

Freedom

A JOURNAL OF ANARCHIST COMMUNISM.

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NOTES.

The Free Commune.

The discussion of the Syndicalist position has brought some remarkable contributions towards the solution of the vexed questions of personal liberty and the organisation of production and consumption. A writer in the *New Age*, who seems to realise very keenly the absolute slavery embodied in any kind of wage system, says plainly that we need above all things "communal solidarity." Undoubtedly. But such a devoutly-to-be-wished-for consummation could only be attained by a negation both of Government or State as a controlling power, and of private property as owned under the present system. Again, Mr. and Mrs. Webb in the *Daily Herald* have contributed a series of articles which are, of course, quite Fabianesque; that is to say, grotesque in their failure to appreciate the worker's capacity to organise his own affairs—when he is left unmolested by the busybodies who regard him as so much raw material to be moulded into a prescribed shape by white-fingered experts. Yet, after meandering through a maze of bureaucratic platitudes, they finish by talking of the "utmost liberty possible to man," as if they had some dream of what liberty really means; and then they are driven to preach Communism as the ultimate goal: "a broad-based and infinitely-varied Communism—a world in which each man, woman, or child takes according to his needs, and enjoys according to his faculties, without let or hindrance." If we thought they were in earnest in preaching this, we should be inclined to ask: "Why then do you not admit the wisdom and justice of Anarchist Communism, whose ideal is 'the utmost liberty possible' and 'an infinitely-varied Communism'?"

Capitalism the Criminal.

Whatever contempt one may feel for a Devonport or the authors of the Putnam horrors, one must after all admit that their personal responsibility as destroyers of human life is only a passing manifestation in a "social system"—if we may employ such a euphemism to the inferno of profit-mongering—whose very foundations are built with the bones and blood of exploited workers. Explosions in mines, accidents on railways or in factories, life-conditions which engender phthisis at a much greater rate than Mr. Lloyd George's Sanatoria will ever keep up with in the curing—all these things are taken as a matter of course by the master class, who are extremely self-satisfied and jubilant if they can show a few decimal points less in the life-toll. So that Devonport's devastation of Dockland is only a horrible chapter in a book of horrors, which sickens us at every page we turn. To hate the man and his like is natural enough, but what can we think of people preaching a system of eugenics to improve the species, and neglecting to impeach such monstrous growths of the present system as the slum landlord, the sweating employer, and the great financial magnates whose Juggernaut wheels crush whole nations? Hypocrisy is the daughter of cowardice, and these people are afraid to say what they know is true. If it were not for the splendid spirit shown by the dockers and their wives and families, as well as by the workers generally in their struggle for existence, one might certainly despair of the future of humanity. All help, then, for the brave dockers.

The Maniacs of Officialism.

The terrible calamity at Binz, besides giving us instances of splendid heroism, has given us a picture of the outrageous lengths to which police rule has gone in Germany. "Civilians who were anxious to help," says Reuter, "were forced back by the police with the remark, 'It is not your business to save life.'" The fact that after the calamity rescuers and rescued alike were compelled to pay the pier toll of ten pfennigs before being allowed to go off, is a fine example of the depths the official

mind can descend to. We have constantly pointed out that the more people allow themselves to be governed, the more they will be deprived of the best feelings of humanity. Quite recently we have had instances of men standing by while people have drowned. Fortunately, they are isolated cases; and the finer spirit of true heroism is still so deeply instilled in human nature that the desire amongst a certain section to curb spontaneous action has so far had little effect. But the fact that such a disgusting insult to our common humanity could be thrown in the face of the German people by the fanatics of official discipline shows to what extent the fanatics of officialism will go. And a generation educated with such inhuman conceptions of social relations, sans solidarity, will be the impress to some extent of this disastrous teaching: "Leave everything to the officials."

Punishment and Brutality.

The "re-barbarisation" of the race that Spencer spoke of can be accomplished by even more insidious methods than the militarists would invoke. Bismarck's "blood and iron" policy was at any rate frankly brutal and reactionary; but the Bills and proposals now being considered in relation to the "feeble-minded," the White Slave traffic, and the "sterilisation of the unfit," prove to us how the most abominable brutality ever conceived may be advocated under the cloak of that blackest of all hypocrisies—the faddists' plea of "cruel only to be kind." No sooner do we get the White Slave Traffic Bill (a fine opportunity for official blackmailing) than we are once more confronted with the brutes whose first and last word is "flog." Do not stop to reason over the fact that there would be no white slave victims if there was not a social system that places them at the mercy of the wretches who are after all—and do not forget it!—supplying the needs of bourgeois morality. As Bernard Shaw has pointed out in regard to these flagellomaniacs, there are debased natures who feel a secret animal satisfaction at the mere suggestion of flogging, just as another gang of hypocrites are enjoying the discussion of sterilisation. Don't speak of slums, of poverty and starvation, and all the evil environment of the present system. Flog, sterilise, isolate for the regeneration of the race, and let us have a nice cosy talk over the details! That is "re-barbarisation" by a hypocritical "civilisation."

What Compulsory Arbitration Means.

Mr. Lloyd George's announcement that the Government intend next year to bring in a Bill for the compulsory settlement of Labour disputes should draw attention to the Act recently passed by the Labour Government in New South Wales. Compulsory Arbitration Boards are set up, on which the employers have a representation of three-fifths (how impartial!), and drastic punishment is meted out to anyone going on strike. We quote details from the *International Socialist* for May 25:—

"In future, the Labour Party decrees that the extreme penalty on an individual worker for a single act of striking is to be £50, with no gaol alternative, but the working man's wages are to be seized week by week, either wholly or in part, until the full amount of the fine has been met. Where the strikers are members of a Union, unless the Union can prove that it ordered them to scab, the Union may be compelled to pay £20 of every fine inflicted. If a Union aids other Unionists who are on strike, by voting money or in any other way, it is liable to be fined £1,000. Furthermore, all the funds of the Union (benefit, death, and funeral funds, etc.), whether in the hands of trustees or not, are to be seized to pay fines. If an individual advocates a strike, or speaks in support of men on strike, or gives any money to aid men on strike, he or she may be sent to gaol with hard labour for six months. The clause is specially framed to reach the International Socialists, whose strike propaganda is always feared by the Labour Party and its masters."

If they wish to avoid similar conditions here, the workers must prepare to fight the Government's proposed Bill.

LESSONS FROM HISTORY.

Under this heading we propose to give on occasions a few facts from the struggles that have become historical in the effort of the more enlightened of mankind to win from the oppressors some liberty or advantage for the people. We know so little of our own history, so far as it concerned the conditions of the masses, and at the same time it is so full of interest in this respect, that we shall need to make no excuse for reproducing extracts from important works relating thereto, with a few observations to connect them together.

In view of the recent prosecutions endangering the freedom of the Press, we will begin with a few facts showing how our "guardian angels," the Parliamentary infallibles, behaved during those times "when the State was for a hundred and forty-three years the active and determined frustrator of public information"—as G. J. Holyoake tells us.

The extracts we shall give are all taken from the "History of the Taxes on Knowledge," by C. D. Collet (London: T. Fisher Unwin, 1899), and it will, perhaps, be best to quote first of all from the preface by G. J. Holyoake. He says:—

"Institutions, libraries, great newspapers, great publishing houses have arisen, which would not exist had the repealed Acts which clogged knowledge remained in force. Yet every newspaper proprietor was formerly treated as a blasphemer and a writer of sedition, and compelled to give substantial securities against the exercise of his infamous tendencies; every paper-maker was regarded as a thief, and the officers of the Excise dogged every step of his business with hampering, exacting, and humiliating suspicion. Every reader found with an unstamped paper in his possession was liable to a fine of £20. When the writer of this Introduction published the 'War Chronicles' and 'War Fly Sheets,' the Inland Revenue Office bought six copies as soon as each number was out; thus he incurred fines of £120 before breakfast, and when the last warrant was issued against him by the Court of Exchequer he was indebted to the Crown £600,000. Besides, he had issued an average of 2,000 copies of the *Reasoner* for twelve years, incurring fines of £40,000 a week, which amounted to a considerable sum in twelve years. He who published a paper containing news without a stamp, was also liable to have all his presses broken up, all his stock confiscated, himself, and all persons in his house, imprisoned, as had been done again and again to others within the writer's knowledge. Neither cheap newspapers nor cheap books could exist while these perils were possible."

Evidently Governments, with their laws, prisons, and police, were specially invented to hinder the progress of mankind!

In his opening remarks, Mr. Collet says:—

"When the King of the Tonga Isles, in the Pacific Ocean, was initiated by Mr. Marriner, the missionary, into the mysteries of the art of writing, he was alarmed at the idea of his subjects learning to read: 'I should,' he said, 'be surrounded with plots.' The British Government has often shown, as regards the kindred invention of printing, an intelligence in no way superior to that of the Polynesian Sovereign. While it has been slow to make use of this art as a means of instructing and guiding the people under its care, it has been quick to imagine danger if the communication of one mind with another were not impeded with restrictions which carefully avoided any discrimination of the nature of such communication...."

"The History of the Taxes on Knowledge begins with their imposition in the reign of Queen Anne. The battle against the Press had, indeed, begun before that date, and in the reign of Charles I. it waxed hot. Thus, in 1637 a decree of the Star Chamber limited the number of printers and master type-founders; and imposed the penalty of whipping, the pillory, and imprisonment for publishing without the consent of the licensers, at whose head were the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Bishop of London.... In 1641 the Star Chamber was abolished by Act of Parliament, and the House of Commons took the regulation of the Press into its own hands.... In March, 1643, an Ordinance was issued by the Commons authorising the Committee of Examination, or any four of them, to appoint persons to search for scandalous pamphlets and to seize lying pamphlets, presses, or printers.... This Order of Parliament brought up John Milton, who, in November, 1644, addressed to the Lords and Commons his *Areopagitica*, or Appeal for the Liberty of Unlicensed Printing. It was a serious disappointment to Milton to find that, after sending the Chief Licensor to the Tower, the Parliament was so ready to continue his work. The exuberant completeness of this appeal for the right of every man to deliver his conscientious convictions to the public without previous censure makes it difficult to summarise his work. Everything that could at that time be said on the subject is said. Beginning with the admission that a book may be a mischievous one, Milton shows how the rulers of Greece and Rome had never found it necessary or desirable to silence any writer, but had profited by the comparison of the bad with the good, and that this toleration had continued till 'the project of Licensing crept out of the Inquisition, and was caught up by our Prelates, and hath caught up some of our Presbyters.' He goes on to show how impossible it must be to find any one base enough to be willing to undertake such an office, and yet good and great enough to be entrusted with it; how surely the process must stifle every new and true thought, and bring literature down to the level of what has been already ascertained and admitted; and he ends by depicting the

degradation of the author who, after having submitted his work to the Licensor, is inspired to improve it before publishing it, but must refrain, unless he is willing to beg the permission of a dull officer, to make each new correction."

The Licensing system broke down and was abolished fifty years after Milton's appeal was made; but a system just as oppressive to authors and publishers soon took its place:—

"Towards the end of Queen Anne's reign Parliament had recourse to another device, nominally to check 'false and scandalous libels' against the Government and 'the most horrid blasphemies against God and religion,' but really to pay for the War of the Spanish Succession. The 10 Anne, cap. 19, besides putting duties on imported linen and soap, taxed several kinds of agreement written on vellum, parchment, or paper; and above all, it taxed printed papers, pamphlets, and advertisements, and required a stamp to be placed on every paper that it chose to call a newspaper. These were to be imposts for thirty-two years, in order to pay £1,800,000 levied by means of a lottery...."

"After this brave departure Parliament proceeded to pile Act upon Act. Thus the 11 George I., cap. 8, stopped the practice of printing newspapers on a sheet and a half, entering them as pamphlets, and paying only the pamphlet duty of three shillings on the whole edition. It placed 'upon every journal, mercury, or public newspaper' a duty of one penny for every sheet upon which it was printed, and of one halfpenny for every half sheet thereof. Then the hand of the law descended on the 'unfortunate street-sellers. By the 16 George II. it was enacted that anybody might take into custody a hawkers of unstamped newspapers; that any Justice of the Peace might commit him to the House of Correction for three months; and that any one seizing or apprehending such an offender might claim a reward of twenty shillings, to be paid by the Receiver General of his Majesty's Stamp Duties...."

"The French Revolution naturally roused the Government of the day to place fresh fetters on the Press. The 38 George III., cap. 78, imposed a penalty of £100 on any one publishing a newspaper before an affidavit had been delivered at the Stamp Office, specifying the name and abode of the printer, publisher, and two of the proprietors. The same penalties were incurred by neglect to print the name and abode of the printer and publisher on the newspaper, and by failing to deliver a copy of every newspaper at the Stamp Office within six days of its publication. Other penalties were—for printing or publishing any newspaper not duly stamped, £20; for having any newspaper not duly stamped, £20; for sending out of Great Britain any newspaper not duly stamped, £100; for sending during the war to any country not in amity with his Majesty any newspaper or such other paper stamped or unstamped, £500;—for printing or publishing in that part of Great Britain called England as copied from a foreign paper any seditious matter that had not been so printed, imprisonment for not more than twelve or less than six months. The proof that it had been so printed was to lie with the defendant. The object of these securities was not to bring a number of the opponents of the Government to utter grief, but to suppress all expressions of discontent. Any man who carried on printing or publishing for a livelihood was actually at the mercy of the Commissioners of Stamps, when they chose to exert their powers."

We see from the above how Government helps progress (!). Is it not strange that the people should still expect to win their emancipation through such an institution?

"CANT, HUMBUG, AND MENTAL DEBASEMENT."

We are sure our readers will agree that it would be a pity to let the following correspondence waste its sweetness in the columns of the *Socialist Standard* (July). It is therefore reprinted verbatim.

NOT TAKING ANY, THANKS!

The following, we think, sufficiently explains itself.

MALATESTA RELEASE COMMITTEE.

London, W., June 14, 1912.

Dear Comrade,—At a meeting of the above on the 13th inst., it was unanimously agreed that your party should be asked to send a delegate to join and co-operate with us, in order that this committee should be as representative as possible of all those who are in sympathy with the objects of this committee.

We are resolved to carry on this agitation on a wider scale and are assured of the support of prominent men, including M.P.'s and other influential people.

Awaiting your favourable reply,

Yours fraternally,

(Signed) J. F. TANNER, Hon. Sec.

Mr. J. F. Tanner,

MALATESTA RELEASE COMMITTEE.

Sir,—Your letter inviting the Socialist Party of Great Britain to send a Delegate to co-operate with your committee was duly placed before my Executive, who instructed me to inform you that *The Socialist Party* declines to join with working-class enemies for any purpose whatever, and that therefore your invitation is declined.

Your Mr. Malatesta, if a victim at all, is but a victim of the system both he and you do your best to maintain by the spreading of

confusion in the minds of the working class. Your whining for mercy, therefore, savours even more of the hypocrite than of the coward, while your "Demand" for release is grotesque.

That your committee should have entertained the idea (even for a moment) that the Socialist Party could be seduced from its allegiance to the working class by the glamour of temporarily associating with "prominent men including M.P.'s and other influential people" shows not only how woefully you have miscalculated the moral strength and integrity of the Socialist Party, but also the cant, humbug, and mental debasement of the ultra-revolutionists—the Anarchists—the *anti-political* giants who yet can be got to glory in the prospect of associating with "M.P.'s and other influential people."

In the interests of the working class we decline your invitation and say "Down with Anarchy! Long live Socialism!"

On behalf of the Executive of

The Socialist Party of Great Britain,

C. L. Cox, Gen. Sec. *pro tem.*

[The author of that letter should certainly be a good judge of cant and humbug.—Ed. FREEDOM.]

The Francisco Ferrer Association and Syndicalism.

Each country has a preference for certain methods in the working out of social problems, and a favourite one here (U.S.A.) is to dine and afterwards discuss. All countries have such clubs; but here—and particularly in New York—they are growing to such an extent that soon they will be the rule, and not the exception. The "Twilight," "Sunrise," "Intercollegiate" (Socialist), "Collectivist," "Socialist," "Heretics," and scores of others meet at stated intervals. All have talks or discussions, and while some are inane, others are quite serious, and have a real beneficial effect. One of the best features, perhaps, is the humanising effect they have on those who attend, in the sense that various elements are brought together on neutral platforms with free speech as the basis of discussion. That there is usually some limitation to the free speech goes without saying, but while it impairs, it does not destroy the club's usefulness. The most advanced, because most free from party influence, has been the "Sunrise." Originally started by Benj. R. Tucker, Eugene Smith, E. C. Walker, and a few others, some sixteen or eighteen years ago, its attendance has grown from thirteen to over six hundred diners. Walker says the club was started "to discuss Philosophic Anarchism"—whatever that is—and as he has been the secretary since its inception, he ought to know. It has long since adopted the policy of discussing various questions of human interest, with a preference for "sex," and a decided antipathy to anything suggesting revolutionary action, the term "revolutionary" meaning the overthrow of existing institutions by physical force or violence, as, for instance, the Boston Tea Party. In these days, when Revolutionary (?) Socialism may mean electing Socialist Mayors and Congressmen by ballot-box methods, this definition is far from being superfluous.

A common characteristic of these dining clubs is that one person invariably rules a certain club, and determines who the speakers shall be and what the subject for discussion. Walker rules the destinies of the "Sunrise Club," and increasing age has made him so philosophical that he has become an American patriot, and, as is befitting a patriot, he draws the line at anyone who adopts the old patriotic method of redressing wrongs. Men like Alex. Berkman may dine at the club and listen to the discussion, but they are debarred from participation in it because they have been too closely connected with Direct Action. Theorists like Emma Goldman and myself are not under the ban; in fact, E. G. is more than welcome, as she is the best drawing card the club ever had. Some months ago she addressed the club on "Woman's Inhumanity to Man," and all previous records of attendance were smashed to smithereens. Six hundred and four people sat down to dinner, and the gathering suggested a mass meeting rather than a dinner at a dollar a plate. The average attendance is about two hundred and fifty, and the highest previous to this was four hundred and twenty-five. "Bill" Haywood was among the diners, and although the biggest figure in the American Labour movement, Walker disregarded the usual courtesies extended to visitors, and failed to call on "Bill." As a real manly type of man, he probably had very little to say on the subject; but the insult was deliberate, and the audience protested. For the first time in the history of the club, Walker's rule was challenged by the audience; a real revolution broke out, the Autocrat was forced to back water, and "Bill" spoke.

The Ferrer Dining Club was organized shortly after the foregoing, and with it the principle laid down that no subject be barred, and the more unpopular the speaker's views, the more welcome he should be. Several dinners took place at the Ferrer Headquarters, and one of the pleasant features was that they were cooked and served by our own comrades. It was decided to celebrate the second anniversary of the Francisco Ferrer Association, and as the Centre was too small, the affair was arranged and carried out on June 14th at the Café Boulevard, New York City. The subject selected for the dinner was one very much to the fore in radical circles all over the world, and one tabooed by all the radical dining clubs last winter. "Syndicalism" was the topic for discussion, and the speakers were Wm. English Walling, Hippolyte Havel, Leonard D. Abbott, Alexander Berkman, Louis Levine, Moses Oppenheimer, H. Simpson, and the writer. Walling,

Oppenheimer, and Simpson represented the Socialist line of thought; Havel, Berkman, and Kelly, the Anarchist; with Abbott and Levine sympathetic to the latter.

Over two hundred sat down to dinner, which, considering the warm weather, was a striking tribute to the subject. Had it been held in the winter, at least four hundred would have attended. No soul-inspiring addresses were made, but it was a thoughtful gathering appreciative of the good points brought out by the speakers. It is difficult to wax enthusiastic or evoke any expressions of deep human sympathy over the wrongs of the proletariat after speakers and audience have dined well, if not sumptuously. For this reason academic subjects, or those that lend themselves to the humorous, are the most popular. Gatherings such as these are not ideal places for awakening the consciences of the people, or redressing great wrongs; they are, however, as has been said, a form of American life, and serve a useful purpose.

In connection with the above, it is not inappropriate to recall that the Socialist Party of this country at its recent convention incorporated a clause in its rules of membership that "any member who advocates sabotage or crime" (?) as a form of propaganda or retaliation in the class war will be expelled from the party. This is, of course, a triumph for the Bergers and Hillquitts, gentlemen who make their living—and a good one—at practising law or politics; and a direct slap at Haywood and the Direct Action wing. Perhaps the politicians of the party intended to clear the air, and on the face of things it looks as if Haywood and his friends should have resigned from the party. What really happened is that which always happens when attempts are made to abridge speech and stifle free thought: it has generated a great deal of hypocrisy. The Socialist papers have had and are having numerous letters from party members discussing the question, and the methods whereby a member may conform to the letter and violate the spirit of the law are manifold. The most striking of the suggestions is that the party does not forbid a man *committing* sabotage or crime, it forbids him *advocating* it. Truly a distinction fit for a Jesuit. So far Haywood and his Socialist friends remain in the party, but whether they are still advocating Direct Action I cannot say. These things, small as they are, are part of the disintegration of our political life. The line of cleavage is everywhere manifest, and any student can see the realignment of forces and parties going on.

Direct Action and Revolutionary Syndicalism are growing factors, and will have to be reckoned with more and more as time goes on. How far it will resemble the Syndicalism of Europe and affect the Labour movement here is for the future to decide. An ever-growing interest is everywhere to be seen, and the more discussion on the subject the better. It was fitting that the Francisco Ferrer Association should be the first organisation to attempt to set before the American people the ideas that are exerting such a profound influence in Europe.

HARRY KELLY.

UNITED STATES SOCIALISTS AND "VIOLENCE."

(To the Editor of FREEDOM.)

DEAR COMRADE,—At the recent national convention of the Socialist Party of the United States, of which party I am a member, it was proposed to insert in the constitution a clause that should attract the attention of all revolutionaries, whether Anarchists or Socialists, the world over. This clause, known as "Section 6, Article II," insists that the party shall expel all members who "advocate crime, sabotage, or violence," and it is now sent to the rank and file for endorsement by referendum.

Consider the condition of the Socialist Party in the United States, should such a rule be adopted.

"Crime" being a word for which there is no Socialist definition, we are forced to accept the legal definition, and the New York penal code, which is typical, defines crime as "an act or omission forbidden by law and punishable by death, or imprisonment, or fine," etc. This means that the party must expel every Socialist street-speaker fined for "obstructing a highway"; every Socialist strike-picket arrested and fined or imprisoned in States which forbid picketing; and in the State of Massachusetts, where fine and imprisonment are the penalty of dissuading persons from enlisting in the militia, but where the Socialists by their own rules forbid members to enlist, it means the expulsion of every Socialist.

"Sabotage" includes the "shirking of work." A Socialist magazine that advocates the new regulation, *The Masses*, inadvertently admits that "nine-tenths of the workers of the United States are to-day practising sabotage"; so that nine-tenths of the workers of the United States, if they have the courage to advocate what they practise, are ineligible to membership in the Socialist Party of the United States.

"Violence" is a wide term, but, even taking it in its narrowest sense, to expel its advocates means that Berger, the only Socialist member of the United States Congress, must be expelled, because he advises the worker "to be prepared to back up his ballot with his bullet"; and that Debs, the Socialist Party's Presidential candidate, must be expelled, because he writes "Arouse, ye slaves!"

If the framers of "Section 6" mean what they say, these are the logical conclusions to which they are driven. If they do not mean what they have said, then they should revise their proposition.

Will not the revolutionaries of England, whatever their quarrels with the Socialists of the United States, protest against this absurdity, and help to save us from ourselves?

Cloughton, Yorks.

REGINALD WRIGHT KAUFFMAN.

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Syndicalism and Anarchism.

[SECOND ARTICLE.]

In our first article on "Syndicalism and Anarchism" it was shown how, in this country since the years 1820-30, and in France after the unsuccessful political revolution of 1848, the efforts of a considerable section of the workers were directed towards a *direct struggle* of Labour against Capital, and to an endeavour to create for that purpose the necessary Labour organisations.

It was also shown how this idea became, in the years 1866-70, the leading idea of the newly created International Working Men's Association; but how, after the defeat of France in 1870, the paralysis of its revolutionary forces after the fall of the Paris Commune, and the triumph of Germany, the political element got the upper hand in the International, and became for a time the dominating element in the Labour movement.

Since that time the two currents have continued to develop, each of them in that direction which was already implied in its programme. Political Labour Parties were organised in all Constitutional States. They did their best to increase as rapidly as possible the number of their representatives in their respective Parliaments; and, as was foreseen from the outset, their representatives, hunting for votes, inevitably reduced their economic programmes, so as to have them limited by this time to such minor restrictions of the rights of the employers as only give a new force to the capitalists and help them to maintain the present conditions. At the same time, as the Socialist politicians combatted the representatives of the political bourgeois Radicalism, who competed with them for Labour votes, they helped—against their own will—to give a new lease to triumphant reaction all over Europe.

Their ideology itself—that is, the ideas and the ideals they were spreading among the masses—was modelled in accordance. They were resolute partisans of State centralisation, as against local autonomy and the independence of the smaller nations; and they worked out a philosophy of history to support these foregone conclusions. They threw cold water on the hopes of the masses—preaching to them, in the name of "historical materialism," that no substantial change is possible in the Socialist direction until the number of capitalists has been reduced by their mutual competition; and they left unnoticed the fact, which becomes so striking now in all industrial countries, that, owing to the growing facilities for exploiting the peoples that are backward in industries, the English, the French, the Belgian, and other capitalists are now exploiting the labour of hundreds of millions of men in Eastern Europe, Asia, and Africa; the result being that the number of people living upon the work of other people, far from being gradually reduced in the chief industrial countries of Europe, goes on increasing in an appalling proportion. And with the increase of their numbers grow also the numbers of those who are interested in the maintenance of the present capitalistic State. Finally, the advocates of political agitation for the conquest of power in the present State bitterly opposed everything that could spoil their chances of acquiring political power. They excluded from the International Socialist Congresses all those who dared to criticise the results of their Parliamentary tactics; they deprecated strikes; and later on, when the idea of the General Strike began to penetrate even into their Congresses, they wildly opposed it by all possible means.

For full forty years these tactics have been pursued, and now it is evident to every one that all over Europe the working men

have had enough of it: many turn away from it in disgust. This is the reason why we hear so much now of "Syndicalism."

However, during these forty years the other current—the direct struggle of Labour against Capital—also continued to develop, notwithstanding all the persecutions of the Governments and the denunciations of the capitalist politicians. It would be an extremely interesting history to show the steady development of this current and to analyse its relations, intellectual and personal, with the political Social Democratic parties on the one hand and the Anarchists on the other. But the time has not yet come to write such a work, and, after all, perhaps it is better that it should not be written now. It would divert attention towards personal influences, while it is the influence of the great currents of modern thought and the growth of self-consciousness among the working men of America and Europe, independent of the influence of the intellectual leaders, which has to be examined, if a real history of the Syndicalist movement be written.

All we need say at the present moment is, that quite independently of the teachings of the Socialists—in virtue of the very fact that masses of working men were brought together in the industrial centres, and that they had retained from times past the tradition of their professional Unions, both open and secret—they continually organised Unions, in order to put a bridle on the ever-growing exploitation and on the haughtiness of the employers. And in proportion as the organised masses of workers grew larger and stronger, and more conscious of the great struggle that is the very essence of the life of civilised nations since the Great French Revolution, their anti-capitalist tendencies became more and more definite.

During the last forty years, while all possible effort was made by the political leaders in different countries to prevent the revolts of Labour, and to subdue those of them which were of a menacing character—precisely during these years we saw the Labour revolts growing more widely spread, more violent, and more significant of the intentions of the workers. More and more they lost the character of mere outbursts of despair; more and more, when we came into contact with the workers, we saw ripening among them a dominating thought, which could be expressed almost in a word, full of deep sense:—"Go! Leave us, you 'captains of industry,' if you cannot manage the industries so as to give us a living wage and security of employment. Go! if you are so shortsighted and so incapable of coming to a common understanding among yourselves, that you rush like a flock of sheep into every new branch of production which promises you the greatest momentary profits, regardless of the usefulness or noxiousness of the goods you produce in that branch. Go! if you are incapable of building your fortunes otherwise than by preparing interminable wars, and squandering a good third of what is produced by every nation in armaments for robbing other robbers. Go! if all that you have learned from the marvellous discoveries of modern science is that you see no other way of obtaining one's well-being but out of that squalid misery to which *one-third* of the population of the great cities of this extremely wealthy country are condemned. Go! and 'a plague o' both your houses' if that is the only way you can find to manage industry and trade. We, workmen, will know better how to organise production, if we only succeed in getting rid of you, the capitalist pest!"

These were the ideas which were budding, were thought over, and were discussed in the workers' dwellings all over the civilised world; and these were the ideas which resulted in those tremendous upheavals of Labour which we saw every year in Europe and the United States, in the shape of dockers' strikes, railway strikes, miners' strikes, and weavers' strikes, until at last they began to take the shape of general strikes—general strikes which soon took the character of great struggles of the elements of Nature, and in comparison with which all the petty Parliamentary struggles were such pitiful child's play.

And while the Germans were jubilating with red flags and torchlights at their steadily increasing electoral successes, the more experienced nations of the West were silently pursuing an infinitely more serious task—the task of the *inner* organisation of Labour; and the thoughts which worried them were of a far more serious nature. They asked themselves: What would be the outcome of the now inevitable world-conflict between Labour and Capital? What new forms of industrial life and social organisation would come out of this conflict?

This is the true origin of the Syndicalist movement, which the ignorant politicians discover now as something new to them.

For us, this movement is not new. We greeted it when its

tendencies were expressed in the programme of the International Working Men's Association. We defended it in the International, when the German political revolutionists assailed it and saw in it an obstacle to their conquest of political power. We advised the workmen of all nations to do as the Spaniards did, when they kept the Trade Unionist organisations in close touch with the "Sections" of the International. And since that time we have followed with deep sympathy all the phases of the Labour movement, knowing that, whatever the conflicts between Labour and Capital may be in the near future, it is this movement which will open the eyes of society at large to its duty towards the producers of all riches, the only movement that will induce thinking men to find a way out of the blind alley into which the recent development of Capitalism has been driving our generation.

Of course, the Anarchists have never imagined that it was they who gave to the Syndicalist movement its present conception of its duties towards the regeneration of society. They have never put forward the absurd pretension of being the leaders of the great movements of thought which lead mankind to a progressive development. But what we may claim for ourselves in full confidence is, that we understood from its beginnings the immense importance of the ideas which now constitute the leading aim of Syndicalism. These are the ideas which were developed in this country by Godwin, Hodgskin, Gray, and their followers, and in France by Proudhon—namely, the idea that Labour organisations for production, exchange, and consumption must take the place of the present capitalist exploitation and of the State; and that other idea, that it is the duty, the function, of the Labour organisations to work out this new form of society.

These two fundamental ideas are not our invention. They are nobody's invention. Life itself has dictated them to nineteenth century civilisation, and upon us lies now the duty of realising them in life. Our pride is only that we have understood them; that we defended them through those dark years when they were trampled under foot by the Social Democratic politicians and their would-be philosophers; and that we still intend to remain true to them.

STATE INSURANCE.

The much-boomed Health and Unemployment Insurance Act has now come into force, and we shall soon be in a position to judge the results of the second of the great series of "social reforms" which, we are told, are to prove an effective alternative to the "visionary schemes" of the Revolutionist. The history, character, and application of Mr. Lloyd George's great social panacea provide an interesting study to the Anarchist. First of all, with all its defects, it must be taken as part of the first-fruits of the people's discontent with the social and economic conditions of the present time. It is now universally admitted that something must be done, if not to remedy social and industrial evils, at least to ease the smart of the pain they cause. And then the appearance of the possibility of relief by "constitutional means" must be maintained; for the increasing impatience of the poor—and of those people who feel and understand the injustice of the time—with the ordinary social and political methods has become very evident to the governing class, even though the rebellious and the discontented themselves are unable to gauge the strength and volume of the rising tide of revolt.

The social problem is threatening the existence of the State. If the admission were to be made that the State and capitalist society (for the maintenance of which the State exists at the present time) were unable to tackle the great problem of poverty, and in reality were its cause and the means of perpetuating it, then the forces of violence upon which these infamies rely would rapidly melt away before the common burning anger of mankind.

Now, the poor of Britain having become entitled to "outdoor relief" to the extent of five shillings per week when they reach the age of seventy (a saving in poor-law expense of three or four shillings per week each), a further step in the State regulation of poverty is taken. So the great minds of the political world have been at work and devised a scheme whereby every working man or working woman is compelled to join a State-assisted sick benefit society. And as a marvel of statesmanship, their wages, the purchasing power of which has suffered a serious reduction within recent years, are now to be further depleted by a weekly tax to provide against sickness. This is quite in accordance with the doctrines of thrift preached to the poor on innumerable occasions. It is not merely true that the wealthy class will do anything for the workers except get off their backs, it is also true that in any social or economic readjustment which is made they will do their utmost to redistribute the burden amongst the people who now bear it rather than relieve them of any portion of it. That is all the "statesmanship" there is in this much-belauded "great boon," which nobody in the community asked for, and millions of people object to.

It is interesting, by the way, to notice the failure of the most experienced of Parliamentarians to devise an intelligent law. Although a small army of State and political party lecturers have within the past six months been appointed (with suitable remuneration) to explain the meaning of this law throughout the country, although many millions of leaflets have been distributed by the aid of the Post Office, besides the assistance given by innumerable newspapers and orators, no capable exponents can be found anywhere. The "Chinese puzzle" and its like sink into insignificance beside the Insurance Act for mystery and bewilderment. Yet so many people imagine an Act of Parliament to be so simple a solution of every problem!

The scheme is forced upon all the employed below the income-tax limit, whether they need it or not, with no power of choice in the matter. The "benefits" are so obvious and attractive that compulsion has to be used to induce the recipients of the wisdom and benevolence of the Legislature to accept the favours thrust upon them! Without the assistance of the approved societies the scheme would have collapsed. And without the use of the meanest and most despicable form of coercion ever devised, i.e., by deduction from wages, thereby leaving the worker the alternative of destitution and starvation if his reason or his conscience makes him an objector, the whole scheme would have sunk to the ground.

The Insurance Act represents a big jump into the Servile State. Thirteen millions of people are to carry passports for the rest of their lives. There is not the slightest doubt that another weapon has been devised for use by the employing class and the political police against every worker who rebels against injustice and evil social conditions. Already thousands of working men realise how much more their cards place them in the power of their employers. No more will such simple expedients as change of surname, or inexact statements as to last employer, employment, place or length of time of employment, etc., be possible to the workman. He is registered and labelled. Collars and chains are unnecessary—there is now a cheaper and more efficient substitute. The casual workers are in an even worse position, for, as with the Liverpool dockers, with a clearing-house system they are to be dealt with simply as a horde of slaves. The position of the Trade Unions is a parlous one. By becoming approved societies they will be bound tightly to the Board of Trade. In their anxiety to secure legal security they must accept conditions further reducing their efficiency as fighting forces. The State having failed to crush them, now fetters them.

Again, it will be seen that law and government are the parents of "crime." It is their child, and without them it would cease. By this Act, potential criminals are already manufactured by the million. The full list of crimes has yet to be ascertained, but already we have to face fine and imprisonment for refusing to be insured, for inability to maintain the insurance payments, for refusing to produce cards when employers and inspectors demand them, and for refusing to undergo "minor surgical operations."

Of course, the Act will have its defenders, for it creates tens of thousands of officials and other interested persons, who, with their friends and dependents, will be full of praise for it. The medical profession, having failed to secure a big slice of the plunder, are at present denouncing the "fraud" and "swindle." Had their demands been met, and had they been able to fasten a huge tax for their own support upon the working class, we suppose they would have been as discreetly quiet as they are in the case of fees for compulsory vaccination. The character of the law will be unchanged, whether they receive their pound of flesh or otherwise. It will still be a "fraud" and a "swindle" for the poorer people who are always in difficulties. The twelve millions on the verge of destitution in this country will be perpetually harassed by the emissaries of the State, continually lapsing or falling out of benefit. Worst of all, it seems possible that the more regularly employed will be used as a "buffer" section against their poorer fellows. Like all laws, it creates antagonism amongst men. And no doubt in the future when we urge the abolition of the State on the ground of common human advantage, we shall be told that we are making an attack upon the savings and the vested interests of the thrifty poor. When we consider the paltry "benefits" of the Act, it is obvious what a sweeping indictment of the present social and political system of society they imply. The legal robbery and monopoly which reduces a community to the necessity of such schemes of relief is rotten ripe for complete destruction.

It is not too late, indeed the present moment should provide a starting point, to arouse a general revolt, not only against this particular instance of political botchery, but also against the whole fraudulent and futile attempt to perpetuate conditions of poverty and degradation for the people by means of the power and authority of the State.

G.

Release of Malatesta.

Our readers will join with us in congratulations to our old comrade on his release, which took place last Monday. At present, he is anxious to regain his strength; but as soon as he feels well he will give his impressions of our prison system, which our patriots will be surprised to hear compares very unfavourably with that of Italy.

The Release Committee hope that funds will soon be forthcoming to clear off the debt incurred in the agitation. Now, comrades, send what you can spare to FREEDOM Office.

VOLTAIRINE DE CLEYRE.

This brilliant fighter for individual freedom, who died in Chicago on June 20, was buried in Waldheim Cemetery, close to the Chicago Martyrs' Memorial. She had been an invalid for years, but her strong will kept her from giving way entirely. Recently, however, it was found necessary to perform an operation, which gave some relief; but a second operation took place, from which she never recovered.

Voltairine de Cleyre was born at Leslie, Michigan, on Nov. 17, 1869. Her father was French, and her mother American. She received an ordinary school education as a child, and from the age of 13 to 18 was in a Catholic educational institute in Canada. On leaving this place, and beginning the struggle for a living, the effects of her religious training soon disappeared, and at the age of 19 she began writing in a Freethought magazine, and soon became its editor, shortly afterwards making a tour of the Eastern Provinces for the American Freethinkers' Society. The eight-hour movement of 1886 and the Chicago tragedy brought her into the Anarchist ranks. She obtained a very scanty livelihood by teaching, which in recent years prevented her taking a prominent part in propaganda work. However, those who heard her lecture or read her writings know how her indignation burned at white heat when describing the wrongs and injustices of our social system. To her, the Anarchist ideal was something more than a dream of the future; it was a guide for everyday life, and not to be comprised with. Most of us can find excuses for ourselves when we deviate from the straight line; but Voltairine kept herself to it unflinchingly. Writing from New York, Alexander Berkman says: "Voltairine was, without exaggeration, the greatest woman America has produced so far. Certainly the ablest and most revolutionary and uncompromising American Anarchist. Her death is a very serious loss to the movement."

The esteem in which she was held was shown by the crowd which assembled at the graveside, among those present being representatives of the Workers' Ring, the Bohemian Bakers' and Turners' Unions, the English, Hungarian, Czech, and Italian branches of the I. W. W., the Woman's Society "Progress," and the Jewish Cabinet Makers' Union. Vincent St. John (Sec. of the I. W. W.), William Haywood, W. Trautmann, and others represented the militant wing of the American Labour movement.

A very large international memorial meeting took place in New York on July 1. Numerous well-known speakers paid their tribute to the memory of our comrade, and telegrams were read from various associations and comrades unable to be present.

A committee has been formed to gather and publish her works. Many poems and articles in MS. are in hand, and these, with her published works and a biographical sketch, will be issued in two volumes. Donations and advance orders should be sent to H. M. Kelly, care of *Mother Earth*, 55 West 28th Street, New York.

TRIAL OF MEXICAN REVOLUTIONISTS.

After three weeks of legal comedy, the Court of Los Angeles on June 22 sentenced the four accused—Ricardo F. Magon, Enrique F. Magon, Librado Rivera, and Anselmo Figuero—to 23 months' imprisonment. They have been transferred to the prison on McNeill's Island, Washington. By imprisoning the chief editors of *Regeneracion*, the organ of the Revolution, which aims at the restitution of the land to the people, the American capitalists are helping their man, President Madero. The Government of the United States cannot seriously accuse those men of having violated the principle of neutrality, but it has often encouraged revolutions which were profitable to the capitalists, as in Panama, Cuba, Nicaragua, Honduras, Haiti, etc. Besides, the American Government has helped President Madero to crush the rebels of Lower California. But the hope to have killed the paper will not be realised; *Regeneracion* is still alive. The weekly chronicle of events which was written by Ricardo Magon will now be done by a woman comrade, Francisca Mendoza; while another woman, Sofia Breton, has joined the staff. Garza and Palacio remain, and Wm. C. Owen continues to edit the English section, and incidentally to flog the American State Socialists. Nevertheless, the loss of the four comrades is felt very much.

After sentence had been pronounced on the prisoners, they were removed to the local prison. A crowd of relatives and sympathisers followed. On the pretext that this was an attempt to rescue the prisoners, the police attacked the crowd and arrested a number of people, including a number of female relatives of the prisoners, one of whom has sent us a letter with an account of the affair. We print the letter here, with a few omissions. The fiery spirit of our young comrade has not been cooled by her experiences under lock and key:—

DEAR COMRADES,—In an hour of depression in a heavy atmosphere full of sham and iniquity, I find myself happy to know that we are not alone in the fight, that there are noble hearts amidst the corruptness of our artificial life who understand, and their purity is shown in their splendid work for the betterment of humanity by using constantly their best efforts to change the monstrous system of our existence.....The men who strive to work for progress with lofty and clean principles are misunderstood, condemned, and killed.....

Our brothers, Ricardo and Enrique Flores Magon, Anselmo Figueroa, and Librado Rivera, the representatives of the present class struggle in Mexico, were convicted unjustly by a grand jury, their offence being violation of the neutrality

laws (sending armed men from one country to another), Madero, the present executive of Mexico, committing the same crime, but, of course, permitted by "Uncle Sam.".....At the trial, hundreds of sympathisers have been present, always roughly handled by the "slaves of the people"—the police.....On the day when the sentence was to be pronounced, scores of officers were sent to keep order, searching for arms the hundreds of sympathisers around the Federal building and not admitting men into the Court. As the sentence was given, the prisoners were immediately ushered out of the Court under a heavy guard, the women and children following for a last good-bye. The throng outside sent forth a roar of cheering to the prisoners, and the cry of "Land and liberty for all!" The police, frightened by such exclamations and fearing a riot, started to club men, women, and children unmercifully. The uniformed slaves, plainclothes men, and others, with their shield of authority, were converted into fiends during these cowardly proceedings.....Women were handcuffed, insulted, and taken to jail, one being a daughter of Anselmo Figueroa, with her baby in her arms, also her sister, a child of fifteen. Men, for protecting the weak, were also taken.

We remained in jail five days, and are out now under bonds. In jail I have seen cases I never imagined existed. Women, when arrested for the slightest offences, have been mutilated by the "cops." Five of us, the fourteen months' old baby included, were confined in a cell eight or nine feet square, with treatment far from human, and compelled to associate with persons with contagious diseases. Detectives in the guise of newspaper reporters molested us with interviews, to gain evidence against us. Such are conditions in the "Land of Liberty."

All the papers that represent the workers should unite in a strong protest against the injustice to our brothers, whose only aim in life is the deliverance of the labourer. Agitation, comrades, is our salvation from a prison term, and will free Magon and his comrades from their full sentence. Let us show the tyrants of the world that these men do not stand alone. Nothing will kill the beautiful movement of the proletariat in Mexico. Workers of all the world, turn your eyes to this Southern nation and learn their lesson, the lesson that the world belongs to Labour, and that the worker is no longer a tool but a conscious, independent being who fights to maintain his dignity. "Land and liberty for all!"—Your sincere comrade,

LUCILE NORMAN (one of the girl prisoners).

Los Angeles, July 5.

INTERNATIONAL NOTES.

Switzerland.

As is known through the daily press, the Labour Union of Zurich appealed to the working class of that town to declare on July 12 a general strike of twenty-four hours, as a protest against the introduction into Switzerland of great numbers of German professional strike-breakers, sent by special societies to Zurich, where the painters and locksmiths have been on strike for months. Taking the conflicts between strikers and blacklegs as a pretext, the municipality of Zurich issued an order restricting the right of picketing. This attempt to curtail the power of the strike, of course, aroused great excitement among the workers. It is interesting to note the part played in this case by the Social Democratic Party. The order against picketing bears the signature of the Social Democratic Councillor Vogelsanger, a political juggler with principles; and it seems that the other Social Democratic members of the municipality (of its nine members four are Socialist) approved of the prohibition; at any rate, none of them protested.

The working class of Zurich, which before this had retained some confidence in Parliamentary action, has now definitely lost all faith in the work of politicians, and understands that only direct action is able to keep Governmental abuses in check. The workers see now that they will have to fight not only the representatives of the bourgeoisie, but also the Social Democratic officials; and that the only weapon in this fight is the general strike.

The vote of the Unions showed 6,366 for a general strike and 812 against. Those voting for a strike were all the Unions of the building trade, metal workers, clothing trade, carmen and cabmen, motor drivers, and cabinet makers; against were the gas workers, electrical workers, railway men, the catering trade, and, as usual, the printers and compositors.

The strike proved a huge success. It was thought that only the workers in private enterprises would strike; but work stopped also on the municipal tramways, electrical and gas works, and railways. On the first day the Strike Committee received the news that the Swiss Union of employers in the building trade had decided on a lock-out on Saturday and Monday, and the metal manufacturers also adhered to this decision. At the same time it was known that the Governor of the Canton had called up the soldiers. From other parts news arrived that collisions had occurred between strikers and the police and troops. The whole of last week the town remained in a state of siege. The Attorney-General ordered the arrest of the secretary of the Federation of Trade Unions and also the secretary of the Municipal Workers' Union, both charged with sedition. Several other persons have been arrested. The secretary of the Socialist Party, Geschwend, was left at liberty because he declared to the Attorney-General that he had voted against the general strike and that he had not taken part in the action of his Trade Union. On Monday a search was made at the headquarters of the Trade Unions, which was surrounded by a large military and police force.

The general strike movement of Zurich was characteristic, because it was directed against the Social Democratic members of the municipality, who had made common cause with the bourgeoisie in the defence of capitalism.

A few days later, on July 16, the leaders of the Social Democratic party in Zurich, recognising the indignation of the workers and the possibility of for ever losing their confidence, held a meeting at which

they officially gave their blessing to the strike. The resolutions declared that the strike was an act of solidarity, and protested against the attitude of the Government. It is very touching to see the Social Democratic politicians now bestowing their approval on the strike, but it comes rather late.

—From the *International Syndicalist Bulletin*.

Austria.

The blighting influence of the Social Democratic politicians on the activity of the workers has been shown again in two cases where the men had decided to begin the fight with their employers, but were restrained by the fair promise of political leaders to arrange things smoothly and by Parliament. The Unions of the miners and of the railway men are strongly centralist and entirely directed by leaders who are at the same time Social Democratic Deputies in the Austrian Parliament. The reader will remember that in April of this year the miners of Bohemia struck work, whilst their comrades in Moravia—the two countries are side by side—continued to work. But when the latter also intended to strike, the political leaders quickly ended the strike in Bohemia by a worthless agreement, and thereby put the Moravian miners in a difficult position, as they could no longer count on the solidarity of their comrades, and had to accept another valueless contract with the mineowners. During the month of June the Moravian miners showed that they were not at all satisfied with that contract, which is, after all, not even carried out by the capitalists. So towards the end of the month the men wanted to strike. The mineowners convoked a conference, at which they threatened a general lock-out if the strike was declared, because, they said, according to their own contract the miners had no right to strike. This assertion was confirmed by the central committee of the Trade Unions at Vienna. And so the Moravian miners are condemned by their own leaders to submit and desist from striking.

A somewhat similar case happened with the railway men. In December, 1911, they wanted to begin "passive resistance," because they were not satisfied with the concessions made by the Government. But the Social Democratic politicians, who at the same time are the leaders of the railway men's Union, did not allow the men to begin action. They pretended that in April Parliament would remove the trouble. Not only April but May and June passed, and the railway men gained nothing. Parliament was occupied with other things, especially with increasing militarism. Only four days before the recess of Parliament the Social Democratic Deputies proposed to vote the 17,000,000 kronen demanded by the railway men. The Government, however, declared from the beginning that even if Parliament should accept this proposal, it would not be carried out. But, after all, the proposal was rejected, and the men are cheated again. As yet they do not see clearly that instead of relying on the talk of politicians they must rely solely on their own direct economic action.

Norway.

The Norwegian Government has put before the Storting a Bill for the introduction of conciliation and arbitration in disputes between employers and their workers. A special tribunal, the Labour Court, will be created for the settlement of conflicts and the interpretation of labour contracts. The tribunal will consist of a chairman, who will have the same powers as a judge of the Supreme Court, and four assessors, two of whom will be appointed by the Central Trades Council and two by the Employers' Union. The Labour Court will have the power of ordinary Courts, with the right to hear witnesses and to pronounce sentence. These sentences will be definite; but in case a complaint is refused, there may be an appeal to the Supreme Court.

In cases of dispute about labour conditions and wages, the parties must bring the dispute before a Conciliation Council, composed of an official conciliator and two assessors nominated by the president from a list proposed by the two parties. The country will be divided into five districts, each with an official conciliator. If within fifteen days the Council cannot find an agreement acceptable to both parties, these can ask for the proceedings to be stopped. If the parties do not submit their differences to the Conciliation Council, the Minister of the Interior has the right to do so.

Besides, the Bill provides for the creation of an Arbitration Court composed of the president of the Labour Council and four assessors, two of whom represent the men and two the employers. The decisions of this tribunal only remain in force for three years, unless both parties agree to a longer period.

Disputes about the interpretation or application of a wage contract may in no case end in a strike or lock-out; those about new conditions of labour or wages must first be submitted to conciliation before a strike or lock-out is declared. Each breach of this law will be punishable by fines. Violation of a labour contract will be punished by a fine not exceeding 30 kronen (1 kr. equals 1s. 2d.) per member of the workers' Trade Union, and not exceeding 30,000 kronen per member of the employers' Union. The organisations on either side are responsible for the fines of their members.

The new Bill has been met by the strong opposition of the workers. Its aim is clearly to prevent the men from striking—that is to say, from having recourse to their sole effective weapon in the fight against the capitalists. Besides, the workers know that tribunals of

the kind suggested are always more favourable to the employers than to the men, as the president nearly always belongs to the bourgeoisie.

New Zealand.

We see from the *Maoriland Worker*, the official organ of the Federation of Labour of New Zealand, that the methods of Revolutionary Syndicalism are gaining ground there. This is shown in two ways: by a growing opposition to the compulsory arbitration law, and by an equally pronounced reaction against old-fashioned Trade Unionism, to which the new movement opposes solidarity between the different unions, known as Industrial Unionism.

PRINTED PAGES.

The Life of William Morris. By J. W. Mackail. New edition. 2 vols., 4s. net (cloth). London: Longmans, Green, and Co.

News from Nowhere. By William Morris. New edition. Paper, 1s. net; cloth, 2s. net. Same publishers.

This cheap edition of the Life of Morris at last puts it in the reach of those with slender purses. Mr. Mackail has done his work very well until he deals with Morris's connection with the Socialist movement, when the writer's lack of sympathy with anything revolutionary is only too apparent. He looks upon Morris's Socialism as one of those eccentricities natural to all men of genius, and one can almost imagine Mr. Mackail's sigh of relief as he chronicles the poet's withdrawal from the Socialist League. But apart from this, the author has got his materials together in a way that allows the reader to follow Morris throughout his life. And what a life it was! Born of a wealthy merchant, from his boyhood he seems to have avoided all those petty restrictions which usually cramp and mould the young. At Marlborough School, which he entered in 1848, the boys were "allowed much more individual freedom . . . than now exists at any public school"; and when he was at Oxford, we read, "there was neither teaching nor discipline." Accordingly his talents had free development, with the result that as a poet and artist he was one of the greatest of his generation. These volumes are published in Longman's Pocket Library, a good photograph of Morris appearing as frontispiece.

Messrs. Longmans have also published new editions of "News from Nowhere" in the same series. The paper edition at 1s. has long been wanted, but we hardly see why the cloth edition should be raised in price from 1s. 6d. to 2s. The same policy was adopted with the last edition of "The Dream of John Ball." If the publishers will give us a 1s. paper copy of the latter, we will forgive them for raising the price of the cloth edition.

Other Publications Received.

The Trial and Imprisonment of J. W. Gott for Blasphemy. By Ernest Pack. 1s. net. Bradford: The Freethought Socialist League, 28 Church Bank.

Bravo y Cerebro. Num. 1. Revista dedicada á la propaganda Anarquica y Revolucionaria. New York City: 270 West 4th Street.

Unto this Last; Sesame and Lilies; The Two Paths; A Joy for Ever. By John Ruskin. 7d. net each (cloth). London: Everett and Co., Ltd., Essex Street, W.C.

In Memoriam: Voltairine de Cleyre. With Portrait. 15c. Chicago, Ill.: Livshis (Annie), 2038 Potomac Avenue.

New Order Tracts: (1) The New Parliament; (2) The New Landholder; (3) The New Money; (4) The New Worker. By W. A. and H. M. Macdonald. 1d. each. London: Questall Press, 173 Seymour Place, Bryanston Square, W.

Over-Production and Want. By Michael Flurscheim. 1s. net. London: Wm. Reeves, 83 Charing Cross Road, W.C.

The Toiler: A Militant Advocate of Syndicalism. 10c. monthly. Kansas City, Mo.: The Toiler Publishing Bureau, 1820 Campbell Street.

Direct Action. By Voltairine de Cleyre. 5c. New York: "Mother Earth" Publishing Association, 55 West 28th Street.

Post-card Portraits of Malatesta.

One Penny each. Profits to go to Release Fund.

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PROPAGANDA NOTES.

Free Speech Fight at Edinburgh.

For years it has been the custom to hold meetings at the Mound, but owing to complaints of disturbances the magistrates issued a proclamation that all speakers must have a licence from them before holding a meeting. Most of the speakers who frequent the spot bowed to the decision, but our comrade John McAra defied them, and on Sunday, the 21st inst., he was arrested by the police on two charges—speaking without a licence, and committing a breach of the peace. On the 26th he was brought before a magistrate, who found him guilty of speaking without a licence, and, according to the *Glasgow Herald*, he was “admonished.” What that means, we do not know, but in a letter received from McAra on the 31st he says:—

“There is to be an appeal. The lawyers say we have a good case; of course, they say that to all their intended victims. I’m getting any amount of mud thrown at me in an underhand way by the Press and by the Labour Councillors, who belong to the branch of the I.L.P. that meets on the Mound. They hold their meetings behind mine, and very often have very few to speak to. Their annoyance is great at the sight of my large meeting, so they are all for the permit, knowing, I suppose, that I wouldn’t get one. But I have not been lazy this week or two. They have been throwing mud at me, but I had the best of that. I have been showing the mud that they are made of. They didn’t feel the indignity of a permit. I’m spoken of by the Press and others as ‘the man McAra,’ or ‘the Guthrie Street Anarchist.’ But I touch their pride there; for it was from that slum that non-compliance with the order came. Not one in Edinburgh made a move until I showed by my action the measure of the degradation of all the parties that speak on the Mound. I.L.P., S.L.P. (two bodies of them), R.P.A., Secularist, Salvationist, Sheepfold Mission, Undenominational Evangelists, Mormons—they all hurried to get a permit. Some were refused. Now you see my position. A slum man and an Anarchist—yet Edinburgh is indebted to him for staying the hand of magistrates in their attempt to degrade the city. That’s rather a tit-bit.”

PORTSMOUTH.—The flag of Anarchy is flying here. At a recent I.L.P. meeting on the Common I challenged them to debate, and was successful in getting one. Mr. Porter spoke for the I.L.P.; subject, “Direct Action v. Political Action.” The debate took place at Town Hall Square, before a crowd of nearly 600 people, who followed the arguments carefully. Mr. Porter does not believe in strikes; he believes in the ballot-box—the old argument from the State Socialist. It would be very good if someone from London would come down for a day (Sunday). There is a large demand for Anarchist books and papers, of which I have sold a good quantity. Plenty of people here are in sympathy with the Anarchist ideal. I could do more propaganda if I had a little help from others. I would be pleased to co-operate with someone at Portsmouth. Write to me at 276 Commercial Road.

MAX SELSER.

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Hyde Park—Sundays, 7.

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Regent’s Park—Sundays, 11.30.

Victoria Park—Sundays, 11.30.

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Speakers wishing to book up vacant dates, or willing to exchange dates, should write J. F. Tanner, 29 Beryl Road, Hammersmith, W.

Ferrer Sunday School, 99 Charlotte Street, W. (entrance Bedford Passage), meets every Sunday afternoon at 3 prompt. Comrades and sympathisers are invited to bring their children.

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