never be but enemies to science and freethought. Parliaments must feel that they are doomed institutions of the past, and that coming times on a new basis of economic and social institutions will also erect political structures of a new type, these free relations between autonomous groups and individuals which we call *Anarchy*. Hence events which a few years past would have been of sensational interest, the adoption of Socialist politicians like Burns, Briand, Viviani, into English and French Ministries, are hardly noticed to-day; nor are the victories of the Labour parties at the last general elections in England and France felt to be of any real interest, and everyone looking at Russia feels the absurdity of trusting to parliamentary action to fight even the political enemies of the people, autocracy and bureaucracy, much less to solve the economic problems of that country—the land question and others. We see, indeed, almost everywhere groups of people of various, often not at all of advanced, ideas take matters into their own hands, paralyse all the clever rules excogitated to make them work one or the other form of combination like clockwork, and arrive at a direct understanding with their exploiters, an understanding which in many cases does nothing to really alleviate their wrongs; but everyone feels that at a moment's notice combined action may begin again on a larger scale, and that any real settlement of claims, permanent peace, is once and for ever out of the question. Strikes in the old times were to a large extent a question of money, of funds to support a number of workers for weeks or months. To-day combined action takes place on such a large scale that careful preparation is impossible, the movement wins in a few days or hours or collapses for the moment; no one despairs of the coming success. Who thinks now of international labour laws, arbitration boards, all the little schemes of an idle State Socialism, powerless because without any real grip either on capital, which must be domineering and exploiting to the last, or on the working classes, whose instinct made them but lukewarm defenders of these petty go-between systems? We may thus be confident that *direct action* makes splendid progress, and the immediate success or failure of any

of the numerous movements is of small importance. Parliamentarism is discredited, the hopes of Social Democratic politicians are found to be chimeric, people feel that they are wronged, and combine to set matters right directly. This is all we can wish for from people whom our Anarchist propaganda has not directly touched yet, or who, whilst acquainted with them, do not feel inclined to accept the Anarchist ideas.

Here I venture to express an opinion which may not be shared by all others of us. If at some future time we expect all people to hold Anarchist ideas and to be able to live up to them, in the meantime these ideas are held only by growing minorities; but whilst some accept them fully, others accept them but to a limited degree. The final stage cannot be reached at once, and we may have to look forward to an intermediate stage in which Anarchists may have full elbowroom to live up to their ideas within their own circles, whilst others will practise forms of organisation which we reject but which seem practical to them. Progress in this direction is impossible with parliamentarism, which absurdly undertakes to make laws binding upon all, whether they agree and want them or disagree and reject them, one and all. Direct action, on the contrary, means that those interested in a matter settle it themselves as well as they can. Trade unionism on these lines means that the workers of each trade settle their own affairs, which only they properly understand. Hence universal direct action implies to recognise the right of all to a free arrangement of what concerns them. Anarchists exercise this right for themselves, and will not deny it to others who insist on arranging their affairs in a less advanced spirit; the main thing is mutual toleration, which is impossible under majority rule, whilst direct action permits each current to come to the front in full strength,—there is free scope for all, it is for us to come forward and win.

By this new spirit of direct action, then, that deep-rooted obstacle of law and authority which blocked our way seems about to be overcome in a truly wonderful way, and it is all so simple: people at last begin to mind their own business, and refuse to be led about by their leaders, old or new.

Anti-militarism is another way of direct action. The roundabout way of Social Democrats, who try to get into power in order to reform and improve militarism (which they never do when in power), is replaced by direct propaganda among conscripts and soldiers, and as a result soldiers here and there begin to refuse to be henchmen and murderers in the capitalist interest. France and Switzerland are the vanguard of this movement, which has as yet touched England but little,—still Lieutenant Collard of "on the knee" memory is a distinguished forerunner of English anti-militarism, same as the captain of Koepenick is in Germany; and if ever an English anti-militarist paper is started (there are such papers in nearly all countries now), "On the Knee" would be a fitting title for it.

There is really a spirit of dissatisfaction and rejection of discipline and submission about everywhere, and it is absurd to imagine that Social Democrats will be able to deviate this broad stream into the narrow and shallow channels of parliamentary and municipal action. There is hope that an utter amount of corruption will discredit these middlemen of politics quite as much as the middlemen of commerce and industry are discredited already. Co-operation does away with one set of middlemen, the other set of middlemen—politicians, legislators, governments—will be found equally useless, and people will themselves attend to their own affairs. This will not be Anarchism yet, but at last a wide field of free action will be created upon which every phase of Anarchist thought can be realised by actual experience, and new results be arrived at which no one can foresee.

A glance at the many dismal features of real life of to-day will often seem to refute the hopeful impression which I have tried to sketch out in the above. Much is left to be done, of course, but all may now be done with that new vigour and enthusiasm

which come with success. And it would be a great mistake to diminish the amount of real Anarchist propaganda in favour of some modified ideas which seem more acceptable to greater numbers. For whilst the Anarchist spirit is making headway, the real knowledge of Anarchist ideas still lags behind, and people eager for independent action are still far from knowing what Anarchist experience and thought has already elaborated. There is, then, every reason for work on all the numerous fields of propaganda, and full success in prospect.

Looking at the different countries, we see RUSSIA on the eve of a prolonged deadlock or of a real revolution. What direct action—the general strike of October, 1905—gained in a few days is almost lost by a year's hopeless experiment in parliamentarism; the heroic action of individuals seems to carry on a hopeless fight against an overwhelming body of absolute brutes. The moment must come when direct action of a more determined kind at last stops the huge machinery of cruelty and humbug called the State. Meanwhile Anarchist criticism of parliamentarism is eagerly studied, the Social Democratic parties by their continued belief in parliamentary means are discredited, and a revolution, strong and clear, avoiding the mistakes made in 1905, is at hand.

In GERMANY even the Social Democratic party had to accept to some extent the idea of the general strike, at which they sneered for so many years. Marxism has lost its theoretical prestige; the predominance of useless political action is generally regretted. That country, by the elections of this month, has practically to decide whether it agrees or not to a ridiculous system of bombastic aristocratic rule. Things are moving even over there.

AUSTRIA lost all the year over Parliamentary intrigues connected with the introduction of manhood suffrage. The Social Democratic party at least threatened to begin a general strike over this question. We have learned to be modest in our expectations about these parties, and so even this threat counts for something. Next year they are likely to see the uselessness of their new plaything.

In SWITZERLAND anti-parliamentary trade unionism and anti-militarism are being vigorously pushed forward, both in the French-speaking districts of the old Jurassian Federation and at Geneva, and in German-speaking Switzerland, chiefly at Zurich. Our comrade Bertoni's trial at Lausanne showed that the new anti-Anarchist law falls entirely flat. At present Switzerland is an ideal ground for agitation among French, Italian, and German speaking workers, almost like in the days of the old International.

In FRANCE the most intelligent representative of governmentism and capitalism, M. Clemenceau, happened to be Minister at the time of the First of May Eight Hours' movement, and we saw this man, who in the Dreyfus days so cleverly exposed the machinations of military and police intrigues, forgeries, and crimes, at once resort himself to all the vile means which he formerly and during all his long political life denounced. He let loose the whole police against the Syndicalists, tried to dishonour them by inventing their connection with Royalist plots, and in short behaved like a Bonapartist prefect and a general of the Boulanger type combined. This done, he now tries to prolong the life of capitalism by an anti-clerical diversion—a thing very useful and essential, certainly; but when it is done to strengthen the power of the State, there is an unmistakable mark of humbug about it. However, it is interesting to see how little this greatest of bourgeois politicians can achieve, and how he cannot march an inch forward, so to speak, without the participation of the admirable Lépine, the Prefect of Police, and his satellites in this action. It is police, police, and once more police—that is the first and last word of M. Clemenceau's political wisdom.

Fortunately, the French workers begin to see clearly. The Amiens and Limoges congresses show that only the fanatical adherents of the old Marxist, Jules Guesde, are taken up with politics as before; the others, though still adopting political means, recognise the equal right of direct action. Anarchism in France is at work in more different spheres than in any other country—in theoretical propaganda, in small local groups, in the trade union movement, in literature and art, in education, the women and neo-malthusian movements, anti-militarism, Anarchist colonies, and smaller movements.

In ITALY an anti-parliamentary trade union movement is growing up between the Socialist parties and the Anarchist groups. In SPAIN such a movement has always existed, and is holding its own in spite of the endless persecutions after Morral's brave act. The infamous treatment of Ferrers and

Nakens only creates sympathy with the cause whose martyrs they are.

In BELGIUM and HOLLAND both Syndicalism and Anarchism prosper. In the former country a number of young comrades made efforts to start a new international organisation—something that, to me at least, looks very well on paper, but which for all practical purposes our movement has long since outgrown. Evolution leads from organisation towards the complete absence of organisation, not the other way—else why be Anarchists at all? There is no danger that the international spirit which pervades our movement will be lost, but each locality knows best what to do, and an international organisation could only be either an obstacle or something entirely useless. Still, if advocated in the gentle way of our Belgian comrades it is more a sign of their welcome eagerness to be active than of anything else, and signs of too great activity are better than inaction from lack of interest. This is, of course, the personal view of the present writer.

I cannot form an opinion on the present state of the movement in America. As to England, the publication of the *Voice of Labour* shows that the time has come when she, too, will march forward on the broader lines of direct action. The economic futility of the purely political Labour victory at the last general election makes this development inevitable, and promises success to the new venture.

Thus there is hope everywhere, and with it a call, an urgent, immense call, for increased activity—each one applying himself to the task he knows best, sure that in the end all these efforts will combine in one general effort to overthrow capitalism and political domination, and to establish freedom.

ESPERANTO.

DEAR COMRADE,—Will you allow me to treat Esperanto from another Anarchist's point of view? Here we have a language that is not being imposed by any State force, but which is being adopted simply as expressing the people's desire for knowledge of one another, thus constituting ideal co-operation. The study of French and German which your correspondent recommends would necessitate four or five times the leisure that Esperanto needs. Our modern society has translated time by money, and the class which the Anarchist wishes to see take up internationalism is scarcely burdened with that article.

No one denies the beauty of natural languages, but they are beautiful because they express the desires of the people to communicate impressions. Esperanto expresses the desires of nations to communicate, and is beautiful in the logical and fair manner in which it fulfils this desire. There is no danger of the language degenerating into dialects. Is it an Anarchist who adduces this argument? Esperanto is the creation of people who *desire* international communication. Its quality of being universally understood is its chief one, and is scarcely likely to be lost sight of. Idiom Neutral if not simpler than Esperanto, but is only understood by those acquainted with Latin and French. If ever a simpler language is invented (and I honestly doubt whether this is possible) we will calmly consider whether its superior facility of acquisition is sufficient to induce us to reject a language already international, and act accordingly. But oh! the last argument—that the Anarchist's international language is his ideas. I was in Germany a short time ago. I come of German parents, and have lately endeavoured to polish up a childhood knowledge of the language by two years' study, but my greatest sorrow was to stand in front of men in Germany with whom I was in sympathy and find myself unable to follow up any idea of the least depth. I came back a more zealous Esperantist than ever.

Yours fraternally,

19 Boscombe Road, Shepherd's Bush.

H. MEULEN.

A REPLY.

Voluntary acceptance of something does not by itself constitute ideal co-operation, nor is it a standard of the value of a thing. Religion, *e.g.*, was voluntarily accepted at first, and ended by becoming an all-dominating prejudice which is not yet entirely uprooted. It is necessary to enter into the merits of each case. Now the writer says that the study of one of the most widely spoken living languages would take four or five times the leisure that Esperanto needs. But to have access, by spending some months over this instead of spending some weeks over Esperanto, to millions of volumes of literature, to be able to communicate with any number of people living in our immediate neighbourhood and yet separated from us by so many State-cultivated patriotic prejudices—this seems to me, at any rate, more interesting and worthy of all possible effort, far more than saving some months' time by learning Esperanto and being able to exchange direct letters in this way with *some* people scattered here and there whose real qualities would be hidden by a conventional language, equally unfamiliar to all; in one word, I have more to learn from fifty million French-speaking people than from stray Eskimos and other

out-of-the-way people with whom I might correspond in Esperanto; for all others would more or less go to the trouble of learning one or the other of the four or five really important languages. I ask this question: if I know one or two of the widely spoken languages, what is the use of Esperanto to me? And if I know none of these languages ought I to limit myself to learning Esperanto and nothing else? Thus Esperanto is either useless or an utterly inadequate substitute.

The beauty of natural languages consists for me in the very appearance, the particular features of most words. This esthetic view may have been developed in my particular case because I had leisure to study the growth and history of several languages. But I have noted a similar feeling in people who are otherwise quite uneducated. They like and cherish their dialect, their native talk, and if it is not properly spoken it jars to their ears like a false note to a musician. To them as to me Esperanto appears either comical or too sad for this, simply distasteful. If people do not feel this, that is their own affair. I only maintain that such people, by the unhappy surroundings which the capitalist system forces upon them, are to a regrettable extent alienated from real Nature, and if they feel as Anarchists they ought to endeavour rather to bring themselves and others nearer to Nature again than to deaden another of their senses, the love for the beautiful and the natural.

As to dialects, my whole article shows that I say nothing against them; but what would be the good of an international language if it fell to pieces again, dividing into dialects which often have a tendency to become separate languages? I understand that groups of competent scholars will elaborate by and by the Esperantist dictionary for all divisions of science, etc. This looks very plausible, but somehow as an Anarchist I do not much care about all these good people making my words for me; if this is the right system, why should we object to paternal legislation in general? I shall be told that Esperanto is not compulsory, but still if I object to these word-making committees I should have to create a schism or leave the church altogether,—thus indirect compulsion is in full vigour. Submission is the first rule, or the *universal* character of the thing is gone, and I prefer my freedom to that abstract universality.

I have not examined Neutral, but have read that the Esperantist vocabulary is mainly based on the Latin languages also, because the inventor considered the Latin and Southern populations the slowest to learn other languages, and went farthest to meet their particularities. This shows what an illusion Esperanto really is; the Latin peoples, who are most lacking the knowledge of other languages, practically only learn their own language over again, and then imagine they have done some intellectual work!

When the writer of the letter was hindered in his conversations with Germans by his imperfect knowledge of that language, at any rate those with whom he spoke could express properly all they had to say. If both had spoken Esperanto, probably neither of them could have deeply entered into the subject, as an artificial language cannot in a few years' time acquire that real aptness to express every nuance of thought which real languages after their secular evolution can. Thus superficiality would in instances take the place of serious effort. As shallowness is not exactly the thing of which there is a great scarcity in our modern life, there is no need to encourage it by pseudo-learning, by encroaching dilettantism.

December 15, 1906.

M. N.

DEAR COMRADE,—One of the most prominent traits in the character of a partisan is his inability to look facts in the face without the squint his bias gives him. To the Christian all is damnable that is not blessed with the sign of the cross. "M. N." in your December number falls into a similar bias: all is cursed that cannot be appropriated by him (or her) to the Anarchist movement, this movement that none can define except the "authorities," who have a very ready answer. I look in vain for that co-ordinate system that can be grasped by a sane mind and used by him for the advancement of humanity, which "M. N." professes such fond regard for.

Stripped of its verbiage, what does the two and a half columns of the praise of Anarchy and denunciation of Esperanto amount to? That it is "a sidetrack which leads from our ideas." Everything, then, must be immolated on the altar of "our ideas." Esperantists are just as capable of forming ideas as are Anarchists, probably more so in some instances; but they do not claim the variety in Nature as *their* system. To the warped visage of an Anarchist all is wrong, vile, distorted, artificial, ugly fads, broken remnants, that are apparently opposed to "our ideas," as though Mother Nature in her endeavour to produce something beautiful had created an Anarchist as the *summum bonum* of her efforts. Therefore he must pose as the grand critic of all he sees around him, dissatisfied with everything and everybody but "our ideas."

Instead of it being a sign of the "movement" declining that comrades are taking up Esperanto, it is a sign that the Anarchist mind is broadening out of its narrow sphere, that it is getting sane, that a few comrades are not making a fetish of "our ideas" to the exclusion of all others.

In Esperanto there is no charm of sound, he says. Surely he cannot have heard it spoken to say that. Esperanto is a most melodious language, being as pleasing to the ear as Italian or dictionary English. The fact of a few letters being circumflex is no evidence of defect. The common sounds of humanity must have signs to symbolise

them; thus Sanskrit has thirty-two letters. By the judicious use of circumflexion multiplicity of letters is avoided; thus the English "j" and "g," variants of one sound in Esperanto, are expressed by a short g (j), as in gem or Joe, and g, as in go, good. This we claim to be an economy.

"M. N." is altogether wrong in stating that it would end in English, Spanish, Russian Esperanto. The simple rules of the language preclude this. New words may be formed in the easiest manner. An English Esperantist would produce the same words as a Russian Esperantist.

"M. N.," like most evolutionists, tumbles into the error of thinking that language has evolved from the rudimentary sounds of apes. Language is like a machine: it had to be invented, just as Esperanto has been invented. The world needs nothing worse than a means of international intercourse. Esperanto feeds this want. "M. N." says "No, learn more languages." He forgets that Europe is not the only continent, that all over the East there are hundreds of tongues. No man could learn them. With an auxiliary language it is needless: the Hindu Esperantist can converse with a Mexican Esperantist as easily as he can with a Persian, and so on. But it has this further advantage amongst many more, that the cream of the world's literature can be translated into Esperanto, and thus give it to all the world.

That there are several aspirants to the universal tongue is no argument against it, rather the reverse. It is evidence that the need is felt by many men. In the efforts to supply the need several come into existence. But Esperanto has done for language what Sciensoocracy has done for social economy: it has crystallised the thought of the day into a concrete whole, systematising it in such a manner that it may be grasped by all. Many men circle round the truth, the genius grasps it. Just as Sciensoocracy is a synthesis of the progressive thought of the day, so Esperanto is a synthesis of language, and, in spite of the curses of "M. N.," has come to stay.

FELIX HETHERINGTON.

LAW AIN'T JUSTICE.

The Lady sat in her easy chair,
And the maid she combed and dressed her hair,
And powdered her skin to look like milk,
And dressed her in laces, in satins and silk,
And the Lady drove out shopping.

With a well filled purse—"Oh, you pretty thing,"
Said she to the jeweller's diamond ring;
"You're so dear to my heart, I must have you."
She "klept it"—and with a smile withdrew,
And greatly enjoyed her—shopping.

The Woman, without a table or chair,
Crouched nursing her babe—she was starving there,
And her breast for the babe was void of milk,
They were clothed in rags—not of satin or silk,
And the woman went out—shopping.

With empty pockets, with mind half crazed
By the hunger-wails of her child bedazed;
While fainting with hunger, and almost dead,
She "took" for her child a loaf of bread,
When penniless she went—shopping.

How did it end? Why! end in grief
For the Woman—condemned as a common thief:
While the Lady—with satins and silks on her back
Was released as a klep-to-man-i-ac.

ENVOI.

The moral is this—and that is all;
They say "all are equal before the law,"
And you're fool enough to believe this lie.
The law is made, you may be sure,
To protect the rich and oppress the poor;
If you don't see it now, you will by-and-by.

P. 5 P. in *Solidarity*.

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NOTES.

WAYS AND MEANS.

Does it not seem a strange contradiction that in their efforts to obtain the vote the Suffragettes should have to turn rebels? It seems that if you desire to be enfranchised by the State you must first become a law-breaker. And there is no denying that the Suffragettes are right in their methods, whatever one may think of their aims. But let us have fairness. If the Anarchists are right in their contention that the spirit of revolt has directly or indirectly won practically all that humanity has gained in the teeth of its oppressors, it should be admitted without cavilling that there is something else to be done for progress besides voting.

In the preface to the *Reformers' Year Book* for 1907, Mr. Pethick Lawrence makes the following statement *re* the action of the Suffragettes:—

"With fearless courage they have set the ordinary conventions at defiance, and being all women of the highest personal character and reputation, they have taken upon themselves the mantle of breakers of the law in order that women throughout the country might see and understand and rally to their standard."

It is only to be regretted that so much good fighting should be done to gain so little. The vote, if obtained, will leave poor woman as much the slave of the sweater as she is to-day. That is certain. But it is to be hoped that the moral of this revolt, and at the same time the organisation of women in trade unions, will prepare them for a bold and widespread attack on the present economic system, that will open up a new path to their complete economic freedom. In the meantime it is well to remember that they have commenced on the lines of Direct Action.

COMMON-SENSE AND CRIME.

It is really encouraging in the midst of so much that is stupid and short-sighted to see the awakening of an intelligent interest in the "criminal" and the causes which produce him. Mr. Branthwaite, Inebriates Act inspector, in his Report says that it is hardly realised how potent ordinary disease and ill-health are in the making of inebriates; in a few cases it has been possible to trace the connection between inebriate habits and accident. The hardening effect of gaol life upon habitual drunkards is fully realised by those whose duty it is to deal with such persons; repeated short sentences have no deterrent influence over the confirmed inebriate. Imprisonment of drunkards is useless, says the inspector; "an absolute waste of public money." "Cannot prison be avoided altogether in the majority of cases?" he asks.

The committal of habitual drunkards to prison, he concludes, has proved useless and inhumane, because it leads to moral degradation, causes or increases mental defect, and removes all hope of reformation. The only chance of reformation depends upon their early committal to special medical treatment and avoidance of prison routine.

All such testimony is invaluable, and badly needs to be given the widest publicity.

CRIME AND DEFECTIVE VISION.

A rather curious instance bearing upon the above comes from America. *The Literary Digest* for December 22 gives an account of defective vision found to be prevalent amongst the inmates of the Elmira (N.Y.) State Reformatory. The

evil consequences of neglecting to have scientific treatment for these sufferers is treated of by Dr. George Gould, of Philadelphia, in the *Buffalo Medical Journal*. He says: "The State, in its infinite stupidity, doubly punishes them, both by imprisonment and by improper glasses. Such is governmental wisdom. . . . Put upon 108 out of any 400 moral and well-raised boys of twelve years of age spectacles which would correct the ametropia (abnormal refraction of the eye) of any one of these 108 boys of the reformatory, and they will either get into the reformatory, a hospital, or their graves within a few years."

Further, we are told that wherever an attempt was made to deal with this matter even in a partial way "the results on demeanour, conduct, school or handwork, promptly showed great improvement."

Evidently here is another neglected aspect of the "criminal" question, and as usual we find the matter getting attention, not from the State—whom Dr. Gould charges with "amazing blundering"—but from intelligent individuals interested in the subject. All this points to what might be accomplished in a free society where State-organised hindrances had vanished, and in place thereof was developed the free initiative of intelligent individuals, as we see always to be found, working in the best spirit of humanity and solidarity for the alleviation of such social ills as capitalism may hand on to us.

THE BLIGHT OF OFFICIALISM.

The following statement needs no comment from us, but perhaps the State Socialists may see something in it to be admired:—

FARM COLONY EXPERIMENT WRECKED BY L.G.B. METHODS.

The interesting back-to-the-land experiment with workhouse inmates, carried out by the Poplar Board of Guardians on a hundred acres at Laindon, in Mid-Essex, has proved a failure.

That is the opinion, among others, of Mr. Joseph Fels, who initiated the experiment and leased the land at peppercorn rent to the Guardians for the purpose.

"The idea I had in proffering the land," he told a representative of the *Daily Chronicle*, "was the carrying out of an independently administered farm colony for the transfer of paupers from the workhouse to the land, and their training for useful lives upon the land. At first the administration of the colony was carried on with great spirit and promise, and upon fairly intelligent lines.

"As soon, however, as the Local Government Board brought pressure to bear on the management, the establishment entirely lost its distinctive character. It ceased to be a farm labour colony, and became simply a branch workhouse. The result is that the men have lost hope, initiative, and aspirations to become self-supporting."

Questioned as to the future of the colony, Mr. Fels said that so long as the Local Government Board did not take the trouble intelligently to inform itself of the advantages of such training as was intended to be given at Laindon, there could be no remedy.

ABSURDITY IN EXCELSIS.

If it were not for the tragic side to the following, one might imagine it was an incident in some screaming farce, wherein the acts of life were presented in an inverted order:—"A man in Danzig who rushed on to the railway line to save his daughter's life has been summoned and fined for trespass. He appears to have been so flurried by the fact that a goods waggon was just about to run over the girl that he forgot to apply for permission to rescue her." It all sounds too ridiculous and incredible, until we remember that one of the first consequences of the Aliens Act was to refuse the right of landing to a shipwrecked crew!

An Appeal for "Freedom."

The difficulty of printing *Freedom* in these times of depression compels us to ask all friends and sympathisers to render what financial assistance they can to enable us to appear regularly.

Much voluntary work must always be given to help the paper along, but as we are only workers ourselves, our pockets will not meet the deficit on each number.

Any subscriptions will be thankfully received, and should be sent to J. TURNER, 127, Ossulston Street, Euston Road London, N.W.

VOICE OF LABOUR.

See announcement on last page.

Thomas Cantwell.

Born December 13, 1864. Died December 29, 1906.

Many, indeed, are the friends that will hear with sincere regret of the death of our old and valued comrade Tom Cantwell. For years his health had incapacitated him from any active work in the movement, and latterly the suffering arising from heart trouble had been prolonged and intense. His patience and fortitude never failed him, and those who had nursed and attended him through all the weary months of pain learned to admire and respect him.

He first became active in the Socialist movement through joining the Socialist League. With Morris, Kitz, Mainwaring, Turner, and others he entered heart and soul into that splendid open-air propaganda, which, whilst almost always battling for free speech, held the crowds at the street corners and inspired them with that deep, broad, and revolutionary ideal of Socialism which all these past years of reaction have not entirely effaced. Whatever needed to be done—distributing handbills, selling literature, bill-posting, and the rest—Tom Cantwell could be relied upon to take his share of the work through good and ill repute. And if, as not infrequently happened, there was the prospect of a battle with the roughs or the police, then arose the opportunity he ardently desired, and in the encounters of those days every one knew that Cantwell would be in the front.

It was after his six months' imprisonment in 1893 that he joined the Freedom Group, and from that time onward till his collapse at the end of 1902 he shared the trials and troubles of publishing an Anarchist paper. His indomitable pluck through all adversities remained his strongest characteristic, and broken in health as he then was as a consequence of his imprisonment, he stuck to his work with never a thought of giving in.

Besides his work on *Freedom*, to which he gave much voluntary labour, and so helped it to live, he gave much energy to the printing of pamphlets, and produced at his own cost an excellent edition of Bakunin's "God and the State."

On Thursday, January 3, he was laid quietly to rest in Edmonton Cemetery, amongst those present being Mrs. Hyde, Frank Kitz, W. Wess, and T. Keell.

THE CONQUEST OF BREAD.*

An English translation of this important work has been too long delayed, but it appears at any rate at an opportune moment, when the revival of Socialism is again turning men's minds to the deep and vital problems that press more and more urgently for a solution.

For many reasons it is a work of the first importance to English readers, whose bias is all in favour of clear answers to "practical questions." And whilst there is in this volume no laying down of rules to be followed, no dictation as to details, it can safely be said that in no other work that we know of are the fundamental needs for social re-organisation so clearly expounded, and the dangers and difficulties of revolutionary crises so courageously faced.

After the chapters dealing with "Our Riches" and the well-being they could ensure for all, "Anarchist Communism" and "Expropriation" are dealt with, and are followed by chapters on "Food," "Dwellings," "Clothing," "Ways and Means." Here, indeed, is matter for the earnest consideration of those in the Co-operative and Trade Unionist movements in England who amidst the narrow, capitalist-stricken conditions in which they now vegetate have still in their minds the great aim of producing, consuming, and distributing for the benefit of all. We will quote one paragraph in this connection that will help to explain Kropotkin's views:—

"Instead of plundering the bakers' shops one day, and starving the next, the people of the insurgent cities will take possession of the warehouses, the cattle markets—in fact of all the provision stores and of all the food to be had. The well-intentioned citizens, men and women both, will form themselves into bands of volunteers and address themselves to the task of making a rough general inventory of the contents of each shop and warehouse. In twenty-four hours the revolted town or district will know what Paris has not found out yet, in spite of all its statistical committees, and what it never did find out during the siege—the quantity of provisions it contains. In forty-eight hours millions of copies will be printed of the tables giving a sufficiently exact account of the available food, the places where it is stored, and the means of distribution.

In every block of houses, in every street, in every town ward, bands of volunteers will have been organised. These commissariat volunteers will work in unison and keep in touch with each other. If only the Jacobin bayonets do not get in the way; if only the self-styled 'scientific' theorists do not thrust themselves in to darken counsel! Or rather let them expound their muddle-headed theories as

much as they like, provided they have no authority, no power! And that admirable spirit of organisation inherent in the people, above all in every social grade of the French nation,* but which they have so seldom been allowed to exercise, will initiate, even in so huge a city as Paris, in the midst of a Revolution, an immense guild of free workers, ready to furnish to each and all the necessary food."

Here we have the true Anarchist view of the Revolution. No authority, no government; freedom everywhere for the new life that is awakening. And this trust in freedom is well founded. Let those who doubt it remember that it needs a railway accident, a shipwreck, a mine disaster, to prove what man will do when the stupid bonds of ordinary life are loosened, and when there is more or less freedom for action and initiative.

The admirable chapters on "Agreeable Work" and "Free Agreement" we can only refer to as being of the first importance to those who sincerely desire to know how life *might* be arranged under Anarchist Communism. Finally, after answering some "objections," we come at last to the chapter on "Agriculture," which ought to satisfy even the "practical" Englishman in its bold, and we must say successful, exposition of how food could be assured to the population after a Revolution. Kropotkin takes for his illustration the 3,600,000 inhabitants of the two departments of Seine and Seine-et-Oise, tells us what they consume annually, and gives the area (494,200 acres) they would have to cultivate to produce the 22,000,000 bushels of cereals. The number of work-days, of five hours per day, necessary to produce this are then estimated. The same method is adopted in estimating the area of land and the amount of labour necessary for assuring the supply of meat, vegetables, and fruit, until at last we know clearly the full area and the full number of working days required to support this population. They are all solid facts, they are all indisputable, and are called "dreams" only by those who do not wish to see things changed.

As to the manner in which this book has been criticised by the greater part of the English press, it proves at a glance how little they understand of the liberty they prate about, and how their mental outlook is cribbed, cabined, and confined by the traditions of red-tape. "Utopian!" is their one cry. We answer them in the words of Victor Hugo: "There is nothing like dreams to build the future. Utopia to-day: flesh and blood to-morrow."

We give the following extracts from the preface as having a special interest of their own. Speaking of the oft-repeated saying that we misjudge human nature or we should have realised our aims long ago, the author says:—

"At first sight this objection seems very serious. However, the moment we consider human history more attentively it loses its strength. We see, first, that hundreds of millions of men have succeeded in maintaining amongst themselves, in their village communities, for many hundreds of years, one of the main elements of Socialism—the common ownership of the chief instrument of production, the land, and the apportionment of the same according to the labour capacities of the different families; and we learn that if the communal possession of the land has been destroyed in Western Europe, it was not from within, but from without, by the governments which created a land monopoly in favour of the nobility and the middle classes. We learn, moreover, that the mediæval cities succeeded in maintaining in their midst for several centuries in succession a certain socialised organisation of production and trade; that these centuries were periods of a rapid intellectual, industrial, and artistic progress; and that the decay of these communal institutions came mainly from the incapacity of men of combining the village with the city, the peasant with the citizen, so as jointly to oppose the growth of the military states, which destroyed the free cities.

The history of mankind, thus understood, does not offer, then, an argument against Communism. It appears, on the contrary, as a succession of endeavours to realise some sort of communist organisation, endeavours which were crowned with a partial success of a certain duration; and all we are authorised to conclude is, that mankind has not yet found the proper form for combining, on communistic principles, agriculture with a suddenly developed industry and a rapidly growing international trade. The latter appears especially as a disturbing element, since it is no longer individuals only, or cities, that enrich themselves by distant commerce and export; but whole nations grow rich at the cost of those nations which lag behind in their industrial development."

Further, speaking of the real significance of the great French Revolution, he says:—

"It is now known that the French Revolution, apart from its political significance, was an attempt made by the French people, in 1793 and 1794, in three different directions more or less akin to Socialism. It was, first, the equalisation of fortunes, by means of an income tax and succession duties, both heavily progressive, as also by a direct confiscation of the land in order to subdivide it, and by heavy war taxes levied upon the rich only. The second attempt was to introduce a wide national system of rationally established prices of all commodities, for which the real cost of production and moderate trade profits had to be taken into account. The Convention worked hard at this scheme, and had nearly completed its work, when reaction took the overhand. And the third was a sort of Municipal Communism as regards the consumption of some objects of first necessity, bought by the municipalities, and sold by them at cost price.

It was during this remarkable movement, which has never yet been properly studied, that modern Socialism was born—Fourierism with L'Ange, at Lyons, and authoritarian Communism with Buonarroti, Babeuf, and their comrades. And it was immediately after the Great Revolution that the three great theoretical founders of modern Socialism

* *The Conquest of Bread*. By P. Kropotkin. London: Chapman and Hall, Limited. Price 10s. 6d. net.

* Kropotkin is here supposing the Revolution to break out first in France.—*Trans.*

—Fourier, Saint Simon, and Robert Owen, as well as Godwin (the No-State Socialism)—came forward; while the secret communist societies, originated from those of Buonarroti and Babeuf, gave their stamp to militant Communism for the next fifty years.

To be correct, then, we must say that modern Socialism is not yet a hundred years old, and that, for the first half of these hundred years, two nations only, which stood at the head of the industrial movement, *i.e.*, Britain and France, took part in its elaboration. Both—bleeding at that time from the terrible wounds inflicted upon them by fifteen years of Napoleonic wars, and both enveloped in the great European reaction that had come from the East."

And finally, as to the beginnings of Socialism in England and France these points are of interest:—

"In Britain, Robert Owen and his followers worked out their schemes of communist villages, agricultural and industrial at the same time; immense co-operative associations were started for creating with their dividends more communist colonies; and the Great Consolidated Trades Union was founded—the forerunner of the Labour parties of our days and the International Working Men's Association.

In France, the Fourierist *Considérant* issued his remarkable manifesto, which contains, beautifully developed, all the theoretical considerations upon the growth of Capitalism, which are now described as 'Scientific Socialism.' Proudhon worked out his idea of Anarchism, and Mutualism, without State interference. Louis Blanc published his *Organisation of Labour*, which became later on the programme of Lasalle in Germany. Vidal in France and Lorenz Stein in Germany further developed in two remarkable works, published in 1846 and 1847 respectively, the theoretical conceptions of *Considérant*; and finally Vidal, and especially Pecqueur—the latter in a very elaborate work, as also in a series of Reports—developed in detail the system of Collectivism, which he wanted the Assembly of 1848 to vote in the shape of laws."

THE VOICE OF THE "EINZIGE" IN FRANCE.

(Translated from the Paris *Figaro* by Benjamin Tucker, and published in *Liberty*.)

"My friend," wrote the Marquise de Lambert to her son, "never indulge yourself in any follies save those that give you pleasure."

How well I like this advice! It bears witness to such good observation of self and others, to so exact a sense of reality!

If we were to limit our activity to the things that give us sincere pleasure,—follies, frivolities, great deeds, playthings,—life would at once become simple, easy, and—yes, in very truth—much more moral.

In every one of us—or in almost every one—there are two personages: the real one, and another one manufactured by public opinion, by imitation, by vanity and stupidity. This second individual dominates the primitive individual, compels his respect, forbids him to express his wants, to formulate his dreams.

By reducing him to silence and quiescence, this bad master enervates, paralyses, destroys his slave. He soon reigns alone over a territory which does not belong to him, and which he governs ill. It is he who gives us tastes contrary to our instinct, urges us in paths that are not our paths, hurls us into adventures for which we were in no way destined, imposes upon us artificial passions, gloomy follies, mortally wearisome diversions, and, to finish his imbecile work, persuades us that all of it is the result of our free choice.

Hardly any one lives by himself and for himself. Generally our virtues and our vices are foreign constructions. Our opinions do not belong to us; we receive them from external circumstances, they are not born in our blood. We attack what we ought to defend, we devote ourselves to causes which logically we should combat. Unconscious of our real personality, we carefully play a rôle which we take seriously.

And with what stupefaction we view those who, escaping the bad master, satisfy their instincts, think according to their temperament, love, hate, suffer, and enjoy with their fibres and not with an imagination deformed by examples and habits! These indulge themselves only in those follies that give them pleasure, and so they indulge themselves less than others, and their existence, when viewed closely, is seen to be a very reasonable one. Yet they seem to us odd, abnormal; they scandalise us. "What originals!" we say with a tinge of contempt, we who endeavour to copy so faithfully the emotions, ideas, and behaviour of our neighbour, who in turn is the precise counterpart of his neighbour.

In truth, we prefer no matter what effort to that of knowing ourselves and feeling and thinking by ourselves. The desire to imitate is stronger than hunger and love.

Every morning, opinion, fashion, revolutions, order and disorder, are reborn of this universal and burning desire to do as others do, which throws men out of their beds and sends them to work, to play, to crime, to self-sacrifice.

Each goes in search of the group to which he belongs, and which has re-made him in its image. But who dreams of choosing his own pleasure, his real pleasure? Nobody! We look for pleasure to things in which one or several persons have told us that they found their pleasure. If these things do not suit us; if they deceive us; if they disappoint us,—it will be a proof that life is detestable, that's all! In fact, it is bad, and particularly for those who take it in the wrong way,—that is, all of us!

When Madame de Lambert advised her son to commit only those follies in which he found real charm, she put him on guard against the

danger of confounding his vanity with his passions, of subordinating his aspirations, whether reasonable or unreasonable, to opinion,—in short, of imitating instead of living.

Imitation gives us more faults than virtues. And how many faults it gives us. . . . One does not become a drunkard because of frequent thirst and because one drinks with pleasure, but from drinking when not thirsty with other people who are drinking.

It would take a great amount of energy to refrain from doing—even if one is little tempted—what one sees done around him. It is too difficult! We yield! We imitate; we repeat the imitation; we become accustomed to it; and then we decorate the habit formed with the name of pleasure. One really has to excuse himself to himself for having acted in spite of himself. But, if this habit is ill adapted to your person, it will injure you by separating you from yourself, however good and excellent it may be, this habit borrowed through weakness. Why did you not seek elsewhere a satisfaction involving no lie?

The morbid *ennui*, the discouragement with which so many beings drag themselves through their amusements, among brilliant careers, surrounded by an apparently harmonious family, is an unconscious remorse at having missed something magnificent and important. Certainly they have missed something,—their life, nothing more,—and all for not having had the energy to do the extravagant or rational deed that suited their inner personality; for having avoided the folly—or the wisdom—in which their pleasure lay.

We all have capacities of enjoyment; we all have an object to attain. In order to enjoy and to realise, one must seek one's pleasure; that is a surer morality than to follow in a dispirited fashion a flock which does not know, either, where it is going.

It will be objected that human beings are sufficiently inclined to run after their own satisfaction, and often by the worst roads. I flatly deny it. There are few people sincerely attached to the pursuit of their pleasure, if we except the sinister maniacs of vice,—but these are sick people, of which we need not speak. I am thinking only of the worthy persons, almost normal, who go about haphazard, who do not know their own law, who are profoundly ignorant of their own needs, and who choose their acts as they choose for their summer holiday a site whose picturesqueness is declared to them by an illustrated poster. One would like to say to these people: Not simply should you rush into those follies alone which give you real joy, but, further, you should do only that which you feel a keen temptation to do, without exterior excitement, without first looking to see what others do, without concerning yourself about the state of astonishment into which you may plunge the public or your friends, without any thought of the public.

How many rash and guilty acts would be avoided by such a method! How many courageous acts would be accomplished!

Fear and love of opinion for the vain, imitation for the weak,—those are the two main springs of morality and its opposite. Would not the simple, sane, and sincere search for one's own pleasure give better results, more satisfying to human pride?

In one of his speeches in the Long Parliament, Cromwell said that what was done doubtfully is a sin. I am quite of his opinion. And we do doubtfully all that vital instinct does not dictate, all that is suggested in opposition to ourselves, all that we discuss at first in order to resolve upon afterwards in spite of a weak protest from within. It is true that we perform automatically every day a multitude of acts which we do not discuss for a moment. I do not look upon these as better than the acts of suggestion or vanity. The only good acts are those of ardour, passion, enthusiasm,—the acts of impulse. Impulse is the movement of the inner being, of the being that knows what it wants and what suits it. Even when this movement is bad I prefer it to those that are prompted by opinion and debility. And be very sure that, if they could take place without hindrance, in full liberty, the impulsive actions would often be excellent. But even the maddest of the impulsives undergo the pressure of their surroundings, and whatever they may do, are always a little restrained, always lie a little to themselves.

Yet in everyone's memory there is some one of those sudden movements that upset domesticated egoism and create disorder. Question yourself closely: do you regret the things which you did with a start, in a fever, in extreme emotion, to satisfy a violent need of the heart, of the mind, of the blood? Do you regret the unmeasured generosity whose consequences became a burden to you later? Or those frantic decisions in which you sacrificed everything to a passion too strong to be counterbalanced? Or those violences which gave vent to accumulated heartburnings? Or the absurd frankness which destroyed a "fine future" to gain the liberty needful to your pride? Do you regret those things that resemble neither the dull follies into which we sink from habit or the showy follies in which we compromise ourselves in order that people may say of us: "What an astonishing person!"? Do you regret the follies that "pay," to use the American expression?

I do not believe it. We regret those follies whose disastrous ending we foresaw at the moment when we took the plunge. There are follies which we regret before realising them; these are the most numerous, the ones that we should avoid.

But we regret also many acts that are called reasonable; we sometimes regret having stifled an extravagant dream in order to take a companion, of one sex or the other, who was not chosen for pleasure's sake. We regret having entered upon a career very well adapted to

those who recommended it to us, and very ill adapted to ourselves. We regret having bought a house that we did not much want, in order to give a better idea of our fortune. We regret, and greatly, having broken an arm in an automobile accident, after taking up automobiling simply to imitate everybody. We deplore the stomach-ache given us by a dinner at which we were terribly bored. We regret so many things! having so carefully cultivated false friends, and allowed true ones to depart . . . for one has hardly room for true friends among all these tasks performed in order to be thought well of and to resemble others. We regret the time, the long time, lost in running after what we did not want, in keeping by us people that were unattractive to us, in assuming fatiguing duties without compensation, in forcing ourselves, without aim or result, to tell useless lies . . . and we regret also having spent our money for appearance instead of to satisfy our real tastes; having been faithful or unfaithful out of snobbishness.

When we reflect upon it, we perceive that nowhere, at no time, have we sought our pleasure. We perceive that we have forgotten to live, and we regret it . . . when we reflect upon it.

AN OPEN LETTER TO JAMES SEXTON.

DEAR COMRADE,—Your recent remarks about the Chinese in Liverpool caused me no little surprise, you being a Socialist. Surely you are not the "sexton" who is endeavouring to toll the death-bell of international brotherhood of the workers. However, your speeches both in the Council and General Labourers and Gas Workers Union meetings inferred as much. In the Council, Alderman Oulton, a Liberal, reproved you, a Socialist, for fostering racial hatred. Irony, wasn't it, comrade? Yes, you did mention that it was not your intention to do so; but such remarks as these, that the Chinese were "vile," "disgusting," "immoral," and "not even men," cannot possibly do anything else than foster racial hatred.

Are you aware, comrade, that while our ancestors were running about in a state of savagery these "uncivilised" and "vile" Chinese had cultivated arts and literature—in fact, were the most civilised nation upon the earth? It is not many years ago since your own countrymen were spit upon and denounced with similar abuses and epithets as you have poured out in denunciation of the Chinese. Did that have a tendency to create a brotherly feeling with the two nations? I trow not.

Not many months ago you were on the same platform of the Queen's Theatre as the author of the "Bottom Dog." You spoke of him in high praise—even went so far as to say that he was your "literary godfather." I am afraid, comrade, you are not a very dutiful godson or perhaps you would read his books, especially his latest, with more care, because I am positive that it would be distinctly beneficial to you if you read and re-read his "Not Guilty." Allow me to commend to you one or two quotations from the man you admire so much:—

"Spiritual pride, intellectual pride, pride of pedigree, of caste, of race, are all contemptible and mean."

"The masterful man who insults his fellow-creatures [puts on airs of command and leadership] should be gently but firmly lifted down many pegs."

Your "startling speech" at the Union's meeting offers food for reflection. You catered remarkably well for those men who perhaps are inclined to "feel" rather than think, and no doubt you have done a fine political juggle with our principle of international brotherhood in anticipation of a further attempt to reach the House of Corruption and Confirmed Political Jugglers; but, comrade, it is such stuff as this that creates a canker in the cause of Socialism. "Conviction," says Carlyle, "is worthless till it converts itself into conduct."

It is by this juggling, this twisting, that the majority of the Labour representatives have attained their ambition as M.P.s, and I think, comrade—nay, I am sure—that they will continue to act upon the method which has resulted in their election.

Surely, comrade, it is not you who is going to divert the attention of the workers from the real cause of their poverty and misery? Surely you are not going to descend to the level of those political tricksters who revel in blinding the workers to gain their own ends? It is this diplomacy, this any-means-to-an-end business, that tends to bring the true principles of Socialism down into the slush of modern politics, which contaminates whatever it touches.

If we are, as Socialists, convinced of the international brotherhood of the workers, irrespective of creed or colour, then by all means let us endeavour not to allow our conviction to become a hollow mockery and an empty sham.

Yours fraternally,

Liverpool.

A YOUNG SOCIALIST.

LITERARY NOTES.

The Reformers' Year Book. 1s. net. 4 Clement's Inn, London, W.C.

A word of praise can always be given for this excellently arranged and exceedingly useful volume. It answers at once the purposes of a directory and a book of reference, and is practically a miniature cyclopædia for all sections of Socialist, advanced, and reform movements. Much prominence is given to the Women's Suffrage movement, and since we are treated to the portraits and biographies of "Some Notable Men," of course the ladies who desire to vote claim an equal privilege. Consequently some pages are adorned with the portraits of those plucky women whose desire seems to be to grasp the shadow and miss the substance. To us, this parading of "notabilities" seems a waste of good space. However, the volume is quite indispensable to all active workers in advanced movements, and the excellent way in which it is produced is a credit to the editors.

The Labour Question. An abridgement of *The Conditions of Labour*, by Henry George. Price 1d. Newbie Liberal Committee, Annan, Scotland.

More than twenty years ago Henry George, by the publication of his *Progress and Poverty*, aroused a burning interest in the land question. As a criticism of part of the great problem of the unequal distribution of wealth and consequent poverty for the masses, it achieved a great success. He never saw the other side. He never realised that exploitation of the workers by the capitalist in his industrial enterprise was at least an equal source of the existing misery and poverty, and was practically a concomitant of landlordism. Or if he realised it he was so blinded by his one panacea of the Single Tax that he deliberately ignored it. That is why Henry George could never be called a Socialist.

The same one-sided views are manifest in this condensed reprint. Nothing but taxation of land will mitigate our social ills. In trade unionism he saw only "a violation of natural rights." He did not understand the wage system and how it had grown up. Only once does he seem to catch a glimpse of what a future society might be. "We would not be disposed to deny," he says, "that voluntary Communism might be the highest possible state of which a man can conceive." After this glimpse of the truth he returns again into the shadow of the Single Tax, and that view of a future society knows him no more.

This little work may have the merit of maintaining discussion on the land question, but in other respects it reads woefully out of date.

Socialism and the Family. By H. G. Wells. 6d. net. A. C. Fifield, 44 Fleet Street, E.C.

Mr. Wells has gained for himself quite a wide reputation as a writer of imaginative and—may we say?—Utopian works, more or less descriptive of changes in social life which he conceives the future may have in store for us. His *Socialism and the Family*, however, is an attempt to deal with what is regarded as a very difficult problem (at least in England) from a Socialist point of view. It is not quite so easy to face the prejudices of a public infected with the morality of the *Daily Express* as it is to write "A Modern Utopia"; and to deal with this particular problem one must be quite sure of one's ground, and hold fast to one's ideal in face of all the calumnies hypocrisy will hasten to invent. Apparently Mr. Wells is not sure of his ground. In his remarks on Socialism, for instance, he makes some allusions about Socialism being presented "as a scheme of expropriation to a clamorous popular government of working men, far more ignorant and incapable of management than a shareholders' meeting." Put government out of the question and we ask, What does Mr. Wells know about the working man's capacity to manage his own affairs, if he is not bossed by those intolerable nuisances the middle-class Socialists with the "managing temperament," to use his own expression? There is class prejudice here, as well as a failure to discern the real obstacles to social reorganization.

However, threading through all the uncertainty and indecision, as it appears to us, of this volume we are finally brought to the conclusion that in Mr. Wells we have one more apostle of the State. Pity it is, but so it is! Listen to this, ye who "never will be slaves":—"The State will pay for children born legitimately in the marriage it will sanction. A woman with healthy and successful offspring will draw a wage for each one of them from the State, so long as they go on well. It will be her wage." Alas, sweet romance of love and youth! Are thy days to be so soon numbered? Is the course of true love, that never did and never will run smooth, to be mechanically diverted into the channels of State organisation and control? Are all the natural and healthy manifestations of the maternal instinct to be "regulated" by the Barnacles and the Stiltstalkings? Such suggestions have been made before and have been met with the derision they deserved.

And yet, referring to the Anarchist spirit, Mr. Wells could write:—

"All men who dream at all of noble things are Anarchists in their dreams, and half at least of the people who are much in love, I suppose, want to be this much Anarchistic that they do not want to feel under a law or compulsion one with another."

Elsewhere he admits, "One's dreamland perfection is Anarchy."

But he is mistaken. Anarchy is not a "dream," neither is it "perfection." It stands simply for human freedom, without which moral, intellectual, and physical degeneration is inevitable. Like light and air, it is a fundamental necessity to produce a healthy, sane and vigorous humanity. That is the simple, logical, common-sense of Anarchism. But it is not perfection. If Mr. Wells will reconsider his Socialism in the light of these freer conceptions—on the basis of the Free Commune, for instance—he will find the difficulties he has been grappling with in this little work will solve themselves.

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