

# Freedom

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## NOTES.

### High-Class Hooligans.

It is nothing new to find so-called educated persons behaving, on occasion, like cads; but the fact that we find a person like the Master of the Cambridge University Draghounds summoned for cruelty to a stag, proves further how education can be perverted to make us stupidly brutal rather than intelligently humane. We need not repeat the sickening details of the torture of this unfortunate animal. Suffice it to say that a hooligan would blush to be accused of such cruelty. Yet we find the authors of this outrage were not convicted, probably because so many of the gentlemen who make our laws indulge in the same kind of "sport." There may also be another view of the question. If the sentimentalists who take action for the protection of dumb animals should awaken public opinion against such barbarities, we may later on have the prosecution of capitalists for cruelty to that other and far less important animal—man. Fancy convicting the London County Council of cruelty to the tram men in keeping them so many hours without food, or railway directors for working their drivers so many hours without sleep! In fact, there is no telling where it would end. So humanitarianism must be "put down."

### Art and Freedom.

"Yet they would find that rules were constantly being laid down by musical critics, as by literary critics, indicating in what limits creative energy and genius were to show themselves; but as they dealt with what music had been, not what music was going to be, they were always behind the times, and their rules, if they did anything at all, hampered rather than guided the spontaneous movements of artistic creation. The result was at times quite ludicrous. Perhaps the last critic who laid down rules in regard to poetical composition was Wordsworth, but as neither he nor anyone else ever followed them, no great harm was done." (*Westminster Gazette*, November 25.)

These excellent remarks of an Oxford lecturer on "Criticism and Beauty" hold good evidently if "critics" and "artistic creation" are replaced by "lawgivers" and "the lives of men." Then they imply a recognition of the absurdity of laying down rules to regulate our conduct beforehand, and a demand for free, unfettered evolution. Is not human life more complicated, more differentiated than all artistic creation, and therefore least amenable of all to regulations drawn up beforehand? And yet to men at large is still denied what artistic creation has already won even in the opinion of hereditary Conservatives like Mr. Balfour, for the quotation is taken from the report of his Romanes lecture.

### Prometheus Still Bound.

We do not invite him to think the subject out further; it is to the interest of his class that people should continue to think law-making necessary. No one will deny that the present system benefits Mr. Balfour and his friends. But we others might stop for a moment to think what ridiculous productions are works of "art," made to order, following the precepts of pedantic critics—every one will see this. But what are we ourselves, the law-fed, law-abiding mass, but stunted, machine-made creatures of an equally ridiculous type? How different might we be, if we were free on all sides! Art has risen to that freedom by *taking* it, by *acting* up to it; and see what it has produced! Art is a glimpse at, a fragment of that general freedom which it is in our power to take if we only will. Art is a perpetual forerunner and pathfinder of freedom; let us follow it. Art has already emerged from the dark ages when it lay fettered and crushed—as the "free citizens" of all civilised countries lay to-day; for mankind at large still lives in the dark ages. Nor can anybody help them but they themselves. In the sixteenth century La Boetie

expressed in two words the root of the evil: *voluntary enslavement* ("servitude volontaire"). Break at last this yoke of *voluntary* submission if you would *feel* free and *be* free.

## I.W.W. FIGHT FOR FREE SPEECH.

As we have often said, it is a delusion to imagine any particle of freedom safe in our time unless upheld by a determination to resist all attacks against it. In Spokane, Wash., in the American West, where one might think some of the freedom of the pioneer days might still linger, open-air propaganda by the Industrial Workers of the World became disagreeable to the capitalists, and forthwith the City Council passed "Ordinance No. A 3890," then "Ordinance No. 4381," with the elegant title: "An ordinance forbidding the use of certain streets, alleys and sidewalks within the city of Spokane for the purpose of holding public meetings, street shows, or the use of the same by street fakers or other persons, or the doing of any act which tends to collect or draw a crowd. . . ."

The first to defy this ukase was, it appears, William H. Taft, the ambulating President of the United States, who "spoke on the street, attracting 40,000 people, with the consent and approval of the police." But when the I.W.W. speakers began to do the same, they were arrested by the dozen. "Two hundred and fifty men and women," says the *Spokane Industrial Worker* of November 10, "are now in jail. Some of them have been in the sweat box for 24 hours, a small cement cell, 6 by 8, where 27 men were packed like sardines for this length of time, with no ventilation save the half of a great door, without sanitary conveniences of any kind, and a 4-inch steam pipe in full use directly over their heads."

The free speech fight is helped by hundreds of workers in the West who board trains and hurry to Spokane. The Coeur d'Alene District Union of the Western Federation of Miners issued a general appeal to all workers to boycott Spokane goods and trade all over the country. Rightly they say in this appeal:—"We call the attention of the workers to the fact that it is not the handful of militant workers in Spokane that the government of that city and all other parasites are after, but the militant working class movement of the world. Remember, fellow workers, that the strangulation of free speech or the right of assemblage at any time or place is but a step from the precipice from which despotic Spain hurled a Ferrer. Rise, then, in your united strength, trample in the mud and spit upon this city ordinance that denies these rights."

The *Seattle Star* remarks: "Has not the United States Court of Appeals of the District of Columbia declared that Gompers, Mitchell and Morrison must go to jail because they *discussed a matter a Court told them they must not even talk about*? Are not the Spokane cells crowded because men ask for the right of free speech?" The Washington decision mentioned arises from the fact that a Court may order the most absurd things, and those who disobey these injunctions go to prison. This is American freedom.

ANARCHY.—A social theory which regards the union of order with the absence of all direct government of man by man as the political ideal.—*Century Dictionary*.

## The Great French Revolution, 1789—1793.

By P. A. KROPOTKIN.

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# MODERN SCIENCE AND ANARCHISM.

By PETER KROPOTKIN.

## III.

### THE REACTION AT THE BEGINNING OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY.

In the earlier part of the nineteenth century, after the defeat of the Great Revolution, Europe passed, as is known, through a period of general reaction in the domain both of politics and of science and philosophy. The White Terror of the Bourbons in France; the Holy Alliance concluded in 1815 at Vienna between Austria, Germany, and Russia; mysticism and pietism and State police at the Courts and in the upper classes, everywhere triumphed all along the line. However, with all that, the fundamental principles of the Revolution did not perish. The gradual liberation of the peasants and the town workers from a state of semi-serfdom in which they had been living till then, equality before the law, and representative government—these three principles promulgated by the Revolution and carried by the French armies all over Europe, as far as Poland and Russia, gradually made headway in France and elsewhere. After the Revolution, which had begun to preach the great principles of liberty, equality, and fraternity, the slow evolution began—that is to say, the slow transformation of institutions, and the application to every-day life of the ideas proclaimed in France in 1789–1793. Such a slow realisation, during a period of evolution, of the principles that have been proclaimed during the preceding revolutionary period, can even be considered as a general law of human development.

If the Church, the State, and Science trampled under their feet the banner on which the Revolution had inscribed its device: "Liberty, Equality, Fraternity"; if compromise with existing conditions, political and economical servitude, had become the watchword of the moment, even with philosophers of that period—Hegel in Germany and Cousin in France—nevertheless, the great principles of Liberty gradually began to penetrate into life. True, that serfdom for the peasants all over Eastern Europe, and the Inquisition that had been abolished in Italy and Spain by the armies of the Revolution, were re-established. But a death-blow had been dealt to these institutions, and never since could they recover from it.

The liberation wave first reached Western Germany, then it rolled as far as Prussia and Austria in 1848; it spread over the peninsulas of Spain and Italy, and, flowing further eastwards, it finally reached Russia, where serfdom was abolished in 1861, and the Balkan States, where it ceased to exist in 1878. Slavery disappeared in North America in 1863.

At the same time, the idea of equality of all before the law, and that of representative government also, spread from West to East, and at the end of the nineteenth century Russia and Turkey alone remained under the yoke of autocracy—already weakened, however, and doomed to a certain death in a near future.\*

\* \*

More than that. On the line of demarcation separating the eighteenth century from the nineteenth, we already find the ideas of economic enfranchisement loudly advocated. Immediately after the overthrow of the King by the uprising of the people of Paris of August 10, 1792, there was, both in Paris and the provinces, an outburst of Communist feeling, leading to direct action in this sense in the revolutionary sections of the large cities and the municipalities of the small towns and villages over large portions of France.

The people proclaimed that the time had come when Equality must cease to be a shallow word; and as the burden of the war that the Republic had to fight against the allied monarchies, fell especially upon the poor, the people forced the Commissaries of the Convention in the provinces to take Communistic measures.

The Convention itself was compelled by the people to take Communistic measures tending towards the "abolishing of poverty" and "levelling the fortunes." And after the bourgeois Republican party of the Girondists had been thrust out of power on May 31—June 2, 1793, the National Convention and the Radical bourgeois Club of the Jacobinists were compelled to agree to a series of measures tending to nationalise not only the land, but also all the commerce in the main necessities of life.

This deeply seated movement lasted till July, 1794, when the bourgeois reaction of the Girondists, combined with the Monarchists, took the upper hand. But it was this movement which gave to the nineteenth century its specific character—the Communist and Socialist tendency of its advanced elements.

So long as that movement lasted it found several spokesmen from among the people. But amongst the writers of the period there was none who would have been able to give a literary expression to its aspirations and foundations, and to advocate it in such a way as to produce a lasting impression upon the minds of his contemporaries.

\* See the "Conclusion" of "The Great French Revolution."

It was only in 1794, in England, that William Godwin brought out his truly remarkable work: "An Enquiry into Political Justice and its Influence on Public Morality," which made him the first theoriser of Socialism without government—that is to say, of Anarchism; while Babeuf, aided and perhaps inspired by Buonarrotti, came forward, in 1796, as the first theoriser of centralised Socialism, i.e., of State Socialism.

Later on, developing the principles already put forth at the end of the preceding century by the people of France, came Fourier, Saint-Simon, and Robert Owen—the three founders of modern Socialism, representing its three principal schools; and later on, in the "forties," we have Proudhon, who, without knowing Godwin's work, laid anew the foundations of Anarchism.

The scientific basis of Socialism under both aspects, governmental and anti-governmental, was thus elaborated from the beginning of the nineteenth century with a richness of development, unfortunately too much ignored by our contemporaries. But the reality is that modern Socialism, which dates from the International Working Men's Association, founded in 1864, has outdistanced its founders by two points only—both, no doubt, quite essential. Modern Socialism has declared that its aims can only be brought into life by a social revolution—which Fourier, Saint-Simon and Robert Owen did not wish or dare to say; and it has completely broken with the conception of "Christ being a Socialist and revolutionist," which was so often paraded before 1848.

Modern Socialism has understood that to realise its aspirations a social revolution is absolutely necessary, not in the sense in which the word "revolution" is made use of when an "industrial revolution" or a "revolution in science" is spoken of, but in its exact concrete meaning: that of a general and sudden reconstruction of the foundations themselves of society. Moreover, modern Socialism has ceased to mix its conceptions with certain innocent reforms of a sentimental order mentioned by a few Christian reformers. But this last—we must point out—had already been done by Godwin, Fourier, and Robert Owen. As to centralisation and the cult of authority and discipline, which humanity owes to theocracy and to Imperial Roman law—all "survivals of an obscure past"—these survivals are still retained by many modern Socialists, who consequently have not yet reached the level of their two predecessors, Godwin and Proudhon.

\* \*

It would be difficult to give here an adequate idea of the influence which reaction, having become supreme after the Great French Revolution, exercised upon the development of science.\* Suffice it to remark that what modern science is so proud of to-day was already indicated, and often more than indicated—it was sometimes put forth in a definite scientific form—towards the end of the eighteenth century. The mechanical theory of heat; the indestructibility of movement (preservation of energy); the variability of species by the direct influence of surroundings; physiological psychology; the anthropologic comprehension of history, of religions, and of legislation; the laws of development of thought—in a word, the whole mechanical conception and synthetic philosophy (a philosophy that compromises all physical, chemical, vital, and social phenomena as a whole) were already sketched and partly elaborated in the last century.

But when the reactionaries had got the upper hand, after the defeat of the Great French Revolution, for fully half a century, they stifled all these discoveries. Reactionary scientists represented them as "unscientific." On the pretext of "first studying facts" and accumulating materials for "science" in scientific societies, they even went so far as to repudiate any research which was not merely mensuration. Such remarkable discoveries as the elder Séguin's and, later on, Joule's determination of the mechanical equivalent of heat (the quantity of mechanical friction necessary in order to obtain a certain quantity of heat) were repudiated by these keepers of tradition. Even the Royal Society of Great Britain, which is the English Academy of Science, refused to print Joule's work, finding it "unscientific." As to Grove's remarkable work on the unity of all physical forces, written in 1843—no attention was paid to it till 1856. One must read the history of science in the first half of the nineteenth century to realise how dense was the obscurity which enveloped Europe at that time.

\* \*

The veil was suddenly rent when, towards the end of the "fifties," under the impulse of the revolutionary year of 1848, there began in Western Europe the movement which brought about Garibaldi's rising, the liberation of Italy, the abolition of slavery in America, liberal reforms in England, and a few years later the abolition of serfdom and the knout in Russia. The same movement overthrew in Europe the philosophical authority of Schelling and Hegel, and in Russia it gave rise to that open rebellion against intellectual serfdom and cringing to all sorts of authority which was known by the name of Nihilism.

\* I have discussed this question to some extent in a lecture delivered in England: "The Development of Science during the Nineteenth Century."

Now that we can look backwards upon the history of those times, it is evident for us that it was the propaganda of Republican and Socialist ideas in the "thirties" and "forties" of the nineteenth century, and the Revolution in 1848, which helped science to rend the bonds that had stifled it since the anti-revolution reaction had begun after the crushing, by the united Kings, of the revolutionary French Republic of 1789-1793.

Without entering into details, it will be sufficient to remember a few facts. Séguin, whose name has just been mentioned as the promoter of the mechanical theory of heat; Augustin Thierry, the historian who first laid the basis of the study of the rule of the people in the small Republics of the early Middle Ages, and of the Federalist ideas of those times; Sismondi, the historian of the free mediæval Republics in Italy, were followers of Saint-Simon—one of the three great founders of Socialism in the first half of the nineteenth century; and Alfred R. Wallace, who discovered at the same time as Darwin the theory of origin of species through natural selection, was in his youth a convinced partisan of Robert Owen; Auguste Comte was a follower of Saint-Simon; Ricardo, as well as Bentham, followed Owen; and the materialists Carl Vogt and George Lewes, as well as Grove, Mill, Herbert Spencer, and so many others, were under the influence of the Radical-Socialist movement in the "thirties" and "forties." From this movement they drew their scientific courage.

The appearance, in the short space of five or six years, 1856-1862, of the works of Grove, Joule, Berthelot, Helmholtz, Mendeléeff; of Darwin, Claude Bernard, Spencer, Moleschott, and Vogt; of Lyell on the origin of man; of Bain, Mill, Bournouf,—the sudden appearance of this wonderful constellation of works produced a complete revolution in the fundamental conception of science. Science immediately ventured into new paths. Whole branches of learning were created with prodigious rapidity. The science of life (biology), that of human institutions (anthropology and ethnology), that of understanding, of will and of passions (physical psychology), the history of law and of religions on a scientific, anthropological basis, soon grew up under our very eyes, striking the mind by the boldness of their generalisations and the revolutionary spirit of their conclusions. What were mere general guesses in the eighteenth century now became facts, proved by the scales and the microscope, and verified by thousands of observations and experiments. Even the manner of writing completely changed. The men of science just mentioned, one and all, returned to the simplicity, exactitude, and, I must say, beauty of style which was characteristic of the followers of the inductive method, and of which the writers of the eighteenth century, since they had given up metaphysics, were such great masters.

It is impossible to predict in which direction science will henceforth go. As long as men of science depend on the rich and on Governments as they do now, their science will inevitably bear the stamp of these influences, and a stagnant period, like the one in the first half of the nineteenth century, can certainly be produced once more. But one thing is certain. In science, such as it appears to-day, there is no necessity for the hypothesis which Laplace knew how to dispense with, nor the metaphysical "little words" which Goethe mocked at. We can already read the book of Nature, which comprises that of the development of both inorganic and organic life and of mankind, without resorting to a Creator, or to a mystical vital force, or to an immortal soul; and without consulting the trilogy of Hegel, or hiding our ignorance behind any metaphysical symbols whatever, endowed with a real existence by the writer. *Mechanical* phenomena, becoming more and more complicated as we pass from physics to the facts of life, are sufficient to explain Nature and all the intellectual and social organic life on our planet.

No doubt much that is unknown, obscure and not understood remains in the Universe, and we know that in proportion as we bridge over gaps in our knowledge, new chasms will open up. But we know no region in which it would be impossible for us to find an explanation of the phenomena if we turn to simple physical facts which we see produced when two billiard balls meet, or when a stone falls; or to the chemical facts which we see going on around us. These mechanical facts have been sufficient till now to explain all the phenomena we have studied. They have never yet played us false, and we do not see the possibility of ever discovering a sphere in which mechanical facts would not meet our want. Nothing up till now justifies us in surmising the existence of such a domain.

(To be continued.)

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## THE EVOLUTION OF THE POLICE DOG.

A Paris paper photographed a police official watching the Spanish Embassy with a police dog before him. Such dogs were let loose in those days to harry the people who left a meeting on Montmartre. The people of Paris torn by dogs in their streets at the bidding of the police! In Berlin last year a meeting of apprentices was dissolved, and the young workers driven away by police dogs.

These dogs acquired their official capacity under the pretext of detecting crime and saving life. Of course, they never did anything of the kind. A Paris dog, stationed at the river, once fell in the water and had to be rescued at great trouble as it could not swim, of which nobody had thought before; and a Berlin dog recently got lost and the whole police had to hunt for days to detect him. Thus they demonstrated plainly their true official incompetence, but, like all true officials, this does not affect them. They have come to stay and extend their functions in the way it suits them and those who employ them. A reproduction in miniature of the origin of all government: authority foolishly consented to by the people under the pretext of some useful work, and, authority once established, the useful work is shirked and the power acquired is used against the people. Already the man-hunting by dogs brought us back to the delightful old days of American slave-hunting by bloodhounds. We hear further of war dogs which are greatly missed in our days, since, as we are told, the armies of centuries ago, back even to the days of the barbarian tribes, never went into battle without these fighting dogs at their side. How can we possibly remain behind these barbarian tribes! And in Paris and Berlin political manifestants are beginning to be at the mercy of savage dogs.

This evolution is inevitable. Authority means the constant falling from bad to worse, the gradual increase of brutality; and who knows whether the dog is its last word? Some day they may succeed in debasing vipers and crocodiles sufficiently to do police work, and then we shall be under *their* sway.

Not so, however, as long as the people of Paris have a word to say. Hervé declares bluntly that these dogs will be shot, and it is evident that most people will henceforth not care to attend Paris meetings without being armed. This opens a wide prospect, and is certainly an incident not intended in the successful career of the official police dog.

## NOTES FROM NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE.

Comrade Kean opened his campaign here on November 9, and finished a successful course of lectures on November 18. The first lecture was on "The Evolution of Man." After describing the formation of worlds, he traced the evolution of life up to man. The second lecture was on "Stirner's Egoism." Beginning with a review of society, and revealing it to us in all its horrible nakedness, he proved that the prevalent feature in man to-day was degeneracy, a degeneracy, Kean contended, that was greatly augmented by the atavistic doctrines of Christianity. Further, that if the workers could grasp the fact that the fundamental motive of all our actions was self-interest, they would probably have sense to stand on their feet and demand their rights. In the lecture on "Anarchism" we had described to us its history. It is a point worthy of note, which Kean specially emphasised, that most of our great thinkers have been Anarchists, more or less. The next lecture was one on "Knowledge and Belief." It was pointed out how easy it was to mistake one for the other. All religions were beliefs. The last lecture in the course was "The Quintessence of Ibsenism." Kean had a good grip of his subject. He gathered up all the threads of his previous lectures, and then proceeded to show, with the aid of Ibsen, that the individual owed more to himself than to any movement. There was about his remarks a tone of serious cheerfulness, which appears to be much needed in the Anarchist movement. He tried to drive home the fact that the man who went about with a face as long as a Christian's—whether he was an Anarchist or an archangel it did not matter—was just as much a nuisance to a movement as the person who saw in it just a means of recreation. The ideal man was he who looked life straight in the face, saw clearly what he wanted, and then, with coat off and sleeves up, worked cheerfully for his goal.

In the middle of the course Kean delivered a lecture on "The Philosophy of Nietzsche." I am unable to sum up his teachings here, there are so many sides to them. There is much contrariety of opinion in the Anarchist movement over this great thinker. Judging from his writings, undoubtedly he himself was an Anarchist. One of his aphorisms reads—"To live as I like or to live not at all." But whether he would have allowed others the same freedom is a debatable point. However, those comrades who are not afraid of being hit in a thousand places and awakening up to where one is—metaphorically speaking—should read Nietzsche.

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## BOURGEOIS SOCIALISM AND THE COMING SLAVERY.

The National Committee to Promote the Break-up of the Poor Law have issued an "outline" of their proposals. These proposals emanate practically from the "superior persons" of the Fabian Society, that is to say, from the Webbs, those bureaucratic meddlers, with Bernard Shaw at their tails—as usual. Around them these luminosities have gathered such well-known altruists as the Bishop of Southwark, Sir John Gorst, the Dean of Norwich, Sir Gilbert Parker, and some others, all great lovers of the poor and the outcast—at a distance.

We mention these names, as it is just as well to know the sort of people who are to appoint the Bumbles of the future, and who are proposing plans for the moralising of the workless worker, and for making him a useful and obedient slave under bourgeois State Socialism—when it arrives.

"To break up the Poor Law and to transfer its several services to the Local Education, Health, Lunacy, and Pension Authorities," and to have in addition a "National Authority dealing with Unemployment," is briefly what they are aiming at. At bottom it means nothing less than middle-class bureaucratic control of the unemployed, the casual labourer, and the "submerged tenth," whose terrible plight is largely a consequence of the lives lived by these same middle classes.

Now if such plans emanated from the Bishops and the Gorsts, we should feel no surprise. But with what disgust must one read of these professors of Socialism calling for powers "for an altogether new [legal] enforcement of parental and marital responsibility," when none should know better than they how impossible it is for our poverty-stricken population to meet with certainty any of the responsibilities that society imposes.

As to this "authority" which they desire to create "to deal with the unemployed able-bodied, to decasualise labour, to regularise industry, to train the incompetent, and to detain under discipline the 'won't works,'" one sees clearly enough what that means. It means State regulation of the unemployed, and to the economic slavery which already crushes the worker is to be added the slavery of the State when he falls out of work. A new department would be created in which the "superior persons" of the Fabian Society would be installed (are they not always after these official positions?), and the first step towards bourgeois State Socialism would have been taken.

In a circular, signed by Mrs. Webb, we read that "three of the great causes of destitution" are "preventable sickness, neglected infancy and childhood, and uncontrolled and unsegregated feeble-mindedness." They forget to tell us how it is that sickness and feeble-mindedness have not impoverished the Dukes. But, of course, the statement is a bourgeois lie, as Nordau would say, since even the Fabians know that all these evils arise from a vicious social system, where *exploitation* is the order of the day.

We cannot do better than quote against this contemptible and misleading statement of Mrs. Webb, some observations by another Fabian, commonly known as George Bernard Shaw. Speaking of what private property has done for the proletariat, he says: "On the roads he is a vagrant: off them he is a trespasser: he is the first disinherited son of Adam, the first proletarian, one in whose seed all the generations of the earth shall yet be blest [*pace* Mrs. Webb], but who is himself for the present foodless, homeless, shiftless, superfluous, and everything that turns a man into a tramp or a thrall" ("Fabian Essays," p. 9).

So here we have the truth. Private property, and the *exploitation that inevitably accompanies it*, are the root causes of the poverty and destitution we have to-day. What then can we say of these so-called Socialists, who play the reactionary game of enslaving the poor to the power of the State, while neglecting to attack the classes whose monopoly, as Shaw says, is at the bottom of all the trouble?

Mrs. Webb, indeed, seems to have joined that class to whom Shaw administered such a strong dose of the truth, when he said: "In the midst of the riches which their labour piles up for you, their misery rises up too and stifles you. You withdraw in disgust to the other end of the town from them; you appoint special carriages on your railways, and special seats in your churches and theatres for them; you set your life apart from theirs by every class barrier you can devise; and yet they swarm about you still: your face gets stamped with your habitual loathing and suspicion of them: your ears get so filled with the language of the vilest of them that you break into it when you lose your self-control: they poison your life as remorselessly as you have sacrificed theirs heartlessly. You begin to believe intensely in the devil. Then comes the terror of their revolting; the drilling and arming of bodies of them to keep down the rest; the prison, the hospital, paroxysms of frantic coercion, followed by paroxysms of frantic charity" ("Fabian Essays," p. 22).

## The Great French Revolution.\*

"Two great currents," the author begins, "prepared and made the Great French Revolution. One of them, the current of ideas, concerning the political reorganisation of States, came from the middle classes; the other, the current of action, came from the people, both peasants and workers in towns, who wanted to obtain immediate and definite improvements in their economic condition. And when these two currents met and joined in the endeavour to realise an aim which for some time was common to both, when they had helped each other for a certain time, the result was the Revolution."

The new ideas had been long since elaborated by the eighteenth-century philosophers; insurrectionary periods, hunger riots, peasants' risings had taken place; but all this is far from being a revolution. "A revolution is infinitely more than a series of insurrections in town and country. It is more than a simple struggle between parties, however sanguinary; more than mere street-fighting, and much more than a mere change of government, such as was made in France in 1830 and 1848. A revolution is a swift overthrow, in a few years, of institutions which have taken centuries to root in the soil, and seem so fixed and immovable that even the most ardent reformers hardly dare to attack them in their writings. It is the fall, the crumbling away in a brief period, of all that up to that time composed the essence of social, religious, political and economic life in a nation." To arrive at this, "the revolutionary action coming from the people must coincide with a movement of revolutionary thought coming from the educated classes. There must be a union of the two." The French Revolution, therefore, happened at the moment when the middle classes became conscious of their rights and felt capable of snatching the government from the Court aristocracy—but the power to do this was given to them only by the simultaneous stirring of the mass of the peasants. These latter events, "the part played by the people of the country places and towns in the Revolution," have never been exhaustively studied; and it is to the reconstruction of the history of *popular action* the author devotes himself especially, establishing thereby the unique character of his book (chap. I.).

Whilst obvious circumstances—I mean the many other works he is continually giving us, "The Conquest of Bread" and "Mutual Aid," "The Memoirs of a Revolutionist" and "Russian Literature," Recent Science and Ethics, "Fields, Factories and Workshops," "The Terror in Russia," etc.—explain that he could not spend years on the exploration of the French central and local archives, where so much of the neglected popular side of the Revolution can only be studied in full detail, other circumstances make him particularly fit for this subject. P. Kropotkin, seeing in his youth the serfdom of the Russian peasants and the absolutism of Nicholas I., has vivid personal impressions of that *ancien régime* which the French Revolution destroyed. He witnessed many ineffectual efforts to solve the Russian land question—by Government in the "sixties," by Parliament in the earlier Dumas, by peasant movements, be they educative, co-operative, or insurrectionary. He again watched all revolutionary efforts of the working classes for the last forty years, and obtained a clearer insight in the inner history of all these movements from their faint beginnings to their present growth than most others, and certainly than all the usual historians, who have little experience of life outside of books and charters. His training in natural science, and in particular the attention he always gave to mutual co-operation, collective efforts

\* *The Great French Revolution, 1789-1793.* By P. A. Kropotkin. Translated from the French by N. F. Dryhurst. London: W. Heinemann; New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1909. xi., 610 pp. 8vo. Cloth, 6s. net.

(Mutual Aid), enable him to discover almost lost traces of the influence of this factor, of which historians, dealing mostly with individuals only, take little notice, or which they are used to treat with contempt. When they have said "the mob" or "the rabble" thought or did this or that, the matter ends for them; whilst Kropotkin's real work here only begins to examine the real sources and motives of popular thought or action. We might say, finally, that the study of the French Revolution was to him a relief from other work for the last thirty years or longer. "The Spirit of Revolt," that early pamphlet from the *Révolté*, several articles on the Revolution (widespread French pamphlets), and a series of articles in the *Temps Nouveaux* were leading to the present book, which in the course of printing the original French edition almost doubled its size by constant additions, and represents a good two years' work as it stands now. The Russian revolutionary events since 1905, and their momentary failure, may have finally determined the publication of the book, which, in its earlier chapters chiefly, offers striking parallels to the Russian events, and by describing and explaining the prolonged interruptions, periods of stagnation and reaction, which even the French Revolution underwent to an extent that will be unexpected to most readers, may perhaps give the key to the present situation in Russia, and hold out hopes for a revival of the revolutionary spirit in that country.

We cannot give in short the contents of sixty-eight chapters, excellently translated, and augmented, in this edition, by a full subject index; but we will accompany the author some little distance as he approaches the period to which his book is limited, the years 1789 to 1794.

The modern State had no existence in pre-Revolutionary France. The middle classes, from the English Revolution of the seventeenth century, from Turgot and Adam Smith, the political economists, and from their own experience in industrial exploitation, desired a Constitution modelled upon the English Constitution, government by the propertied classes, the breaking of the power of the Church, a centralised State, freedom of industry and commerce, which in reality meant freedom to exploit the workers, to whom the right of combination, surviving even in guilds and ancient customs, was henceforth to be strictly denied. But the selfishness which is at the bottom of these demands was accompanied by a certain amount of idealism, the hatred of despotism, abstract ideas of liberty and equality (chap. II.).

What was the people's idea? "Respect for royalty and aristocracy was passing away. Ideas of equality were penetrating to the very lowest ranks. Gleams of revolt flashed through many minds." Popular writers claimed "equal rights to the land for all, and Communist possession of it"; but they had little personal experience with the people's need, and the people themselves were not clear in their minds what to do with the power they had conquered. Still, they leaned towards decentralisation, real municipal life—which was opposed by the middle classes in possession of State power; they hated the aristocracy, the clergy, all oppressive and degrading feudal institutions, and they had a real hunger for land, to which the landlord refused them access. This need of land "awoke the spirit of revolt ever since 1788," and "stimulated the incessant revolts of the peasants in the years 1789-1793," which enabled the middle classes to overthrow the old system. "Without those risings, without that disorganisation of authority which resulted in never-ceasing *jacqueries* [victorious peasant riots], without that promptitude of the people of Paris and other towns in taking up arms, and in marching against the strongholds of royalty, whenever an appeal to the people was made by the revolutionaries, the middle classes would certainly not have achieved anything" (chap. III.).

The peasants' misery is next described, but it is noticed that whilst their great mass became poorer, a few succeeded in bettering their condition, and it was these "village middle classes, the well-to-do peasants," who "furnished the first speakers against feudal rights, and demanded their abolition" (chap. IV.). (This observation reminds one of similar developments in the Labour movement.)

"The Spirit of Revolt: the Riots," is a chapter (V.) teeming with facts impossible to summarise briefly. The insufficient, stingy reforms in the early years of Louis XVI's reign, frustrated by the passive malignity of that deceitful being, who quite knew what he was about, and tried to win time and to play false up to the foot of the scaffold—the powerful example of the American Revolution—all this would not have given the middle classes real strength to attack the old system, had it not been for an endless series of popular revolts, hunger riots when harvests were bad and food was scarce. Here flour mills and bakeries were seized, there the houses of notaries and attorneys were invaded and the deeds and contracts burned. The silk weavers of Lyons went on strike and saw their leaders hanged; military enlistments and the exaction of the tithes led to riots, whilst Governmental repression of independence in the Paris and some provincial so-called *parlements* led many to take an interest in these institutions, and street demonstrations began which soon followed closely all reactionary moves of the Court party. "From 1788 the peasant riots became so general that it was impossible to provide for the expenses of the State," and the King was forced "to convoke first the two Assemblies of Notables, and finally the States-General."

But these are only some introductory chapters of more general contents. What follows is five years' history, sometimes summarising longer periods, but often dealing with situations which change hour by hour; and the immense materials condensed in Kropotkin's book

could not be studied to any advantage if they were condensed still further. Moreover, our own opinions must be based on the complete mass of facts, and not on a few selected examples. I will only direct attention to some results, copiously illustrated and proved throughout the book.

One is the lack of sincerity, the great distrust of the middle classes in their temporary co-operation with the people. They needed the people for fighting royalty, but they wanted it to stop short of the slightest social demands; they felt safe only when the people had returned to their hovels and were again kept down by State power or by their own citizen forces, the National Guards. They were ready to accept the most unsatisfactory compromise with their enemies "above" in order to get rid as soon as possible of their allies "below." What really causes a step forward to be made is usually a Court conspiracy which threatens the lives and property of the middle-class leaders. Faced by ruthless repression, to which blind folly and pride drive the aristocrats, the middle classes call upon the people, energetic men enter into contact with advanced, fighting groups of the people, and a bold stroke is made—the Bastille, the Tuileries stormed. But their next care is to stop the people, to prevent them by force and ruse from going one inch further—and usually, in spite of some warning voices, those of Marat or the Paris Communists or others, the people go home, and a new variety of Government plays the old game a little longer.

In a similar way the peasants are continually put off. The night of noble sacrifice of August 4, 1789, came to very little in practice. Nobility and clergy gave up their feudal rights: but the moment they felt safe again, they wished it to be understood that this was only an abstract wish to be realised at some future date when any amount of regulations would have been worked out in detail and the question of compensation satisfactorily arranged; in short, the less they heard of any change in the feudal system, the better they would be pleased. The peasants had to take matters in their own hands, refuse further payments, burn the deeds, drive away the landlords' henchmen, and seize the land. Wherever they did this, the old system was gone, and no reactionary efforts of later times could re-establish it; where they did not, they might still wait for the law to help them, for whilst the *direct action* of the peasants caused the representative Assemblies by and by to sanction the new state of things by laws, nobody enforced the law if the peasants did not see to it themselves. They carried their purpose, the feudal system being rotten to the core and incapable of living on or of being revived.

The town workers were less successful; industrial development was as yet too far behind to make them a more homogeneous mass and to separate them entirely from the small middle classes. The Revolution had done away with all the many noxious regulations and customs which dictated every step they took in their respective trades, and they wanted to enjoy their new freedom, being averse for a time to coalitions into which their economic position soon forced them; but then it was too late, their employers were in power, and coalitions were prohibited until 1864, and made possible in a more satisfactory way only by the law on Syndicates of 1884. But they made the most notable efforts towards a full and large municipal life and what may be called *local direct action*. The instrument of these efforts was the sixty districts, later on the *sections*, of Paris. They originated in 1789 as local electoral assemblies, but energetic men in this way being brought into mutual contact, they found occasion for combined action, they chose to stay, and took hold of the control of local affairs. The feeling of local autonomy inevitably arose, and collective care for the economic welfare of the inhabitants of the district became a habit. All over France the Communes constituted innumerable nuclei of local revolutionary life, breaking the resistance of reactionists and monopolists, coping with the endless difficulties of the food supply in a time of famine, of military equipment and supplies in years of wars on all frontiers, with resistance also against the central bourgeois State power which Constitutionalists, Girondists, Jacobins, all were bent on introducing and enforcing.

The history of the Revolution really is that of the conflict of all these local organisms, *sections* and *communes* who wanted social changes and local freedom, and of the elective Assemblies and their ministries or committees, who wanted to come to a stop, to have things settle down, to restore obedience to a fixed system of State power and bourgeois order. To achieve this, it was tried, on one hand, to regulate all civic life by making the free local organisms legal organs of the State by investing them with authority, police work, etc., which soon had a demoralising influence and stifled local life. On the other hand, those who were the most energetic, enthusiastic and unselfish were eliminated, literally killed, group after group, proceeding artfully from Left to Right. In a time of general suspicion, with war and Royalist insurrections all round, with masses of dissatisfied bourgeois who lay low for the time but supported all counter-revolutionary moves, all efforts for "moderation"—in such times it was not difficult to create a scare against the Communists first of all and have them exterminated, Jacques Roux and his friends. The Hebertists' turn came next; they had boldly attacked the roots of religious superstition, and a source of mental enlightenment was removed when they mounted the scaffold. Then came the turn of Danton, the man who had best known how to raise revolutionary enthusiasm. All this was done at the instigation of Robespierre, who failed to see that he had cut away the foundations of the structure which he himself wanted to erect—a sort of State Socialist autocracy which would have been unrealisable,

but would in any case, to have the slightest chance, have required the support of all who wanted social changes and a real Republic; and it was those he had hunted down and killed. So Robespierre and his friends, isolated by their own desire for exclusive power, were soon exterminated by the Thermidoriens, and with them the Revolution was gone; step by step, bourgeois and reaction triumphed; the last Jacobins and the Babouvists fell, military chiefs rose above the civil politicians, the Directory, and Bonaparte seized the reins of power by the treacherous act of the 18th of Brumaire.

The result of this temporary victory of reaction was that whatever *could* be was restored of the old system; but many things could not be restored—just those which the *direct action* of the people had effectively destroyed during the Revolution, by the initiative, energy and sacrifice of a few, as a rule, whom the masses had followed when increasing numbers seemed to give greater security. What is done by law only, can be undone by law; what is *really* done, cannot be undone. This is one of the great lessons of the French Revolution, and nowhere certainly is it so fully proved as it is on almost every page of Kropotkin's book.

If the fact that a revolution only succeeds if born from and nourished by continuous popular action and marching ahead is the broad result of the present work, the ways how this may happen, what is to be done and what must be avoided are also pointed out by numerous examples. The book deals with an endless variety of revolutionary situations, and the factors which led in each case to victory or defeat. We never feel that this is ancient history to some; on the contrary, it is alive, and we have seen many similar situations in our days, in Russia, in Italy, in Spain, and may be we shall see some more in the days coming. Those interested in the analysis of revolutionary events will find few books more interesting and stimulating to further thought, whether they agree or disagree as to details.

Communists will in particular welcome the reconstruction as far as possible, from fragmentary information first collected by Bernard Lazare, of the efforts of a Paris Communist group gathered round Jacques Roux, Varlet, Rose Lacombe, and others; early Socialists like Dolivier, Lange and Boissel, scattered Socialist ideas of other writers are brought together, and their opinions, just as those of Winstanley the Digger and others of the English Revolution, are quite familiar to us, once they are translated, so to speak, from the peculiar form which the customary political language of their time gave them. What we miss in these precursors is the desire for personal freedom; but real material want, famine and starvation, weighed heavily on the people of those times, and bread was a necessity, freedom seemed a luxury.

The discoverers of "scientific Socialism" and Social Democrats in general think that the era of revolutions is over. There is no better refutation of this than the present book, which shows the inefficacy of even the most advanced Governments and legislative bodies; whatsoever was achieved had to be done in a revolutionary way—simply by *doing it*, in the teeth of all the obstacles which law and force put up. In this respect the book is a most striking impeachment of Parliamentary tactics. Besides, it is full of facts and characteristic details, and will be read, alike for study and for recreation, with real pleasure.

November 24, 1909.

N.

## INTERNATIONAL NOTES.

### Spain.

Maura's cynical brutality replaced by Moret's sly, sullen meanness—that is really all the change to record from Spain. The "castle of curse," Montjuich, still holds about 1,200 prisoners; and since the "Liberal" Cabinet took office until November 20, the military judges of Barcelona and Tarrasa have pronounced two death sentences, ten sentences of penal servitude for life, four of 6, 12, 12, and 20 years, fifteen of 4 to 17 years' prison; two women received 14 years and 8 months each. I omit the names of these prisoners, also all the small condemnations. We all remember the tragic farce of Ferrer's trial, upon which the attention of the civilised world was concentrated; we can imagine how these officers, men of "honour," according to Alfonso, dealt with all these unknown, poor prisoners. This happens in a country where amnesties are scarce, and when the exposure of torture and police manoeuvres forces the Government to liberate some political prisoners, others are sure to remain in prison, forgotten—witness that *death* only liberated last summer a prisoner of the peasants' revolt trial of about 1882; he had spent 27 years in prison. For the Jesuitical spirit which, by "mental reservation," teaches how to convert an apparently candid statement into a lie, pervades every action of this Government—and are other Governments really much different? They certainly made no secret of their complete solidarity with the Spanish Government in all its doings. If the present Spanish Government dare not, as far as we know, have further death sentences executed, how long will this last? Exactly as long as they and all other Governments feel that they could not resist the storm of indignation and of revolt this time which new murders would create. They are cute enough to see that the apparent lull does not mean indifference, but arises rather from their cowardly flattening out into shapeless forms, leaving no front to attack. Maura and Lacierva spoke up and showed an iron front; Moret abstains from overt acts, but keeps sly, invisible repression going on. This "laying low" is new Governmental tactics to which the people's mind is not yet sufficiently adapted. It

reminds one of the treacherous Witte régime in Russia after the general strike of October, 1905, had forced the Tsar to some apparent concessions. Hypocrisy and treachery are resources always handy to monarchs driven into a corner; Alfonso follows Nicholas in playing that game. By and by, we hope, it will be played out!

The fact that the state of siege in Catalonia has come to an end cannot be opposed to the previous remarks, for no Government can indefinitely paralyse the life of the most industrial part of the country. Our papers begin to reappear; we know of papers in Sevilla (*Al Paso*) and in Gijon, on the northern coast (*Solidaridad Obrera*). On the other hand, the Jesuit parties are busy everywhere in spreading lies on the Barcelona events. What does it matter to them if their lies are exposed in honest papers which their dupes never see?

All this shows that more than ever remains to be done, and it would be a permanent defeat of the working classes in all countries if they did not succeed, by a universal cry for *amnesty* at least, in liberating the 1,200 Montjuich and other Spanish prisoners. Reaction would profit everywhere by their indifference. The Argentine Republic gives the first example where an individual act, the killing of the chief of police, a local *fait divers* leading to no popular movement whatever, was the pretext for declaring a sixty days' state of siege for the whole country, to arrest all Anarchists, suppress all their papers, etc. Do not say that this is a far-off country; except the United States and parts of Canada, it is the best developed part of America. What of India and, a little time ago, Ireland? The system spreads to make isolated acts and local outbreaks an excuse for general coercion, the suppression of advanced movements, and the denial of even that threadbare illusion that we call "justice" on a wholesale scale to all whom those in power dislike. We think we enjoy Constitutional freedom, and that it is safe for ever. Indeed it is not, it is curtailed in a thousand ways, and coercion, legally decreed on some scare, can at any moment take its place. Political Socialists think that the governing classes have already resigned themselves to be slowly permeated by democracy, to be taxed out, bought out, and to die a decent natural death by and by. Nothing of the kind. They watch the barometer of popular tension, and use every period of slackness to take back what was already considered conquered ground. The present moment, with regard to Spain, is critical indeed.

Russia was left to her fate—a first international defeat. Will the Spanish prisoners also be left to their fate? With regard to Russia, the movement of 1905 was so hopeful that no help seemed to be needed, and now that a nation of prisoners is kept down by hordes of soldiers, police and spies, and their employers, political considerations seem to prevent a real movement of protest in the countries of spirited protest *par excellence*—France, England, and Italy. But Spain is almost outside of these considerations, and to forget her would be as cruel as it would be unwise. Let Social Democrats remember that Bismarck, in 1878, took two individual acts, disavowed entirely by the party, as a pretext for outlawing the German Social Democratic Party for twelve full years. If ever there was an occasion for an international movement of solidarity, it is the present for a demand for *amnesty in Spain—if not also in Russia*. France, Italy, and other countries will act, and are acting already; but the relative silence of the English and American workers acts like a dead weight and countenances official Spain, Maura under the mask of Moret!

### France.

When a Socialist conquers political power, becoming a Minister like Briand or Millerand in France, he might well be content with enjoying the amenities of his new position and remaining a renegade pure and simple. Experience shows that these men, before all, feel the necessity of doing harm to their old parties by corrupting many individual members by the Governmental blandishments at their disposal, and by drawing red herrings across the track of the whole movement. Millerand is always busy recruiting for a kind of official Syndicalism, Labour offices and the like. He knows the efforts of the French workers to disentangle their organisations from State and municipal protection and favours; needless to say, he wishes to see them lose again their independence. He knows the efficacy of strikes; of course, he works for compulsory arbitration—this new enslavement of Labour. Briand, again, seeing the gulf between Capital and Labour widened at last by the efforts of Syndicalism, which works for the abolition of wage-labour and Capitalism, feels impelled to unite the interests of Trade Unions and capitalists by making the Unions to some little extent co-proprietors with the capitalists. This co-partnership scheme he proposed in his Neubourg speech last winter, and he and those in his interest are steadily working to insinuate these ideas into the Labour movement.

Are these not attempts at subtly poisoning the whole Labour movement? Destroying the strike initiative by a network of regulations, beginning with fines for breach of contract, and compulsory arbitration, comes as near to a reintroduction of the old combination laws as the modern State dares to do. But even then some spirit might be left in the movement—if only to fight these new regulations as they have got to do in Australia just now. Here Briand steps in and makes the Trade Unionist co-proprietor. Now he will work hard, will see that his mates work properly, will evade strikes which are a loss to the business; in one word, he will be a model employee, and the spirit of the property-holder will expel the spirit of discontent. Some may object here: "Let us first have a footing in the employers'

property, and we will soon get the rest." I think, rather, that such a weakening and emasculation of the Labour movement would follow that they would soon lose that footing and be reduced to their old state, with the loss of the power which their strength gathered together in fighting Syndicates gives them now. And before that happened, the workers would be divided, co-proprietors and those left unprovided for; and the revolutionary efforts of the latter would be powerless in their isolation.

We may have to pass through all this, for these are blows which our enemies will not neglect to strike if they can. But the final failure of all these schemes will certainly rid us also of State Socialism itself, which is never clearly separated from any of them. All that comes from the State, even if it be by the intermediation of Socialists, is but an insidious means to strengthen the State and the capitalist system bound up with it; and the more State Socialists have a hand in all this, the sooner a general revulsion of feeling will rise against all three. State Socialism will never come, for it is here already, merging before our eyes these last twenty years into State Capitalism, State power, and, if Briand's scheme were realised, also into ordinary Capitalism.

These three factors, the State, Capitalism, and (State) Socialism, are so different that their union does not add to their strength, but reduces it. Each yields to the demands of the two others, and none does this in good faith, all being enemies at heart. A coming crisis may bring the breakdown of all three and an immense rush of the people for freedom, far from the trammels of State, Capital, and exploded Social Democratic science and its representatives. What happened in Russia when the St. Petersburg absolutism seemed crushed for a moment, in October, 1905? Independent communities, the so-called local Republics, formed themselves in many districts. What happened in Catalonia lately? The people seemed victorious for a moment, and a number of towns declared themselves independent collectivities in the same way. The future may be bright yet, once the wave of revolt will have passed along; and the present international reaction is really helping, it seems, to stir up this immense wave.

If we turn to Australia, we read of Broken Hill prisoners in Albury jail, where "soap is at a premium," and a senior warden "repeatedly struck prisoners and bullied them mercilessly" (Melbourne *Socialist*, October 1). Nor does the immense miners' strike of these weeks show that triumphant Labour politicians, Labour Ministries, compulsory arbitration, etc., bring much good to the workers. The officials of the Northern Federation of Miners have just been arrested on a charge of *conspiracy*, simply for organising the strike.

In French-speaking Canada, again, any number of Jesuits poison the minds of the people, and shiploads almost of French priests are sent over there, a good riddance for France in any case. Our Montreal comrades do their best to combat religious and State superstition there, and the death of poor Ferrer gave, as it did everywhere, a great lift to their work.

Really, reaction is so rife that a stand must be made against it everywhere. If this is less visible in England at this moment, it is because the British workers seem to be in that happy frame of mind to make a choice selection between Liberals, Tories, and Labour leaders—a harmless, quiet occupation which keeps them busy and is sure to leave things exactly as they are. Whatever should reaction do to them? They endorse it by their votes, whatever name they write upon their ballot-paper. Will this idle casting of a vote be all they mean to do for months to come, and will they forget over it the thousands of Spanish and Russian prisoners whom an international effort on the lines of the wonderful Ferrer week might save?

#### PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED.

- The Crisis in Finland*. 1d. Issued by the Parliamentary Russian Committee. London: Alexander and Shephard, Rolls Buildings, Fetter Lane, E.C.
- La Terre en Russie*. Par P. Kropotkine. 50c. Paris: P. V. Stock.
- La Vie Ouvrière*. A bi-monthly review of Revolutionary Syndicalism. 50c. Paris: 42 Rue Dauphine, VI.
- Almanach du Travailleur, 1910*. 30c. Pully-Lausanne: Imprimerie des Unions Ouvrières.
- Les Objectifs de nos Luttes des Classes*. Par V. Griffuelhes et L. Niel. Paris: La Publication Sociale, 16 Rue Monsieur-le-Prince. Also in parts: *Le Syndicalisme Révolutionnaire*. Par V. Griffuelhes. 15c.; and *La Valeur Sociale du Syndicalisme*. Par L. Niel. 15c. (same publisher).
- Europe's Optical Illusion*. By Norman Angell. 2s. 6d. London: Simpkin, Marshall and Co., Stationers' Hall Court, E.C.
- School Care Committees*. By Maud F. Davies. 6d. net. London: T. Burleigh, 155 Victoria Street, S.W.
- Britain's Siberia*. By a Certified Lunatic. 1d. London: Twentieth Century Press, Clerkenwell Green, E.C.
- Le Crime d'Engendrer*. Par Fernand Kolney. 30c. Paris: Librairie du Malthusien, 51 Rue Ramus.

#### PROPAGANDA NOTES.

[Reports of the Movement are specially invited, and should be sent in not later than the 25th of each month.]

##### LIVERPOOL INTERNATIONAL MODERN SCHOOL.

In response to our appeal in October's *FREEDOM* our hopes have generously materialised. On behalf of the above school allow me to thank those comrades who have helped us financially. The rent of the room has been guaranteed by a Liverpool comrade—who, by the way, has had the responsibility of the Modern Schools of Spain entrusted to him; also a substantial lift to school funds has been given by George Davison in the shape of £5. We hardly anticipated this generous gift of a comrade who only knows the school by repute. If this should meet the eye of George Davison, I can only say we shall take every advantage it has afforded us in the shape of propaganda and the furtherance of the school.

We have forty-five members on the books, and the good average attendance of forty. This speaks well for our lecturers and their choice of subjects. Youngsters soon convince the speaker that his lecture is a boredom by resorting to the tricks of the nobs of society at a society concert—and we can't blame youngsters, can we?

There is at present need for two classes. The "elder" young comrades want to have something deeper than that which is meted out sometimes for the little ones, so now the necessity arises, and we hope by the time this is in print their hopes will be realised.

For the Chicago Martyrs' Commemoration meeting, on November 14, we issued leaflets, and our little hall was filled, several adults being present. Mat Kavanagh was the speaker of the afternoon, his subject being entitled "A Story of Chicago." Mat spoke mainly to the elder comrades of the school. Frequently he was applauded during his address, which points to the effectiveness of his speech. He seemed to stir the interest of our young comrades in other history than that of the stereotyped history they receive in their Council schools. We older comrades are more or less informed as to the course the speaker would pursue, and to detail it is needless; but to the children it was news. Several questions were asked at the close of the address, such as—"What became of Ling?" "Why did the police interfere in a peaceful meeting?" etc., etc. Meetings of this description give us encouragement to strengthen our position with the workers to be.

The following week, November 21, Fred Bowers addressed the school. A hearty reception did Fred receive, for our comrade tells us funny stories mixed with ironies of life. He had no name for his address, and candidly told us that he had "nothing to say," but he kept us interested and amused, in spite of having "nothing to say," for his specified time. Fred talks to us in a blunt, home-spun fashion, and soon captures the hearts of the youngsters. We hope to hear him often, for he is an "honest Injun" and a good Socialist to boot.

Adult comrades are specially invited to give us a call at 1 Clarendon Terrace, Beaumont Street, every Sunday at 3 p.m.

Donations: To Picnic Deficit and School Funds (from October 25 to November 25)—G. D. £5, M. B. 2s 6d, A. S. 2s 6d, L. P. £1.

J. H. DEE.

##### LEEDS.

By the arrangement of some of our comrades, on the 5th of November Charles Kean delivered a lecture in the hall of the N.W. Socialist Union on the subject of "Evolution of Man." We expected a very good audience, but unfortunately Guy Fawkes appeared on the scene that night and set our city on fire. Still the lecture was fairly well attended. Our Comrade Kean had a very hard task to deal with such a complicated subject as the "Evolution of Man" within an hour and a half. Giving a very brief and at the same time a clear outline of the evolution of man from the point of view of modern science, he went on to deal with the same subject from the psychological standpoint. Here he has shown to us in a very plain and straightforward manner, on the one hand the development of civilisation as built up by man in the form of up-to-date culture, art and science; and, on the other hand, the errors man had created within the time of his development. He dared to say some very strong things to the Socialists who were present in the hall, so as some of them could not stand it they left the room. I think it would have been wiser for them to have stayed to the end and pointed out to the lecturer where he was wrong. All round we had a very interesting and beneficial evening. Kean, as usual, had a good sale of literature.

I regret to say that our good old Comrade Fox has left Leeds, and we all send him our hearty best wishes. S. G.

##### WALTHAMSTOW ANARCHIST COMMUNIST GROUP.

We held good outdoor meetings on November 10, 17, 23, and 30, Comrades Ponder and Barrett giving stirring addresses to very attentive audiences. Plenty of questions, and, on two occasions, excellent discussions between a Christian Liberal and our Comrade Barrett.

We have been successful in getting an indoor place to carry on our propaganda meetings during the winter months at the I.L.P. Club, 67A Erskine Road, Walthamstow. We held our first meeting on Wednesday, December 1, when Malatesta gave a lecture on "Anarchy and Anarchism" (in English). Our comrade was afraid he would not be understood in English, but he found that was not so with the numerous questions and discussion which followed his address. We

did not have a large audience, although our Comrade Large went round to the different Parliamentary Socialist parties giving away handbills, so that they should have an opportunity to defend their position or to attack ours. The few who did attend are those who no doubt want to find out whether they are standing in the light, and with others entered very earnestly into the discussion which followed the excellent address delivered by our comrade. I should think that the clear reasoning with which their questions and discussion were answered, especially on the functions of the State or men in any position of authority, even down to the paid organiser, was sufficient to make them pause and ask themselves whether they are not in a reactionary party, instead of joining hands with those who are out to abolish all authoritarian rule, and to fight for that which is worth fighting for—Freedom and Liberty.

W. FANNER.

#### BATTERSEA FREEDOM SOCIETY.

Although very cold, we still have good meetings. On November 1 Ponder enlightened the audience on Anarchism, while a few of us went round to the delusion booths (polling stations) and gave away hundreds of the Anarchist leaflet, "What Anarchists Fight For." On November 2 Barrett gave a good lecture on "Anarchism" (by request) to the local Industrial Unionists, at their branch meeting place. Their members seemed to take a great interest in the subject, asking many questions. On November 8 Ray and Paine addressed the meeting. On the 15th Ray again spoke. On November 29 the vote-catchers (S.D.P.) were here holding an unemployed meeting, so we had a rest.

W. U.

#### ALDRED FUND.

The following sums have been received since our last issue. Further donations are solicited, which will be acknowledged in these columns:—Mr. Wilson 5s, Mr. Smith 1s, Mr. Freeman 5s, F. B. B. 2s, A Friend £5, S. Carter 2s, G. Davison £1, Everybody's Friend £1, M. M. D. 2s 6d, J. Furley 3s, Comp 6d.

\* \* The continuation of "Evolution of Anarchism" is held over till next month.

Arthur Godfrin, instituteur à Douzies-Maubeuge (Nord), France, désirerait entrer en relations avec un instituteur Anglais, notamment pour discuter méthodes et échanger livres de classe.

Com. Arb. Bildungs Verein, 83 Charlotte Street, W.

Public Lectures in German every Thursday at 2 p.m.

December 16—R. ROCKER, "Ferrer und die Freie Schule."

#### East London Anarchist-Socialist Sunday School.

The East London Anarchist-Socialist Sunday School meets at 3.30 every Sunday at the Workers' Friend Club and Institute, 163 Jubilee Street, Mile End. Children in the district invited. An Esperanto class for adults and children is specially conducted by Comrade Dusa.

#### MONTHLY ACKNOWLEDGMENTS.

(November 5—December 7.)

FREEDOM Guarantee Fund.—G. Valensin 5s, N. 10s, H. Glasse 7s 6d, E. Rhodes 2s, per J. H. D. 7s, R. Clarke 6d, J. Richfield 1s 6d, A. Platten 2s 6d.

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