

Freedom

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NOTES.

The Miners' Vote in South Wales.

One of the most hopeful signs for the future of the Trade Union movement is the attitude that the rank-and-file begin to take up over the action of their leaders in the settlement of strikes. The Boilermakers gave a powerful example of this new development, just as the North-Eastern Railway men gave us an example of the vital importance of the spontaneous strike. Now the vote of the South Wales miners—almost unanimous—rejecting the masters' terms in spite of all the persuasion of the leaders, who have compromised with the masters to an extent that has aroused the anger of the men, shows a growth of that spirit of independent action which will carry an immense weight in all disputes, when the masters realise they are face to face with such resistance and such solidarity. And what do the leaders propose to do? It will be useless to adopt, as some have done, the shameful tactics of trying to discredit the men. The sufferings which the strikers endure to gain ever so little in the struggle for life appeals even to their enemies. These men are in earnest. And to such a spirit as they have shown the "leaders" will have to answer with something more to their advantage than the empty and fruitless palaver of Parliamentary action.

The Minimum Wage.

There are people, no doubt with good intentions, who fancy they can see in the fixing of a minimum wage a panacea for the evils of sweating. In their view the Trade Boards Act is to prove a real blessing, for instance, to the 22,000 sweated victims who are employed in the paper-box-making trade; 17,000 of these profit-grinding machines are women, and these unfortunates can, if they are lucky, earn 1½d. to 1¾d. per hour! If there were no other reasons for a social revolution this would be enough. For when one understands the wealth-producing capacity of up-to-date science applied in every direction, the thought that such starved slaves should hang on to the very edge of life over the gulf of sheer starvation, surrounded, too, by such frightful abuses of monopolised wealth, makes one wonder how "society" can hold together for a single day. But at last the thoughtful care of the paternal legislator has been turned in their direction, so after July 1, 1911, it is decreed that they shall have 2¾d. per hour; from February 1st, 1912, 3d. per hour; from February 1st, 1913, 3¾d. per hour. The way the paternal legislator progresses by the use of the beneficent farthing in these cases can only be described as poetical justice. If we go on at this rate wages will almost keep time with the increase of taxation, and then the worker will only feel the burden of the increased cost of living. Have the sweated box-makers to thank the Labour Party for this crumb of comfort added to their wretched existence? A miserable crumb, when every man and woman who understands the root evil of it all should be straining every nerve for the right of *all* workers to the best that life can give—and the end of the capitalist system.

Peace and Progress.

Nobody trusts politicians. They do not even trust each other; so it is not to be expected that a Cabinet Minister like Sir Edward Grey can preach peace to the nations without his motives being called in question. His desire to avert the sacrifice of human life which war entails has touched him rather late in the day. His sincerity would have been less open to doubt if his voice had been raised at the time of the Boer War. And the same can be said of many others who have suddenly awakened to the fact that war is an evil that disgraces civilised nations. There is, we must remind them, another kind of war which they will still have with them if all the Dreadnoughts were at the bottom of the sea and all the machine-guns

were swept off the face of the earth. The incessant and never-ending war between the exploited masses and the capitalist and ruling classes will continue to claim its victims just as surely if we have arbitration with the present social and economic conditions as it has done under the "blood and iron" regime of unbridled militarism. For all that, one good thing may result from the discussion of arbitration, and that is the spreading of an *idea* amongst the multitude, who might otherwise never dream of the settlement of international disputes by any other means than the sword. This should mean the spreading of an antimilitarist spirit; and if this should become a conscious power amongst the workers, the capitalist may indeed have his claws clipped in grabbing for new markets.

The "New Age" and the Old Mistake.

The cankerworm of Imperialism works its way in unexpected places. During the Boer War we had the spectacle of Jingoism triumphant in the Fabian Society, and distorting with its vulgar passion the normally serene visage of the Ethical movement. Robert Blatchford had Union-Jack-on-the-brain. To-day it is the turn of the *New Age*. The Editorial Notes on the peace movement are only a variation of the "Rule Britannia" theme. The writer quotes with approval these words of von Treitschke: "War is politics raised to the highest power. Ever and again the truth will be confirmed that a nation only becomes a nation in war. Only great deeds done in common for the idea of the Fatherland keep a nation *together internally*." He adds: "There is, as far as we can see, no means save war, or the vivid danger of war, of bringing together again the sundered halves of our unhappy nation here and now." Why he wants to bring "the sundered halves" together does not appear, but it seems to us it might very easily be accomplished if the rich exploiters would, as Tolstoy suggested, get off the backs of the workers. What arrant nonsense "educated" people can often indulge in is here shown by one who asserts that war best develops our manhood, that economic servitude is not so much to be deplored as "the growing materialism of the rich." And if the editor of the *New Age* really imagines that "national solidarity" is a triumphant outcome of the war fever, then the sights he saw on "Mafeking night" must have illuminated his features with a smile that probably still remains intact.

SUPPRESSION IN JAPAN.

The following item of news written by a resident in Japan, which we receive through a friend, gives just a glimpse of social conditions in Japan:—

"The Press is strictly muzzled in Japan. It is hard to tell how its members individually feel about the Kotoku case. One of them, an A.M. from an American College, rather too conservative, said to me, 'Many people who are not Socialists even are disgusted with our present Government. Why, they are afraid even to allow a lecturer on Sociology in the college. Stupid things! They don't know the difference between Socialism and Sociology, as the two words sound alike.' In fact, the officials—I mean the lesser officials—of Japan are for the most part well-meaning people, recruited from the half-educated classes. Of course, the pay of an official is too meagre to call any brilliant mind to the service.

"This army of officials is wonderfully eager to suppress the following classes of books:—First, those having any mention of Socialism, Anarchism, or other revolutionary doctrines; second, those that strike at the family system and parental authority; third, those of immoral tendency. Very good! But they also class together under tabooed books Shaw, Tolstoy, De Maupassant, Wedekind, Zola, and many French writers of the realistic and decadent schools, together with advanced thinkers like Ibsen. Is Ibsen immoral?

"Students are even forbidden to act the love scenes of Shakespeare, but are encouraged to act scenes from historical plays like 'Julius Caesar.' One of the results of the taboo is that students are very eager to read these books."

MODERN SCIENCE AND ANARCHISM.

BY PETER KROPOTKIN.

XIII. THE MEANS OF ACTION.

It is self-evident that if the Anarchists differ so much in their methods of investigation and in their fundamental principles, both from the academic men of science and from their Social Democratic colleagues, they must equally differ from them in their means of action.

Holding the opinions we do about Law and the State, we evidently cannot see a source of Progress, and still less an approach to the required social changes, in an ever-growing submission of the individual to the State.

We cannot either go on saying, as superficial critics of present society often say when they require the State management of industries, that modern Capitalism has its origin in an "anarchy of production" due to the "non-intervention of the State" and the Liberal doctrine of "let things alone" (*laissez faire, laissez passer*). This would amount to saying that the State has practised this doctrine, while in reality it never has practised it. We know, on the contrary, that while all Governments have given the capitalists and monopolists full liberty to enrich themselves with the underpaid labour of working men reduced to misery, they have NEVER, NOWHERE given the working men the liberty of opposing that exploitation. Never has any Government applied the "leave things alone" principle to the exploited masses. It reserved it for the exploiters only.

In France, even under the terrible revolutionary (*i.e.*, Jacobinist) Convention, strikes were treated as a "coalition"—as "a conspiracy to form a State within the State"—and punished with death. So we need not speak after that of the anti-Labour legislation of the Napoleonic Empire, the monarchic Restoration, or even the present middle-class Republic.

In England, working men were hanged for striking, under the pretext of "intimidation," as late as in 1813; and in 1831 working men were transported to Australia for having dared to found, with Robert Owen, a "National Trades' Union." In the "sixties" strikers were sent to hard labour for picketing, under the pretext of thus defending "freedom of labour"; and not further back than 1903, as a result of the Taff Vale decision, the Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants had to pay £26,000 to a railway company for having declared a strike.

Need we speak after that of France, where the right of constituting Labour Unions and peasant Syndicates was obtained only in 1884, after the Anarchist agitation which broke out at Lyons and among the miners in 1883; or of Switzerland, where strikers were shot at Airolo during the boring of the St. Gothard tunnel; to say nothing of Germany, Spain, Russia, and the United States, where State intervention in favour of capitalist misrule was still worse?

On the other side, we have only to remember how every State reduces the peasants and the industrial workers to a life of misery, by means of taxes, and through the monopolies it creates in favour of the landlords, the cotton lords, the railway magnates, the publicans, and the like. We have only to think how the communal possession of the land was destroyed in this country by Enclosure Acts, or how at this very moment it is destroyed in Russia, in order to supply "hands" to the landlords and the great factories.

And we need only to look round, to see how everywhere in Europe and America the States are constituting monopolies in favour of capitalists at home, and still more in conquered lands, such as Egypt, Tonkin, the Transvaal, and so on.

What, then, is the use of talking, with Marx, about the "primitive accumulation"—as if this "push" given to capitalists were a thing of the past? In reality, new monopolies have been granted every year till now by the Parliaments of all nations to railway, tramway, gas, water, and maritime transport companies, schools, institutions, and so on. The State's "push" is, and has ever been, the first foundation of all great capitalist fortunes.

In short, nowhere has the system of "non-intervention of the State" ever existed. Everywhere the State has been, and still is, the main pillar and the creator, direct and indirect, of Capitalism and its powers over the masses. Nowhere, since States have grown up, have the masses had the freedom of resisting the oppression by capitalists. The few rights they have now they have gained only by determination and endless sacrifice.

To speak therefore of "non intervention of the State" may be all right for middle-class economists, who try to persuade the workers that their misery is "a law of Nature." But—how can Socialists use such language? The State has *always* interfered in the economic life in favour of the capitalist exploiter. It has always granted him protection in robbery, given aid and support for further enrichment. *And it could not be otherwise.* To do so was one of the functions—the chief mission—of the State.

Socialism, we have said—whatever form it may take in its

evolution towards Communism—must find *its own form* of political organisation. Serfdom and Absolute Monarchy have always marched hand-in-hand. The one rendered the other a necessity. The same is true of Capitalist rule, whose political form is Representative Government, either in a Republic or in a Monarchy. This is why Socialism *cannot* utilise this last form, just as it cannot utilise the Church and its theory of divine right, or Imperialism and Caesarism, with its theory of hierarchy of functionaries.

A new form of political organisation has to be worked out the moment that Socialist principles shall enter into our life. And it is self-evident that this new form will have to be *more popular, more decentralised, and nearer to the folk-mote self-government* than representative government can ever be.

This is also the tendency which begins to prevail in the conception of men, the moment they free themselves from the prejudice of authority. If we carefully observe life in this country, in France, and in the States, we see, indeed, a decided tendency towards constituting independent communes, municipal and rural, associations, societies, federations, etc., assuming wide social and economic functions, and connected with each other by free agreements independent of State intervention. Of course, it is not the German Emperor, or the English Imperialists, or even the Swiss Jacobin Radicals who pursue such aims. These people have their eyes turned backwards. But there is a progressive fraction of society, chiefly among the working men, both in Europe and America, who work hard to create such new channels of common life and work, independent of and quite outside the State.

Knowing all this, we obviously cannot see an element of Progress in an ever-increasing submission to the State. On the contrary, we represent ourselves a forward movement of society as an approach to the *abolition of all the authority of Government*, as a *development of free agreement* for all that formerly was a function of Church and State, and as a *development of free initiative* in every individual and every group. And these are the tendencies which determine the tactics of the Anarchists in the life of both the individual and our circles.

Finally, being a revolutionary party, what we study in history is chiefly the genesis and the gradual development of previous revolutions. In these studies we try to free history from the State interpretation which has been given to it by State historians. And we try to reconstitute in it the true rôle of the people, the advantages it obtained from a revolution, the ideas it launched into circulation, and the faults of tactics it committed.

Studying the beginnings of a revolution, we are not yet satisfied with reading how miserable were the masses before the revolution. We want to know how they passed from their condition of inactivity and despair to their revolutionary activity; how did they wake up? what did they do after the awakening?

We understand, for instance, the Great French Revolution quite differently from a Louis Blanc, who saw in it a political movement directed by the Jacobinist Club. We see in it a great *popular* movement, which took place especially in the villages, among the peasants, for the abolition of feudal servitude and the return to the villages of the lands seized since 1669 in virtue of Enclosure Acts; and in the towns—for getting rid of the misery of the town proletariat by means of a national organisation of exchange and socialisation of production. (See my "Great French Revolution.")

We study the movement towards Communism which began to develop amongst the poorest part of the population in 1793-94; and on the other side we carefully study the growth of the power of the middle classes, who worked with energy and knowledge at constituting their own authority, in lieu of the broken authority of the King and his *camarilla*. We see how they laboured to build up a powerful centralised State, and thus to consolidate their property, acquired during or through the Revolution, as well as their full right to enrich themselves with the underpaid work of the poorer classes, while the mass of the people were trying to find new forms of political organisation in their "Sections" and Communes.

And then we see how the centralised State, created by the Jacobinist middle classes, prepared the way for the autocratic Empire of Napoleon I. We see how, half a century later, Napoleon III. found in the dreams of those who meant to create a centralised Republic the necessary elements for his Second Empire. And we understand how this centralised authority, which for seventy years in succession killed in France every local effort and every personal effort made outside the State hierarchy, remains till now the curse of the country. The first effort to be free from it was only made in 1871 by the Paris Communalist proletarians.

It is thus seen how in this domain, too, our comprehension of history and the conclusions we draw therefrom are quite different from the comprehension and the historical conclusions of both the middle-class and the Socialist political parties.

(To be concluded in our next issue.)

NIGHT AND MORNING.

When the light of a summer's day penetrates the fog and smoke of a great city and the huge buildings and the wretched hovels are shown in outline against the blue sky, when the sun shines on the shop fronts and the music-halls, on the pale faces and the painted faces, and "darts his light through every guilty hole," then it seems as though the limelight of the theatre had suddenly given place to the broad sunlight of day, and unreality becomes tawdry and absurd in the presence of reality.

At such moments we instinctively confront ourselves with questions—"Is it all a mistake? What if in reality our intelligence is a disease and our activity the fever resultant from our decay?"

"I am convinced that in no very remote future the history of the so-called scientific development of the recent centuries will serve as an inexhaustible subject for the laughter and pity of our descendants," said Tolstoy, and he but echoed the thought of the Preacher in ages long past. "Lo, this only have I found, that God hath made man upright; but they have sought out many inventions."

How if all our wealth and poverty, our Empires and our revolutions, art in all its branches, science, philosophy, and poetry, in a word, our achievements, could be dismissed with that whimsical expression—"But they have sought out many inventions"?

Some cities seem built to give birth to such thoughts as these. Manchester, for example, boasts of being the centre of the most thickly populated district in the world, yet but a short car-ride brings one to wild and desolate hills—hills that would transform a city clerk into a philosopher or a well-dressed shop assistant into a poet did either soil his boots by wandering on them. Should he contemplate their ragged outline jagged against the sky of a wild winter's night, or should his eye wander among the rich shades of brown and green of the moorland bathed in sunlight; should he meditate on the peaceful life in the few lonely cottages—in either case his thoughts will be thrown into startling relief by the murmur that rises from the valleys, by the smoke or glare disguising the nature of the sky, by the forest of chimneys, and this American factory that has pushed its way so far up into the silence of Nature. And what does it all signify? Have we done all this but to serve as an "inexhaustible subject for the laughter and pity of our descendants"?

The hum and murmur in the valleys are the slow wearing away of human life. No wheel that turns down there in the factories that does not contain in itself human energy. No building there but the walls absorbed men's lives before they would stand. No town but that it is built of human vitality. And to what purpose do the wheels revolve? What relationship to life have these walls? And this whole town, what meaning has it? The walls are dead things. They do not accord with the aspiration of those whose labour gave them birth. Every brick is the grave of some piece of a man's life.

Here we are face to face with the real tragedy of existence. All else is incidental to it. The maimed, the starving poor, the mine explosions, disasters at sea, war, the horrors of the Inquisition, and all barbaric cruelties are seen to be but miseries attendant on and slight compared to this one great tragedy—that the meaning of our lives is lost even when we are successful in avoiding the calamities by the wayside.

Our thoughts materialise in machinery merely to bring into existence some foolish trifle. The walls we have built are ugly and serve as prisons. The whole civilisation we have created! We cannot rejoice in it. "How weary, stale, flat, and unprofitable seem to me all the uses of this world," we sigh with Hamlet; or in the bitter despair of Macbeth we cry:—

"To-morrow and to-morrow and to-morrow
Creeps in this petty pace from day to day
To the last syllable of recorded time,
And all our yesterdays have lighted fools
The way to dusty death."

But this is only the first phase of thought. Soon in our ruin we begin to perceive the picturesque. The wonder of the structures down in the cities makes us feel "What might have been," and the hard circumstances of life turn us from dreams to action, and "What might have been" transforms itself into "What shall be." The greatness of our failure suggests to us the greatness of our possibilities.

To-morrow and to-morrow and to-morrow, hours before the dawn, the stone-paved, melancholy little back streets of the Lancashire and Yorkshire towns will echo with the clatter of hurrying clogs. Young girls hastening to give their lives to the "master cotton-spinners," and strong men hurrying that their number may be registered at the lodge, lest the privilege of a day's work be denied them. Away on the banks of the Clyde among the giant girder-work structures where the great ships so silently slip down the river out into the ocean and the far corners of the earth, here, too, men in their thousands have hastened that warships and Atlantic cities may take shape amid the thunderous roar of countless hammers. But an hour or so and the proletariat of London in their silk hats and frock coats will be hurrying from the great railway termini to balance on office stools and deduct the losses of their masters from the gains, so that these worthy gentlemen who control society may know how much the workers of the North have produced in excess of the amount for which they have paid. And this great march of humanity in which you and I take our place, what does it signify, "What without asking whither hurried whence"? What

we have produced in our day's toil is not to become a part of our life. The vitality of each day is lost to us for ever; and when the daylight is spent and part of the night is burned away, the melancholy march of the thousands back to their mean little homes, a few thousand cups of tea, listless conversations about nothing that matters, and then to-morrow—and to-morrow—and to-morrow. Truly our lives "signify nothing." We are building tombs among which we already take up our residences. We march, as it were, to our own funerals.

But once more in the greatness of this ignoble procession we may see the coming greatness of that march that shall be. One by one these men and women who have so thoughtlessly turned over page after page of their book of life are arrested by seeing something beautiful, and so they stop and in future love to contemplate each leaf and receive from it all the riches it has to offer. From the bottom of their hearts such men and women curse those who steal the book from them to build an inartistic scrap-heap.

In some near future more of us will see the beauty of the days we let slip so uselessly. The warm sunshine, the clear air, the colours, the curves, the shapes of things, and our vitality—these will be beautiful to us, and we will claim them as our own.

Then this ignoble shuffle of countless feet at dawn shall be changed to the resolute march of men. Against the dawn sky the red flag of the revolution shall flutter in the morning breezes, and this "sorry scheme of things" will be shattered. Henceforward our labour shall contribute only to that which is worthy to be exchanged for human life.

In the machines that we produce shall be our vitality, making us immortal workers in the factory of human wealth and happiness. In every brick of the building we create shall be a portion of our life, there to remain a part of the future life of the people. And the civilisation of the future shall be the material expression of all our hopes and desires, not a tomb for the living but immortality for all.

We will fashion into beautiful shape this monstrous myth Humanity, and breathe our vitality into him so that he will live to enjoy and beautify the earth.

G. B.

BRAZILIAN NAVAL MUTINEERS.

Last year we read of a sudden mutiny of Brazilian sailors, how they had put themselves in possession of one of the large warships and threatened to direct its guns on Rio de Janeiro. Those who have even the slightest notion of the absolute submission in the Navy can understand that only unendurable conditions could have driven those men to open mutiny. The authorities were dumbfounded at the daring of their sailors. The Brazilian Parliament, which was sitting at the time, offered the mutineers full amnesty if they surrendered. This the men did, relying on the promise of Parliament. But the military and naval authorities had other ideas about the sacred discipline which has to be maintained in spite of honourable promises. Parliament went into recess for Christmas, when the military and naval chiefs had at least for a time a free hand. The Commander, Marquis da Rocha, then found a fiendish way of punishing the sailors who were still under arrest.

The *Correio da Manhã* (Brazil) gives some details as to how those poor men were tortured on the Island of Cobras, situated a few hundred yards from the capital, Rio de Janeiro. The solitary cells are meant to receive a single prisoner, who has not even enough space to stretch himself on the floor of his cell. The only ventilation is a small, barred hole in the door; even in the middle of the day those cells are in utter darkness. In these cells the sailors were put, not one in a cell, but twelve to fourteen men in each of these holes! The last arrivals had literally to be packed and pressed in before the door could close. . . . The poor wretches, unable to move, soon began to feel the torture of their condition and to realise that it was meant as a new and cruel way of killing them. Towards eight o'clock in the evening, from the interior of those cells cries of supplication and anguish were heard:—"For the sake of the flag which we have served, Commander, have pity on us! For the sake of yourself and those you love, help us!" Later, their appeals for help proving useless, cries of revolt and fury, violent maledictions were heard:—"Cowards! You fled when we had guns to defend our rights. You offered us amnesty only to kill us the easier!"

An officer on duty who had heard all, addressed himself to the Commander, Marquis da Rocha, explaining the dreadful suffering of the unhappy sailors, but he obtained only this answer:—"Leave things alone. Do not open the doors of the cells! . . ." Towards midnight the cries ceased. The poisoned air of the solitary cells had begun its work. When in the morning the door was opened the corpses fell down. Joao Candido and some others were not yet dead; they were dragged out. What happened afterwards to these men is unknown.

The next evening a heavily laden barge, without any lights, approached the beach of Caju, where the cemetery is situated. The administrator of the cemetery seemed to have been warned of the visit, and in a short time the corpses were transported from the barge to the cemetery. By order, all was done in darkness. Before leaving, the sergeant in charge of the barge said that next morning another load of ten corpses would arrive. So the sixteen sailors, tortured and killed, were laid silently and secretly in their tomb. . . .

Till now it is impossible to know what befell the other sailors who trusted the word of honour of the authorities.

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Social Revolution in Mexico.

Despite the united efforts of the capitalistic Press, the American public is gradually awakening to the fact that Mexico is in the throes of a genuine revolution, having for its object not the mere dethronement of the individual tyrant Diaz, but such radical social transformations as shall result in the restoration of the land to the people and assurance that the toiler shall receive the full product of his toil. "Despite the united efforts of the capitalistic Press," I say, for, while more or less accurate details of the actual fighting appear from time to time, a conspiracy of black silence as to the true object of the struggle is systematically observed. With one voice our great dailies seek incessantly to convey the impression that the present upheaval is but another of those contests for political power which have been all too frequent in Spanish-Latin countries.

That the public, or at least that portion of it which has a through vital interest in the speedy solution of the social problem, sees this studied deceit is evidenced by the increasing frequency with which armed recruits from the Industrial Workers of the World and other radical organisations are finding their way across the border, to join hands with those who are battling for the workers' rights. The growing anxiety at Washington and the persistency with which the United States authorities are injecting themselves into the conflict also point a lesson that the dullest should be able to understand. In a word, that the revolution threatens most seriously the vested interests of monopoly, native and foreign, is beyond question. Events are developing and will continue to develop. Among the very latest and most significant is the denunciation of Madero, revolutionary candidate for President, by Magon, chief of the Mexican Liberal "Junta," and his associates. It is worthy of the closest perusal, for it contains a kernel of infinite possibilities.

"Francisco I. Madero is a Traitor to the Cause of Liberty." This is the seven-column heading displayed in *Regeneracion* of February 25 over the lengthy article in which Magon explains in detail the causes that have forced him and his associates to take their stand, despite the great apparent danger of splitting the revolutionary forces and bringing the movement to confusion. He makes specific and general charges of the gravest character, and concludes what is, in reality, a manifesto with an unflinchingly outspoken statement of the ends he and his fellow-fighters have in view. It is this latter portion of his letter that will command the most rapt attention, for its comprehension will show even the least thoughtful the forces at work on either side. To that, therefore, I devote most of my space; but first I set out, most briefly, the personal charges against Madero, the wealthy landowner who is candidate for the Presidency in opposition to Diaz.

Magon accuses Madero of having taken his revenge on radical leaders who were known as being opposed to his political ambitions, by betraying them to the United States authorities—in the case of Gabina Cano—and by forcible seizure and imprisonment—in the case of Prisciliano de Silva, who had returned from a victory at Guadalupe by which he had obtained most important gains. Magon charges that Silva was fraudulently induced to unite with Madero for a supposed attack on Navarro, and that when he and his men refused to pledge themselves to vote for Madero, they were made prisoners. "We do not want a master," they are reported as having answered. "We want land and liberty. The electoral ballot will not feed us."

Having explained that Madero himself is one of the wealthiest

men in Mexico, that he is leagued with other wealthy men and is supported by the Church, to which he has made special promises, Magon proceeds to show that Madero brought himself into prominence by subsidising the Press, the false reports spread broadcast by his agents having been rendered possible by the fact that the "Junta" leaders lay for years in prison, where they were kept *incomunicado*, and that their organ, *Regeneracion*, is not allowed to be circulated in Mexico.

Furthermore, Magon states that in September last, shortly after its leaders had been released from prison, the "Junta" insisted that Madero should explain his attitude toward its programme of principles. His reply was that he could not accept the programme, as it would alienate his wealthy followers; and that, in particular, he was opposed to the "Junta's" position on the land question.

Magon also states that a circular diligently disseminated by Madero's agents, in which he himself is alleged as signing himself "Provisional Vice-President," Madero being represented as "Provisional President," is a fraudulent document. He declares that he has no ambition to hold office, as has been evidenced by repeated refusals; and he expresses the sentiments that actuate him in the following emphatic language, to which special attention is directed:—

"Before all else I ought to say that governments are repugnant to me. I am firmly convinced that there is not, and cannot be, a good government. They are all bad, whether they call themselves absolute monarchies or constitutional republics. Government is tyranny because it curtails the individual's free initiative, and the sole purpose it serves is to uphold a social system which is unsuitable for the true development of the human being. Governments are the guardians of the interests of the rich and educated classes, and the destroyers of the sacred rights of the proletariat. I have no wish, therefore, to be a tyrant. I am a revolutionist, and a revolutionist I shall remain until I draw my last breath."

One need not be a genius to understand that such talk goes straight to the hearts of the disinherited who are flocking to the "Junta's" standard, for its truthfulness is confirmed by the experience of their daily lives. It is from the West that, at present, this veritable army of discontent is being mainly recruited; and it is in the West that officialdom has been most brutal in its treatment of the poor. For a time helpless working men may be hounded to jail by professional man-hunters greedy for fees; for a time the most elementary rights of free speech may be trodden into the mud with seeming impunity; but only for a time. Sooner or later the chickens come home to roost.

The daily press of February 27 reports prominent Maderists—men named in Magon's letter—as anxious to make peace, their sole stipulation being that Diaz shall retire. That no such farce as that will satisfy Magon and his followers is clear from his letter, in which he says: "Our salvation lies not alone in the fall of Diaz, but in the transformation of the ruling political and social system; and that transformation cannot be effected by the mere overthrow of one tyrant that another may be put in his place, but by the denial of the pretended right of Capital to appropriate to itself a portion of the toiler's product." Elsewhere he explains that Diaz himself has been eagerly conniving at the predominance of Madero, foreseeing that he would be instrumental in turning what is threatening to become a true economic revolution into the ordinary political imbroglio that changes nothing and is in no way dangerous to wealth and power.

As president of the "Junta," and as an incessantly courageous fighter for the cause of the masses, Magon commands an immense and intensely earnest following. The stand he has taken may well be, therefore, the forerunner of developments that will affect most profoundly the world-wide movement of discontent. It may be the starting-point whence will issue changes of the gravest import.

WM. C. OWEN.

Anarchist Communism and its "Difficulties."

A friendly critic writes: "Why don't you start a series of articles on 'Difficulties,' with especial reference to differences of opinion on vital issues?" The suggestion is an excellent one, but it is somewhat to be feared that the series would run to an indefinite length if all the "difficulties" that occur to the minds of our opponents (and they always concern "vital issues") have to be met and answered to their satisfaction.

Difficulties, however, that arise from differences of opinion, no matter what the "issue," do seem to offer opportunities for

reasonable discussion, so something perhaps may be said on that point which will help to make the Anarchist position clear.

The principles of Anarchism suffer from two gross misrepresentations. On the one side, they are proclaimed as advocating violence, disorder, and outrage of nearly every description; on the other, of requiring such a high standard of human conduct that only perfectly constituted human beings could live in accordance with them. Both assumptions are equally absurd. Anarchism insists on ending once for all every form of exploitation of one human being by another; and it proposes to throw over, without any compromise with any existing authority or coercive institutions, all barriers to human progress and development. In other words, it fights for the fullest measure of individual liberty.

History tells us on every page that liberty has always been a blessing to mankind, that tyranny has always been a curse. Notwithstanding this well-established fact, the Anarchists are attacked for proclaiming that individual freedom must be complete—free from class domination, free from State control—before we can even begin to realise what a grand advancement can be made in human development.

Liberty, then, is as essential to our moral and intellectual well-being as pure air is to our physical health. But we are told by our critics that after all we are forgetting the difficulties that will arise in an Anarchist society owing to "differences of opinion on vital issues." But that is just what we require. If we are all of the same opinion on "vital issues," we shall not progress very rapidly; and if, on the other hand, one set of opinions is to be forced on us all by majority rule, we have not taken the first step towards an Anarchist society, but are being ruled by the counting of noses just as we are to-day.

Probably, however, it is intended to put an instance where "differences of opinion" affect the practical working of some particular system in our industrial organisation. If possible, let us find one. Let us, for example, take our railways. They have necessarily many points of similarity, but in one respect they differ in a remarkable manner. Nearly every line has a distinct type of locomotive, and these differences in detail and construction have originated from differences of opinion amongst engineers who have favoured certain designs for reasons of their own. If it had been compulsory for every line to adopt the same type, the barrier to engineering progress in the matter of locomotives would have been enormous. Nothing but good has resulted from differences of opinion on this "vital issue," for the perfection of the locomotive is a vital issue, we imagine, to our railway system.

Still, it may be urged against us that, after all, they have been compelled to adopt a uniform gauge. Certainly, they have adopted a uniform gauge, but not by the compulsion either of a majority or of a special legal enactment. An experiment was even made in this matter, as the Great Western was able to demonstrate. But the "narrow gauge" became universal because *liberty* was served thereby. Complete liberty of running over each others lines was assured, and every one has been "freer" for this victory of a common-sense rule of practical application. Utility solved the problem.

And this is precisely what would happen under Anarchism. Where all are benefitted and none is injured, there is no need for a quarrel. But when some may be injured to benefit others, the case is different, and a solution must be found which will be agreeable to all. For are we not agreed that "the injury of one is the concern of all"? So we come back to the point we started from, that "differences of opinion on vital issues" are not a danger but a blessing where mankind is free, for under such conditions they help to find the "solutions" which under our present system are either legally forbidden or are the source of endless strife.

DISARMAMENTS HUMBUG.

The suggestions for an international peace agreement, launched by President Taft and seconded by Sir Edward Grey, are resulting in a widespread agitation for an agreement of some kind between nations on the armaments question.

The humanitarian instincts of the "Nonconformist conscience," acting on a public mind prepared by the economic pressure of taxation, has succeeded in focussing attention on the tremendous and ever-increasing burden of armaments. Big men of all schools of thoughts are voicing opinions more or less favourable to the idea of limitation of armaments. To judge by the extent of its public expression, one would think that it was the single desire of the British people to forthwith set about ushering in the Millennium. The House of Commons passes a motion, without a division, declaring that it would "welcome the establishment of international arrangements under which the Great Powers would

simultaneously restrict their warlike preparations"; which being passed, the House voted £44,000,000 for the provision of more Dreadnoughts.

What words of mine can fully express the contempt of decent-minded men for the cowardly and hypocritical sham of this "world movement towards peace." A "peace movement" inaugurated by two spokesmen of the ruling military class! A movement having for its object, as Taft puts it, "that international difficulties shall be submitted to the adjudication of Courts of Arbitration, as matters of national property are." Or, to quote Sir Edward Grey, real relief will only come when "nations do what individuals have done—come to regard an appeal to the law as the natural course for nations, instead of an appeal to force."

Here we have the usual sophistical distinction without a difference. What does judicial law rest upon? Does not its power rest upon its ability to enforce its decisions? Its power to make good its decrees by an appeal to force, to its police, its soldiers, and its prisons? Wherein does the virtue or the sincerity of the Taft-Grey proposals lie? In what particular would our future state differ from our present one? International Courts can only make their decrees effective by their power to enforce them, by an ultimate appeal to the superior weight and effectiveness of their combined armaments. There is nothing in these ideas which contains the promise of the scrapping of a single Dreadnought.

Indeed, the whole discussion has such an air of unreality that it would be unworthy of notice were it not for the serious attention being given it by great numbers of people throughout the world. However disinterested and worthy the motives of the bulk of these people may be, there can be no two opinions as to the absolute hollowness of the pretensions of the American President. At the very moment when he gave vent to his "epoch-making pronouncement," the Government of which he is the head was massing its troops on the Mexican frontier, preparatory to an invasion of that country. The successes of the Mexican revolutionaries were "seriously imperilling the great American financial interests" in Mexico, and therefore the revolutionaries must be overawed by a display of force. The American tyrant comes to the aid of the Mexican tyrant Diaz. No pious aspiration for universal peace can be allowed to stand in the way of the safeguarding of "financial interests"—financial interests which in Mexico derive their profits from the quite open slavery and tyrannous persecution of the mass of the people.

Here we have the mask of hypocrisy and sham stripped off for the moment. In the face of danger to the financial interests of the American magnate, fine words and glowing sentiments go by the board; the wolf casts off his sheepskin.

The peoples of the world are presented with a fine illustration of the primary function of all armies: the keeping in subjection of the revolutionary instincts of the people, and the safeguarding of the financial interests of the privileged few.

No amount of frothy sentiment uttered by humbugging politicians will induce the world's capitalists to render useless their chief bulwark against the revolutionary action of the people.

Universal disarmament can result only from the disappearance of that which gives rise to the necessity of armaments—the domination and exploitation of the many by the few. It will result from the abolition of this system of private property and economic slavery, which is the goal of the Social Revolution. J. P.

COMMUNIST PRODUCTION v. HIGH FINANCE.

III.

Tolstoy, in his essay on "Money" in "What Shall We Do?" gives a most pointed illustration of how in our days the compulsory money payment has become the chief instrument in enslaving mankind. It is based upon a trustworthy record of the recent history of the Fiji Islands. The following is a summary of Tolstoy's account of the Islanders' difficulties:—

"The natives of Fiji were reclaimed from savagery a long time ago, and were distinguished among the other natives of Polynesia by their intellectual capacities. . . . Within a short period they became good workmen and cattle breeders, etc.

"The inhabitants were well-to-do, but in the year 1859. . . . their condition became desperate: the nation and its King were in need of money. This money, 45,000 dols., was wanted as compensation. . . . by the United States for violence said to have been done by the Fijis to some American citizens.

"To collect this the Americans sent a squadron, which seized some of the best islands, and. . . . established cotton and coffee plantations.

"Notwithstanding their prosperity, the Fijis had preserved almost up to that time the forms of. . . . natural economy which existed in Europe during the Middle Ages: money was scarcely in circulation amongst them, and their trade was almost exclusively on the barter basis. . . . the few social taxes. . . . being paid in rural products. What could the Fijis and their King do, when the Americans demanded this money under terrible threats in the event of non-payment? To the Fijis the very figures seemed inconceivable, to say nothing of the money itself, which they had never seen in such large quantities. After deliberating with the other chiefs, their King, Kakabo, made up his mind to apply to the Queen of England, at first merely asking her

to take the islands under her protection, but afterwards requesting definite annexation.

"But the English regarded this request cautiously.....and made inquiries in order to be able to decide whether it was worth while to annex.....and to lay out money to satisfy the Americans.

"Meanwhile the American Government continued to insist upon payment.....and raised their former claim, threatening to increase it still more if King Kakabo did not pay at once.

"Being thus pushed upon every side, the poor King, acting upon the advice of European colonists, began to try and raise money in Melbourne.....and a commercial society was formed there. This joint-stock company formed a treaty with the chiefs of the Fijis on the most advantageous terms. It took over the debt to the American Government.....and for this the company received for itself much of the best land, perpetual immunity from all taxes, and the exclusive right for a long period to establish banks, with the privilege of issuing unlimited notes.

"By this time Kakabo's income was reduced to *nil*,* and on the advice of his white friends he created the first direct tax in the country—a poll tax amounting to £1 for every man throughout the Islands. As I have said before, there still existed on the Fiji Islands a natural economy and trade by barter, and very few natives possessed any money.....

"One alternative was left to him—to try and raise money from the European colonists; that is, to address himself to the merchant and planter. To the first he was obliged to sell his productions on the merchant's own terms (because the tax-collector required money at a certain fixed date), or even to raise money by the sale of his expected harvest, which enabled the merchant to take iniquitous interest. Or he had to address himself to the planter and accept the very low wages offered.

"Very quickly in the course of a few years the picture of the social condition of the inhabitants of Fiji was quite changed. The local administration, formerly incorruptible, soon made common cause with the planters, and a whole series of coercive measures were instituted. Whole districts, formerly flourishing, lost half their population, and were greatly impoverished. Most of the male population worked far away from their homes for European planters, to get money to pay their taxes with; local farming was neglected and went to ruin. A new petition was got up and handed to the British Consul, and England, who had time meanwhile to duly appreciate the natural riches of this fine corner of the globe, officially took possession of the Islands in 1874. Matters are partially improved, for England is a more clear-sighted enslaver; she does not kill at one blow the goose who lays the golden eggs, but feeds her in order that she may continue to lay them. To-day the economic subjection of the Fijis is complete."

Nowhere, I think, could a more striking example be found of the true nature and meaning of our compulsory monetary system. This episode is worth pondering upon. We see here very clearly how money (the means of subjection which is supplanting all others) can in a few years reduce a people comparatively free and happy and prosperous to a condition of slavery and misery.

Turning from a primitive people to a young, vigorous, and essentially modern civilisation—America—we have another striking example of the rise of the money power. It may be said in favour of the United States system of government that originally it did not afford much opportunity for exploitation and oppression; and in the early days the people as a whole were flourishing. In 1842 Dickens wrote enthusiastically about the well-being of the American workers. It had long been the design of the plutocracy to effect the complete subjection of this vast continent and its immense resources. The opportunity to do this presented itself during the great Civil War. The American financiers knew well that money, the circulating medium of the country, was the life of its industry and trade, and that once they obtained control of it they could inflate or depress the business of the country at pleasure. Scarcely had the war broken out ere the metallic currency of the country (as usual in times of crisis) disappeared. Wall Street was endeavouring to corner it. A confidential circular was issued from a London banker to the American bankers, showing well what was passing in the financial mind. It declared that chattel slavery must go, and that "the European plan" must be adopted: which is, "capital control of labour by controlling wages. This can be done by controlling the money. The great debt that the capitalists will see to it is made out of the war must be used as a measure to control the volume of money."†

At this time money, of course, was urgently needed; but the patriotic capitalists would only loan it out at from 24 to 36 per cent. interest, in their country's hour of need! Lincoln was not to be baffled, so Treasury notes ("greenbacks") were issued, not bearing interest, and payable for all debts. This at once brought relief to the country, but it did not suit the money-lords at all. The circular already quoted goes on to say: "It will not do to allow the greenback to circulate as money for any length of time, for we cannot control that." So the bankers influenced legislation, and a clause was consummated by Congress to the effect that greenbacks should only be legal tender for debts other than duties on imports and interest on the

public debt, which now had to be paid in coin. The financiers had triumphed. Imports rose enormously, and the effect of demanding coin as the sole legal tender for interest on the public debt was to depreciate the greenbacks, and a demand was created for gold. In the year 1864 the American people were plundered of nearly 400,000,000 dollars in consequence of the exception clause; and from this time onwards the dominance of the financiers was assured.*

To recapitulate. I think I have demonstrated that the money power is supreme to-day. Even moderate men have admitted this. Frederic Harrison wrote: "The richer classes have disciplined social power in spite of a popular franchise..... The real political power remains with the real social power" ("Order and Progress"). J. A. Hobson has declared that, "No sooner was the House of Commons set upon the foundation of a genuinely popular franchise, and raised to a position of unquestioned supremacy as a legislative and executive organ, than the secret growth of a new organ of State [the Cabinet] began to supersede it" ("Decay of Parliamentary Government," *Millgate Monthly*, October, 1905). Is not the influence of finance at work here? Again, J. H. Harley wrote in the *Labour Leader*, December 20, 1907: "The corruption of Parliament is producing a deep-rooted revulsion among European Socialists against Parliamentary methods. There is a growing disposition on the part of the leaders of the people to declare for the political strike and direct action." And lastly, Hilaire Belloc and C. Chesterton, in their recent work on "The Party System," maintain that the "decisive power" in modern politics "rests in the hands of a small plutocratic coterie."

Clearly the time is ripe for a new departure in working-class activity. The most that party politics can give us is a sort of mitigated State Capitalism. It is not from existing institutions, corrupted and controlled by high finance, that the New Order will be born. As a writer in the *New Age* (January 20, 1911) declared: "Until the Socialists can destroy the power of the great financial houses, the capitalists have a tremendous weapon against Socialism, as panic after panic could be engineered by the Rothschilds, the Speyers, and the Morgans to injure any Socialist Government." When we consider that there is something like £100 of credit to every £1 held in reserve, and that the financiers can control the greater part of the metallic currency, we can well understand how easily public confidence can be unsettled, and any political movement discredited and disrupted. Indeed, this is precisely what was done in the New York banking crisis of 1907, which was engineered to serve the purpose of a few financiers. Eminent authorities, whom no one could accuse of being alarmists, such as Goschen, the members of the Associated Chambers of Commerce (in 1907), and W. Bagehot (in "Lombard Street") have pointed out the grave dangers of our unstable banking and currency system. The world's commerce is carried on by means of loans, loans create credits, the stand-by to protect these is gold—gold therefore rules trade.

In the next and concluding article I propose to show how genuine Socialistic co-operative groups, working in conjunction with the Syndicalist movement, could emancipate the workers from economic thralldom.

S. C. POTTER.

(To be concluded.)

ERRATA.—My article in last month's *FREEDOM* suffered somewhat at the hands of the printer, and in consequence no sense can be made of the paragraph at the top of the second column. If the following six lines are placed at the top, the article will then read correctly:—

is the chief instrument as well as the symbol of economic subjection. As Ruskin pointed out:—"The force of the guinea you have in your pocket depends wholly on the default of a guinea in your neighbour's pocket."

What is the precise nature of money? Most of us are but too familiar with the condition of having just too little of that scarce commodity. But do we understand its true purpose? Most of us know

INTERNATIONAL NOTES.

United States.

The fight for the right to hold meetings in the open air at Fresno, California, has ended in a victory for the comrades of the Industrial Workers of the World. But the authorities did not give in until they saw the impossibility of continuing their course. As we mentioned in last month's *FREEDOM*, over a hundred persons who had continued to exercise the same right as that enjoyed by the Salvation Army and other religious organisations, to hold open-air meetings, had been put in prison by the Fresno authorities. The comrades in other cities then decided to come to the help of the few fighters who were yet at liberty at Fresno, and a perfect invasion of California was organised. The *Globe Democrat* of St. Louis states that on February 26 an army of 100 unemployed had left the town for Fresno; by the time that they arrive at Kansas City they will be 200, and by continuing to pick up the unemployed along the route they will be nearly 1,000 when arriving at Fresno, where the authorities will find it impossible to imprison them all when speaking in the open air. Another detachment started from Denver, Colorado, under the guidance of 20 members of the I.W.W. Their army is expected to grow to 5,000 by the time of its arrival in Fresno. From the North yet another detachment is approaching under Carl Brown, one of the organisers of the

* The company had also abolished the small Customs duties on imports previously paid to King Kakabo by the Europeans on the Islands.

† Quoted in W. A. Macdonald's excellent booklet, "The New Order: Social Revolution by Free Groups."

* See "Seven Financial Conspiracies which Have Enslaved the American People," by S. E. V. Emery, to which I am indebted.

"Coxy Unemployed Army" which in 1893 was spoken of in the Press of the whole world. This detachment had already arrived at Sacramentos, the capital of California, when the authorities of Fresno began to hesitate in their attitude. They offered the hundred imprisoned militants a sort of compromise by which they were to be allowed to speak on town lands. But the prisoners refused any compromise, claiming the full right of free speech anywhere in the open air. The arrival of large bands of propagandists in the town broke down the last resistance from the authorities, and they retracted their prohibition of open-air meetings for the workers.

This is the third similar victory which the Revolutionary Syndicalists of North America have gained—the first at Missoula, Montana; the second at Spokane, Washington; and now at Fresno, California.

France.

Our readers will remember how after the last railway strike in France, Durand, the secretary of the Coal Porters' Union at Havre, was condemned to death for having caused the death of an armed blackleg. From the beginning his innocence was asserted, but "an example" had to be made with those revolutionary strikers, and Durand was the chosen victim. But his comrades and the whole Socialist and Anarchist Press, as well as the Confederation of Labour, did not rest till they had obtained, first, the commutation of the death sentence, and finally his release. But it is too late. Durand has become mad, as the doctors declare, owing to the emotion and strain in prison. So the bourgeoisie of Havre has nevertheless succeeded in its vengeance on this poor worker.

Towards the end of April a daily paper, *La Bataille*, the organ of the French Syndicalist organisations, will appear in Paris. In a circular which has been distributed all over the country, the provisional board of administration explains the immediate necessity of having a daily paper. "We see every day our organising and educative work misrepresented, hampered, and even destroyed by the action of the bourgeois Press. This danger is all the greater during strikes, when the Press regularly takes the part of the employers. The political Press looks upon events from its Parliamentary point of view. Not a single paper defends the interest of the fighters, of the working class. We must have our own paper. When the workers have their own organ, Syndicalism will be independent of the capitalist and political Press."

Concerning the necessary funds, the circular states that great sympathy from the side of the Trade Unions has been shown and sufficient sums have been subscribed to begin the publication in a few weeks. The organisers think that 100,000 francs will be sufficient to organise and issue the paper and to guarantee its existence at least for one year. To obtain the money, three ways are indicated: shares of 25 francs, subscriptions, and voluntary contributions.

Employers' Boycott of Ports.

The weekly *Bulletin of the International Federation of Transport Workers* (March 13) states that the International Shipping Federation has organised an inquiry to find out which ports have a bad reputation concerning delay in loading and unloading of vessels. Based on this inquiry the shipowners have drawn up a "black list" of ports which they will avoid till the situation there has been improved. It is interesting to know that a strong "labour organisation" is considered a factor of a bad situation. So from the shipowners' point of view Genoa is the worst port in the world, because the local port workers, very strongly organised, exercise an enormous influence on all affairs concerning the port. Also in Dunkerque the relations between masters and men are bad, as the men often strike, even for small causes, thus forcing the vessels to wait. The shipowners are seldom supported by the Commercial Tribunal, the members of which are mostly local shopkeepers. The shipowners' action again shows how necessary it is for the seamen and transport workers of all nations to unite and act together if they would be able to face their arrogant masters.

Last month, at Antwerp, a Congress was held of the International Transport Workers' Federation. The principal question was the proposal of a general strike. The central committee of the Federation, which is fixed at Berlin, had before already declared itself entirely opposed to such an idea. After long discussions, Germany and Sweden declared themselves against a general strike; whilst the United States, England, Norway, Denmark, and Holland were in favour. The English delegate, Havelock Wilson, informed the Congress that great progress had been made by their Union. Out of 60,000 British sailors, 30,000 are organised at present, which means that in one year over 20,000 new members have been gained. The Congress appointed a defence committee to study the situation in the different countries and to organise an international strike when deemed necessary.

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*.

PROPAGANDA NOTES.

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

GLASGOW.

On Sunday, February 19th, our comrade J. S. Mason lectured on "Militarism." His subject was interesting, owing to so much talk lately in the Press about Conscription and appeals for volunteers for the Territorials. Our comrade opened by going through the history of the past dealing with wars, proving that the pages of history are stained with human blood and the people taught to fight as a duty. Wars have been engaged in, not in the interest of the workers, but in the interests of gangs of international financiers. The war spirit is taught as much as possible at school and in church. Not only the school children, but also the attendants at some of the Sunday schools are drilled in military tactics; and squads of boys bearing guns and stepping to the beat of a drum go marching through the streets of our great cities. He was interesting when he pictured the brutal and bloody eviction scene of the last century, such as the Sutherland eviction was, when hundreds of aged men and women were turned out of their homes to starve or die, while their sons were away fighting the battles of their country in India, Africa, and the Crimea. It is necessary, from the capitalistic point of view, that an army should be maintained at home for the defence of their property, and to keep the workers in submission during lock-outs, strikes, and revolts. Working men are beginning to see that the soldiers are used against them in their struggles with their employers. Force has been the mainstay of all forms of authority. When the workers grow wise enough to banish the war spirit, when they refuse to use force against their fellows, then the power of the oppressor will be gone. The workers possess neither land nor property. Let the landlord and employer defend themselves. Let the workers refuse to slaughter each other in the interest of the common enemy.

Comrade Paton gave us a reading on "War" from Ruskin's "Crown of Wild Olives," which was appreciated.

On March 5 our State Socialist friend P. Machray, from Paisley, was on our platform; subject, "Legislation or Direct Action." As a member of the S.D.P. he was thoroughly convinced that the workers' emancipation will be got by putting a majority of Socialists into Parliament. Admitting "Direct Action" is necessary, yet we must get the power of government into our hands; then laws for the benefit of the people will be passed, instead of, as to-day, being made by the capitalists for their own ends. He was enthusiastic when he dealt with the power of the "Ballot Box," which could be used effectively if the workers would only learn self-interest, learn how to vote, be determined not to put into power their masters—and enemies—the capitalists. He could not understand members of Trade Unions, who did not trust their bosses to pay the Union rate of wages, yet trusted their masters to make laws to govern them. He admitted there were traitors in the ranks, but had the hope that the movement will get men who will not sell their conscience for place or gold. The Socialist Government will take over the land, tools, and all the instruments of production, and make them the property of the collectivity. It was a lecture delivered with a style and determination that, although not with him, one had to admire. He attacked the Anarchists and tried to make us look foolish. Comrades, however, answered all his objections, and the audience was left to judge between us. We hope our friend will soon be with us again.

Our comrade Barrett continually holds open-air meetings, with assistance from other comrades. In spite of the cold weather, we have large crowds and good sale of literature. The Red Flag is kept flying here. Our indoor meetings end this month. Brassfiners' Hall, 36 Main Street, Gorbals, every alternate Sunday at 7 p.m.; April 2, 16, 30. Group meetings are held on the first and third Tuesday of every month at the Clarion Scouts' Rooms, 26 Elmbank Crescent; April 4, 18, and May 2, at 8 p.m.

A. BARR.

BELFAST.

The meetings on Sunday mornings of the group of Anarchists in Belfast are proving very interesting. The discussions are lively, and the rawness which at first was the prominent feature of the speaking has almost disappeared. On Sunday, March 4, we had a surprise visit from Dennis Hird, who delighted us by taking part in our discussion. In a few illuminating phrases he cleared up a number of knotty points, and finally kindly sketched a course of study for us. His hints were greatly appreciated and will be made use of by our members.

On Sunday, March 19, we had a visit from Dugald Semple, who addressed us on "Socialism and the Simple Life." His lecture was well received, and provoked a good discussion. We hope to arrange for a public lecture by Comrade Semple next winter.

LIVERPOOL.

Attention has been called to the school by the *Fortnightly Review*. It has not forgotten us in its diatribe against all things Anarchistic. Dr. Johnson, in referring to one of his own pamphlets, said: "I think I have not been attacked enough for it—attack is reaction; I never think I have hit hard unless it rebounds." The "rebound" has come from the Press, from the *Fortnightly Review* to the "Penny Dreadfuls"; but the blow is "below the belt." Of course, we must not expect anything "sportsman-like" from the defenders of those men who poured a fusillade of British bullets into 100 Sidney Street in their endeavour—

"To show the world that two thousand Britons

Can beat two foreigners any day."

We have it on the authority of the *Fortnightly Review* that our school is the pioneer school. This is news to me. "If the schools do not increase in England," it says, "it will not be for the want of zeal on the part of the English Anarchists." It is well, comrades, that we have the "zeal" to do things. The next thing is an opportunity of expending that zeal; but the zeal to do things is the all-important factor. To increase these schools especially schools such as the one now established in America, would certainly be a great factor in realising that international solidarity for which we Anarchists are ever striving.

Inspector Sweeney suggests that we have the young men on our side. I feel sure our old comrades rejoice at the thought. We shall progress if we have the important asset of youth on our side. I am firmly convinced that

all the legislation suggested by that admirable gentleman will not dampen the ardour of youth. It will be in their reverses where they will gain strength, and in their successes hope! To develop and encourage this youthful asset to our movement is the mission of the School. And through the *young idea* lies the hope. In the Anarchist movement there is a wide field to work in. We can safely compliment ourselves upon the fact that while a true Anarchist breathes there will be a movement. We must once more redouble our efforts in the struggle, for "in the struggle there is life." Defeat must not be in our vocabulary.

Donation to School (February 25—March 26)—W. B. 2s 6d, School 5s.
International Club, Spekelaand Buildings, Canning Place. DICK JAMES.

MONTHLY ACKNOWLEDGMENTS.

(March 9—April 5.)

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